

Workshop on Indonesian Cinema - Abstracts
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<p>Alicia Izharuddin alicia.izharuddin@soas.ac.uk</p>	<p>The Muslim female body in Indonesian cinema and the face veil as 'Other'</p> <p>The years after 11 September 2001 saw the production of images in the Western media that suggested a link between Islam and the oppression of Muslim women. In response to this often vilifying Western discourse about Islam and Muslim women, a number of Indonesian filmmakers have produced films that provide a more peaceful and tolerant image of the faith. These films belong to the recently identified genre of 'Islamic cinema'. Representations of 'strong', career-minded, highly educated, and vocal veiled Muslim women have challenged negative stereotypes circulating in Western mass media. While these representations have been mostly unproblematic and often celebrated, the face veil or <i>cadar</i> is contentious. In the 2011 film <i>Khalifah</i> (dir. Nurman Hakim), the <i>cadar</i> is a visible marker of Otherness, a political, cultural and national problem to be solved. This paper discusses the ways in which the 'veiled body' in Indonesian cinema has become inscribed with many meanings and argues that varieties of the veil are used to distinguish between Indonesian identity and the Other.</p>
<p>Kartika Susanti kartika.susanti@my.westminster.ac.uk</p>	<p>Discourse of Development in Indonesian Commercial Film</p> <p>During the so-called "Development years" of the 1980s, Indonesian filmmakers produced many films that revolved around themes of class relations, poverty, and modernisation. Given the nature of censorship at the time, most of the films bore the ideals of a Development agenda. The cinematic discourse was very much in line with the government's vision about development.</p> <p>The situation has greatly changed following the reforms of 1998. Censorship has relaxed and film makers have started to bring issues back to the screen. A number of films have tried to portray the condition of rural areas that are less developed in comparison to Java, the population centre of the archipelago. These films appear to be critical, or at least representative of</p>

	<p>real conditions, but has the role of commercial cinema changed following the reforms of 1998 or is it unconsciously repeating the same pattern, which is promoting Development?</p> <p>This paper forms part of a dissertation project for MA in Media and Development at the University of Westminster. It is focused on Indonesian commercial movies produced after the reform period of 1998. Two films were chosen as objects of analysis: Land of Heaven... It's Said [<i>Tanah Surga... Katanya</i>] (Herwin Novianto, 2012) and Denias, Singing On the Cloud [<i>Denias, Senandung di Atas Awan</i>] (John de Rantau, 2006).</p> <p>The paper explores how the discourse of development is represented in post-dictatorial Indonesian commercial films and to question the role of commercial films in the Development project.</p>
<p>Katie Diesta Whitcombe katie.whitcombe@gmail.com</p>	<p>Conversations on Tolerance: Exploring Religious Tensions in Indonesia through Film</p> <p>The 2009 independent romantic film "<i>Cin(T)a</i>" courted controversy in Indonesia because of its portrayal of an interfaith relationship. Despite the Indonesian government's focus on the ideal of harmonious relations between members of different faiths in Indonesian society, controversy and tension still surrounds issues of religious tolerance and diversity. This paper explores interfaith dynamics in Indonesian cinematic imaginary. "<i>Cin(T)a</i>" is one example of a growing number of films that deal with religious dilemmas (otherwise largely ignored) in a romantic context. An investigation of taboo topics illustrated in popular cinema provides a clearer understanding of religious tensions in Indonesia. In focusing on romantic Indonesian films, the paper argues that this art form serves not just as entertainment but, of no less importance, as a medium to express controversial ideas and opinions about religion.</p>
<p>Dr Gerald Sim gsim@fau.edu</p>	<p><i>The Act of Killing: A Study of Politics and Style.</i></p> <p>This paper proposes a political and aesthetic study of <i>The Act of Killing</i> (2012). Critical acclaim for Joshua Oppenheimer's documentary about Suharto-backed Indonesian death squads, invariably extols its reflexivity. Perpetrators of genocide, asked to restage their crimes, choose to appropriate Hollywood genres and produce several stark and surreal moments. However, the</p>

