



Sex, Sadism, Spain, and Cinema: The Spanish Horror Film

Nicholas G. Schlegel

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From 1968 to 1977, Spain experienced a boom in horror-movie production under a restrictive economic system established by the country's dictator, Francisco Franco. Despite hindrance from the Catholic Church and Spanish government, which rigidly controlled motion picture content, hundreds of horror films were produced during this ten-year period. This statistic is even more remarkable when compared with the output of studios and production companies in the United States and elsewhere at the same time. What accounts for the staggering number of films, and what does it say about Spain during this period?

In *Sex, Sadism, Spain, and Cinema: The Spanish Horror Film*, Nicholas G. Schlegel looks at movies produced, distributed, and exhibited under the crumbling dictatorship of General Franco. The production and content of these films, the author suggests, can lead to a better understanding of the political, social, and cultural conditions during a contentious period in Spain's history. The author addresses the complex factors that led to the "official" sanctioning of horror films—which had previously been banned—and how they differed from other popular genres that were approved and subsidized by the government. In addition to discussing the financing and exhibiting of these productions, the author examines the tropes, conventions, iconography, and thematic treatments of the films. Schlegel also analyzes how these movies were received by audiences and critics, both in Spain and abroad. Finally, he looks at the circumstances that led to the rapid decline of such films in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

By examining how horror movies thrived in Spain during this decade, this book addresses a sorely neglected gap in film scholarship and also complements existing literature on Spanish national cinema. *Sex, Sadism, Spain, and Cinema* will appeal to fans of horror films as well as scholars of film history, European history, genre studies, and cultural studies.

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