

## 6. Entertainment and History

### 6.1 Why do we need Entertainment?

#### 6.2 Folk Theatre

#### 6.3 Marathi Theatre

#### 6.4 Indian Film Industry

#### 6.5 Entertainment and Professional Opportunities

Things that help refresh our minds and give a feeling of happiness are the sources of entertainment. Various hobbies, games, drama-film, writing-reading, etc. are the sources of entertainment.

### 6.1 Why do we need Entertainment?

Healthy entertainment of excellent quality is essential for the healthy growth of one's personality. Entertainment keeps our minds lively and fresh. It may also make us feel physically more energetic. So eventually our efficiency at work improves. Pursuing hobbies and games helps in personality development. In India many festivals, sports, dance-music, etc. were developed as forms of entertainment since ancient times.

There are varied forms of entertainment available in the modern period as well.

#### Try to do it.

Make a list of various types of entertainment and classify them into different categories.

Entertainment can be classified into two categories, active and passive. Active entertainment anticipates an individual's mental-physical participation. Practicing of handicrafts and participating in sport activities are examples of active

entertainment.

Watching a sports match or listening to music or watching a movie are examples of passive entertainment. In this type of entertainment we are not actual participants but only viewers.



#### Do it.

Create a chart of active and passive types of entertainment, which are related to history.

### 6.2 Folk Theatre

**Puppetry - Wooden Puppets (Kathputali)** : Remains of clay dolls have



#### Puppetry - Wooden Puppets

been found in the excavations of archaeological sites of Harappan civilisation as well as sites in Egypt and Greece. It is possible that they were used as puppets.

In ancient India materials like wood, wool, leather, horns and ivory were used to make puppets. The *Kathputali*, a traditional art of puppetry in India has two styles; one that developed in Rajasthan

and the other in southern regions of India.

The artists who stage *Kathputali* shows are found in Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Assam, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnatak and Kerala. The role of the narrator known as *sutradhara* is very crucial in the success of *Kathputali* stage show. The stage for this puppetry show is quite small but the puppeteers use light and sound effects in an ingenious way. Shadow puppets, hand puppets, wooden puppets and string puppets are used in *Kathputali* shows.

***Dashavatara Theatre*** : *Dashavatara* is part of the folk theatre in Maharashtra. *Dashavatara* shows are presented in the regions of Konkan and Goa after harvesting season is over. The stories presented in these shows are based on the 10 incarnations of Vishnu, namely *Matsya*, *Koorma*, *Varaha*, *Narsimha*, *Wamana*, *Parashurama*, *Ram*, *Krishna*, *Buddha* and *Kalki*. At the beginning of the show *sutradhara*, the narrator invokes Lord Ganesha, the destroyer of obstacles.



***Dashavatara***

The method of acting, make-up, costumes in *Dashavatara* shows is set by the tradition. The show is mostly musical but sometimes there may be a few spontaneous dialogues. The characters representing gods use wooden masks. The show ends by breaking *dahihandi*, an earthen pot of curds, followed by *aarati*, singing praises of the God.

In the 18th century Shyamji Naik Kale started a *phad*<sup>\*</sup>, of *Dashavatara* artists which used to perform all over Maharashtra.

Vishnudas Bhave, the pioneer of Marathi theatre staged mythological plays by introducing some modifications in the *Dashavatara* style. Thus, the origins of the Marathi theatre can be traced to *Dashavatara* tradition.

<sup>\*</sup>The meaning of *phad* is ‘a troupe’.

***Bhajan (singing devotional songs)*** :

To sing songs in praise of God and chanting god’s name accompanied by instruments like *taal* (cymbals), *mridangam*, *pakhavaj* is known as *Bhajan*. There are two types of *Bhajan*, *Chakri Bhajan* and *Songi Bhajan*.

*Chakri Bhajan* : Devotees keep moving in circular fashion and sing without break.

*Songi Bhajan* : The singer-actors act as devotees and deliver dialogues in the form of devotional songs.

Tukadoji Maharaj introduced a new form of *Bhajan* known as *Khanjiri Bhajan*.



**Do this.**

Listen to the *bhajans* composed by saints Tulsidas, Surdas, Meerabai and Kabir and try to learn them with the help of your music teacher or some traditional singer.

In north India the *bhajans* composed by Saint Tulsidas, the great poet Surdas, Saint Meerabai and Saint Kabir are very popular.

Compositions of Purandardas, Kanakdas, Vijaydas, Bodhendraguruswami, Thyagaraj, etc. are sung in Karnatak.

In Gujarat Saint Narasi Mehta gave momentum to the *Bhakti* movement. In Maharashtra, Saint Namadeva supported the tradition of *bhajan-keertan* through the tradition of *Varakari* sect. The *Varakari*

sect developed a glorious tradition of *bhajan-keertan*.

