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Asian Digital Cinemas as Transnational Cultural Institutions: Constructing Global Identities?

This paper compares two of the digital cinemas based in South and Southeast Asia as transnational cultural institutions with different agenda and genealogy. Here I delineate the role of the digital cinemas in constructing notions of nationhood, modernity and identity in contemporary Asia. I understand the Bangladeshi and Malaysian digital film practices as transnational discourses produced, circulated, and consumed alongside (and interacting with) cultural flows within and beyond a discursive field, a postcolonial nation-space. My question is: caught in the realm of transnational media flows, how the digital films in Bangladesh and Malaysia respond to the demands of postcolonial national modernity in the face of late capitalism and market globalization. The paper thus takes an interdisciplinary approach to analyze the role of digital film culture in identity formation in Bangladesh and Malaysia in the face of globalization. I investigate how we can think about the national while looking at the digital film practices in contemporary Asia that are largely transnational. Here I identify the roles these cinemas play in forming variety of identities, such as national/religious/cultural identities in a globalizing Asia.