taza-gui or fresh speech, itself a movement that flourished in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal cultural circles to such an extent that it could, and should, be seen as a catalyst "to bring the vast Persophone literary tradition into the wider scholarly conversation about various 'alternative modernities'" (p. 236).

A frequent idiom in *taza-gui* is Sufism, which Chandra Bhan links to images and conventions of other poets, both Iranian and Indian. Precisely because Chandra Bhan is Hindu, he can, and does, vacillate, at times "exploiting his interstitial subject position as a Brahman steeped in the Perso-Islamicate cultural world, [at other times] drawing on 'Indic' tropes" (p. 220). He even plays with his own name "Brahman" in verse precisely to demonstrate how "a highly literate and sophisticated Indian poet can Persianize his very name in order to conform to the classical metrical conventions that remained the norm among the wider audience of the Persianate world" (p. 223).

Yet the adventuresome imagination and the cultural border crossing that marked Chandar Bhan have not been lauded by posterity, or even much studied today. His own reputation as a Hindu loyal to a "Muslim" emperor was even called into question through a dubious, oft-cited couplet attributed to him but severely critiqued by Kinra (pp. 281–85). More serious is the neglect of the Indo-Persian cultural production of the great Mughals. Major scholarship on the political, military, economic, and bureaucratic aspects of Mughal rule abound, yet the genre of literary labor that Chandar Bhan exemplifies—one linked to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Indo-Persian *tazkiras*—has been routinely ignored. As Kinra observes, "This is not just a loss for Western scholarship; many of these texts have faded into obscurity even in India … [at the same time that they] are often difficult to locate even in Persian printed editions" (pp. 12–13).

One can only hope that Kinra's pioneering labor will inspire others to look beyond narratives of dependency and decline and instead explore the treasure trove of cultural production that led Mughal India "to be viewed all over the wider Persianate world as a haven for intellectual freedom and literary genius" (p. 206). *Writing Self, Writing Empire* is indispensable for any student of the Indian Ocean region or comparative history, especially as it provides a blistering, novel, and convincing corrective to Orientalist or Western triumphalist views of the "decadent East."

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Far Out: Countercultural Seekers and the Tourist Encounter in Nepal. By Mark Liechty. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017. xiv, 387 pp. ISBN: 9780226428949 (paper, also available in cloth and as e-book).
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In *Far Out: Countercultural Seekers and the Tourist Encounter in Nepal*, Mark Liechty fluidly unfurls the interconnected stories of Nepali entrepreneurs and Western travelers who built the infrastructure of Nepal's tourism industry. Artfully threading together comings and goings of people, capital, and ideas in Nepal, especially Kathmandu, he utilizes interviews with key actors and ephemera from various phases of tourism to create an exceptionally readable text, with interest within and beyond the academic world. Liechty challenges broad-brush stories of Shangri-la and lawless lands with

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investigations of how Nepal's tourism industry changed over a half-century because of very particular encounters with distinctively positioned actors.

Far Out questions assumptions about Nepal's interaction with the West, insisting that the arrival of foreign tourists and seekers led not to mimicry, but to a more complex exchange of ideas and practices. In rewriting a story of engagement that makes Nepali actors active agents in interactions, Liechty is able to explore Nepal's important political and social changes between the 1950s and 1980s, including the existence of Nepal's own countercultural movement. Liechty has unusual access to dozens of key actors in the emergence of the tourism industry in Nepal and shows skill in connecting these very detailed nuggets with larger sweeps of Nepali and global history.

The Theosophy tradition and other Shangri-la fantasies of Nepal in the nineteenth century are important background to contemporary tourism, but Liechty notes that these conditions, like many others, are not alone sufficient. Before 1951, when Nepal became a nation-state, Nepal had a reputation in Western popular writing, but few international visitors. Subsequent press coverage of the successful summiting of Everest (1953) and the skill of King Mahendra to turn his coronation (1956) into an international event took Nepal out of the books and onto the map as a site to be visited.

There are a number of historically structured conjunctures in this tale; disparate events such as the Cold War and the Yeti Mania shape the scale and nature of international encounters in Nepal. In the 1950s, foreign mysticism and Nepal's political opening came together to make it possible for Nepal to be a physical instantiation of Western mystical fantasies. Furthermore, Liechty attends to the infrastructures that are necessary in different periods to attract different constituencies to Nepal. *Far Out* goes beyond these intersecting phenomena to show how individual actors, such as Boris Lissanevitch, John Coapman, Ravi Chawla, and many others, led Nepal into new realms of tourism that the government struggled to embrace. Liechty's chapter on John Coapman, who "… stared me straight in the eye and told me things I knew to be untrue … realizing that the myth was the story" (p. 95), showcases his ability to bring to life the characters of Nepal's tourism journey and contextualize their fantastical accounts.

In many accounts, Nepal served as a background for Western hippies and alternative lifestyle movements. *Far Out* explores how these counterculture actors, especially those escaping the politics of the West in order to "just live" in Nepal, were interpreted by Nepalis as Western renouncers—people rejecting social conventions, but also dirty foreigners, both literally and ritually. Nepali youth observed the exotic outsiders, but were also creating their own modernity and alternative politics. Liechty notes that Nepal's call for new worlds is not imitative, but "derives from exactly the same modern forces that also drove her Western peers to Kathmandu" (p. 263). He also observes how the impure practices of hippies not only challenged Hindu ideas, but also offered opportunities for subaltern subjects in Nepal. Westerners found in Nepal not merely an alternative lifestyle but an alternative life that freed them from the politics and history of 1960s America and Europe that drove many out of their homes. "Hippie Nepal" is the focus of *Far Out*, and this rich account could stand as a book by itself.

Liechty observes how, by the 1970s, "a broad shift in global youth culture, not government policy" (p. 288) led to the end of the quest for the challenges of living rough, replaced with an interest in struggles with nature and the Nepali government's promotion of the country's cultural attractions. These new tourist attractions found support from the international development industry and elite Nepalis with overseas experience, who were able to provide the comforts of home with a "traditional" flavor. This new generation of tourists had more money but less time than their predecessors, and hoped to "do Nepal," whether its mountains or its monasteries, efficiently.

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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

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