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Interview of well-known singer and character actor Vishnupant Jog by Bapu Watve

Bapu : Vishnupant, although you are called 'Anna' at home, I am going to call you 'Jog' only, since your name use to appear in film credits as 'Jog' and not as 'Vishnupant Jog'. Am I right?

Jog : That is correct.

Bapu : When were you born?

Jog : 18th September 1905.

Bapu : Which means you will be 82 years old now.

Jog : Yes. In this September.

Bapu : How far did you study?

Jog : Medical education for one and half years after passing matric.

Bapu : Matric from which place? Nagpur?

Jog : No. I could have completed my matriculation from a government-recognized school, but my brother intervened. At that time Non-Co-Operation movement was going on.

Bapu : Yes. That was a national movement.



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Jog : So, my elder brother, who was the head of our family, removed me from the school.

Bapu : Who was your elder brother?

Jog : Nana Jog.

Bapu : That well-known litterateur?

Jog : Yes. He decided that I will not study in that school anymore and shifted me to another school, 'Tilak School' which had then started at Nagpur. So, I passed my matric from that school.

Bapu : Which means you are matric from Tilak University.

Jog : That is right. In Pune, Tilak University had been set up. I passed matric of that institute. But then I faced problem with my further studies.

Bapu : Is it?

Jog : Yes. Tilak University's matric qualification was not recognized by anybody. That time Dr. Bhadkamkar and few others had started 'National Medical College' at Mumbai, which recognized this matric.

Bapu : So, your brother must have got you enrolled in that college.

Jog : Yes. I completed the first-year course. But in the second year, I started getting frequent bouts of fever. Malaria. I took several medicines. But I started developing deafness due to that. Then I lost interest and left Bombay and therefore, left medical course halfway. Had I completed the course I would have been L.C.P.S.

Bapu : Means you would have got into different field and would have become a doctor.

Jog : Yes. The funny part is that, had I passed matric from my earlier Nagpur government school, there was a Medical School in Nagpur, offering L.M.P degree, in which I could have got admission.

Bapu : Was it a school or college?

Jog : School. It offered L.M.P. degree. Licensed to Medical Practice. I would have been a Doctor from that institute. But because of my brother's whims, I could not study in Nagpur and when I came to Mumbai, I got such severe attacks of malaria that doctors advised me to leave Mumbai. So, I had to leave Mumbai.

Bapu : So, in the end, you became an Actor instead of a Doctor

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : Your case is similar to Keshavrao Bhole, famous music director of Prabhat.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : In fact, he was in the final year of M.B.B.S. when he had repeated bouts of malaria and doctor advised him to leave Mumbai. I believe at that time there were no medicines for malaria.

Jog : Absolutely no medicines.

Bapu : Then he left Mumbai for Amravati and pursued music.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : What happened after you left your education halfway?

Jog : Then I went back to Nagpur and after some medication got cured. I was doing some odd jobs here and there. I could not get a proper job since I did not have education certificate from the government.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : There was one Mr. Shankar Balaji Shastri, a well-known litterateur.

Bapu : Yes.

Jog : He was a friend of my brother.

Bapu : Nanaji's friend?

Jog : Yes. Nanaji's friend. They discussed about my future. I used to sing at home. I had not studied music, but I use to recite songs sung by others.

Bapu : Which means you had a good voice.

Jog : Yes. I had good voice. That was a natural gift. I had not worked on it.

Bapu : Then?

Jog : They decided that I should pursue career in musical dramas. Dinanath Mangeshkar, proprietor of 'Balwant' was Shankar Balshastri's friend. So, Shankar Balshastri took me to Chandrapur, also known as Chanda, to that drama company. I was taken to Dinanathrao who asked me to sing.

Bapu : Then?

Jog : I sang for him and he approved and agreed to employ me, and I stayed with them.

Bapu : Ok. There are many such instances abroad. Actors John Wayne and Henry Fonda did not set out to be actors. But they became famous actors. There are some examples here also. Sharad Talwalkar or Vasant Shinde did not intend to be actors but by chance they became actors. Chandrakant was a painter. He was a painter and an actor. Did similar thing happen to you? Were you always interested in acting?

Jog : Not really. I used to mimic sometimes to make people laugh. But that was not my career objective.

Bapu : Ok. Only liking for mimicry and acting.

Jog : Yes. And my elder brother must have noted it and told that to Shankar Balaji Shastri and since he was friend of 'Balwant' owner Dinanath, I got entry in 'Balwant'. And from 1928 to 1935 I was in the field of dramas.

Bapu : What was your salary in Dinanath's company?

Jog : You will now laugh at me. After providing for my lodging, boarding and clothing etc, I was paid Rs.10 per month.

Bapu : And what work was assigned to you?

Jog : Not much. I would be given small parts having a dialogue of 4 or 5 sentences. But Kolhatkar used to like my work.

Bapu : Chintamanrao Kolhatkar?

Jog : Yes. He was the owner. One of the Partners. He liked my clear diction and my boldness and used to recommend me.

Bapu : Were you always bold?

Jog : Yes, since my birth. I was never afraid of anything. But I could never get major roles because the company had Dinakar Dhere.

Bapu : That is, Dinakar Kamanna.

Jog : Yes. Dinakar Kamanna and Damuanna Malwankar. So, due to the presence of such big actors, even after a year, I was always getting only small roles.

Bapu : Do you remember the names of the dramas in which you acted, small roles, maybe.

Jog : First I got 'Moru's role in *Bavannan*. Then in *Gugal Mangal*, I had a song and some part.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : Although I had not studied music, I could sing songs which were set.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : So, it got known that I could sing and act in different kinds of roles. But I never got a chance to work. Only once I acted Moru's role. But Dinanath liked my work very much.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : It was not much. I had just copied Damuanna Malwankar.

Bapu : Ok, Then?

Jog : I had got bored with routine and these small assignments. I had nothing to do except for eating and sleeping. About the same time, Hirabai Badodekar's company had come to Belgaum. So, I went and met her.

Bapu : Do you remember the name of Hirabai Badodekar's company?

Jog : Yes. "Nutan Sangeet". When I met her, she asked me where I was working then. When I informed her 'Dinanath's company, she asked me if I could join her company?

Bapu : Dinanath's company had three partners. Is it not? Chintamanrao Kolhatkar, Master Dinanath

Jog : And Krushnarao Kolhapure. So, I told Hirabai that I will join her company provided that I get a major role.

Bapu : Yes. You wanted an important role.

Jog : She agreed and mentioned that she faced shortage of people. Then she gave me the role of 'Vaishakh Sheth'.

Bapu : In which drama?

Jog : 'Sanshay Kallol'

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : I enacted that role very well.

Bapu : Did Vaishakh Sheth had any songs?

Jog : No. But I totally changed the way the character was being portrayed.

Bapu : Is that?

Jog : Till then the actors use to recite the script given. But I added few shlokas in the dialogue and made that character important. Later, other actors started enacting that role of Vaishakh Sheth in the way I had established.

Bapu : So, you put your stamp on that character.

Jog : Yes. Later,(N.S.) Phadke produced one drama 'Yugantar' in which I got a major and important role, that of 'Pancham'.

Bapu : Pancham?

Jog : Yes. And present-day Saraswati Rane was my heroin 'Kokila'. Our scenes & dialogues were liked by the audience. Even Sahitya-Samrat N.C. Kelkar had openly appreciated my role of Pancham.

Bapu : What was your salary then in Hirabai's company?

Jog : Rs. ???

Bapu : That was very good. And you also got important roles.

Jog : Yes. Vilasdar in 'Manapman'. Suresh Babu Mane used to enact 'Dhairiyadhar'.

Bapu : Suresh Babu! Hirabai's brother? He was a very good singer.

Jog : I enacted 'Vilasdar', Bandupant Soni enacted 'Laxmidhar'. Thereafter, I acted in every drama. Once I acted 'Nupur' in 'Punyaprabhav'.

Bapu : Is it?

Jog : Normally, Dinkar Dhere used to act that role. I had seen it. Once I had to act that role in an emergency. Thus, I was getting established. I had lost stage freight. Then there were riots in 1929.

Bapu : Communal riots?

Jog : Yes. Among Hindus and Muslims in Mumbai. So, I decided not to stay in Mumbai and was thinking about further course of action! A few days earlier, Bhatebuva had attended our show in Mumbai.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : One Mr. Deshmukh, whom I knew, was working in his company. When I approached Deshmukh, he asked me to sing for Bhatebuva. Bhatebuva liked my voice.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : Bhatebuva asked me if I can join him. I was worried because of riots. No one knew how long it will last. I accepted his offer. He gave me money to buy ticket for Jabalpur.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : His company was Hindi. I went to Jabalpur and was with them for three years.

Bapu : 3 years!! But they must be producing Hindi or Urdu dramas.

Jog : Yes. There would rarely be any shows of Marathi dramas like 'Sant Sakhu'.

Bapu : Who will see Marathi dramas in Uttar Pradesh?

Jog : We use to move to places like Gwalior, Agra, Allahabad, Jabalpur etc in U.P. and M.P.

Bapu : Do you recall the names of dramas?

Jog : Yes. 'Punjab Mail', 'Ek hi Paisa', 'Shadi ki Paheli Raat' are some of them.

Bapu : Did you sing in any drama?

Jog : Yes. Must have sung in few.

Bapu : But that must have been in Hindi.

Jog : Yes. (Jog sings the song...)

Bapu : Who composed the songs?

Jog : Bhatebuva himself.

Bapu : Oh Yes. Did you meet Sohrab Modi then?

Jog : Before going to Bhatebuva, for a short tenure of six months, I was with him at Kolhapur.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : Benjamin had selected me.

Bapu : That actor Benjamin?

Jog : Yes. He was their hero at that time in Hamlet.

