

Thai Film and Television Development and its Impact on the Economy

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Abstract: Film and television are regarded as the media carrying cultural communication, that is, one of the key carriers of cross-cultural communication. In recent years, Thai films and television have gained more and more popularity among audiences all over the world, which not only has far-reaching significance for studying the phenomenon of cross-cultural communication, but also its contribution to the economy is worth analyzing. As a non-traditional film and television power in Asia, there are many places worthy of our attention and research on how Thailand makes film and television develop rapidly and drive its economy.

Keywords: Thailand; Film and Television; Economy.

1. The Origin and Development of Thai Film and Television and its Golden Age

1.1. The Origin of Thai Film and Television

1.1.1. Thailand's First Exposure to Film and Television

In 1894, August Lumiere and Louis Lumiere held a film exhibition in Southeast Asia. On June 10, 1897, it was the first known Thai screening of a film called the wonderful Parisian. The daily Bangkok Times, issued on Wednesday, June 9, 1897, has evidence that the film directed by S.G. Marchovsky was shown in theaters on June 10,11 and 12, with more than 600 Thais being the first moviegoers. In the same year, the film of King Chulalongkorn's visit to Europe was brought back to Thailand, causing a lot of discussion, and his brother Prince Krom Luang Sappasat Suphakit, considered the "father of Thai cinema", accompanied him to Europe to buy photographic equipment, and later began the production of films, mainly about the king and the royal family's activities and ceremonies, and the commercial release.

1.1.2. Early Production of Thai Film and Television

Under the leadership of Prince Krom Phra Kamphaeng Phet Akarayothin, another man known as the "Father of Thai Railways", the National Railways Feature Film Service of Thailand was established, which produced many promotional documentaries for railways and other government agencies and became an important training ground for many filmmakers. One of the early productions was the Great Celebration in North, a documentary film that became popular after its release in 1940. Two of the earliest Thai films was Suvarna of Siam, a Topical Film co-produced by Universal Studios and Topical Film Service and directed and written by Henry MacRae. Filming began in early March 1923 and the film was shown at the Pattanakarm Cinema in Bangkok on 22 June 1923. The first Thai film written and produced entirely by Thais was a silent film, Double Chok, produced by Manit Wasuwat's Srikrung Film Company in 1927 and directed by Khun Anurakrathakan.

1.2. The Development and Golden Age of Thai Film and Television

1.2.1. Development of Film and Television in Thailand

Thai cinema is the development of Thai film culture. The development of Thai cinema dates back to King Chulalongkorn's visit to Bern, Switzerland in 1897 and the recording of the film, which was brought to Bangkok and sparked the interest of the Thai royal family and local businessmen, who brought film production equipment and began exhibiting foreign films. In 1920, the film industry began to develop.

(1)16mm era

The period from 1945 to 1970 was the rise of Thai popular film culture. After World War II, the introduction of 16mm silent film gave birth to a very popular form of film culture in Thailand. This local filmmaking was closely associated with its largely rural audience and ended in the early 1970s.

(2)35mm era

In the 1960s, 16mm films were gradually phased out and officially ended in 1972, and were replaced by 35mm films because they could synchronize sound and picture, and although they were more expensive to produce, they ensured an enhanced viewing experience for the audience, which led to a Renaissance in Thai filmmaking.

(3) The 1970s and 1980s

Thailand was the first country to suffer after its economic bubble burst in 1997. The worldwide economic crisis has brought the Thai film industry, which was already on the verge of collapse, directly to the brink of collapse. Thailand saw an explosion of locally produced films in the 1970s after the Thai government imposed a heavy tax on imported films in 1977, leading to a boycott by Hollywood studios. This fatal blow also gave the Thai film industry a chance to be reborn, in the face of such a depressed situation, many people who pursue film began to analyze and think about relevant methods, these people have gone abroad to other countries to understand the principle of foreign film and television research and excellent skills, for the development of foreign film and television experience is to be fully learned.

(4) Thailand new wave

The first wave of new wave appeared in the 1970s, when

intellectuals entered the film industry and produced so-called "social critical films". In 1981, Hollywood studios sent films to Thailand again. With the emergence of GMM Grammy's own film studio GTH and now GDH 559, the mainstream film industry in Thailand has produced a series of successful films in business and criticism, such as Shutter, Kung Fu, Bangkok Traffic Love Story and so on.

1.2.2. Golden Age of Thai Film and Television

(1)The first "Golden Age"

In 1928, the first "talkies" began to be imported, creating stiff competition for Thai silent films. The first Thai sound film, *Gone Astray*, premiered on April 1, 1932. The film is considered an ideological film in the period of political reform and was a great success. In 1933, Sri Krung shot *Grandpa Som's Treasure*, the first Thai color film. This period until 1942 is considered by scholars to be the "golden age" of Thai cinema.

