

## EDITORIAL NOTE

Films from the East Asian shores have become a focus of new cinematic excitement on the subcontinent. In India, not unlike most of the countries where they are made, the films circulate in copied and shared forms, feature in screenings organized for cinephile gatherings, are discussed in conversations and Web forums. Alongside, they have begun to find a place in academic programmes on cinema in India, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

The curious aspect of this engagement is the responsiveness to both the artistic adventure of the new Asian Cinema and its spawning popular forms, to the complexities of Hou Hsiao-hsien and the cult pleasures of J-Horror, the artistic challenge of Jia Zhangke and the generic codes of *Wuxia*. The world-wide critical interest in Asian cinema is, of course, part of a larger response to the Asian negotiation of the new world order of cultural transaction, to the surprises the Asian countries have sprung on the market by sending back icons, texts and styles towards the West. The study of Asian cinema, even the constitution of Asian Cinema as a category of intellectual inquiry and marketing initiatives, is part of this intriguing chapter in Globalization. But the category, even as its politics is being debated, seems poised to extend its frontiers. The routes of new circulation and discussion, based largely on copy culture and the Internet, have begun to mark out new domains of engagement beyond the polar spaces of East and West. The Indian engagement with Asian cinema should evoke such a zone of conversation between cinematic cultures laid out in terms of 'difference in proximity'. It will, hopefully, generate new paradigms of investigation of Indian cinema itself even as it seeks a reconstitution of the amorphous domain of Asian Cinema.

This issue of the *JMI* collects papers from the international seminar on *New Asian Cinema: Trans-Asian Frames*, organized by the Department of Film Studies at Jadavpur in September, 2007. The seminar came close on the heels of the international conference on Asian Cinema held in Bangalore by the Centre for the Study of Culture and Society (February, 2007), and as a prologue to a series of collaborative academic events around Asian Cinema to be launched in the Film Studies forums in India. In the Department the immediate follow-up was the introduction of a course module in the MA programme. The idea behind the seminar, launched on a scale much larger than our usual events, was to get possible collaborators together and exchange notes on the critical issues at stake, and also discuss modalities of joint initiatives.

A large part of the discussions was in the form of panels, which proved to be exciting to listen to but difficult to reproduce. We present here a selection from the papers, leaving out the panels. Besides the scholars published here also present were Chua Beng Huat (National University of Singapore, Singapore), Kim Soyoung (Korean National University of Arts, Seoul), Maheen Zia (University of Karachi, Karachi), Zakir Hossain Raju (Independent University, Dhaka), Neel Chaudhuri (Osian's-Connoisseurs of Art, New Delhi), Ashish Rajadhyaksha (Centre for the Study of Culture and Society, Bangalore), M. Madhava Prasad (Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad), Abhijit Roy, Madhuja Mukherjee, Subhajit Chatterjee and Moinak Biswas (Department of Film Studies, Jadavpur University).

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