Bapu : I believe the name of his drama company was 'Arya Subodh'

Jog : Yes. Something like that. Though the name was 'Arya', but drama used to be in Urdu.

Bapu : Urdu! Yes. So, you had worked in Sohrab Mody's company for six months.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : Did you get important roles there?

Jog : Yes. I was getting good roles. But their food did not suit me.

Bapu : Oh No!

Jog : Sohrab Modi was a good-natured person. Benjamin also behaved decently with me. But I did not like their food. I thought, I will spoil my health because of this.

Bapu : That's correct.

Jog : So, I ran away from there breaking the contract. I went underground for a month. Nobody knew my whereabouts. Then I went back to Hirabai.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : Then from there to Bhatebuva. After returning from Bhatebuva I found the drama business collapsing.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : Even Nanasaheb Phatak told me to change my field.

Bapu : How did you know Nanasaheb Phatak?

Jog: He is my brother-in-law, married to my real sister. He told me that drama business had no future and I should join films.

Bapu: Ok.

Jog: He said the film line is upcoming and with his help, I joined Shalini Cinetone.

Bapu: This period must be about 1931-32-33.

Jog: That is right.

Bapu: So, you went to Kolhapur.

Jog: Yes, I liked it for few days, but I did not get any work.

Bapu: Why? Baburao Pendharkar was there?

Jog: Yes. But he took 5-6 months to make one film in which I would have a shot occasionally.

Bapu: What was your salary then?

Jog: Rs. 100/-

Bapu: Which was good then, considering what others were paid. And you also got a part in 'Pratibha'

Jog: Yes. I had acted very well in Pratibha. But the picture flopped.

Bapu: Why? There were so many well-known actors in the film.

Jog: Yes. Mr. Date was there.

Bapu: Keshavrao Date, Nanasaheb Phatak, Durgabai Khote, Usha Mantri....

Jog: And Raja Paranjape. In fact, me and Raja Paranjape made a great pair.

Bapu: Did you have a comic role?

Jog: And because I knew Hindi and Urdu, I found it easy.

Bapu : Was it a bi-lingual film?

Jog : Yes. And I could recite Dohas.

Bapu : Did you sing in Pratibha?

Jog : No.

Bapu : But then 'Usha' and 'Ashira Avis' were earlier films.

Jog : Yes. In 'Ashira Avis' I had sung a song "Meri Begum Ko Kisi Tarahse Hathse Gavah"

Bapu : 'Ashira Avis' was only in Hindi. Who was the director?

Jog : Shivkumar and Anandkumar were two North Indian brothers.

Bapu : But the film did not do well.

Jog : No.

Bapu : But despite being a great artistic film, 'Pratibha' also did not run well.

Jog : Yes. Baburao had designed excellent sets. But of no use. The things were not appreciated. The story writer Narayan Hari Apte felt that it was not picturised well.

Bapu : Ok. What was your role in 'Usha'?

Jog : That was some insignificant role.

Bapu : What is your impression about Baburao as a Director? I believe he had developed a defect in speech due to some illness.

Jog : Yes. His speech was defective, but we understood his explanation.

Bapu : What was his specialty?

Jog : He had poor literary sense but was good at set designs, shot taking, camera work, drapery and creating period atmosphere.

Bapu : But despite lacking in the literary sense he chose a revolutionary subject like 'Sawakari Pash'.

Jog : But that time Vishnupant Aundhkar was with him. 'Sawakari Pash" was made by two of them together. It had a good subject.

Bapu : But it was already there. 'Maharashtra' had produced it as a silent movie.

Jog : Yes. The film was ready. They made it talkie. The silent film was good.

Bapu : Narayan Hari Apte had written the story of silent film as well as talkie.

Jog : I do not know.

Bapu : Then Visnupant Aundhkar had acted in 'Sawakari Pash'. What was your role in that?

Jog : Some minor role with singing. I was not really satisfied. I got real satisfaction in 'Brahmachari'.

Bapu : 1936 'Sawakari Pash'.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : Then what next?

Jog : Nothing much. Used to go to the studio, did some minor work when asked, come home, eat and sleep.

Bapu : Then you must have left Shalini.

Jog : Yes. I left. I was getting bored.

Bapu : Then?

Jog : I did not know what to do. In Budhwar Peth, there was a shop 'Kulkarni Scientific Gallery'.

Bapu : You are now narrating an incident, which occurred in Pune after you had left Kolhapur.

Jog : Yes. Kulkarni had organized Lunch on the occasion of Mahalaxmi Puja. He called me for lunch. I was singing while taking lunch. Kulkarni was friend of Atre. While walking on the road, Atre heard my voice and he climbed up the stairs.

Bapu : Which song were you presenting? Do you remember?

Jog : Most probably 'Adhir Man Bawre'.

Bapu : In your booming voice.

Jog : (he sings...) While I was singing, he climbed up the stairs. I stopped. He asked me not to stop and said he had come to hear me. Afterwards, two more people sang and then he left.

Bapu : Did you know Acharya Atre?

Jog : I knew him, but I was not acquainted with him. Then Kulkarni asked me to continue singing. I sang a few more songs. He liked my voice. I think, he must have recommended me to Vinayakrao for a job in his company.

One day, while I was brooding about not getting proper roles in Shalini Cinetone and being unemployed, I got a letter from Master Vinayak....

Bapu : Ok

Jog : inviting me to his company. It also said, if things do not work out between us, they will reimburse me to and fro travelling expenses. I left immediately...

Bapu : But you were working in some drama company then.

Jog : That was insignificant, just to while away my time.

Bapu : I also understand that letter was delivered to you only. If somebody else had received the letter he would not have given it to you. Who would like to lose such a good actor-singer?

Jog : I was standing outside, and the postman delivered that letter to me. That's a coincidence.

Bapu : You must have been delighted.

Jog : Obviously. I always wished to get good roles in cinema. I felt that I would get such roles with Vinayakrao, so I was eager to go to Kolhapur. After reaching there, I met Vinayakrao who asked me to sing. That time he had one Muslim music director who was also present there. I do not recollect his name, but he was very pleased and advised Vinayakrao to employ me. Baburao Pendharkar was also there. He got up and left. I thought he did not approve me but after going to his office he called me and asked if I was willing to enter a contract with them. Of course, I was interested.

Bapu : Oh

Jog : But I put one condition that I should get work. For about two and half years I was sitting without work in the cinema.

Bapu : You were getting insignificant roles.

Jog : He agreed and said they will give me work and they cannot afford to employ a person without work. Then the first picture planned was....

Bapu : “Amrut”

Jog : Yes. Amrut. But that got cancelled. I did not have a major role in that.

Bapu : No?

Jog : But then they planned 'Brahmachari' in which I got a good role with songs and thereafter, from 1938, my career took off.

Bapu : There is a background for starting 'Brahmachari'. The company had produced a magnum opus 'Jwala' in both Hindi and Marathi, but it failed at the box office and the company faced financial problems.

Jog : Yes. They were in great financial trouble.

Bapu : They wanted to make a comedy film, in a quick time and Acharya Atre wrote 'Brahmachari' for them. Am I correct?

Jog : Yes. That is correct. There were three owners; Pandurang Naik, Baburao Pendharkar and Vinayakrao Karnataki.

Bapu : Was Pandurang the same person, famous cameraman?

Jog : Yes. The three were in great distress and were wondering how to come out of it.

Bapu : Yes!

Jog : For Jwala they had hired big stars like Chandramohan.

Bapu : Yes.

Jog : Then Acharya Atre thought of the plot of Brahmachari. It was finalized and on 5th June 1938, Muhurt shot was filmed on me as 'Vinayak'.

Bapu : Wow. It was 49 years back.

Jog : The picture was completed in three months.

Bapu : But your character was named 'Chakor' in that.

Jog : 'Chakor', yes. And I had two songs.

Bapu : Can you recite a few lines? Your songs were so popular then that old-timers still remember them and know you by those songs only.

Jog : it's "Pritine Veda Pisa Zala" [SINGS], and that " Pakhara".

Bapu : Can you sing that?

Jog : It is like "Pakhara Preetichya Re, Pakhara Ghe Bharari, Preetichya Re Pakhara, Pakhara" [SINGS]; cannot sing without accompaniment.

Bapu : That is correct. Those were very popular songs then. And I remember you were also given a peculiar costume. The Colour of your hat was always the same as the coat. I remember it because it had become a fashion in Pune then. I had also got a cap of the same cloth as the coat.

Jog : Ok

Bapu : And when I went to school in that dress, people use to call me 'Chakor'.

Jog : Ha! Ha! Ha!

Bapu : This is just to tell how popular your costume had become. But this role of Chakor was a light role and a secondary role. Because you were enacting that role, Atre had written songs for that role.

Jog : Because Pendharkarrao and Vinayakrao had liked my singing, they asked him to include songs for me. Otherwise, they would not have utilized me fully, if I had only prose.

Bapu : That is right.

Jog : Yes. And for that song 'Pritine Veda Pisa' I had composed the tune.

Bapu : Is it?

Jog : I had sung a song in a drama in the past. I do not remember the wording of the original song, but I told them that I know one tune which can be used here, and I sang for them which they approved.

Bapu : Who was the music director?

Jog : Dada Chandekar. One more thing. There is one song by Minakshi, "Firwa na". For that also I had given the tune. For "Sakhyano Jara Dola" I had removed first two lines from a Hindi song and used the tune.

Bapu : Oh.

Jog : The original song is like "Aaj man Bhor Na Lage, Zuk Ke Ayi Andhiyari Kali Ghata laai".

Bapu : So, you gave tune for that song. That song was also very popular.

Jog : These tunes were from the songs that I had heard when I was working in Hindi dramas.

Bapu : But I have heard, please confirm if correct, that it was felt that out of these two songs, one song was not needed.

Jog : Yes. There was a thought that “Preetichya Pakhara” is out of place.

Bapu : Which song? “Preetichya Pakhara”?