**You would like to know this :**

There are two main traditions of *keertan*, (1) *Naraadiya* or *Haridasi* (2) *Varakri*. *Haridasi keertan* is a solo performance. It has two parts, *Poorvarang* and *Uttarrang*. *Naman* (praising god), *Nirupanacha Abhang* (singing a composition that leads to the main theme) and *Nirupan* (explanation of the main theme) comprise the *Poorvarang*. Narration of a story to illustrate the main theme comprises *Uttarrang*. In the *Varkari Keertan* collective participation is more important. The players of cymbals also play an important part along with the *keertankar*. During the independence movement a new type of *Keertan* was developed, known as *Rashtriya Keertan*. It places more importance on creating awareness by narrating the life stories of great leaders of the Indian independence movement, scientists, social reformers, etc. The tradition of *Rashtriya Keertan* was started by Dattopant Patwardhan of Wai in Maharashtra.

Members of the Satyashodhak Samaj founded by Mahatma Jyotirao Phule also used *Keertan* as a medium of creating social awareness. The style of *Keertan* by Saint Gadge Maharaj resembled closely to Satyashodhak style of *Keertan*. He used to throw light on issues like abolition of caste, cleanliness, deaddiction, etc.

**Keertan :** Traditionally, Naradmuni is supposed to be the founder of the *Keertana* tradition. Saint Namadev is known as the first *keertankar* of Maharashtra. Other saints helped the tradition to flourish.

The *keertankar* is also known as *Haridas* or *Kathekaribuva*. He has to dress in a traditional way. He needs to train himself in oratory, singing, musical

instruments, dance and humour. He needs to be very well informed. *Keertan* is performed in a temple or in the precincts of a temple.

**Lalit :** *Lalit* is an old form of entertainment in Maharashtra. It belongs to the tradition of *Naradiya Keertan*. It is quite popular in Goa and Konkan.

During the performance of *Lalit* on the occasion of religious festivals, it is presumed that the presiding deity of that festival is present on the throne and then she is invoked for fulfilment of a desire. The invocation continues as follows : “**Let everybody be granted their desire. Let entire village live in happiness till we perform next Lalit. Let the internal clashes vanish with this performance of Lalit. Let nobody’s mind be spoilt with prejudice. Let all transactions happen with clear minds. Let the community’s behaviour be pious.**”

The *Lalit* is performed in a theatrical style. Stories of Krishna, Rama and great devotees are presented during the performance. A few texts of *Lalit* are available in Hindi as well. *Lalit* forms a part of the backdrop of modern Marathi theatre.

**Bharud :** *Bharud* can be described as a metaphorical song that has spiritual and ethical lessons. *Bharud* is comparable to the style of a road show. *Bharuds* composed by Saint Eknath are popular in Maharashtra because of its wide range of subjects, dramatic quality, easy rhythm and humour. Saint Eknath composed *Bharuds* with a purpose of educating people on various aspects of life.

**Tamasha :** *Tamasha* is a Persian word. It means a ‘pleasing sight’. *Tamasha* developed as an independent art form in the 18th century, by absorbing various traits of folk theatre and classical arts.

There are two types of traditional *Tamasha*, *Sangeet Bari* and *Dholakicha Phad*. Dance and music are more important than drama in a *Sangeet Bari*. *Tamasha* with drama as the main part, was developed later. It included *Vag*, the dramatic part, little later. The *Vag* becomes very lively and entertaining because of its spontaneous humour. The show begins by singing the praise of Lord Ganesha, known as *Gana*. It is followed with the presentation of *Gavalan*. The second part of *Tamasha* presents the *Vag*. The popular plays like *Vichchha Mazi Puri Kara* or *Gadhavache Lagna* are examples of the modern form of *Tamasha*.

**Powada** : *Powada* (ballad) is a dramatic narration by alternately reciting poetry and prosaic extracts. *Powada* narrates great deeds of heroic men and women in a very forceful and inspiring style. The *Powada* composed by Adnyandas, a contemporary poet of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, narrating the incidence of the killing of Afzal Khan and another one on the battle of Sinhagad, composed by Tulasidas, are two well-known examples of *Powada*.

In the British period, *Powadas* narrating the stories of Umaji Naik, Chapekar brothers, Mahatma Gandhi were composed. During the 'Samyukt Maharashtra' movement the *powadas* were used as a medium of creating public awareness.

### 6.3 Marathi Theatre

Theatre is a place devoted to performances, either solo or collective, of performing arts. Participation of the artist

Gather information about dramas on the life of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, Mahatma Jyotirao Phule, Lokamanya Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar.

as well as the audience is essential for a successful performance. The theatre comprises several factors such as script, director, artists, make-up, costumes, stage, art design (backdrop of the stage), lighting arrangement, audience and critics. Dance and music can also be part of a drama. A drama is usually enacted with the help of dialogues. However, mime can also be used as the medium of expression.

