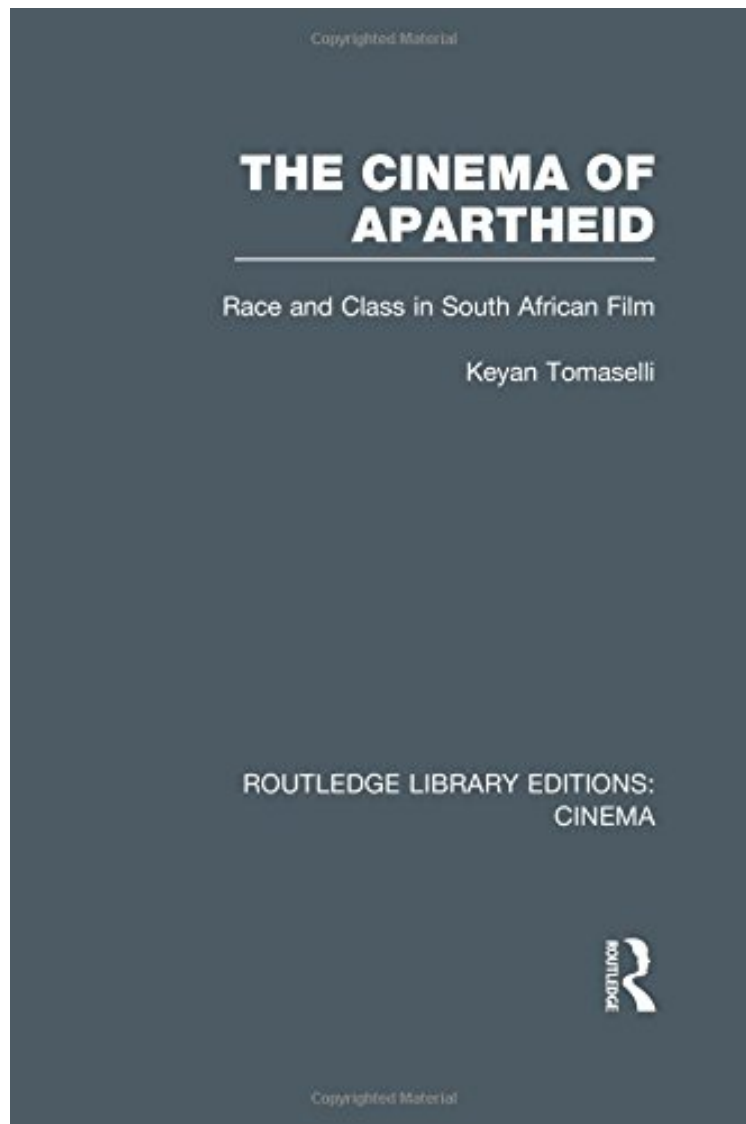


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## The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film (Routledge Library Editions: Cinema)

*Keyan Tomaselli*

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**Keyan Tomaselli : The Cinema of Apartheid: Race and Class in South African Film (Routledge Library Editions: Cinema)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised

This study analyses the historical development of South African cinema up to the book's original publication in 1988. It describes the films and comments on their relationship to South African realities, addressing all aspects of the industry, focusing on domestic production, but also discussing international film companies who use South Africa as a location. It explores tensions between English-language and Afrikaans-language films, and between films made for blacks and films made for whites. Going behind the scenes the author looks at the financial infrastructure, the marketing strategies, and the work habits of the film industry. He concludes with a discussion of independent filmmaking, the obstacles facing South Africans who want to make films with artistic and political integrity, and the possibilities of progress in the future. Includes comprehensive bibliography and filmography listing all feature films made in South Africa between 1910 and 1985 together with documentary films by South Africans, non-South Africans, and exiles about the country.

From Library Journal  
Written from a strong leftist and anti-apartheid viewpoint, this work is interesting, although choppily organized and too limited in scope. Black films, film critics, and various movements in South African cinema are discussed, but there is too much focus on local matters and a limited number of films and persons. Useful appendixes contain lists of South African films made from 1910 to 1985 and selected documentaries. There is also an extensive bibliography. Not for those wanting a comprehensive overview. Tomaselli's strong opinions make interesting reading nevertheless. Roy Liebman, California State Univ., Los Angeles  
Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc. The critical discourse on the nature and role of the creative imagination in the formation, maintenance, and promotion of competing ideas of identity, race, nation, and political economy in the context of South Africa has tended to focus on written prose and poetry rather than other areas of creative expression, especially film. This is perhaps explained by the fact that not much is known about South African filmmaking over the years to document and analyze South African film thought and practice or to position it in the overall context of the political economy of a capitalist racist, and repressive social formation. Building on two equally landmark studies on the media in South Africa (*The South Africa Film Industry* [1980] and *Myth, Race and Power* [1986]), Tomaselli presents in *The Cinema of Apartheid* the first comprehensive and authoritative account of the historical and contemporary forces that have defied and shaped the nature of film thought and practice in South Africa. In eleven chapters Tomaselli offers a critical overview of the variety of production, distribution, and exhibition practices in South Africa; the role of the state, the ideology of Afrikaaner hegemony, and the tensions spawned between and within other racial and cultural groupings; the structure of the industry, dominant themes and styles, the nature of "black film," totalitarian censorship and its myriad implications—especially its devastation of more radical types of film and video work; and the role of foreign films and film productions in South Africa. The cumulative result of this overview is an indictment of the capitulationist bent of the dominant sector of the South African film industry, and its failure to fully come to terms with the realities of a totalitarian society. *The Cinema of Apartheid* is a thoughtful and challenging description and analysis of artistic perspectives on apartheid. The filmography and bibliography alone are worth the price of this book, a truly invaluable contribution to the literature on film and society in general and apartheid in South Africa in particular. -- From Independent Publisher  
From the Inside Flap  
How a nation looks at itself and shows itself to others is often revealed in its movies. But alongside this more flattering self-image, its movies may also reveal realities which it would rather conceal. This ambiguity is particularly true of South African films, which reflect the daily life and values of a society governed by extreme theories of racial separation. In *The Cinema of Apartheid*, Keyan Tomaselli analyzes the historical development and present state of South African cinema. Assuming no special knowledge on the part of the reader, the author provides fascinating descriptions of the movies, with penetrating comments on how they reflect South African realities. Tomaselli addresses all aspects of the film industry. While focusing on domestic productions, Tomaselli also discusses the many international filmmakers who use South Africa as a location. He begins with an account of how the government uses subsidies and censorship to determine which films are made. He explores the tensions between English-language and Afrikaans-language films, and between films made for whites and films made for blacks. Considerable attention is given to the media and the distribution system which shape the nature of film discourse in South Africa. Tomaselli takes his readers behind the scenes to examine the industry in its financial infrastructure, its marketing strategies and its work habits. He concludes with an appraisal of the independent cinema created on the margins of society and the obstacles facing South Africans who wish to create films with artistic and political integrity. He shows how social polarization has produced a great gap between what is and what might be, but holds out some hope for progress. The documentary section of *The Cinema of Apartheid* is the most comprehensive research on South African film ever to appear in print. A filmography lists all feature films made in South Africa between 1910 and 1985, together with numerous documentaries about South Africa, including films by exiles and non-South Africans. The bibliography cites outstanding writing from three continents. Tomaselli's approach, combining

historical, political and aesthetic analysis, offers a unique view of a country in turmoil. The Cinema of Apartheid may prove to be not only the definitive book on South African cinema, but also a model study of an entertainment industry.