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## ISHQ (URDU: 'LOVE')

Intimate, tender...and not so-tender, moments seen in films such as *Ek Seor* (1957), *Aa Gale Lag Jo* (1973), *Ap ki Kasam* (1974) and *Dafaa 302* (1975) provide a glimpse of the multiple expressions of *ishq*, the perennial theme in Bombay cinema. The versions of romantic love in the 1950s and 1960s were quite artfully understated, dignified, and aligned with contemporary mores, compared with the more strident, dynamic articulations of the 1980s and 1990s, when the modes of *ishq* are demonstrative and demanding – exemplified by the image of Dharmendra passionately kissing Kimi Katkar in *Sher Dil* (1990).

The romantic tone was often set through having the hero serenade the heroine against gorgeous vistas. Such decorous, melodious courting is a recurrent motif in films of the time. We also, infrequently, encounter its subversion – for instance the erotic song *O Babua Yeh Mahua* in a scene performed by Kamal Haasan and Sikk Smitha in tribal attire: an example of the multiple kinds of politically incorrect 'othering' that liberally and unapologetically infuse many films of the time.



Ek Seor (1957)



Ap ki Kasam (1974)



Aa Gale Lag Jo (1973)



Dafaa 302 (1975)



Sher Dil (1990)



Ek Seor (1957)



1911



1912



1913



1914



1915