The rulers of the Bhosale family of Tanjore were great patrons of drama. Some of them had written a few plays and also translated Sanskrit plays. The 19<sup>th</sup> century saw a great development of the Marathi theatre. Vishnudas Bhave is known as the father of the Marathi theatre. *Seetaswayamvar* was the first play presented by him.

The movement started by Vishnudas Bhave was followed in Maharashtra by historical, mythological and also light farcical stage plays. The farcical plays dealt with social issues in a humorous way.

Initially no written scripts were used. Often, only the lyrics were written down but the dialogues used to be spontaneous. V.J. Kirtane was the first author who wrote the script of *Thorale Madhavrao Peshwe* in 1861 and its printed copy was made available. This was the beginning of the tradition of having a complete written script ready before staging a play.

In the latter half of the 19th century, Balkrishnbuva Ichalkaranjkar made special efforts to introduce classical khyal music in Maharashtra. After him Ustad Alladiya Khan, Ustad Abdul Karim Khan and Ustad Rahimatkhani contributed in a great way. Their efforts helped in developing a taste for classical music among the audience in Maharashtra. The growing popularity of classical music resulted in the origin of musical Marathi theatre. The musical plays of Kirloskar Mandali became

very popular. *Sangeet Shakuntal* written by Annasaheb Kirloskar earned a great popularity. Another musical play, *Sharada*, written by Govind Ballal Deval is quite important, as it comments in a humorous style on the evil custom of marrying young girls to aged men. Also plays such as *Mooknayak*, written by Shripad Krishna Kolahtkar, *Sangeet Manapaman*, written by Krishnaji Prabhakar Khadilkar and *Ekach Pyala* written by Ram Ganesh Gadkari are important in the history of Marathi theatre.



### Do you know ?

Khadilkar wrote *Keechakvadh*, a metaphorical drama to denounce the British government. It was based on certain events in the Mahabharata. Draupadi represented helpless Mother India, while Yudhishtira represented the moderates and Bheem, the extremists. Keechaka represented the insolent Viceroy Lord Curzon. The audience used to perceive the characters in this fashion and feel enraged about the imperialistic attitude of the British government.

The popular plays written by Acharya Atre like *Sashtang Namaskar*, *Udyacha Sansar*, *Gharabaher* etc. helped the Marathi theatre to sustain through a temporary decline. The recent plays based on historical themes like *Raygadala Jevha Jag Yete* and *Ithe Oshalala Mrutyu* by Vasant Kanetkar, *Ghashiram Kotwal* by Vijay Tendulkar, *Tilak Ani Agarkar* by Vishram Bedekar became very popular.

The Marathi stage continued to get enriched because of its varied subjects and types of the plays. Marathi stage artists of the bygone era like Ganpatrao Joshi, Narayanrao Rajahamsa, more popularly known as Balgandharva, Keshavrao Bhosale, Chintamanrao Kolhatkar and Ganpatrao Bodas are still remembered as

great actors. The early Marathi plays were staged on open grounds. The British first built closed theatres like Play House, Rippon and Victoria in Mumbai. Thereafter, the shows of Marathi plays gradually took to closed theatres.



### Do you know ?

The renowned author-poet Vishnu Waman Shirwadkar, also known as Kusumagraj wrote *Natasamrat*, a play styled after Shakespeare's well known play, 'King Lear'. It became very popular. Ganpatrao Belvalkar, the tragic protagonist of *Natasamrat* represents a blend of two well-known personalities of early Marathi stage, Ganpatrao Joshi and Nanasaheb Phatak.

## 6.4 Indian film Industry

**Cinema :** Cinema is a medium that brings together art and technology. With the technology of motion pictures the film industry came into being. It gave rise to the era of silent movies. Later, the technology of sound recording was introduced and the age of sound movies began.



### Do you know ?

**Types of movies :** Satirical movies, Documentaries, Advertising films, Children's films, Movies about army, Educational movies, Movies narrating a story, etc.

The honour of making and releasing the first full length movie goes to Maharashtra. Maharashtra is known as the land that nurtured the Indian film industry. The contribution of Madanrao Madhavrao Pitale, the Patwardhan family of Kalyan, Harishchandra Sakharam Bhatvadekar, also known as Savedada is very important in the development of Indian movies.

Later, Gopal Ramchandra Torane also known as Dadasaheb Torane and A. P. Karandikar, S. N. Patankar, V. P.



**Dadasaheb Torane**

Divekar sought help from Foreign technicians and made a movie entitled *Pundalik*. It was released in Mumbai in 1912. *Raja Harischandra*, a movie directed by Dadasaheb

Phalke was the first to be processed completely in India. It was released in Mumbai, in 1913.

