

Liechty's wide-ranging review of Nepal's encounters with the world takes readers from street-level views of Bishnu Shahi's Chai and Pie shop to the influence of US-China rapprochement in the 1970s on Nepali tourism policy. Infusing decades of research into his text allows Liechty to produce a tour de force that offers details for the Nepal expert, new and sophisticated approaches for tourism scholars, and a model of interdisciplinary, well-researched, and readable scholarship.

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Filming Horror: Hindi Cinema, Ghosts and Ideologies. By MERAJ AHMED MUBARKI. New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2016. 216 pp. ISBN: 9789351508724 (cloth, also available in paper and as e-book).
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Meraj Ahmed Mubarki's wide-ranging and well-researched book, *Filming Horror*, is a welcome addition to the burgeoning body of scholarship on South Asian horror. While Indian cinema in general and Bollywood in particular have received an enviable amount of scholarly attention in recent decades, horror—a genre that has often lurked in the underbelly of B and C industries—had been consigned to the trash-heap by scholars and arbiters of taste alike. Simply put, horror was too smutty and disreputable to be considered a formation worthy of scholarly inquiry. In recent years, however, a number of scholars have analyzed horror films from an array of different critical perspectives, and Mubarki's monograph is the first book-length study of these potent cultural artifacts.

The first two chapters of the book provide historical information and the framework that Mubarki deems necessary to process the last three substantive analytical chapters. While useful for nonexpert readers in the field, these lengthy elaborations on Indian history, the history of Indian cinema, overviews of the Frankfurt school and auteur theory, psychoanalytic concepts of the uncanny and abjection, etc. keep the reader from arriving at the substance of Mubarki's intervention—the horror films under discussion. However, the reflections on Hindi horror cinema's relationship with Hollywood, as well as its distinctiveness in terms of form and genre, will be of value and interest to any reader unfamiliar with the particularities of Hindi film.

Chapter 3, "Secular Conscious Narrative," looks at the Gothic classics of the post-independence, Nehruvian period—*Mahal* (Amrohi, 1949), *Madhumati* (Roy, 1958), and *Kohraa* (Nag, 1964)—to argue that whatever the repressive rationality, scientism, and secularism of this dispensation "could not accept or recognize was either repressed or rendered safe through absorption. This is precisely what the 'return of the repressed' narrative of the Hindi horror genre articulates..." (p. 51). In sum, this chapter, which pays close attention to the register of expressionist aesthetics in the Gothic as well as the pat closures these films offer in lieu of resolutions, convincingly demonstrates the vicissitudes of the "Nehruvian moment"—a cinematic moment that narrows the religious outlook and Indian normative obsession with the supernatural and metaphysical speculation" (p. 66).

In some ways, chapter 4, "Return of Traditional-Cultural Narrative," is the richest of all. Here, Mubarki explains the consolidation of horror proper in the 1970s—with tropes like ghosts, monsters, witches, vampires, mad scientists, evil curses, and other malevolent

figures exploding on screen as “an alternative to the Nehruvian secular matrix, the traditional-cultural narratives tend to ‘counter’ secularism and its universalizing tendencies. This tralatitious/mythic/traditional order ... [exposes] the fragility of the modern secular scientific discourse, whereas the consistent and systematic inscription of the mythical order onto the Hindi horror genre narratives points to its pervasiveness” (p. 75). Perhaps more audaciously, Mubarki also suggests that a vast swath of films—from texts that span the late 1960s into the new millennium—form a “subalternist resistance to the hegemonic formulations of the Nehruvian era, representing an underworld whose ideas about gender, society and social relations had been largely ignored or overturned in the interest of a modern, secular, postcolonial modern Indian Identity” (p. 76). Ambitious in scope and seeking to include films as disparate as *Jadu Tona* (Nagaich, 1967) and *Phoonk* (Varma, 2008), this chapter simultaneously foregrounds Mubarki’s contribution and points to the limits of ideological critique. No doubt, the dozens of films invoked in passing or subject to detailed analysis here affirm the “traditional/mythic” order in some manner, but what this discourse implies shifts over time; moreover, what counts as “hegemonic” or “resistant” remains historically pliant and mutative. Relatedly, industrial transformations and the alterations in media ecology exert considerable force on the ideological scaffolding of films and genres; while Mubarki outlines some of these breaks in this chapter, his analyses of specific films do not make enough room for them. Precisely because this chapter includes such a massive assortment of films, a discussion of style and form would have also helped to tease out the distinctions between a Ramsay film and a *Raaz* (Bhatt, 2002), a *Mangalsutra* (Vijay, 1981), and a *Darling* (Varma, 2007). It will be difficult for readers who are unfamiliar with the titles in question to know that these films do not, in fact, look anything alike. Despite a robust theoretical framework, the overwhelming focus on ideological readings to the exclusion of other frames of engagement threatens to flatten out important distinctions between films, filmmakers, and historical or industrial contexts in this otherwise fascinating chapter.

The fifth and final chapter focuses on the rise of Hindutva-inflected horror since the 1980s and makes a persuasive case for the hardening of religious discourses and a concomitant jettisoning of older forms of “folksiness” in the genre.

As a whole, Mubarki’s book makes an important contribution to the field of Indian cinema studies and will be of interest to anyone interested in non-Western traditions of horror. It will also be useful as a teaching tool in upper-level undergraduate and graduate courses in colleges and universities.

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In 1972, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi gained global attention with a speech she gave at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm. The presentation was, in a way, an early treatise on global environmental history.