

THE MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY IN VARIOUS ASIAN COUNTRIES

Information below regarding the motion picture industry in the following countries of Asia comes from the Japanese Yearbook of the Motion Picture for 1969: Nationalist China, Indonesia, South Korea, and Thailand. For Hong Kong, information is taken from both the Japanese Yearbook of the Motion Picture for 1969 and the Government of Hong Kong's Annual Report for 1968. For Burma, Communist China, Malaysia, Singapore, and South Vietnam, these reference sources were used: Area Handbook for Communist China (1967), Area Handbook for Malaysia and Singapore (1965), Area Handbook for South Vietnam (1967), all published in Washington, D. C. by the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, and the Far Eastern Economic Review Yearbook for 1968, published in Hong Kong.

Burma

The Far Eastern Economic Review, in its Yearbook for 1968, reports that film production in Burma has slowed down, with only 61 films being made in 1966 as against 20 in 1965.

Communist China

Communist China's film industry started before the Sino-Japanese War and grew considerably after 1949, according

to the Area Handbook. A total of 480 feature films is reported as having been produced in 1964, in addition to several thousand short subjects. Film production is strictly controlled, says the same source. The Ministry of Culture coordinates all film activities with the information policies of the Communist Party, and the Cinema Affairs Administration Bureau owns and operates the studios that produce China's entire output of feature, documentary, and news films. There are no non-government film producers.

Nationalist China

In 1967 the Government further stepped up its financial support of the motion picture industry and thereby enabled the industry to produce about 250 movies. This resulted in a decrease in the number of foreign movies imported. In 1967 a total of 238 foreign movies were imported, of which 107 were American-made and 69 were from European countries. Import of Japanese films decreased annually, as the following figures indicate: 28 in 1966, 27 in 1967, and 26 in 1969. There exist about 200 movie theaters throughout the country; in Taipei there are four theaters which specialize in Japanese movies. The television industry is growing rapidly, and television movies are especially popular. The movie industry as a

whole has been substantially affected by the popularity of films on television.

Hong Kong

The Annual Report for 1968 issued by the Government of Hong Kong describes its film industry as among the four biggest in the world in terms of output, with 200 features having been produced during 1968, the majority of which were made by two principal and six smaller independent companies. In all, Hong Kong has 51 independent production companies. The Colony has 102 cinema houses, with a total number of seats of more than 116,000. Domestically produced films are exported to all the Southeast Asian countries.

Indonesia

It is reported that in 1967 about 100 foreign films were imported from Japan, the United States, Italy, and Hong Kong. On February 1, 1968, the Indonesian Government started to collect from the importer a reserve fund of \$1,000 per film imported; this levy is deposited with the Domestic Film Industry Promotion Fund. At the same time, the Government raised import tariffs to 40 percent from the 20 percent effective in previous years.

Malaysia and Singapore

According to the Area Handbook for Malaysia and Singapore, the Government is the only producer of films of any kind in Malaysia. The Malayan Film Unit (MFU) of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting was established in 1946 to produce and distribute informational and educational films. It was put on a commercial basis in 1949, and now contracts for special films are ordered and purchased by the various government departments.

The same source reports that in 1960 there were 287 movie theaters in Malaysia, and that in 1962 Singapore had 116 movie theaters with a total number of attendance in the same year of 25.1 million.

South Korea

A total of 150 films, mainly dramatic films, is reported to have been produced in 1967. However, the 20 producing companies were reduced to 12 under the newly enforced licensing system imposed by the Government. At the same time, under the newly enforced quota system, rights of importation of foreign movies were given to the exporter of films as well as the producer.

South Vietnam

The Area Handbook for South Vietnam states that

there are five local firms equipped to produce full-length feature films, but that because of the high price of raw film and operational difficulties incident to wartime conditions, domestic production of feature films stopped in 1964. It is also reported that the Motion Picture Directorate of the Ministry of Information and Open Arms produces about 52 10-minute newsreels a year, plus various documentary films. The Vietnamese Psychological Warfare Directorate also produces documentaries and short features.

Thailand

Domestic film production is very low. An average annual production is about 16 movies (ten 25-mm and six 16-mm). The country still relies on foreign movies: American, European, Chinese and Indian movies in that order. Although many movies have been imported from Hong Kong and Taiwan, the import of Japanese movies is being completely barred.

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