

The Rothermund Memorial Lectures

Friday, December 3rd 2021 - 2:15 pm (CET) - Online

Registration: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYof-igqDorE9JYm0cNPfDNGF-xwxjbtGJw>

Nehruvian Hauntings: Development, planning and the presence of ghosts

Prof. Dr. Margrit Pernau
Max Plank Institute for Human Development



Screenshot of Mahal (1949, Kamal Amrohi)

The Nehruvian times are associated with the efforts to give substance to the promises of independence and promote development, not least through the Five Year Plans. Planning was to embody science and rationality, discarding superstition and the ghosts of the past. While the past still remained important as a source of national pride and identity, it was to be properly disciplined and not longer to have a presence in the present. All the ghosts were exorcised, or were they? This paper will bring these visions into conversation with one of the prominent ghost films of the same time, Mahal (1949, Kamal Amrohi) and ask what remains hidden, when we focus only on the rational part of Nehruvian ideology.