	<p>film's ideological discourses relating to historical contingency, psychic forces, colonialism, and cinema, spin a web denser than critics including Benedict Anderson have acknowledged. Using Bill Nichols's psychoanalytic elucidation of reenacted documentaries, this paper examines the film's deconstructive project, and finds that many have elided the director's implicitly objectivist claims; Bhabha's critique of Said and <i>Orientalism's</i> reliance on subjective fixity thus resonates here. Stylistically, Oppenheimer's film joins Rithy Panh's documentary about the Khmer Rouge's genocidal campaign, <i>S-21</i> (2003), in the reenactment subgenre's canon. With Oppenheimer's own published scholarship about both films, I finally explore the ways that the reenactment subgenre has been utilized by political filmmaking for social therapy and critical pedagogy. To what degree do these multiple articulations overlap with postcolonial hybridity theory? To wit, does <i>The Act of Killing</i> evince an Indonesian postcolonial aesthetic? When Oppenheimer calls his film "a documentary of the mind," is he referring to a national consciousness?</p>
<p>Dr Yvonne Michalik y.michalik@hff-potsdam.de</p>	<p>Women Filmmakers in Indonesia</p> <p>Despite being the fourth most populous country in the world, it is astonishing how little is known about Indonesian film culture. The important role of women filmmakers is particularly underappreciated. My paper will discuss three films (<i>The Photographer</i>, 2007, dir. Nan Achnas; <i>Perempuan Punya Cerita</i>, 2007, dirs. Nia Dinata, Upi, Lasja Susato and Fatimah T. Rony; <i>Mirror Never Lies</i>, 2011, dir. Kamila Andini) made by some of the most important women directors with an approach that combines media theory, gender theory and the socio-cultural context.</p> <p>Because film is a good media of conveying cultural habits and subjects, the films of the women directors represent the dynamics and difficulties that women in Indonesia must face. Their films are a seismograph for the situation of women in a country with the world's largest Muslim population, and in which competing tensions of Islamic tradition, cultural diversity and modernity are apparent. The filmmakers themselves draw attention in a variety of ways to taboo topics. This they pick out subjects which are often neglected by their male colleagues and give voice to issues and problems specific to Indonesian women; they engage with the female side of Indonesian life.</p>

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Sang Pencerah (The Enlightener, 2010) as an Auteurist Islamic Biopic: Inquiries into the Stylistics and the Rise of the Religious Figure Biopic in Contemporary Indonesian Cinema

Since the latter half of the 2000s, a stream of biographical films featuring the life story of religious figures has flooded the Indonesian cinema landscape. *Sang Murabbi* (2008), *Sang Pencerah* (2010), *Soegija* (2012), and *Sang Kiyai* (2013) are only a few filmic examples of this cinematic trend. In this paper, I want to take up *Sang Pencerah* (The Enlightener, 2010) as an idiosyncratic case that warrants a closer inspection. The feature film, directed by Hanung Bramantyo whose *Ayat-ayat Cinta* (Verses of Love, 2008) triggered the wave of Islamic themed films or recent years (Imanda, 2012), chronicles the struggle of the Muhammadiyah founder Kiyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan (1868 – 1923) to reform Islam in the late 19 and early 20th century Java. Despite its moderate commercial success, *Sang Pencerah* was received rather unfavourably.

The film's poor reception stemmed mainly from the controversial depiction of Ahmad Dahlan as a modern Muslim leader; for many critics he was portrayed as too liberal and progressive. Although the polemics stirred by the film demonstrate the capacity of a biopic - an undervalued film genre often construed as pedestrian and tedious (Bingham, 2010) - to stimulate public debate, this has obscured the accomplishment of the film as an artistic work. Consequently, this critical discourse downplays the creative ingenuity of the filmmaker Bramantyo and his cinematographer Faozan Rizal in rendering the film as an audacious, stylistic tour de force that reflects an auteurist agenda.

