As an emotion, anger has almost always been associated with the male heroes of Indian cinema, typically during the years between the 1960s and the 1980s. Arguing that the anger of women has historically been repressed and rarely seen as a mode of industrial makeover, this talk examines rage as a tool that produces an astonishing range of female interventions in the unlikely years before India’s independence. Taking Shanta Apte as a case in point, the talk traces Apte’s rise to stardom as the “stormy petrel” of Indian cinema—and its many and often unpredictable consequences. Using Apte’s writings and clips from her films, Kapse illustrates how women’s anger can function as a political, ideological and aesthetic cinematic mode. Examples demonstrate the ways in which rage organizes on and off-screen demeanor and star performance, asking how female fury can stage cinema’s relationship with modernity and represent the volatile shifts of the talkie era.

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