



Mexican Movies in the United States: A History of the Films, Theaters and Audiences, 1920-1960

Rogelio, Jr. Agrasanchez

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A surge of immigration in the United States in the 1920s coincided with burgeoning developments in entertainment--including cinema. As people from Latin America settled in the U.S. in growing numbers, movie houses sprang up in areas where these populations were concentrated. The advent of talkies in the 1930s propelled the Spanish-speaking movie industry into high gear. As the U.S. entered World War II, films from Mexico dominated the market, creating a culture of Mexican cinema that offered entertainment, a reflection of native values and customs, and a link to the homeland. A study of the Golden Age of Mexican cinema reveals much about the development of Latin American popular culture in the U.S. This book is a richly detailed look at Mexican cinema's boom years in the United States, 1920 to 1960. It draws upon a treasure trove of files from Clasa-Mohme, Inc., a major distributor of Mexican films in the United States, that the author stumbled across while browsing for old movie posters. Chapters focus on the appeal of Mexican cinema and the venues that evolved where Hispanic populations were centered: Los Angeles and Pomona Valley, California; New York City; El Paso, Texas; San Antonio, Texas; and the Rio Grande Valley. The theaters, distributors, audience demographics, popular and critical reception of the films, and the stars all receive attention. Included are lists of theaters in California, Texas and cities in other states that exhibited Mexican films between 1920 and 1960.

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