Given this critical climate, I suggest that it may be more useful to treat the film as a cinematic product with complex artistic credentials, rather than simply as an unfaithful biographical account. For that reason, as part of my ongoing research into the historical poetics of contemporary Southeast Asian cinema, in this paper I will examine the ways in which the film *Sang Pencerah* operates as an auteurist Islamic biopic. My central argument is that the visual style of the film, which I restrict mainly to cinematographic and staging techniques, operates as salient cinematic tools to fulfil the auteurist agenda of Bramantyo and Rizal. Moreover, I argue that these visual

	<p>stylistic strategies have significantly enriched and upgraded not only the aesthetics of the biopic genre but the Islamic themed film at large in the context of Indonesian cinema. As an integral part of the discussion, I will also delve into inquiries that address the proximate social circumstances that may contribute to the emergence of these religious figure biopics in the context of post-reformasi Indonesian film culture.</p>
<p>Ekky Imanjaya eimanjaya@yahoo.com</p>	<p>Tromatized: The Political Economy of Dubbing in Troma Team's <i>Ferocious Female Freedom Fighters</i></p> <p>In late 1990s, Troma Team, a New York-based film production and distribution company, recirculated four Indonesian films: <i>The Intruder (Pembalasan Rambu/ Rambu's Revenge, 1985)</i>; <i>Stabilizer (Segitiga Emas/Golden tringle, 1986)</i>; <i>Ferocious Female Freedom Fighters 1 (Perempuan Bergairah/FFFF/Passionate Woman, 1982)</i>, and <i>Ferocious Female Freedom Fighters 2 (Membakar Matahari/To Burn the Sun, 1981)</i>.</p> <p>Unlike most other titles produced and distributed by Troma, the first FFFF received special treatment: Troma Team decided to rework the film by re-writing and re-recording the dialogue in order to make it more characteristic of a "Troma film". They called the results of this process "Tromatized". The final product, influenced by Woody Allen's <i>What's Up Tiger Lily</i>, has a totally different story and taste than the original.</p> <p>The paper will examine how and why Troma Team redubbed the film and, in doing so, will elaborate the definition of "Troma film" and "Tromatized". Focusing on <i>Ferocious Female Freedom Fighters</i>, I will elaborate on Troma team's strategy of simultaneously framing and feeding their cult fans' taste by carrying out this redubbing. My analysis of dubbing as a means to market the films will draw on theories by Frederic Chaume Varela (polysystemic approaches) and Markus Nornes (corrupt and abusive subtitling theories).</p>
<p>Suraji scunliffe@sfcg.org</p>	<p>The Transformative Power of Film in Indonesia</p> <p>Since 2002 SFCG Indonesia has used both true and fictional narratives to promote mutual understanding and break down stereotypes in Indonesian society. SFCG often uses film as a</p>