Jog : Yes. That did not suit the situation and plot.

Bapu : Who said so?

Jog : I think Baburao Pendharkar.

Bapu : Then?

Jog : Then Shakt Jagatguru was there.

Bapu : At the time of the shooting?

Jog : No. Not for shooting but for trial.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : He said. Let the song remain. People would like it. Does not matter if it does not fit in the plot. But do not remove the song.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : Then the song was retained, and it became very popular. The audience did not consider the song was inappropriate in the plot.

Bapu : Your both songs were very popular. In fact, ‘Brahmachari’ was very successful.

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Jog : Yes. When it was first exhibited at 'Prabhat', the contract was for six weeks. but there was a heavy rush. Then the film was shifted to Aryan talkies where it was being exhibited almost for a year.

Bapu : That was the first time you had worked with Vinayakrao. What is your experience about his direction?

Jog : In my opinion, which I still maintain, nobody could match Vinayakrao as a Director. He was the best. Whether the scene was comic, serious, sad or happy, Vinayakrao was very good at explaining.

Bapu : Is it?

Jog : In fact, I attribute my success to Vinayakrao. He would explain each shot, then ask us to perform, then if he liked it he would ask us to stick to that and if he was not satisfied, he would stand in our place and act out the scene and ask us to follow him.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : Then we would copy what he had taught. Out of many Directors under whom I have worked, I rate him as the best.

Bapu : Vinayakrao's next film was 'Brandichi Batali'.

Jog : When the film was being planned, I was not there.

Bapu : Is it?

Jog : Jawalkar had acted in that.

Bapu : Then what was your role in 'Brandichi Batali'?

Jog : That of peon Govind.

Bapu : from Municipality?

Jog : But I was in the star cast of both the versions. Hindi and Marathi.

Bapu : Oh Yes. 'Brandichi Batali' was made in both languages.

Jog : Yes. In the Marathi version, Shakuntala had acted. And in the Hindi version, one Muslim actress was there.

Bapu : Was it Noorjahan?

Jog : No

Bapu : Was she from Mumbai or Kolhapur?

Jog : I think her name was Mehrunnisa, but she was called 'Ashalata'.

Bapu : That is right. Ashalata who later became a heroin. Was it the same person? She was Khoja.

Jog : Yes. The same. Her surname was Bhagat.

Bapu : Yes. That Ashalata was the heroin of Vinayakrao's pictures later.

Jog : That time I was fluent in Hindi or Urdu and Marathi.

Bapu : Yes.

Jog : So, I could be cast in both versions. In Marathi, the Marathi-speaking lady would speak and sing; in Hindi, the Hindi-speaking lady would speak and sing but I was in both.

Bapu : But due to your popularity from Brahmachari

Jog : Yes. My first shot as Govinda....

Bapu : That is what I was about to ask. With the popularity earned by you in film 'Brandichi Batali', what was the reaction of audience?

Jog : My first appearance showed me lying half-clad, sleeping. As soon as I appeared on the screen people started clapping. They were saying their 'Chakor has come.

Bapu : The audience must have felt that with their Chakor's arrival, there would be some comic scenes.

Jog : Yes, something like that.

Bapu : Do you recall any songs from that film?

Jog : One song from that. "Tuzyavar Gulabachi"

Bapu : Why not sing "Tuzyavar Gulabachi Kali Lagli" in lavni style?

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : And one more song “Rahu Mari Bharari”.

Jog : I do not recall that now.

Bapu : These two songs sung by you had become very popular.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : But I think “Tuzyavar Gulabachi” was more popular.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : It was sung in the Lavani style.

Jog : I use to sing well then.

Bapu : Now you are unable to reproduce it because of old age.

Jog : I am 82 years old now.

Bapu : Yes. 82 years old and approaching 83.

Jog : Yes. Within two months.

Bapu : Did ‘Brandichi Batali’ run well?

Jog : Yes. But not as well as ‘Brahmachari’. It was profitable.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : It earned well because it was coming in aftermath of ‘Brahmachari’.

Bapu : Yes.

Jog : And it had the same star casts.

Bapu : And although the subject of the film was a bottle of brandy, it was a comedy.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : Damuanna's character of Bagaram had become very popular. Minakshibai was in that film.

Jog : Damuanna had also acted very well in that film. Excellent acting.

Bapu : Without any doubt. In fact, that role established him in the film line.

Jog : Yes. He became very popular.

Bapu : Who was the music director of that film? Annasaheb Mainkar or Dada?

Jog : Dada.

Bapu : Dadasaheb Chandekar.

Bapu : In the Hindi version role of Bagaram was enacted by Vinayak himself.

Jog : Yes. But, to be honest, Hindi was not Vinayakrao's mother tongue. So, he could not make the same impact as Damuanna made in the Marathi version. Therefore, I always felt that 'Brandichi Batali' was not as successful in Hindi as it was in Marathi.

Bapu : Correct. Secondly, although Vinayakrao could act in comedies, his style of acting was different. Damuanna was comic right from his appearance. His eyes, his expressions!

Jog : Particularly his eyes.

Bapu : And his expressions. That is why his role in Marathi was better.

Jog : Damuanna's specialty was that he used to fit the character of an innocent but fool person, to the tee.

Bapu : You also acted in 'Sukhacha Shodh'.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : In that film, you had a role of a person besotted by movies.

Jog : There was one song in that film made up by a line from one song then other line from the other song.

Bapu : Ok. But then that trend of mixing songs from different films became quite popular in Marathi and Hindi. It was copied in many films.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : Do you recall any of those songs?

Jog : No. I do not remember any song. But the audience used to enjoy that mixture of songs presented without missing any beat.

Bapu : You were not in 'Ardhangi'

Jog : No.

Bapu : No. That was also a good film in which Atre had presented very effectively, a social problem in a garb of comedy.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : Then you were really made immortal by your role in 'Lagna Pahava Karun'.

Jog : I had the role of Gundyabhau in that film.

Bapu : Yes. The pair of Damuanna and yourself, as Chimanrao and Gundyabhau became immortal.

Jog : Vinayakrao was facing a problem.

Bapu : I was about to ask you how you got selected for Gundyabhau's role.

Jog : It is funny. Damuanna as Chimanrao was fixed and Vinayakrao was discussing with people about whom to cast in the role of Gundyabhau.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : One day I was sitting in the make-up room with Jawalekar who was our make-up artist

Bapu : and, an actor.

Jog : At that time, I noticed Vinayakrao looking at me closely. I too became conscious. Then he asked Jawalekar to fix a big mustache to me describing the shape of the mustache he wanted. Then he again looked at me closely and declared that his Gundyabhau is selected. He asked me to say few lines of Gundyabhau's in a dry, emotionless manner.

Bapu : He was a bachelor and healthy attending gymnasium regularly. How were you made to look healthy?

Jog : No. At that time I was quite healthy. About one and half times my present physique.

Bapu : So, you did not require padding.

Jog : No. Only I must put on a bearing of a wrestler in walk and talk.

Bapu : Jog, in old days, at Prabhat, there was a system of practice before filming started. Did Vinayakrao also follow this system?

Jog : Absolutely not. Vinayakrao believed in being spontaneous. Many times, we did not know our dialogues even.

Bapu : How is that?

Jog : In some places, the dialogues are given one day in advance.

Bapu : Yes.

Jog : Vinayakrao very rarely gave us dialogues in advance.

Bapu : Prabhat had this system of advance practice till 'Ramshastri'.

Jog : Vinayakrao did not follow that system. If we asked him for dialogue, he would ask us to wait or used to tell us that dialogue will be given on the spot.

Bapu : Did you ever offer suggestions about dialogue delivery or actions to him? Was it acceptable to Vinayakrao?

Jog : Oh Yes. If he liked our suggestions he would acknowledge and ask us to implement them. He was cooperative.

Bapu : So, he did not feel insulted if an actor gave any suggestions.

Jog : No. Absolutely not. In fact, he would listen to us with full attention and then would say - what you are suggesting is right and would ask us to follow it.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : It was a fun. We used to enjoy it.

Bapu : Do you remember any specific instances of that time. About “Lagna Pahava Karun”. It was such a successful movie and your role was also so much appreciated. Tell me. In "Lagna Pahava Karun”, there is a song in Lavani style. Obviously, with you in the cast, some song had to be there. How did you create a situation for that song? The situation was quite appropriate for that song. Who thought of that? Vinayakrao?

Jog : Yes. It was Vinayakrao’s idea.

Bapu : How was the situation created?

Jog : You see, me and my brother Chimanrao were looking for a bridegroom and we had got tired of walking. To get over our fatigue we sat down under a tree. Just to relax, Chimanrao asks me to sing a song. Any song.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : Then I sang that Lavani. The tune is ‘Mana Mohini’ [tries to sing but cannot]. Oh! I cannot sing without musical support; I feel lost without music.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : After listening to that song Warerkar told me....

Bapu : Who? Mama Warerkar. That well-known writer?

Jog : Yes. When he met me, He said “Jogya, you have sung the Lavni very well.” When I asked “Which?” he said that one sung under the tree.

Bapu : Hm....

Jog : There is one more incidence that took place after “Lagna Pahava Karun”. In the place where we were put up, there was also one gymnasium expert, whose name I do not remember, who had organized our meeting.

Bapu : Was he from Talwalkars?

Jog : Yes. Talwalkar Gymnasium. Both of us were called to Mumbai.

Bapu : That is, you and Damuanna? Chimanrao and Gundyabhau.

Jog : We were made to sit on chairs and were garlanded and felicitated.

Bapu : Hum...

Jog : Then I got a message to see Nanasaheb Phatak at Dadar.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : So, I started. On the way, when I was at Lamington Road, a girl came and stood in front of me and enquired if I was Jog. When I replied in affirmative, she said that she liked my acting in “Lagna Pahava Karun” very much. So, I stopped you to tell you.

