

# Japanese Horror Films and their American Remakes (Routledge Advances in Film Studies)

By Valerie Wee



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The Ring (2002)?Hollywood's remake of the Japanese cult success Ringu (1998)?marked the beginning of a significant trend in the late 1990s and early 2000s of American adaptations of Asian horror films. This book explores this complex process of adaptation, paying particular attention to the various transformations that occur when texts cross cultural boundaries. Through close readings of a range of Japanese horror films and their Hollywood remakes, this study addresses the social, cultural, aesthetic and generic features of each national cinema's approach to and representation of horror, within the subgenre of the ghost story, tracing convergences and divergences in the films' narrative trajectories, aesthetic style, thematic focus and ideological content. In comparing contemporary Japanese horror films with their American adaptations, this book advances existing studies of both the Japanese and American cinematic traditions, by:

- illustrating the ways in which each tradition responds to developments in its social, cultural and ideological milieu; and,
- examining Japanese horror films and their American remakes through a lens that highlights cross-cultural exchange and bilateral influence.

The book will be of interest to scholars of film, media, and cultural studies.



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#### **Editorial Review**

Review

'The American adaptation of the sensationally popular Japanese horror film *Ringu* (1998)--released in English as *The Ring* (2002)--started a trend of Hollywood remakes of Asian horror film. Wee (National Univ. of Singapore) uses this trend to analyze cross-cultural adaptation and intercultural influence between Hollywood's and Japan's representations of horror. Wee explores how the values and ideologies expressed in Japanese horror films are altered or rejected in the American adaptation-and how these changes reflect either differing or similar value systems and cultural beliefs. In the introduction and the first two of seven chapters, the author establishes historical context and provides an analytical framework for the text. Subsequent chapters focus on specific themes--visual aesthetics of horror; single mothers and abandoned daughters; apocalyptic visions; and (post)modern anxieties-contrasting a specific J-horror film with its American remake. The result of this type of analysis, according to Wee, is broader understanding not only of social anxieties of a specific period, as reflected in horror films, but also of shifts in a sociocultural environment over time. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.'

T S. Yamada, CHOICE

About the Author

Associate Professor Valerie Wee teaches film and media studies in the Department of English Language and Literature at the National University of Singapore.

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