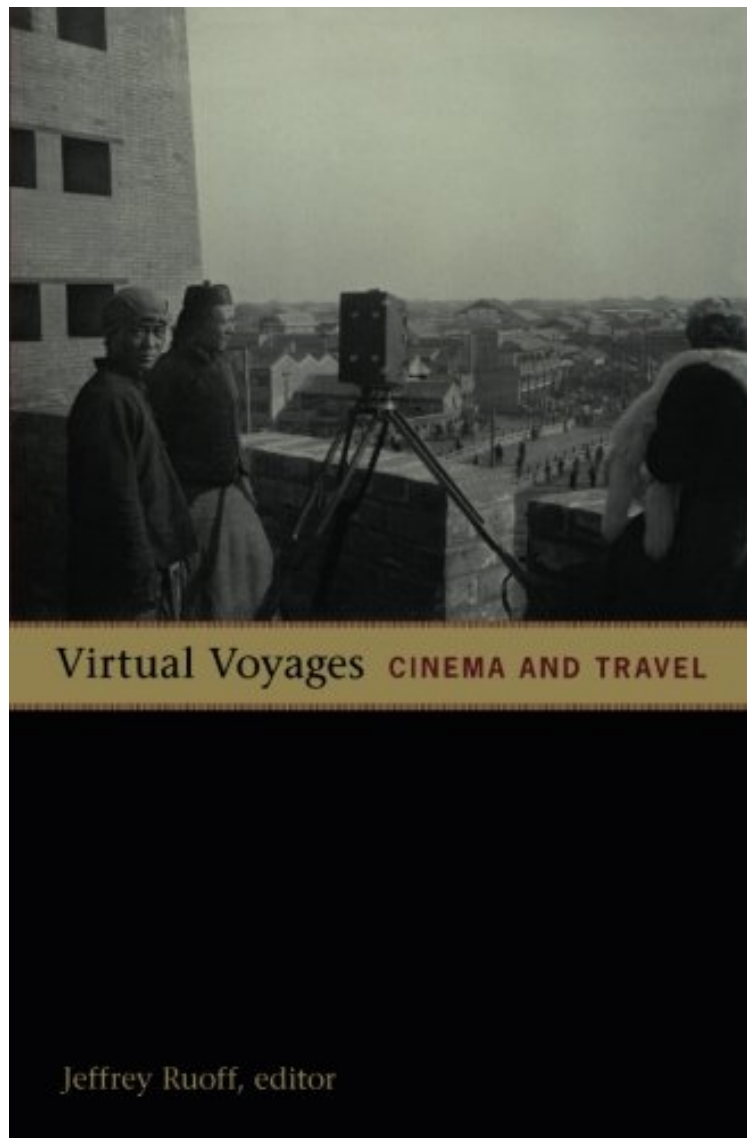


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## Virtual Voyages: Cinema and Travel

*Alexandra Schneider*

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**Alexandra Schneider : Virtual Voyages: Cinema and Travel** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Virtual Voyages: Cinema and Travel:

Virtual Voyages illuminates the pivotal role of travelogues within the history of cinema. The travelogue dominated the early cinema period from 1895 to 1905, was central to the consolidation of documentary in the 1910s and 1920s,

proliferated in the postwar era of 16mm distribution, and today continues to flourish in IMAX theaters and a host of non-theatrical venues. It is not only the first chapter in the history of documentary but also a key element of ethnographic film, home movies, and fiction films. In this collection, leading film scholars trace the intersection of technology and ideology in representations of travel across a wide variety of cinematic forms. In so doing, they demonstrate how attention to the role of travel imagery in film blurs distinctions between genres and heightens awareness of cinema as a technology for moving through space and time, of cinema itself as a mode of travel. Some contributors take a broad view of travelogues by examining the colonial and imperial perspectives embodied in early travel films, the sensation of movement that those films evoked, and the role of live presentations such as lectures in our understanding of travelogues. Other essays are focused on specific films, figures, and technologies, including early travelogues encouraging Americans to move to the West; the making and reception of the documentary *Grass* (1925), shot on location in Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and Iran; the role of travel imagery in 1930s Hollywood cinema; the late-twentieth-century 16mm illustrated-lecture industry; and the panoramic possibilities presented by IMAX technologies. Together the essays provide a nuanced appreciation of how, through their representations of travel, filmmakers actively produce the worlds they depict. Contributors: Rick Altman, Paula Amad, Dana Benelli, Peter J. Bloom, Alison Griffiths, Tom Gunning, Hamid Naficy, Jennifer Lynn Peterson, Lauren Rabinovitz, Jeffrey Ruoff, Alexandra Schneider, Amy J. Staples

Virtual Voyages offers us an incisive look at the ways and means by which nonfiction cinema has mobilized itself to span time and space, carrying viewers across magical expanses for what appears to be a nominal price. The hidden costs and complex pleasures of virtual travel receive close scrutiny in a book that is sure to stimulate further explorations. Bill Nichols, author of *Introduction to Documentary*