2. Characteristics of Thai Film and Television Industry

2.1. Film and Television Orientation

The domestic orientation of the Thai film and television industry, that is, the part of Thai national films, can be mainly divided into five categories: epic, horror, action, comedy and youth films.

2.2. There are Many Kinds and Rich Contents of Thai Movies and Television

Thai film and television are rich and colorful, in addition to epic mythological films, there are a variety of romantic dramas, reflect the reality of social reality drama and creepy thriller suspense films. For example, bl drama "A year", "with your heart to interpret my love", "He is not me", social theme drama "Genius Shooter", "Special student", "Total Eclipse of love", love drama "Meteor Garden", "Heart of Stone" thriller suspense film "Crossroads of Death", "Ghosts will be shown" and so on.

In Thai movies and television, we can feel their plots are friendly and natural, ethnic characteristics, cultural diversity and ups and downs, and we can find their different nationalities' wisdom and benefit in solving problems, and these intelligent applications and achievements are so naturally displayed in the Thai society, which is full of praise.

The plot structure of Thai film and television is relatively simple and not lengthy, and its plot not only achieves ups and downs, but also makes people feel natural, not abrupt and convincing; The acting of the characters is not restrained or surprising, and the ending of the story is usually satisfactory, happy and not suspenseful. Simple and sincere, not flashy, full of hope, is also one of the magic weapons for the success of Thai film and television.

2.3. High Level of Film Production and Directing

The improvement of the elite level of film production, screenwriter and director is also one of the prerequisites for the production of excellent film and television works. From the 1950s to the 1990s, some Thai young people studied abroad and mastered film and television production and directing. In the process of film and television production, they not only absorbed the novel presentation skills of other countries, but also paid attention to exploring the ethnic

elements, so that their film and television works won the praise of a large number of domestic and foreign audiences. Whether it is directing, shooting or editing techniques, Thai film and television have shown great proficiency in these technologies, no less than professional teams in other countries.

3. How does Thai Film and Television Drive Economic Development

3.1. The Film and Television Industry Directly Drives Economic Development

The film and television industry includes the production, post-production, distribution and projection of films and television (including physical products and home entertainment), as well as all activities in the film production process, including the dissemination of film content. Taken together, these factors allow it to have a significant impact on the Thai economy.

3.2. After Sales, Pre-sale Around

Thailand is a relatively tolerant country, which is conducive to the development of Thai film and television, and has received few restrictions. In recent years, Thai dramas have been strongly promoted in the international dissemination range, in addition to being respected in the local area, it is also favored by many audiences abroad. The status of Thai film and television in the international film and television industry has been improved, thus driving economic development. Thailand film and television after-sales, peripheral pre-sale of these aspects also do very well, the first use of film and television to attract a large number of fans, and then peripheral pre-sale, selling small cards, film and television CDS, stars with the same model, so that fans pay for the idol consumption, thereby driving Thailand's economic development.

3.3. Use Film and Television and Star Power to Promote the Thai Economy Consumption

3.3.1. Star Endorsement Cooperation

Make use of star traffic and popularity, cooperate with some clothing, cosmetics, skin care products, diet and other brands, carry out live streaming to bring goods, improve the consumption of the brand, start the brand's popularity fans, let the audience consume, benefit both the brand and the star team, and subtly promote the economic development of Thailand.

3.3.2. Meet and Greet Around the World, Concerts

Film and television actors or popular stars held concerts and meetings around the world. To promote fans to buy tickets, because fans are from all over the world, they sometimes need to buy tickets in Thai baht, which is virtually increasing the exchange rate of the Thai baht, and the need to take planes and other means of transportation, booking hotels, ordering food and other consumption, are undoubtedly driving Thailand's economic development.

3.4. Film and Television - Tourism Integration

Film and television and tourism are two popular leisure industries in recent years. "Film and television - tourism" is the concept of "film and television drive tourism". Thailand has done very well in this respect, which can be divided into film and television locations driving tourism and film and

television stars driving tourism.

3.4.1. Location Drives Tourism

Most foreign tourists are relatively new to these markets and may have limited knowledge of Thailand, so once an influential film and television production is shot in Thailand, it is easy to get the audience interested in Thailand, whether it is culture or attractions. Media reports suggest that films such as the 2012 Chinese comedy *Lost in Thailand* have helped boost tourism in Thailand, especially in Chiang Mai. Therefore, factors such as the growth of tourism in Thailand in emerging markets and the relative lack of understanding of Thailand among these consumers hold great promise for the future growth of film and television tourism in Thailand.

3.4.2. Film and Television Stars Drive Tourism

In recent years, the number of people concerned about Thai entertainment is also increasing, no longer limited to Thailand's local worship, according to statistics China, Singapore, South Korea and other countries concerned about the number of Thai stars increased year by year, the number of Thai star IG fans mostly from China, Singapore and other countries. In addition to some fans who travel to Thailand purely for love and power generation, stars share their daily lives on personal social software, so that more fans can feel the culture of Thailand, whether it is food, clothing, or beautiful scenery, which is to represent and promote Thailand, so that more people understand Thailand and thus promote the development of Thailand's tourism industry, thus driving the economic development of Thailand.