	<p>medium to disseminate narratives and provoke transformative discourse within communities vulnerable to violent conflict. SFCG's paper will focus on the transformative power of film in Indonesia highlighting its recent work with young students or <i>santri</i> from <i>pesantren</i> (private Islamic boarding schools).</p> <p>As part of a broader effort to elevate moderate voices and promote alternatives to violent extremist narratives, SFCG along with the Wahid Institute and P3M, facilitated trainings on documentary filmmaking in 10 <i>pesantren</i> across Indonesia. Following the trainings, <i>santri</i> at each <i>pesantren</i> developed original ideas for films and produced 2 short documentaries about issues of tolerance, diversity, and local culture. SFCG's "Film Festival <i>Santri</i>" (FFS)--the first event of its kind in Indonesia--was held in Jakarta on 21 June, 2013. The festival highlighted the ten best films of the 20 produced by <i>santri</i>, which ranged from the story of a dancer torn between her role as a <i>santri</i> and her role a traditional dancer, to the story of an aspiring <i>kyai</i> (<i>pesantren</i> leader) who faces bullying at school. Many of the films deal with the issue of how <i>santri</i> negotiate their religious commitments and their local traditions, which at times seem to be in conflict. In coming months, SFCG will bring FFS to <i>pesantren</i>, public schools and university campuses across Indonesia to spark dialogue among a broader audience. SFCG is implementing the project in partnership with two local NGOs: the Wahid Institute and P3M.</p>
<p>Ilma Fathnurfirda ilma_ff@yahoo.com</p>	<p>Prioritization of motion picture industry strategies : using a swot-ahp analysis</p> <p>The Indonesian film industry saw a significant decrease in numbers of moviegoers in 2011. As a result, Indonesian films have struggled to compete against imported films. The purpose of this study is provide solutions to this problem by proposing proper industrial strategies. SWOT analysis is a method to develop a strategy based on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that exist in the industry. Then, the strategy produced by the SWOT analysis is weighted using the Analysis Hierarchy Process (AHP). This results in strategies that are prioritized to address the problems of the Indonesian film industry based on Strength-Opportunities.</p>
<p>Tito Imanda menjadi@yahoo.com</p>	<p>Image from the Village: Indonesian Short Films made by Peasants</p>

	<p>This paper is about fiction films made by rural people in Indonesia. Rural populations are generally thought of as a passive audience. Modern media have been trying to access the most remote areas of Indonesia for decades, mostly for political reasons. The Japanese occupation (1942-1945) saw radio receivers with high-rise loudspeakers –the singing trees– in the villages, while the Soeharto regime (1966-1998) saw the launch of the first communication satellite in the Asia Pacific in 1976. Thousands of village offices were equipped with television sets, all with the purpose of propagating their political message. In the Reform Era, many rural households have access to hundreds of domestic and international channels via satellite television. However, the villagers are also now taking their turn to be producers of media. After decades of being objectified by the cameras of tourist and researchers, with the emergence of compact video cameras rural inhabitants now have the opportunity to switch sides. In the 1980's and 1990's, non-governmental organizations first exposed village people to documentary filmmaking in order to record their perspectives on different social conditions or government policies. Since 1998, there have been more and more media literacy and filmmaking workshops, focusing on youth, students, and art communities, and the film products constantly reposition the peasants' place in local, regional, national, and global contexts.</p>
<p>Dag Yngvesson yngve007@umn.edu</p>	<p><i>Kuldesak</i> and the Inexorable, Pulpy Cul-de-sac of Indonesian Film History</p> <p>The “omnibus” feature <i>Kuldesak</i> (1998), made by four young film school graduates and spanning the major political transition from Suharto’s 30-year “New Order” to the current <i>reformasi</i> era between its dates of production and distribution, was accused by many critics of unceremoniously severing its ties with Indonesia’s fifty-plus year history of national cinema. As senior critic J.B. Kristanto wrote, “they just want to be different and enjoy making films without the burden of ideas, tradition, state intervention, etc, such that language, idiom, and symbols can be taken from anywhere” (2004 179).</p> <p>By closely re-examining critical moments within the cinematic past from which <i>Kuldesak</i> emerges, this paper stages an alternate reading: I will argue that the film represents an earnest reflection on the very <i>impossibility</i>, indeed the deadliness, of</p>

