



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

Preserving American Jewish History

MS-603: Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum Collection, 1945-1992.

Series E: General Alphabetical Files. 1960-1992

Box 86, Folder 17, NBC "Holocaust" - Japan, 1979.



JAPAN

sold before US showing;

Oct. 5--15% Thursday

Oct 6- 11.9%

7-13.7%

8- in two parts.at 8:00 16.5% and at 9:30, 19.7%

TV Asahi, which bought it, season starts in Oct., and of ~~Asa~~ Asahi's new shows, H got the top rating, with an average audience of 15.6%, but Roots got average of 23.4%.

Asahi used 250 promo spots at a cost of \$400,000

Each night it was up against heavily popular shows or specials; nightly: a 25th anniversary show with back clips from a popular program; a special theatrical movie and ~~and~~ Disney's Dumbo on Fri; sat, a popular detective series; sunday, Japan Record Award Ceremony, and a popular historical drama.

Yet Asahi felt it was a success and ratings satisfactory.

JAPAN

Holocaust received substantial pre-airing coverage in the newspapers and periodicals of Japan, and the station which bought it used 250 spot advertisements to promote the series, at a cost of about \$400,000. The series received high ratings despite the fact that it ran against several very popular shows, but it caused no large no large controversy.

Sold to TV Asahi before its American showing, the series was watched by 15% of the viewing audience on its first evening, October 15th, 1978. On the following evening, it was received by 11.9% of the televisions that were turned on at the time it was shown, and 13.7% of them the next night. On Sunday when the final two episodes were aired, one directly after the other, it received a 16.5% and a 19.7% rating. The average audience was 15.6% and TV Asahi maintained that this represented a satisfactory rating.

Japan's other television stations met the challenge of the series by airing specials, including a 25th anniversary show with old film clips from a popular program, as well as the Japanese Record Awards Ceremony.

Included in the preview coverage was a major article in Sinsen (New and Fresh), a popular weekly, which summarized the history of the Nazi genocide and also provided a synopsis of the series accompanied by numerous photographs.

Asahi Shimbun (Morning Sun) carried a similar article and pointed out that "discrimination is a continuous sin behind human history."

In an article by Nagaharu Yodogawa, a dictionary-style definition of holocaust is provided for readers. Mr. Yodogawa noted that the series is a lesson in "what is right, what must and should be shown." He further notes that until now, most movies are not made to be instructive, whereas Holocaust is a successful educational tool.

Kota Shindo, who translated the film into Japanese stated that the "deepest

impression given by this movie is that the fate of the characters was largely determined by the women in both families who prevailed in all decision making.

In spite of the heavy preview coverage, fluctuation in the viewer percentages, the counter-programming of high drawing shows on other stations, and the absence of any ensuing controversy, either over its theme or production values are perhaps more telling of Japanese reaction to the series. These elements suggest that the Japanese, far away from the sites of the European battlefields and death camps, treated the program as an interesting, but not nationally significant, television program. This interpretation of Japanese viewer behavior appears to be supported by the fact that the other major American-made serial drama, "Roots", did only slightly better, having received a 23.4% rating. Major and disturbing themes of this period of European history, apparently, have not seriously moved the Japanese public in its television viewing patterns or responses.

