Mother India
Mehboob Khan, 1957
Mehboob Ramzan Khan
1906-1964

First film (as actor): *Alibaba and the Forty Thieves*, 1927

First directed film: *Al Hilal* (“Judgement of Allah”), 1935
PHOTOGRAPHY

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W.I.C.A.

ASSISTANTS

BALU T. SAWANT
M. R. VASUDEV
PARVEZ SABAWALLA
**AURAT ("Woman"), 1941**

Other influences: *The Mother* (novel, Pearl Buck, 1934) *The Good Earth* (film, Sidney Franklin, 1937), Soviet cinema (Eisenstein?), German Expressionism
Other notable Mehboob Khan films:

**ANDAZ** ("Fashion, style"), 1949

Dilip Kumar, Nargis

Raj Kapoor
AAN ("Pride"), 1952

- Dilip Kumar, Nadira
- first Indian Technicolor film
AMAR (1954)

Dilip Kumar,
Nimmi,
Madhubala
“Man proposes, but God disposes”
Katherine Mayo  (1927)
39 printings by 1933
“There has been considerable confusion and misunderstanding in regard to our film production Mother India’ and Mayo’ s book. Not only are the two incompatible but totally different and indeed opposite … We have intentionally called our film ‘Mother India,’ as a challenge to this book, in an attempt to evict from the minds of the people the scurrilious work that is Miss Mayo’ s book.”
“You are our mother—mother to the entire village!”
Probably nowhere else in the world is there a dam as high as this . . . As I walked round the site I though that these days the biggest temple and mosque and gurudwara is the place where man works for the good of mankind. Which place Can be greater than this, this Bhakra-Nangal?
Nehru, 1954

What s a young man’s ambition today? . . . They think of Becoming economists, because an economist plays a big part in the modern world.
Nehru, 1948
Radha (Nargis)
Dramatis personae: Birju ("Krishna") and Ramu ("Ram")
Abanindranth Tagore, *Bharat Mata* (Mother India), 1904-05

Pre-Independence
Supreme synthesis of human and divine
- ascetic, non-sexualized female
- corn sheaf
- cloth (*swadeshi*; indigenous self-sufficiency)
- rosary (‘spiritual salvation;’ difference from West)
- manuscript (*vidya*, secular knowledge, history)
Hind Devi (Goddess India), oleograph, c.1935
Bharat Mata - “Mother India”
Martyrs of Freedom, half-tone print, 1947
Shaheed Bhagat Singh, ca.1940
Bharat Mata, ca. 1950 (with Gandhi and Vishnu) and as Madonna
Mirabai
Ideal/yet unconventional devotee of Krishna, gave up conventional married life; devotional musician and poet

Krishna and Radha
Radha as personification of selfless and erotic love; rustic cowherd girl; pastoral ideal
Shamu (Rajkumar)        Radha
Sita (Ramayana)
Sita as ideal married wife; subservient to Rama; emblem of loyalty, sacrifice, purity, complete fidelity, family values
**laaj**

shame, dignity, honor, chastity (especially female)

**izzat**

dignity, honor, self-respect (individual or familial)
Wifely duty and support
Chastity, sacrifice, purification, sati
Kali
Consort of Shiva;
erocious, destructive, out of control, “mother”

Lakshmi
Wife of Vishnu;
emblem of beauty and prosperity
Death and Dishonor, Purity of Vengeance
Sukhilal (Kanhaiya Lal)
Birju (Sunil Dutt)  Ramu (Rajendra Kumar)
(refrain) I'm no god, nor am I a devil.
Let the world think what it likes—I'm just a man.

There's goodness in me, and wickedness in me too.
There's tons of stains in my heart, but a little purity too.
I'm somewhat virtuous, and somewhat of a fraud.
Let the world think what it likes—I'm just a man.

I've no kingdom, nor crown on my head.
Yet, by my spirit, earth's dignity is upheld.
I'm poor in body but rich in heart.
Let the world think what it likes—I'm just a man.

The song of life has no melody or rhythm.
The whole world's entangled in the net of daily bread.
What injustice there is! I too am bewildered.
Let the world think what it likes—I'm just a man.
Sundar Chachi