Bapu : Then

Jog : I said, ‘Thank you’.

Bapu : Artist always gets appreciation from the public.

Jog : Yes. But it is also very bothersome. I have experienced it. It was so difficult for me to travel!

Bapu : Yes. Yes.

Jog : Wherever we travelled in Maharashtra, there would always be someone who had seen us in ‘Brahmachari’ or in ‘Brandi chi Batali’ or in ‘Lagna Pahava Karun’.

Bapu : Yes.

Jog : They would keep on asking many questions.

Bapu : Han.

Jog : Some people have a dirty habit of asking personal questions. Is Minakshibai married? or How many children did she have?

Bapu : Awkward questions.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : There is a famous statement by Charlie Chaplin. Every actor desire to be famous. And once he becomes famous, he desires that nobody from society should recognize him. Because it becomes troublesome.

Jog : That is right. But I never wished to be famous. It happened.

Bapu : A good cinema actor automatically becomes famous. 'Lagna Pahava Karun' was very successful.

Jog : Yes. It was. But not as much as 'Brahmachari'.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : 'Brahmachari' was at the top. Then it was followed by 'Lagna Pahava Karun'.

Bapu : But 'Lagna Pahava Karun' made you unforgettable.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : As Gundyabhau.

Jog : But 'Sarkari Pahune' did one better.

Bapu : Yes.

Jog : It made me even better known.

Bapu : But in between, you had acted in few films. Were you not in 'Amrut'?

Jog : I was. But only for one song in that film sung in Goan style. 'Dandila Ghalwalele Re Baya'. That is their language.

Bapu : It was at the beginning of the film.

Jog : Yes. [Sings]

Bapu : Then you also acted in 'Sangam'. But it was a small role.

Jog : Yes. Usually, I use to get only small roles. Big role was in 'Sarkari Pahune'

Bapu : You were also in "Pahili Mangalagaur". Role of 'Chintu'

Jog : Yes. 'Chintu'. I really liked that role. I had put my heart in that role.

Bapu : There also you had a comic role.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : Who were your co-artists? I think Shahu Modak and Snehlata Pradhan.

Jog : Shahu Modak.

Bapu : Was it directed by Junnarkar?

Jog : I must tell you one thing about it.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : I do not remember the lady who was working with me. But I had acted in that film very well. And I had totally a different appearance.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : In 'Sarkari Pahune' I had 'Gundyabhau's get up with clean shaved head, Mustaches etc. But here I had to look like a youngster.

Bapu : Yes.

Jog : In 'Mangalagaur' it was a change of image for me.

Bapu : Did you have any song in 'Manalagaur'?

Jog : No. In that film, Snehlata Pradhan had a song with playback.

Bapu : Was the playback system developed in your time?

Jog : It was not there in 'Savkari Pash' days. I had great difficulty in rendering that song.

Bapu : Did you have a song in 'Savkari Pash'?

Jog : That prayer 'Sanshay Ram....' Was sung by me only. It was a direct song.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : I had the role of a beggar singing song in lanes.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : Imagine me singing while walking. No playback. Song being sung under the sun. In those days there was no indoor shooting. Only outdoor. From morning till sunset. We had to finish a full song in a day.

Bapu : But what was the difficulty faced by you.

Jog : I could not hear any musical accompaniment. Musicians used to be placed at a distance, out of camera range.

Bapu : Out of camera range somewhere. Were they stationed in houses on the side when you walked on the street?

Jog : Yes. First in one house. As I moved ahead, they would be shifted to in next house. And with all the breaks, I had to sing in the same tone and with the same speed while walking.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : It was very difficult. Sometimes I wonder how I managed then. But people felt that I had done it well.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : But later, it was decided that the song was not up to the mark and therefore Jog should be asked to sing the song again, looking at the picture

Bapu : Hun...

Jog : Normally a song is first recorded and then there is only lip movement while filming. Here the process was reversed. After filming I had to sing the song looking at pictures and match my own song with lip movement.

Bapu : Yes.

Jog : I wonder now, how I could do it.

Bapu : But it must have resulted in the song having a uniform level.

Jog : Yes. I liked it. Earlier the song appeared to be patchy and the tone was sometimes low or sometimes high.

Bapu : That's right. The mic position was constantly varying.

Jog : But singing while looking at the picture was still very difficult. I wonder how I could do it. But I managed.

Bapu : But although you use to sing in cinemas regularly, you had not undergone any formal training in music?

Jog : No. Even now I am weak in rhythm and tone.

Bapu : You openly admit it?

Jog : Yes. I am weak in rhythm.

Bapu : But while singing, you were not out of tune.

Jog : That is because the song used to be set and well-rehearsed.

Bapu : And you also had an advantage of being gifted with a booming voice which was also very melodious.

Jog : Not only booming voice. My voice was also melodious.

Bapu : That is what I am saying. An ordinary person does not understand rhythm or tone, but the song must sound pleasing to the audience.

Jog : That's all.

Bapu : That's all.

Jog : There are many songs like that these days. Particularly people singing Bhajan [prayer]. The song must be melodious whether it is in tone or not.

Bapu : Ok. Now. After your film 'Lagna Pahava Karun' which was very successful, there was a gap of two years before 'Sarkari Pahune' was planned. Why? And before I ask you the next question, another point. The story is by (C.V.) Jog who use to write humorous stories.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : The screenplay and dialogues were by (C.V.) Khandekar.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : Khandekar is not for writer humorous stories. He is a serious person.

Jog : Yes. But he had written very good dialogues.

Bapu : I would like to know while enacting the scenes, were you acting on your own or Vinayakrao use to advise you how to make it humorous?

Jog : Yes. Vinayakrao knew original Chi. (C.V.) Joshi's story. Dialogues were written by Khandekar. But we use to make some actions to create further humour.

Bapu : That is what I am asking. So, there were some additions by you and Damuanna to the script written by Khandekar.

Jog : But Khandekar had written well.

Bapu : Ok. Coming back. How the decision of making 'Sarkari Pahune' was made in 1942 after a gap of two years?

Jog : don't know how? But he always had that plot in mind. But in between some other pictures were made in which I had no roles.

Bapu : Were you not in 'Sangam'?

Jog : I was in 'Sangam'.

Bapu : But a small role.

Jog : There were other films, but I do not remember names.

Bapu : Coming back. After 'Sarkari Pahune' your pair ...

Jog : It pains me that after the demise of Vinayakrao, Raja Thakur produced a movie with the same pair.

Bapu : Yes.

Jog : You were also there. In what capacity?

Bapu : I was the assistant director. We will come to that later. 'Sarkari Pahune' was very successful.

Jog : Very successful. Particularly, in the princely state, it was seen widely.

Bapu : Because it was critical of princely states. The film was produced in Kolhapur state.

Jog : I am told in Baroda state the king had arranged for a special show.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : Pratapsinh Maharaj was the King. He liked the film so much that he called for a print and arranged its screening in the palace for himself with his family members

Bapu : Did he like it?

Jog : Yes. He liked.

Bapu : In that you have sung a *Tarana*, which had become very popular. Was it added later?

Jog : No.

Bapu : Then? What was the situation for the song?

Jog : There was a state singer, whose part was played by Vatsala Kumthekar, who was playing along with Gundyabhau and teasing him. After all, he was a traditional person who could be easily provoked.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : He wanted to show off.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : So the king arranged for a competition between the two.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : And in that he sings the *Tarana* beautifully.

Bapu : No. No. What I remember is that she makes some comments which hurt you and you say that she is very arrogant and then sing that *Tarana*.

Jog : I do not remember the exact dialogue, but he gets angry and sings.

Bapu : Can you sing a line from that *Tarana*?

Jog : [SINGS]

Bapu : Then?

Jog : Vatsala Kumthekar was a good singer. But in the story, her character is like that she gets defeated.

Bapu : You said earlier that ‘Sarkari Pahune’ made you very famous. How do you say so?

Jog : That is correct. (C.V.) Joshi liked my work.

Bapu : The story writer! That is a great compliment.

Jog : Once he had come to Shalini Cinetone and he told Vinayakrao to call Jog. He wanted to see me in person.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : I was strolling on lawns outside. Vinayakrao called me and introduced us.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : I paid my respect and told him how happy I was to meet the author who had written such a good film story. He said he had specially called me to say that he had liked my work very much. He further said that he would now write a story with Gundyabhau as the main character.

Bapu : Wow. That was a great compliment.

Jog : But then he died. So did Vinayakrao. That film needed only Vinayakrao as director. Nobody else could have managed.

Bapu : No. It was his forte.

Jog : For serious work, Vinayakrao had to be there.

Bapu : Joshi also said that you have played Gundyabhau better than what he had envisaged.

Jog : Yes. Better than what he had in mind. While writing, he had not expected that Gundyabhau’s character to become so prominent.

Bapu : So, he gave you the credit and to Vinayakrao since he was the director.

Jog : Vinayakrao I know only as a Director.

Bapu : He was very hard working and use to work fast.

Jog : Yes. But was not organized. Once he started working on dialogues, he himself wrote the dialogues, he would forget that people are waiting for him with make-up on.

Bapu : Is it?

Jog : Will keep on writing.

Bapu : We would be sitting there with full make-up, mustaches etc, waiting for a call. Suddenly while writing, he would announce that there would be a night shift that day and would ask the cook to prepare food for all. Then we would continue at night after shooting for the full day, with a break of one hour in between. But it was enjoyable. But he was unique. No one else was like that.

Jog : No. And your *Tarana* in 'Sarkari Pavane'; became very popular.

Bapu : Yes. Funny. The song was recorded earlier and there was playback. He had told me that you must look like taking revenge on the lady.

Bapu : Which it looked.

Jog : Right. Later, Vatsalabai told me that she could have easily defeated me in the contest, but the story demanded the character to lose.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : I agreed with her and told her that she has learnt music and I have not.

