

Film 2700 Project proposal  
September 7 2016

The scope of my project will be to cover a brief history of Indian cinema from the 1920s till late 1980s while discussing ways Indian culture have been reflected in cinematic style, and how those customs/aesthetics have transitioned over time. Much of the emphasis of the project will be given to three eras in Indian cinema, the transition from silent era to the talkies (movies with sound), the Golden Age era and the modern “masala movie”. Movies made during transitioning of the silent era to the talkies specifically from 1920-1945, were mythological or historical in nature. These movies acknowledged the classic tales from The Ramayana and The Mahabharata sacred to the Hindu culture. An example is Raja Harishchandra which was the first Indian movie based on a mythological character. Another film, Alam Ara, will also be discussed as it was the first ever Indian movie with sound as well as Indian music. The Golden Age of Indian Cinema commenced during India’s struggle for independence in the 1950s. Movies placed a huge emphasis on social issues that existed at the time as well as educated the masses. A movie called Pyaasa (1957) that will be discussed from this era. Another movie called Mughal-e-Azam in 1960 will also be discussed as it sparked many romantic movies in India. The 1960s and 1970s began the trend of modern Indian movies also known as masala movies. These movies have a mixture of genres such as romance, action, comedy. In addition, they have Indian playback music which is a common element of Indian cinema that have existed from the very beginning. An action/adventurous film Sholay (1975) will be discussed from this time. The film Sholay will also be used as a comparative point to assess how far Indian cinema has developed since it began.