	<p>freeing oneself from history, despite the obvious allure of its upper-middle class characters' bold, Grunge-and-McDonald's-infused attempts to do precisely that. Two of them are actually aspiring filmmakers, and for them, Quentin Tarantino's <i>Pulp Fiction</i> is seen as the ultimate model of an "independent" – and thus escapist and de-historicized – aesthetic and mode of production. Yet <i>Kuldesak's</i> explicit rejection of the work of past Indonesian directors (several of whom are mentioned by name in the dialog) in pursuit of the new and the foreign nonetheless leads it into familiar territory. The surreally brutal, amoral state of affairs in which its characters exist, while set in the present day, is eerily reminiscent of the acute sociopolitical atmospheres in which classic Indonesian "sex" films like <i>Bernafas Dalam Lumpur</i> (Djunaedy 1970) or <i>Bumi Makin Panas</i> (Shahab 1973) are set.</p> <p>Born of Indonesia's 1960s and 70s popular "pulp" novels (often published as series in popular magazines like <i>Varia</i>), these films offered scathing critiques of the stark social, economic, and gender-based inequities that arose following Suharto's hyper-violent, Western-endorsed rise to power in 1965-66. Examining the local effects of globalization in the late 1990s with a similarly fascinated-yet-repulsed gaze, <i>Kuldesak</i> presciently locates itself in a historical Cul-de-sac in which the oncoming future of democratic reform is glimpsed by viewers, if not the film's characters, through the mirror of a past filled with corruption and violence, and entangled in an international web of dubious promises and onerous commitments.</p>
<p>Dr Carlo Bonura cb84@soas.ac.uk</p>	<p>A Montage Ambivalence: Post-Authoritarian Indonesia in Amir Muhammed's <i>The year of Living Vicariously</i></p> <p>The documentary work of Malaysian director Amir Mohammed is characterised by the montage-like style of his films. This style results in complex temporalities that often establish relations between past and present and prevent the use of linear narratives. Following the work of Walter Benjamin, Amir's films make manifest a "dialectical image." This essay will consider <i>The Year of Living Vicariously</i> through the lens of Benjamin's theoretical work. <i>The Year of Living Vicariously</i> is based on a variety of interviews carried out by Amir in 2004 on the set of the Indonesian film <i>Gie</i>. The interviews are with the cast and crew of the film and the film itself is organised around a split screen. In addition to the continuous simultaneity of the split</p>

	<p>screen, often the film situates the production of the past (in the filming of <i>Gie</i>) juxtaposed to anxieties of the present. In the interviews and stories presented by Amir a number of ambivalent themes emerge, including the future role and power of the military, the role of corruption in Indonesian politics, the unresolved questions and politics surround G30S, apathy, or consumption. In this paper I will argue that <i>The Year of Living Vicariously</i> recognises the ambivalence of post-authoritarianism Indonesia, in so far as some of the political forms, actors and events at the core of the Suharto regime remain relevant or at least act as the source of anxieties in the present day.</p>
<p>Liza Ramli noorlizasabariahramli@gmail.com liza.com</p>	<p><i>Orientalism in Ayat-ayat Cinta</i></p> <p>This presentation engage with the notion of orientalism in films by Eastern directors. It will explore the portrayal of the Orient as defined by the Orientalists and the relationship between the East and the West discussed in the romantic Islamic film <i>Ayat-ayat Cinta</i> (Dir: Hanung Bramantyo, 2008). This film has been chosen as the focus for the study as it has had a significant role in shaping and influencing Southeast Asian Muslim perceptions of themselves and the West. It successfully portrays a relationship between East and the West through Fahri's relationship with Aisha, his Muslim German wife, and Maria, his Christian Egyptian neighbour who later becomes his second wife. Based on Edward Said's theory on Orientalism, the research will interpret how technical aspects of the film orientalisied the view of the Orient and differentiated between the superior West and the subjugating East. The key messages conveyed in the film will be examined to evaluate the image of the despotic, oppressive and irrational East. The talk will seek to explore whether the portrayal of the relationship between East and West to is static, or whether it actually reveals far more complexity.</p>
<p>Dhani Agustinus dhani.agustinus@gmail.com</p>	<p>Film Distribution and Exhibition in Indonesia</p> <p>With the beginning of the Reformation Era (1998-), Perfin, the state-owned distribution company ceased to exist. The number of movie theatres decreased significantly as a result of competition from private television, pirate home videos, and the small number of films being produced in Indonesia.</p> <p>Nowadays, producers take their finished films directly to the</p>