Bapu : I believe, the same year, there was a movie 'Tuzach' in which you had acted.

Jog : Yes. And I had a song in that film which was liked by.....

Bapu : Khan Mastan?

Jog : No Hirani or somebody like that.

Bapu : Durani.; J.N. Durani. He was a famous singer from Boriwali.

Jog : Durani. I had a song 'Japun Chala Bai Japun Chala' in that film.

Bapu : Yes. I remember.

Jog : When he saw me in Mumbai Studio, he said I like your 'Japun' very much.

Bapu : Durani said that?

Jog : Yes. Durani.

Bapu : Being praised by Hindi people was important.

Jog : Yes.

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Bapu : Who was the director of that film? Was it Junnarkar?

Jog : Junnarkar.

Bapu : Was he not an editor?

Jog : He was originally Vinayakrao's editor.

Bapu : And our cameraman Bal Dhavale was the hero and Shehlata Pradhan was the heroine of the film.

Jog : Yes. Junnarkar could not deliver.

Bapu : The picture did not run.

Jog : No. Did not.

Bapu : 'Chimukala Sansar'?

Jog : No. Then there was one film directed by Joglekar for Vinayakrao.

Bapu : Yes. That is 'Chimukala Sansar'. Next film.

Jog : When Vinayakrao got tired due to overwork, he would ask the assistant to take up further work.

Bapu : Was Vasant Joglekar working with him as an assistant?

Jog : Yes. Since Vinayakrao was not willing, he took up the picture. But it was not that good.

Bapu : Did you not have any part in it?

Jog : I had a small part.

Bapu : Small part?

Jog : Yes. I used to get small parts only.

Bapu : But whatever roles you got; they were important.

Jog : I made a mistake. Instead of starting film career at Kolhapur, I should have joined the film line at Mumbai in Hindi.

Bapu : Particularly, after your films in Marathi had become famous, you could have entered the Hindi film line.

Jog : But that was not to be. Otherwise, I could have earned a lot of money.

Bapu : Yes. And you could also sing. Subsequently, Vinayakrao produced the film ' Maze Bal'

Jog : Yes. Excellent film.

Bapu : It was based on the subject of an unwed mother.

Jog : It was a very difficult subject. Very good film. But I had no role in it.

Bapu : Ok. You had no role in it. But the next film was " Gajabhau". It had a background of war and was based on the problems of the refugees. Did you have a role in that?

Jog : Yes. But I do not remember much. The only thing I remember is that Sumati Gupte was my co-artist.

Bapu : Ok. Then for a long time, you had no work.

Jog : Yes. For about a year I had no work. After the incidences of fire, in 1948, for about six months there was no shooting in Kolhapur.

Bapu : But after that, there was 'Jai Malhar' which was very important and is considered a landmark in the Marathi film industry.

Jog : In between....

Bapu : That film was made in 1947. An interesting observation is that in 1945 not a single Marathi film was produced. In 1946 there were two and in 1947 six Marathi films were produced of which 2 were hit. Rajkamal's 'Ram Joshi' and your 'Jai Malhar'. From then onwards the era of the rural based films started.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : So, it is forty years since rural films started. What can you say about 'Jai Malhar'?

Jog : My role in 'Jai Malhar' was not to my liking. I had the role of a pimp named Vaghya. But I had accepted it as a job. There is a Village Head [Patil] and this pimp. The pimp used to solicit business for a girl enacted by Lalita Pawar who also used to serve the village head.

Bapu : I believe Baburao Pendharkar, Chandrakant, Sumati Gupte and Lalita Pawar were there in the film.

Jog : Yes. I worked with Lalita Pawar.

Bapu : Yes.

Jog : I liked working with her. She is a fine actress. But my character was of a person getting customers for her.

Bapu : An agent.

Jog : Yes. But I did not enjoy doing that role. But I was a salaried employee.

Bapu : You had two good songs in that film. Do you remember?

Jog : Yes, that is...

Bapu : ' Kutha Chal lees Re'

Jog : Yes. That was one and before that, there was one more song.

Bapu : Kathewadi?

Jog : No. No. That is not from my picture. One more song. Do you remember?

Bapu : No. I do not remember.

Jog : There were two songs.... Yes...it was ' Chabi Dar Nar Guljar'. It had become very popular.

Bapu : What was the tune of ' Kutha Chal lees Re Chandravari'

Jog : [SINGS]. It was like this.

Bapu : Both songs were popular.

Jog : No. The other was more popular. ' Chabi Dar Nar Guljar'. Sometimes we use to wonder.

Bapu : Ok. Master Vinayak expired in 1947. Am I right?

Jog : Yes. We got salary on 15th August and he died on 18th August.

Bapu : Vinayakrao....

Jog : And we lost our job. The person who had introduced me to this line was no more.

Bapu : In Vinayakrao's company, you had a great team of artists. Baburao Pendharkar, Master Vinayak, Salvi, Damuanna Malwankar, Minakshibai and yourself. All in which you were featured were all his films with great teamwork. After his demise, all of you had to work as a free-lancer.

Jog : Yes. But I did not enjoy it. We lost our hearts in the work. It was similar to what happened after the closure of Bal Gandharva's company.

Bapu : Which means you used to work without heart.

Jog : Some people like Shahu Modak, Athawale played the roles of Hamlet and such others. But we did not enjoy it.

Bapu : Were you paid well by Vinayakrao.

Jog : Yes. But a lot remained unpaid.

Bapu : Is it? But what was your salary?

Jog : Maximum Rs. 600/-

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : But in 1947. Things were cheap then.

Bapu : Yes. About 30/40 years back.

Jog : But we faced difficulties in getting our dues.

Bapu : After that, there was one film which celebrated the silver jubilee. That was also based on rural life. ' Jivacha Sakha'.

Jog : Yes. ' Jivacha Sakha'.

Bapu : That was in 1948

Jog : Then there was one in which I had a small role, but the film was very successful.

Bapu : Which one?

Jog : 'Shikleli Bayako'.

Bapu : That was later. After 'Jai Malhar' was your 'Jivacha Sakha'.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : I think you were paired with Vasant Shinde in 'Jivacha Sakha'.

Jog : His character had more prominence than mine. And he had also acted very well.

Bapu : Vasant Shinde.

Jog : My character was not prominent. I had 1 or 2 songs in it.

Bapu : That is because Vasant Shinde had a comic role while your character was a villain. Hence his character got better appreciation?

Jog : No. he had acted well.

Bapu : He did act well but he also got more audience appreciation.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : You had a Lavani in it.

Jog : I remember only one Lavani.

Bapu : Which one?

Jog : That 'Chabidar Nar Guljar'

Bapu : No. It is not in that film. I think 'Ek Dav'

Jog : Yes, that is there in the end. 'Ek Dav Tula Mi Pahili'

Bapu : Can you remember the tune?

Jog : [SINGS] 'Ek Dav Tula Mi Pahili Ubhi Ga Madeet Ga'

Bapu : Please repeat.

Jog : [SINGS] 'Ek Dav Tula Mi Pahili Ubhi Ga Madeet Ga, Ubhi Ga Madeet Ga'

Bapu : Punvecha Chand

Jog : [SINGS] ‘ Punvecha Chand Gund Gola Dharit’;something like that

Bapu : That was in Lavani style. There was also a BHAJAN sung by you ‘ Varyane Kundal Hale’. Do you remember its tune?

Jog : That tune is very good. [SINGS] “Varyane Kundal Hale, Dole Modit Ho Radha Chale, Dole Modit Ho Radha Chale, Varyane Kundal Hale”.... . Sudhir Phadke was Director.

Bapu : And film ‘Jivacha Sakha’ was directed by Raja Paranjape. Was it the first time you worked with Raja Paranjape?

Jog : No, we had worked together earlier.

Bapu : When?

Jog : We were ‘Kanduk Manduk’. In ‘Pratibha’

Bapu : No. No. I mean he as a Director and you as an actor.

Jog : Yes. It was the first time as that.

Bapu : Just as Vinayakrao had his era for comedy films, Rajabhau also had had his era.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : What was the difference in their approach? While Vinayakrao had better literary sense Rajabhau could act out the scene better since he was a very good actor. Was there a difference in their working style?

Jog : Only difference was that Vinayakrao was physically stronger.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : So, he could act out a scene and explain, any number of times. Rajabhau did not have that stamina.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : He would only show one or two times.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : Vinayakrao acted out all the shots. He never got tired.

Bapu : So that was Vinayakrao's specialty.

Jog : He was endowed with good health.

Bapu : Which he maintained.

Jog : Raja Paranjape lost his health due to

Bapu : Hmm;

Jog : Vinayakrao was not addicted.

Bapu : Did Vinayakrao have no addictions?

Jog : You can say so. Except for.....

Bapu : Which was your next picture which did well at the box office?

Jog : 'Shikleli Bayako'

Bapu : No. There was 'Sharada'

Jog : Sharada was a big mixture with too many characters. Shrimant, Sharada, Bhogdand. They had reproduced earlier drama in it.

Bapu : Was that the first time you worked with Bhalaji Pendharkar?

Jog : I think I had worked in....

Bapu : I think it was 'Yere Mazya Maglya', 1955, am I right?

Jog : We had worked in one more picture. Bedekar was there.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : I had acted well in the film. But suddenly they cancelled the film.

Bapu : Which one.

Jog : I do not remember the name. But I had shot for that.

Bapu : Was Bedekar working for Bhalaji?

Jog : Bedekar was Director. But Bhalaji used to be around. I do not remember the name of the film.

Bapu : What was the method of working of Bhalaji Pendharkar, in direction and overall?

Jog : I did not like.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : Balaji would talk to others with disdain.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : Always used to talk in language that hurt others. So, people used to be tense.

Bapu : He would not make people relax.