3.5. Film and Television Cooperation between Countries

3.5.1. China-thailand Film and Television Cooperation

At the beginning, Sino-Thai film and television cooperation was only copyright and dubbing cooperation. Chinese and Thai platforms broadcast each other's original or dubbing film and television works, thus promoting each other's countries and promoting economic development for mutual benefit. In recent years, many Chinese films have been shot in Thailand and achieved good results, which has promoted the cooperation between Chinese and Thai film and television. In 2017, Hengye Film Company acquired all the copyright of the movie *"Genius Gunner"* in China at a price of 3.3 million yuan. Under the stimulus of huge profits, the Thai film and television market has stimulated the desire of domestic practitioners. Sino-thai film and television cooperation is no longer only about Chinese directors shooting in Thailand and Thai actors acting in China, similar to the field of drama, Sino-Thai film and television cooperation has also moved from the introduction and distribution of copyright in the past to a deeper "co-production" of binding and cooperation, driving each other's economic development.

3.5.2. Thailand Cooperates with other Countries in Film and Television

In addition to film and television cooperation with China, Thailand also cooperates with other countries, such as Hollywood in the United States, which has cooperated with Thailand for a long time. For the Thai government, cooperation with foreign film and television organizations can not only enjoy optimistic profits, but also have excellent promotion effects on Thailand's tourism industry, and the film and television cooperation between countries is very long-term. It can not only spread culture but also promote each

other's economic development.

4. Current Situation and Prospect of Thai Film and Television

4.1. Current Situation of Thai Film and Television

4.1.1. Low Labor Cost, Perfect Foundation

Thailand's film and television industry has low labor costs and a sound foundation, and Thailand is striving to become the center of the Southeast Asian film industry. At present, the Thai film production industry has increasingly complete spare parts service (Thailand has ANTANA, a particularly large film post-production company in Southeast Asia). Moreover, compared with the advantages of high-quality and cheap artificial production costs, Thailand, known as the leader of the Southeast Asian film industry, will increasingly optimize the role of its location and post-production base. At the same time, outward production services are bound to win double the vast space for growth.

4.1.2. Supported and Valued by the Government

The progress of Thai film is inseparable from the support and promotion of the government. Since 2000, the Thai government has offered tax breaks to film production, promotion and broadcasting to reduce the operating costs of Thai film and television companies, with the aim of strengthening the development of the film industry. In 2010, the Thai government announced a 10 billion baht (over \$300 million) grant to support the Thai film industry so that it can make a greater contribution to the country's economy.[1]

4.2. Thai Film and Television Prospects

4.2.1. Thai Film and Television Prospects

Thailand's film and television industry is an important part of the national economy, directly contributing 0.4% of the gross national product. The sector is also an important part of Thailand's creative industries. Film and television will increase its market share, meaning that it is likely to maintain its market advantage for some time to come.

Overall, the Thai film and television industry creates highly productive jobs, increases employees' incomes, and contributes significantly to government finances. As such, the sector plays an important role in expanding prosperity and supporting government finances.

In order to further promote the development of the Thai film industry, the Thai government has also begun to reform the relevant system and adopted relevant policies to support the development of Thai film and television. For example, the establishment of a special fund for the film and television industry to grant funding for the film creation of young filmmakers is aimed at encouraging young filmmakers to actively participate in the film industry, so as to help them obtain better development opportunities, which will definitely help the long-term development of the Thai film industry.

4.2.2. International Thai Film and Television Prospects

With the cooperation of the government and the private sector, the Thai film industry has gradually emerged internationally, and more people have become aware of Southeast Asian films. The Thai government has continued to create the perfect environment for foreign film production to come to Thailand to shoot films. Its natural environment and unique people and customs make Thailand an excellent film shooting location, and its relative quality and cheap artificial

production cost advantages and complete infrastructure, attracting numerous foreign film organizations to Thailand for film production.

Under the strong advocacy and deployment of the "Belt and Road" policy, and the trend of "introducing" and "going out" of film and television works, Sino-Thai film and television cooperation may enter a honeymoon period through the policy east wind, and will also have a good cooperation prospect.

In addition, with the development of science and technology, Thai film and television production has made great progress, and more advanced technology can be used to shoot better movies and TV series, thus bringing better audio-visual experience to the audience. Thai film and television production companies are also trying to find more innovative ways to promote Thai film and television works and attract more viewers, coupled with government support for the promotion of Thai film and television works, to help them gain more recognition in domestic and foreign markets. In short, the prospects for Thai film and television development are very optimistic, and you can see more and more Thai film

and television works are recognized globally. With the advancement of technology and strong support from the government, the Thai film and television production industry is making great progress and is expected to achieve more in the future.

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