	<p>exhibitors: the 21 Group and Blitz. Nonetheless, this approach often creates a number of problems related to the scheduling of screenings, numbers of film copies and other logistical issue, the length of the run in cinemas, promotion and so on. These problems are particularly acute for the small and independent production houses and producers as they tend to be in a weak negotiating-position with the 21 Group, the exhibitor that controls 92% of the Indonesian market share.</p> <p>On the other hand, noth the 21 Group and Blitz have also imported and distributed their own films bought on the film market through their subsidiaries (Jive Entertainment, Amero and Camila Internusa). This gives rise to a potential conflict of interests as there are limited numbers of screens (less than 700 screens nationally). The 80-90 films made locally each year also have to compete with in excess of 100 foreign films that are imported annually (Hollywood, Indian and Mandarin) even though there is a screen quota in new Film Law.</p> <p>This paper will also examine the impact of new digital technologies and Digital Cinema Projection (DCP) and their potential for encouraging local businessmen to build movie theatres and create alternative film distribution and exhibition networks.</p>
<p>Eric Sasono ericasono@gmail.com</p>	<p>Documentary film and democracy: <i>The Act of Killings</i> and representation of the 1965-66 mass-killings in Indonesia</p> <p>The purge of the members and supporters of the Indonesian Communist Party in 1965-66 is considered as the main event that engendered the Indonesian autocratic “New Order” regime (1966 to 1998). The recent documentary film, <i>The Act of Killing</i> (Joshua Oppenheimer, Christine Cynn and Anonymous) argues that the current Indonesian political system – not only the New Order dictatorship – is a direct continuation of the 1965-66 mass-killing, shown by the embrace and celebration of the purge’s executioners. Moreover, the conception of citizenship under the current Indonesian political system is also questioned. <i>The Act of Killing</i> shows not only the inability of the Indonesian political system to punish this most severe of crimes against humanity, but also the lack of reason in Indonesians’ day-to-day decision making processes. If these individuals are accepted in the mainstream political system as “normal” citizens, then the conception of Indonesian citizenship is being colossally</p>

	<p>questioned.</p> <p>In this regard, <i>The Act of Killing</i> provides a frightening outlook into an Indonesian political system marked by the absence of individual reason and public duty; instead the society and its political leaders seems to embrace the purge's executioners as heroes. Thus the documentary becomes crucial in addressing the Indonesian political system on three levels: it exposes the fact that citizenship in Indonesia is based on notions of obligation to society rather than on legal status as subjects; it scrutinises the current Indonesian system for its incorporation of the mass-murderers into formal and mainstream politics; and it poses questions of the nation's past and continuities into the present.</p> <p>This paper will discuss the reception on <i>The Act of Killing</i> as part of the development of democracy in Indonesia. Public discussions provoked by the screening of the film on the subject have invoked debates on the democratisation of violence in Indonesia as well as making sense of the relationship between the nation's past and the current political system.</p>
<p>Dr Ben Murtagh bm10@soas.ac.uk</p>	<p>Class and Gender Ambivalence in Two Dorce Films from 1989-90</p> <p>This paper will discuss two films from 1989-90 that served as vehicles for the emerging celebrity Dorce. To this day Dorce Gamalama is perhaps Indonesia's highest profile post-operative transsexual, and until recently has been a mainstay of Indonesian daytime television. The two films in question- <i>Dorce sok akrab</i> (dir. Yazman Yazid, 1989) and <i>Dorce ketemu jodoh</i> (dir. Mardali Syarief, 1990) - are both low budget comedies where the humour centres on complex cases of mistaken identity. In the former a poor brother and sister are mistaken for a well-to-do brother and sister (played by the same actors), and in the latter Dorce's character takes on a male disguise, while simultaneously trying to function as a woman, much to the confusion of her two (female and male) suitors. Given that the films were made around the time of Dorce's sex reassignment surgery and her transformation from low-class transgender parking attendant to national celebrity the films might be understood as a humorous take on Dorce's own gender and class progression. Nonetheless, the films probably also contribute to our understanding of public discourse on class and gender identity in the closing years of the New Order.</p>