Jog : No. With Vinayakrao, it was the opposite. Vinayakrao would make the people feel comfortable. This person would always be taunting others. This constant taunting made him unbearable for me.

Bapu : But the person was intelligent.

Jog : He was ok.

Bapu : His strength was his dialogues.

Jog : I considered his dialogues old-fashioned.

Bapu : Do you remember when you enacted the role of Gundyabhau again?

Jog : Yes. I think....

Bapu : 'Gharacha Jhala Thoda',

Jog : I did not enjoy it.

Bapu : But the film was ok.

Jog : Yes. But I did not enjoy working in that film. Thakur could not manage it.

Bapu : It was not in Raja Thakur's mould. I had acted in it and I was also main Assistant Director.

Jog : You see he had taken in this film all available actors in Maharashtra, then. So, nobody could give justice.

Bapu : Yes. It had a big star cast. You were there. Then Rajabhau Malwankar, Raja Gosavi, Dhumal, Pandit Navalkar, Indira Chitins, Nalini Chonkar, Sudha Apte, Chandrakant Gokhale were all there. It had music by Sudhir Phadke. Tambe's dialogues were also good. It did well in cities but not in rural areas. Unlike Vinayakrao's 'Lagna Pahave Karun' or 'Sarkari Pahune' which were hit everywhere.

Jog : Somehow the things did not click in that film. Some films get the audience so involved that they do not feel like getting up even after the film is over. This film did not have that quality.

Bapu : Ok. If you feel like that what do you think should have been done?

Jog : The subject was good.

Bapu : Yes. Because it was based on (C.V.) Joshi's story 'Maze Dattak Vadil'.

Jog : In Vinayakrao's films, the audience used to engross and would be curious to see what comes next. That element was missing in this film.

Bapu : There was a lapse of fifteen years since 'Sarkari Pahune'. But I noticed that even after fifteen years, the audience still remembered Chimanrao and Gundyabhau.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : The first shot of the film showing Damuanna greeting the audience, evoked laughter from the audience.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : So, your pair was popular for two generations.

Jog : Vinayakrao wanted to go to Mumbai. So many people advised Vinayakrao to bring out a series on our pair before making the move. But he wanted to work with Hindi people in Mumbai.

Bapu : Yes. In between, he had gone to Mumbai. Which film did he produce in Mumbai?

Jog : 'Subhadra'

Bapu : Ok

Jog : It was a total flop.

Bapu : Who acted role of 'Subhadra'?

Jog : Shanta Apte.

Bapu : Shanta Apte. And I think Prem Adib was there.

Jog : No Prem Adib was 'Krushna' in a different film. In this film role of 'Krushna' was enacted by a different actor.

Bapu : Who acted 'Arjun'?

Jog : Ishwarlal.

Bapu : Wow. So, all the old stars were there. Did you have any role?

Jog : 'Narad'

Bapu : So, you had a good role.

Jog : Yes. But somehow, I could not act that well. Not as well as I did in dramas. And in the film, a peace conference was inserted in the end.

Bapu : Peace Conference. So, a political touch was given which the audience may not have liked.

Jog : Yes. He tried to give political colour.

Bapu : I think Yakub was also there.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : Who was the music director?

Jog : I think it was Datta Dawjekar or Kolgarkar. You might know.

Bapu : No. But the picture totally failed?

Jog : I had a song [SINGS] 'Jago Mohan...'. That Govanis fellow, Parsekar

Bapu : Shridhar Parsekar

Jog : he had set the tune.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : I remember, there was a shot of Narad singing on the wall of the fort playing his chiplyai. The shot was taken on Panhala fort. Somehow things did not work out.

Bapu : I think Vinayakrao had problems with the Hindi actors.

Jog : They use to be late in coming and after coming also they would sit chitchatting. They would feel insulted if you break their conversation and call for work. All the things that Shantaram Bapu disliked and he had told one famous actor, what was his name?

Bapu : Yakub?

Jog : No. Not Yakub. Shantaram Bapu told him to either come in time or leave. If he is called at 9:30, he must be there at 9:30 with full makeup on.

Bapu : He had told Pruthviraj also.

Jog : Yes. Pruthviraj and one other famous actor. Some Kapur. He was a good-looking Hindu actor. Also acted well. He was first taken but was summarily removed from the film.

Bapu : Vinayakrao did not have the guts. To scold Hindi artists.

Jog : No. He used to admonish mildly. Not like Shantaram who would dismiss them.

Bapu : Did you have song in Narad's role?

Jog : Yes. I told you earlier. " Jago Gagan ...' on the wall of Panhala fort. I had chiffles in hand, wore KHADAVA in my legs and I walked on the rough wall with sharp pebbles. Luckily I did not fall.

Bapu : Were you paid well?

Jog : I was on salary with Vinayakrao. I did not get paid for the last four months. On top of that, I had given him a loan.

Bapu : He had taken a loan from you?

Jog : Yes. I had loaned him 8000/- rupees of which he had repaid 4000/-. Remaining Rs. 4000/- and last four months salary was lost.

Bapu : So even at that time the Marathi film industry was a losing proposition.

Jog : Very common. Except for Shantaram.

Bapu : I think that time you had a string of 2/3 good films. Starting with 'Shikleli Bayako'

Jog : Yes. I had a small but good role.

Bapu : What was your role.

Jog : Hero Suryakant's father.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : He was not willing to cohabit with his wife.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : On the first night he ignores her. She was educated and he was uneducated. So, he had a complex.

Bapu : Inferiority complex

Jog : On the first night she was eagerly waiting for him and expecting him to embrace her, but this fellow coolly sleeps, without any movement.

Bapu : Meaning

Jog : Whatever expectations a new bride has. Usha Kiran was heroin and Suryakant hero.

Bapu : You liked your role although it was small!

Jog : It was a role of the hero's father and I had acted well. So, I liked it.

Bapu : The father was strong.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : The film celebrated the silver jubilee.

Jog : Yes. I had to give a speech. A function was organized to celebrate the silver jubilee where the minister Balasaheb Desai was Chief Guest. Madhavrao Shinde said to me that they cannot speak and requested me to speak after him.

Bapu : What did you say?

Jog : I gave a good speech. I said, educated wives is a novelty in our society now because in old days women were not educated. But times have changed.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : With women getting educated, society is facing a new situation. The percentage of educated women is highest in Kerala where 70% of women are educated. It is increasing here also.

Bapu : Jayashri Gadkar.

Jog : She had acted well. Chandrakant Gokhale had also acted well.

Bapu : Film was good.

Jog : Film was good. You must see that. That is the best film.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : Madhav Shinde's film. People liked it. Even today there is demand for it. It was directed by Anand Mane.

Bapu : 'Manasala Pankh Asatat' film was not successful.

Jog : I do not know anything about it.

Bapu : You had a small role in it.

Jog : I do not remember.

Bapu : Despite having the script by Khandekar and actors like Ushakiran and Suryakant the picture failed. But 'Suvasini' was a good film.

Jog : I had only one scene in it. But it was good.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : She thinks that her husband is alive.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : She fell unconscious. I bring her to consciousness.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : That was my role.

Bapu : Were you a doctor?

Jog : No. How can I explain? After seeing him she likes him. He tries to explain to her, but she refuses to accept that she is a widow and insists that her husband is alive. In that mood, she falls. He helps in her recovery and tries to explain. The scene was something like that.

Bapu : Only one scene.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : But it was a good scene.

Jog : It was a good scene.

Bapu : In your films, normally you sang your own songs. But you did not have songs in every film you acted in.

Jog : No

Bapu : But all your songs had become popular.

Jog : Let me tell you one incidence. We Maharashtrians are useless people. For the 'Varadakshina' picture I had sung one song in Kolhapur. I had sung very well, in the same manner as it was later sung by Manna day. Then the producer went to Mumbai for recording but did not take me. He got that song sung by Manna Day. Because had he taken me to Mumbai, he would have had to spend on me too and fro travelling and for my lodging and boarding.

Bapu : Manna Dey had not sung it for free?

Jog : No. He must have charged a lot. But he was a local person who came, sang, set the piece and left. For me, they would have required to bear hotel expenses.

Bapu : But the tune of that song was very good.

Jog : Yes. And the people still think that I have sung that song.

Bapu : Yes.

Jog : Somehow his voice has matched with my voice.

Bapu : Do you remember the tune?

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : ‘Ghana Ghana’

Jog : [SINGS] ‘Ghana Ghana Bala Nabhi Datlya, Kosalati Dhara, Datlya Kosalati Dhara’ It is something like that.

Bapu : It is ‘Ghana Ghana Mala Nabhi Datlya Kosalati Dhara’

Jog:[SINGS] I cannot sing now without accompaniments.But it was exactly like that. But I was not taken to Mumbai to avoid four days of hotel expenses.

Bapu : But that song had become very popular.

Jog : It was my formula only. And I could also sing it well.

Bapu : Yes.

Jog : Now I have forgotten the lines.

Bapu : In ‘Gharacha Zale Thoda’, you had a song ‘Balvardhan Sangeet’

Jog : Yes, that was a group song.

Bapu : But you led the group

Jog : I had the main line and the rest was sung by the group which I do not remember.

Bapu : The song was ‘ Balvardhan Geet, Balvardhan Sangeet’. I was also part of the group.

Jog : Yes. You were there. And this fellow was also there..

Bapu : Shrikant Moghe.

Jog : Yes. Shrikant Moghe.

Bapu : The song was in “Shankara Raga.” ‘Balvardhan Geet’

Bapu : Do you remember the tune?

Jog : No.

Bapu : The tune is [SINGS] ‘Balavardhan Sangeet’.... Something like that

Jog : In “Shankara Raga”

Bapu : Till that time, you use to sing your own songs?

Jog : Yes

Bapu : Was ‘Preeti Vivah’ a good film? Do you remember that? No?

