



University of Mumbai

Indo Canadian Studies Centre

A Talk on

**Dev Anand in National Imagination: The Framing of Masculinity in Hindi
Cinema**

By

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On

Wednesday, 14th December, 2011 at 2.00 p.m.

Hindi cinema of the 1950s' is quite self-conscious in its commentary about the formative years of the nation and the responsibility to build it. The role of the male protagonist or the 'hero' as he is commonly referred to is central to this narrative as he embodies an idealized longing for a nationalist spirit and is in a certain way the primary agent - in the cinematic narrative - who shapes the nation's history.

The 50s era in Hindi cinema is marked by the presence of three leading actors -Dilip Kumar, Dev Anand and Raj Kapoor, who occupied a central space in the national imagination. While all three contributed to the construct of the masculine ideal that would bear the responsibility of building a modern nation. It was perhaps left to Dev Anand to push its limits. As a friend aptly observed during a casual chat, "Dev saab probably had the most number of screen occupations (where said occupation is central to the film) than any actor I know of: *Afsar, Shayar, Taxi Driver, Munimji, CID, Pocketmaar, Guide, Jewel Thief, Choron ka Raja, Gambler, Swami, Gangster* or *Prime Minister*. When unemployed, his existentialist range covered the states of being *Sharaabi, Funtoosh, Joshila*, and a *Chupa Rustom*. When he married, it was always a *Love Marriage*. When homeless, he looked for *Paying Guest* accommodation...else he went to the *Kaala Bazaar* with a *Jali Note*, despite the danger of being deported across the *Kaala Pani*. All in all, this *Bombai ka Babu* did everything with unmatched panache."

This presentation is an attempted appraisal of Dev Anand's oeuvre down the years and the creation of a masculine icon that was believed to be "evergreen".

All are Welcome

Venue: Indo-Canadian Studies Centre, Ground Floor, Ranade Bhavan, Kalina Campus, University of Mumbai, Mumbai 400098.