He also created silent movies named as *Mohini-Bhasmasur*, *Savitri-Satyavana*, also documentaries on the rock-cut caves of Verul and pilgrim centres of Nashik and



**Dadasaheb Phalke**

Tryambakeshwar. Later, a tradition of making movies on historical and mythological subjects came into being.

Anandrao Painter, the first one to make a cine-camera of Indian make, also got interested in the making of movies. His cousin Baburao Painter, also known as 'Mistri', made *Sairandhri* in 1918. He made the first historical movie, *Simhgarh*,

#### **You would like to know this :**

The government of India created a special division for making documentaries. It was named as 'Films division'. The documentaries released by this division used to be shown in the cinema theatres before the beginning of the main movie. They were aimed at creating public awareness about various issues. Gather more information about it.

which was a silent one. He also created historical movies like *Kalyancha Khajina*, *Bajiprabhu Deshapande* and *Netaji Palkar*. He also made a movie on a realistic social issue, entitled *Savakari Pash*. In 1925 Bhalaji Pendharkar made a movie entitled *Bajirao-Mastani*. However the British government suspected it to be a medium of spreading nationalistic sentiments and it was banned.

Kamalabai Mangarulkar was the first woman producer. She produced *Savalya Tandel* and *Panaa Dai* (Hindi). *Ramshastri*, a movie made by Prabhat Company in 1944 became very popular. In the post-independence period a few movies were made on historical themes. Acharya Atre made a movie on the life of Mahatma Phule and Vishram Bedekar made movie on the life of Vasudev Balwant Phadke. Dinakar D. Patil made a movie entitled, *Dhanya te Santaji Dhanaji*. *Bal Shivaji*, the movie made by Prabhakar Pendharkar also needs a special mention.

*Sant Tukaram* is a movie to have received international acclaim. It was shown in the international film festival in Paris. Vishnupant Pagnis acted as Saint Tukaram in this film.

#### **Let us find out :**

Let us search on the internet the names of historical movies, which are not mentioned in this lesson and let us make a list of those names.

Historical movies were also made in Hindi. The Hindi movies made in the pre-Independence period, *Sikandar*, *Tansen*, *Samrat Chandragupta*, *Prithvivallabha* and *Mughal-e-Azam* were made with a historical backdrop. *Dr Kotanis ki Amar Kahani* was based on a true story. The movies based on the Indian struggle for independence such as *Andolan*, *Zansi ki Rani*, also deserve a mention.

### Let us find out :

Find out the names of historical Marathi movies made during the period of 1970-2015 with the help of internet.

Production studios such as 'Bombay Talkies', 'Rajkamal Productions', 'R.K. Studios', 'Navketan', etc. played a significant role in the development of Indian film industry.

### 6.5 Entertainment and Professional Opportunities

The students of history can avail of many professional opportunities in the fields of drama and movies.

**Drama :** (1) In order to achieve accuracy of stage backdrops on the stage deep knowledge of the history of arts and architecture of the concerned period is

essential. Experts in these fields can work as art directors or consultants.

(2) The script writers as well as dialogue writers need assistance of experts in languages and the history of languages, as well as experts in cultural history of a given period.

**Cinema :** (1) The art directors of movies create the backdrop designs of atmosphere, costumes and jewellery, make-up, hair styles, etc., suitable to the times of the theme of the movie. Scholars of history can work in this field as art directors or as consultant to the art director.

(2) To write movie dialogues, knowledge of the culture and language as spoken in the concerned period is necessary. Experts in these fields can find many professional opportunities.



### Exercise

1. (A) Choose the correct option from the given options and complete the statement.

- ..... are supposed to be the first *keertankar* in Maharashtra.  
(a) Saint Dnyaneeshwar  
(b) Saint Tukaram (c) Saint Namdev  
(d) Saint Eknath
- Baburao painter made the movie, .....  
(a) *Pundalik* (b) *Raja Harischandra*  
(c) *Sairandhri* (d) *Bajirao-Mastani*

(B) Identify and write the wrong pair in the following set.

- Raigadala Jevha Jag Yete* – Vasant Kanetkar
- Tilak Ani Agarkar* – Vishram Bedekar
- Sashtang Namaskar* – Acharya Atre
- Ekach Pyala* – Annasaheb Kirloskar

2. Complete the following chart.

	Bhajan	Keertan	Lalit	Bharud
Characterisitics				
Examples				

3. Write short notes :

- Need of entertainment
- Marathi Theatre
- Entertainment and professional opportunities

4. Explain the following statements with reasons.

- Expertise in history is important in the film industry.
- Bharuds composed by Saint Eknath are popular in Maharashtra.

5. Answer the following questions in detail.

- Why is Maharashtra known as the land that nurtured the Indian film industry?
- What is *Powada*?

### Project

Get the lyrics of any one of Saint Eknath's Bharud, and enact it in the cultural programme of your school.

