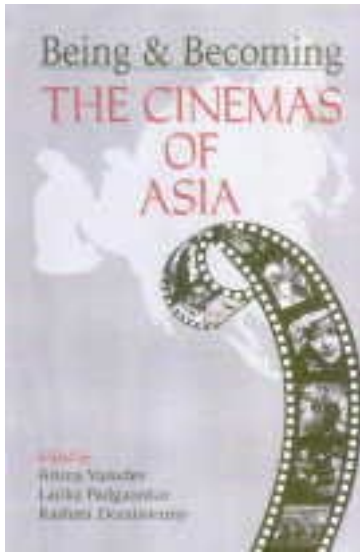


Being & Becoming : The Cinemas of Asia



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"Authored by twenty-nine eminent historians and film critics, almost all of them from the countries they are writing about, these essays bring together the history and the current trends in the cinemas of thirty countries of Asia—from Japan to India to Turkey and Kazakhstan to Indonesia. Asian cinemas stormed on to the world scene with an emphatic flourish some two decades ago. Overnight, the names of hitherto lesser known Asian directors and stars entered the film vocabulary of film circles all over the world. In Asia itself, new festivals sprang up, while on an international level, Asian films garnered awards and accolade. But their evolution as an art form, the cultural and political milieu in which they were made, the factors that propelled them or sometimes led to their decline, still remained largely unknown.

"It is this lacunae that *The Cinemas of Asia*, the first comprehensive book of its kind, strives to fill. It does not claim to cover the entire region, but by virtue of its sheer scope and diversity of content, necessarily provides a bird's eyeview of cinema in Asia. It traces the evolution of the 7 Art, its aesthetics, themes and styles, its impact upon society and the role of governments. All this is located within the social and political climate which defines a context for filmmakers. It offers a glimpse not only into the manner and the reasons for which cinema developed as it did, but also into the organic links between cinema, literature and the performing arts. It examines the impetus for cinema's development or the reasons for its stagnation, at different moments as the case may be. It is a telling, and often times, even a sobering picture that emerges through this collection. It offers an approach to Asian cinema, which is serious without being academic, all the while communicating the excitement for a cinema which is yet to be fully explored." (jacket)

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