Jog : There was a film in which a Prabhu girl had married Brahmin boy

Bapu : Yes

Jog : That was ‘Chimukala Sansar’

Bapu : May be.

Jog : I do not remember my role in it, but the bride was from Prabhu cast and the groom was from Brahmin cast.

Bapu : So, what was the problem?

Jog : Intercast marriage.

Bapu : What was your role?

Jog : Do not remember now.

Bapu : Ok. What was your role in ‘Kamapurata Mama?’

Jog : I was Mama (Uncle).

Bapu : Ok

Jog : In that Chonkar's daughter has acted.

Bapu : Nalini Chonkar

Jog : And Gosavi was there.

Bapu : Raja

Jog : Raja Gosavi, Myself, Nalini Chonkar and Indira Chitnis. Four of us were there.

Bapu : That means it was a comedy.

Jog : Yes

Bapu : Ok. Did the picture have a good run?

Jog : I do not know how it fared financially. But I liked that film.

Bapu : That film celebrated the silver jubilee.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : This was followed by more films. 'Laxmi Ali Ghara', 'Sherawar Savva Sher', 'Bai Mi Bholu' in which you had a big role but not very important, ' Bara Varshe Saha Mahine Teen Diwas'

Jog : That film by Painter.

Bapu : Yes, by Vasant Painter.

Jog : That film was very good. Somehow it did not do well at the box office.

Bapu : But your role was good.

Jog : Yes. I was a C.I.D.

Bapu : So, it was a different kind of role for you.

Jog: Yes, Suryakant was chief. He and I were investigating a murder mystery for which we were required to put on different get-ups and act different people. It was a good role.

Bapu : Which was your important film subsequently? You continued to act for long but any major role?

Jog: I do not remember but in 'Varnecha Wagh' I had a scene. It was good.

Bapu : What role did you have in 'Varnecha Wagh'?

Jog: There was a group of rebels fighting against the British Government. This fellow was also one of them but was secretly helping the British. He gets caught and people take him.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog: There was a song ' Lek ladki ya gharachi honar soon me tya gharachi' ...

Bapu : Was it from this film or from 'Shiklelei Bayako'?

Jog: Ok

Bapu : No. No. It was also not in 'Shiklelei Bayako'. It was in 'Kanyadan'.

Jog: Yes. Bhoite was in it.

01:03:00 hr

Bapu : Yes. You were telling me something about 'Dharmakanya' and some memories of travels.

Jog: I worked in 'Dharmakanya', and in 'Annapurna'.

Bapu : You were popular because you use to constantly appear on the screen. The audience loved you in some of your roles. Did you face any problems in day-to-day life? Can you narrate any incident?

Jog : Yes. I faced a lot of trouble. As far as possible, I use to avoid being seen in public and hide my face. But sometimes people recognized me and would then trouble me by asking questions. The questions were also peculiar. 'You have worked with this actress in this film. Who is her husband?' This type of questions. What could I answer? Or they would ask 'How many children does she have?' or 'Is she married?' 'With Whom?'

Bapu : Oh

Jog : About Minakshibai so many people asked me 'if she is married?'. I answered, 'someone named Pandurang'. Then 'how many children does she have?'. Unnecessary botheration. During travel, people would not allow me to sit quietly. They would show appreciation to my work but also asked this type of questions.

Bapu : Oh

Jog : So, you could not neglect them also. Or they would get annoyed. That was the price of popularity that I had to pay.

Bapu : These are the incidences of people bothering you. Did you have any problems during travel?

Jog : Yes. During travel, we use to contemplate. But people use to disturb our thought process. If they feel that my face was familiar, they would first stare at me. Once they recognized me, they would sit across me and start asking questions like ' Who is that girl who has the role of your sister in so and so film?' Or they would ask ' Are you married? To whom?' I used to get very angry.

Bapu : About 'Dharmakanya'

Jog : For 'Dharmakanya' we had the shooting in *ghat (winding road in hills)* to Ratnagiri. After the shooting, we were on our way back. Some traders from Konkan arrived at the stop and recognized me. They wanted to talk to me. But I kept totally quiet. They tried various means to make me talk but I kept mum till we reached Kolhapur.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : Because I felt that once I mix with them, they would be after me. Then they tried to tease me.

Bapu : So that you will get angry and say something in anger.

Jog : But I kept mum and kept my face expressionless.

Bapu : Jog, although you had acted in 2 or 3 films earlier your career really took off in 1938. From 1938 to 1975, in 37 years you acted in about 52/53 films. In old days there were companies. Then the freelance system got started. What difference did you find?

Jog : At the initial period of 10 years from 1938 to 1948, that is from 'Brahmachari' to 'Jai Malhar' there was stability. One Company, Vinayakrao Director, things were stable. We had a stable life with family, house and all that. Everything was gone with Vinayakrao's demise. Then to earn living we worked here and there but I did not enjoy it.

Bapu : There was no mental satisfaction. You earned name and fame but no satisfaction. While working in a company there was a family like atmosphere.

Jog : Yes. That was no more. Everything became commercial. We went somewhere, did the role assigned with some new actor every time, but it was not enjoyable anymore.

Bapu : Ok. It is said that an artist or a director or any researcher must be very observant. He should always be a student. In your career, did you undertake any research for any role? Or you just used to imagine the character?

Jog : I never studied or researched. When a dialogue was brought to me, I used to ask him to narrate the story first and my role in the story. Then I would read the dialogue. On reading the dialogue I could get the idea of the nature of the person I am enacting. Then I would decide the bearing of the character.

Bapu : Bearing?

Jog : The main thing is to maintain the bearing of the character. Then you can work around it. Imagine the person is a clerk. Then one should not forget the bearing of a clerk. If you are angry or laughing, you should get angry or laugh the way a clerk will laugh or get angry.

Bapu : In the roles which made you famous, were the characters out of your imagination? Did you ever tell the director that you are visualizing the character in a way and that you would have this kind of makeup?

Jog : No. The director used to tell me the makeup.

Bapu : Can you explain by example how you decided about bearing the character?

Jog : About Bearing, take the example of 'Shikleli Bayako'. The father is of the older generation and the son of the newer generation. Son's wife was educated so he was avoiding her. This, the father of the older generation cannot accept.

Bapu : Obviously.

Jog : In the old days, the husband would be supreme. Since I was of the older generation. So, for me the husband was supreme. But here the husband accepted his wife as superior.

Bapu : Because she was educated?

Jog : Yes. And that I could not tolerate. This was my bearing.

Bapu : This was decided by you out of your imagination. Was this the method with Vinayakrao also.

Jog : Sometimes. But Vinayakrao would explain this to us earlier.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : We could get the grip of role from his explanation only.

Bapu : During your days, was there a practice of giving the full script in advance for reading? Was there a practice of reading the full story with dialogues to the entire cast beforehand?

Jog : No. Not with Vinayakrao. Bhalaji used to follow that system.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : Bhalaji had the system of practicing scenes entry by entry. That was not in Vinayakrao's system.

Bapu : But that system was beneficial.

Jog : Yes. His people must be liking that system. But it was not Vinayakrao's system.

Bapu : In the later period did anyone gave you the script of the complete film for reading or did anybody follow the practice of reading the full story with dialogues to the entire cast beforehand?

Jog : They used to give script but not of the entire film. They would give the script only related to your character and say you are enacting this part. But it did not give the full idea. While facing the camera I used to ask questions to get the idea of what I should do. Vinayakrao used to explain everything. He had altogether a different technique. He would even act out scenes for us.

Bapu : So, you felt that his method of demonstrating what he wants was more useful than that of reading our full script. Is there any other director like that now?

Jog : No. That is why the picture fails. The picture does not take grip.

Bapu : Do you find any difference between the old and the new directors?

Jog : By old I mean only Vinayakrao. There was one director Alatekar.

Bapu : Yes Parshwanath Altekar. I liked his direction. He had taken a course of that.

Jog : Everything was measured with him.

Bapu : Yes. He would mark out the distance you should move.

Jog : He used to count seconds. I could not manage that. Similarly, there was one Mr. Bhagwat. Proprietor of Maharashtra Film Company. He would also count 1, 2, 3 and say you speak your line when I count three. I cannot do that. I believe in spontaneity, whether the dialogue or the movement. So, Alatekar and I could not get along. I have acted in his 'Sukhacha Shodh'.

Bapu : Oh! Was that Alatekar's?

Jog : We had a fight once. There was a sentence for me 'Kolha Kakadila Raji Aji'. I told him that 'Raji Aji' does not sound good and we should change it to 'Aji Kolha Kakadila Raji'. He got angry and felt insulted.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : He told me that the actor is not supposed to tell anything to the director. I said ok. When Vinayakrao learnt about this incident, he advised me to neglect it.

Bapu : Did Vinayakrao welcome suggestions?

Jog : Yes. He did not mind changes made by us so long as the sense remains the same. What is the difference between 'Kolha Kakadila Raji Aji' and 'Aji Kolha Kakadila Raji'? He got annoyed because we applied our brains.

Bapu : You have worked with so many directors. According to you, Vinayakrao was the best?

Jog : No doubt.

Bapu : Anything else you wish to say.

Jog : There was a director K. Narayan. I did not work with him. But I used to see his shooting. He also directed in the same fashion.

Bapu : In Alatekar style.

Jog : Yes. To say 'Mi Yeu Ka?' he would do something on his fingers and would insist that the intonation of 'MI' has to be 'Miss; like that. It must be stretched.

Bapu : Very mechanical.

Jog : Yes, it was very mechanical. I did not like it. When a person acts it should not seem to be acting. Like Dinkar Dhere.

Bapu : Ha

Jog : When Dinkar Kamanna acted you never felt he is acting. Acting should be like that.

Bapu : After Vinayakrao, did you like any other director?

Jog : Raja Paranjape was alright.

Bapu : Anything else.

Jog : Some directors are under pressure. If an established actor is there, then these directors would be nervous while directing him.

