ABSTRACT

This paper explores the origins, rise, and rapid decline of the Amoy-dialect film industry — an industry which was centered on the production of commercial Hokkien films in Hong Kong for mass consumption amongst Hokkien-speaking audiences throughout East and Southeast Asia in the 1950s. Building on recent research into “Diasporic Chinese film markets,” it examines this industry in light of the social and political changes (e.g. decolonization, the formation of new, postcolonial nation-states, etc.) that were occurring throughout the course of the 1950s in those areas in which substantial Hokkien-speaking communities existed. It also suggests that the very nature of the Amoy-dialect film industry should prompt us to rethink how we approach the study of “national” and “transnational” cinemas in Asia during the postwar period.