Bapu : Yes, I have seen such cases.

Jog : But then the character suffers. Director feels that he is such a senior established actor how can I teach him? then, he gets nervous and does not say anything and the film suffers.

Bapu : That is what I meant when I asked you about the difference between old and new directors. These days it is quite possible that the director is new, and the actor is famous, and the director wonders how to tell him.

Jog : So, he does not say anything. The actor feels if this fellow is not telling me anything why should he take extra efforts. So, he carries on. He knows that anything will be accepted.

Bapu : Did you ever have an argument with the director?

Jog : Only once. With Altekar.

Bapu : But sometimes when you worked with a new director and if you are not in agreement with him, did you express yourself.

Jog : Yes. Of course. I was not afraid of anyone.

Bapu : They would have said you do what you think is right.

Jog : Yes. That would be their typical answer. I myself used to ask to check after shooting if everything is ok.

Bapu : You have worked with Dinkar Patil in few films?

Jog : Yes. He had defective speech.

Bapu : Yes, there was no clarity in his speech.

Jog : Similar was the case with Baburao Painter.

Bapu : Yes. But he had lost his speech due to illness. Dinakar Patil was a litterateur. He used to write good stories and dialogues.

Jog : He was ok. Better than others. His movie ' Patlanchi' something...

Bapu : 'Patlanchi Soon'; No, 'Patlanchi Por'.

Jog : Which was his first film after the demise of Vinayakrao? Was Ok.

Bapu : Probably I have not seen it.

Jog : It was ok.

Bapu : One more question. I feel that you should have achieved far more than what you did. You should have earned fame in Hindi films. Because you were endowed with such a good voice.

Jog : I could not enter in that sea. And mainly, I did not wish to shift my residence to Mumbai. Had I gone to a director and requested for the role, since I knew Hindi very well, I could have got work. And, I did not like the atmosphere of the Hindi film industry. I would have earned money in Hindi. But in Marathi, there is a friendly and free atmosphere. Also, our films are far better than the Hindi films. I am not talking of Bengali films which are good. But in Hindi films, there is no logic. " Thok Do Yar" is the spirit. Very different. I should not be making such a generalized statement.

Bapu : No. But that is the fact.

Jog : Now every day I see old films on TV. What sort of story is there? Without head and tail. One does not understand what they say. And the dances are there anywhere. Ball dance. As if our parents were Europeans. Tell me in which society there are ball dances, now-a-days?

Bapu : No, you are right. Do you feel that there was some fault in you also? Did you ever approach anyone for the role? Was it in your nature?

Jog : On my own? No. Impossible.

Bapu : Was it in your nature to accept whatever you got in your lot. Some people put in lots of effort to improve theirs.

Jog : No. Whatever I have achieved is out of efforts put in by others.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : I never tried to push myself. Somebody would tell me that to go to R A studio where Hindi or Urdu dramas were being staged. Then I would go. Or somebody will recommend me to others that this boy is a good actor with clear diction and then I would be taken to him. I was taken to Benjamin by Abhay Shankar Shukla.

Bapu : Yes. Shukla. Writer and poet.

Jog : Yes, he was the writer of Sohrab Modi.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : He took me to Sohrab Modi.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : I was sent to Benjamin to test dialogue. He gave me a dialogue in Urdu. It was written in Devnagari script. I read it perfectly. [RECITES DIALOGUE IN URDU]. Since it was in Marathi script and since I knew Sanskrit, I had no problem in delivering those dialogues. So, the director said that my diction was good and recommended me for a job. Same with the songs. But I did not like there. They had fitted a light bulb in Harischandra's crown

Bapu : Oh

Jog : I did not like it. But that was their way.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : Harischandra was seated with the crown. There was a bulb at the top of the crown and its wire was taken from the backside underneath the shirt.

Bapu : All the roles enacted by you in 52/53 were light comedy roles. You did not get any roles of villain.

Jog : No. No villain. Now, I have in 'Hushar Nawara Dot Com'.

Bapu : No. I am asking about the cinema. Have you ever acted villain's role?

Jog : No.

Bapu : In 'Jivacha Sakha' your role had some dark shade.

Jog : I did not like it. He appeared hired villain.

Bapu : So mostly you had light roles. But you admit that you were lazy.

Jog : Yes.

Bapu : Otherwise you would have got many more chances.

Jog : Yes

Bapu : You were fluent in Hindi and in Urdu. You had a good voice.

Jog : I admit that I suffered because I was lazy.

Bapu : You had a good personality then.

Jog : If I were not lazy, I could have worked in 5 or 10 times more films. But because I was lazy and liked to take it easy.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : I was earning enough to buy meals and I did not want to exert more.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : Now I feel had I not been that lazy I would have been happier.

Bapu : Are you happy with your life now?

Jog : Yes. I am. But that is because my son turned out to be good.

Bapu : Is it?

Jog : had my son not been capable I would not have enjoyed a happy life.

Bapu : You have only one son?

Jog : Yes. But the end of my career and the beginning of his financial prosperity coincided.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : That was my fate.

Bapu : What is your son's occupation?

Jog : He owns a factory. He is a mechanical engineer.

Bapu : Ok and daughter?

Jog : She is a good girl. She sings well.

Bapu : Ok. So, she has inherited your trait.

Jog : Yes. People use to advise me to take her for playback.

Bapu : What is your son-in-law's occupation?

Jog : He is the manager of a bank.

Bapu : So, you are happy on that front.

Jog : Yes. Happy. My daughter's husband is good, and son's wife is also good.

Bapu : That's your daughter-in-law. So, you are happy with your life.

Jog : I am prepared to die happily at this moment.

Bapu : You said that the end of your career and the beginning of his financial prosperity coincided. That is a matter of luck.

Jog : Yes. It is all matter of fate. If any credit is to be given, give it to my luck.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : I was never a very capable person. Since I was lazy, I always tried to avoid work. Whatever qualities I have were all natural and god-gifted. I had a good voice, but I never worked on it. If I had a good voice I could not help.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : I took care of my health and never got addicted to cigarettes or tobacco or liquor.

Bapu : Despite being in a film line.

Jog : Yes. I have seen what happens to people addicted to drinks. Dinkar Dere used to drink heavily and lie down anywhere on the roadside.

Bapu : You were lazy but had natural talents which provided you a lot.

Jog : No. I did not earn much. But earned more fame. But I was not financially dependent on my earnings from films only. My brother was very capable, and he had made me the partner in his business.

Bapu : Ok.

Jog : Of manufacturing balloons.

Bapu : Balloons?

Jog : Yes. In the old days balloons were not manufactured in India. They were imported from Japan or America. He was the first person to manufacture balloons in India. It is on record.

In Trichur, there is a magazine on the rubber plantation. One European has written that there was one Mr. Jog from Nagpur who purchased our first consignment within India. Till then they had no Indian buyer for rubber, which they called Latex in India. All rubber produced in India use to be supplied as raw material to foreign countries

Bapu : Would you like to write your memories about the film line?

Jog : No. I get bored of writing.

Bapu : Oh

Jog : I get bored even while writing letters. I enjoy talking.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : Now you are talking to me for hours.

Bapu : Because of which this is getting recorded.

Jog : I do not know how much of this is of any use.

Bapu : No no. It was all very good.

Jog : Ok

Bapu : Considering your popularity there must have been many occasions when women must have tried to woo you.

Jog : No. I never strayed.

Bapu : Never infatuated with anyone?

Jog : I am from a good and cultured family and had a good upbringing. No one could entice me.

Bapu : All your good memories are of the time you spent with Vinayakrao.

Jog : Yes

Bapu : Would you like to say anything more.

Jog : I regret that the business of Marathi film is going down.

Bapu : I was about to ask

Jog : It saddens me. At one point of time, the Marathi films were better than the Hindi films.

Bapu : Yes.

Jog : Films like 'Lagna Pahava Karun' or 'Sarkari Pahune' set the trend which used to be followed in Hindi.

Bapu : You are right.

Jog : The comedy films in Hindi are now following the trend set by Charlie Chaplin. With hat and cigarette. We do not see comedies based on Indian culture.

Bapu : You do not see comedies like 'Lagna Pahava Karun' in Hindi.

Jog : No. Only (C.V.) Joshi could write the stories like that, based on day to day family happenings.

Bapu : And Vinayakrao was the only director.

Jog : Chiman Joshi's comedy was on family events.

Bapu : You have acted in many comedies and read a lot. What do you expect from a comedy?

Jog : Joke should not hurt anybody.

Bapu : Ok

Jog : It should not criticize anybody nor should it be based on physical disability. For example, if a person is old and has lost teeth and is not able to speak clearly, he should not be mimicked. Or in 'Bhavbandhan' there are two dark girls. Gadkari has written a good comedy. But the dark girls in the audience used to get hurt.

Bapu : Yes

Jog : A joke should never hurt anybody.

Bapu : Are all your roles like that?

Jog : Yes. Look at Gundyabhau. He is portrayed as a man who could not tolerate injustice and was prepared to fight.

Bapu : In your day's comedy was based on funny incidences or were based on funny dialogues.

Jog : Now I am 82 years old. My time of departure has arrived. My only wish is that Marathi films should acquire the same class which they had in Vinayakrao's time.

Bapu : When there were institutes like Hans, Prabhat or Saraswati

Jog : Prabhat produced very good films on saints.

Bapu : Social, or Historical like 'Ramshastri'

Jog : Those films attracted the audience. Such film should be produced again. Not childish films which do not carry any message.

Bapu : In short, you want the period of 1930s and 1940s should come again.

Jog : It may come from the angle of earning money, but the quality of Marathi films must improve.

Bapu : This is your wish now.

Mr. Jog is almost 83 years old now. He has started forgetting things with advancing age. He is unable to walk and therefore is housebound. But he is happy. This interview was conducted by Bapu Watve at his residence in Pune.