

Ups and Downs of Film Adaptation from Novels in Indonesia (1926-2018)

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Abstract. The film adaptation from the novel is a film that the story originates come from a novel, not a new story or other media such as comics, short stories, legends, etc. The presence of film adaptation from the novel in Indonesia has given a very important role in the development of Indonesian films as a whole. In the history of film in Indonesia, from the production of the first film in Indonesia, it was a film adaptation from the story of legend (not from the novel), as well as the best-selling films that were mostly watched in theaters in decades were also films adaptation from the novel. This paper will explain how the film is adapted from the novel from time to time along 92 years, starting from the beginning of the first film produced in Indonesia in 1926 to the present 2018. And from the films will be seen as an ups and down of the adaptation film from the novel related to the socio-political change in Indonesia.

Keywords: Film Adaptation from Novel, Ups and Down

1 Introduction

The terminology of adaptation in the cinema world can be understood as a process of creating films which the scenarios take the story sources from other media, such as novels, comics, short stories, poems or legends and so on. Up to now there are at least a few terms that refer to adaptations such as, ecranization, intertextuality, vehicle transfer and comparison literary. The term of adaptation is a very popular term because it is often used, this is in line with the number of novels that are used as sources stories of film.

The choice of the novel that will be adapted is very closely related to the popularity or selling power of the novel. In this case, it is in line with what Sapardi Djoko Damano said, why this novel is chosen not the other, the answer is; the film just follows on a literary popularity [1]. So it is usually interpreted that the reader of the novel is the main consideration of the adaptation filmmakers, the novel reader is the dominant "owner" of the novel's story.

The practice of film adaptation in Indonesia has occurred since the film production of the Dutch Indies government era. Even the first film produced in Indonesia, the *Loetoeng Kasaroeng* film (L. Heuveldrop, 1926) is an adaptation from the story of the legend of Lutung Kasarung from the Sunda region. In 1929 the seventh film produced in Indonesia, the film entitled *Njai Dasima* (Tan Koen Yau, 1929), was a film adaptation of the first

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novel [2]. In the next decade and until now the film adaptation of the novel often occupies a special position among film viewers in Indonesia, because even the best-selling films are the films adapted from the novel. Then film development in general, including film adaptation experienced ups and downs in accordance with socio-political changes in Indonesia.

On the other hand, in Indonesia rarely people are interested in writing books about adaptation from novels to films. So far as searching, there are still two books written about adaptation, the first was written by Pamusuk Eneste (1991) in his book *Novel dan Film* [3]. Eneste termed that ecranization is the process of passing a novel into a film. and the book written by Sapardi Joko Dharmo with the title of his book *Alih Wahana* (2005), in this book describes the process of adaptation in general, including the adaptation from the novel to the film.

Based on the description above, it is considered important to see and explain how far the ups and downs of the film adaptation from the novel from time to time (1926-2018)

2 Discussion

History is a reconstruction of the past. Historians are like people taking a train facing backwards, who can look back, left side, right side, but can't look ahead. Historians can reconstruct what has been thought, done, said, felt, and experienced by others. History as a science bound to scientific research procedures, bound to reasoning that relies on facts. Historical truth lies in the willingness of historians to thoroughly examine historical sources completely so that they can express the history objectively, resulting in a match between historians understanding and facts. History is a diachronic science, because history examines the symptoms that extend in time, but in limited space. Historical explanation must be supported by authentic, complete and trusted data. And historical explanations must include three things: interpreting and understanding, about extended time, and about a single event.

Based on information about the first film produced in Indonesia, starting in 1926, the search for adaptation films in Indonesia began from that year. There is a span of 92 years, the 92-year span will be divided again based on important events related to the socio-political conditions and changes in Indonesia. Beginning with the period or the span of the years 1926-1941, this period will explain the first film in Indonesia in the last days of Dutch colonialism until the beginning of the occupation of Japanese colonization in Indonesia. Next, the period of Japanese colonization in Indonesia until Indonesia became independent in 1942-1944, in this period will be inserted in the period 1945-1947 because in this year there were no films produced in Indonesia. Then, the period 1948-1965, this period was the beginning of the independence period or the Soekarno period (the old order). Next in the period 1966-1990, this period was the period of Soeharto's reign (the new order), the period of the Soeharto government or the New Order period in the explanation here was divided in two (1991-1999), because in 1991 the Indonesian television industry emerged and so booming that Indonesian films became suspended because cineaste people moved to work for the television industry. And the last was the reform era, the period 2000-2018 (now).

The film that is "Temporary" generally agreed upon as Indonesia's first film is a film entitled *Loetoeng Kasaroeng* which was produced in 1926. Why it is said to be temporary because there are some people who disagree with this film which is considered as Indonesia's first film, because the film was produced by Dutch people and film companies are also owned by Dutch people, only the story is about Indonesian original stories and Indonesian native players.

The film *Loetoeng Kasaroeng* (1926) is a silent and black and white film. Production: Java Film Co (L. Heuveldrop). Director: L. Heuveldorp. Ftg / camera: G Krugers. Players:

Martoana and Oemar. This film is produced in the Bandung area. Martoana and Oemar were children of the Bandung Regent at the time named Wiranatakusumah. The film's story is adapted from the legendary story of the legend Loetoeng Kasaroeng which is very popular in the West Java community. The Loetoeng Kasaroeng legend is also filmed again in 1952 and 1983.

The film *Nyai Dasima* (1929) is a silent and black and white film. Production: Tan's Film (Tan Koen Yauw), director: Lie Tek Swie. Ftg / camera: A Loepias, Player Noerhani, Anah, Wim Lender, and Momo. This film is a film adaptation of the first novel / book produced in Indonesia. Adapted from a novel by G Francis (1898), which was based on real stories that occurred in the Tangerang and Betawi regions of the year (1813-1820). And the second film which the story is adapted from the novel is film *Si Tjoenat* (1929), it was silent and black and white. Production: Batavia Motion Picture (Jo Eng Sek, Nelso Wong). Director: Nelson Wong, player: Herman Sim, Ku Fung May, Lie A Djip. The film was adapted from a series story which was published in the newspaper "Perniagaan" (1903) which was then written into a novel form.

2.1 Period of 1926-1941

The Loetoeng Kasaroeng, *Djai Dasima*, and *Si Djonat* film are part of this period, but the three films are considered special because they are the first films in Indonesia and the first film which story is adapted from the novel. For the *Djai Dasima* and *Si Djonat* films both of them were deliberately written because the author has not found what date and month the two films were produced, but equally in 1929. So the film have not yet determined which was the first to be produced between the two.

Overall, during this period film producers were dominated by ethnic Cina, both production companies and the filmmakers, but film players were generally balanced between ethnic Chinese and indigenous people. The names of dominating film companies emerged such as Tan's film (owned by Tan Koen Yauw) and Java Industrial Film (owned by The Teng Chun) and Halimoen Film (belonging to the Wong brothers: Josua Wong and Nelson Wong and Othniel Wong). And the most popular directors include Tan Koen Yauw, and the Wong brothers. While the most popular players included Fifi Yoang, Roekiah, and Raden Muchtar.

During this period there were many films which scenarios were adapted from stories and legends or popular stories in the archipelago and those from China. Such as: Pat Kiam Hap (*Delapan Djago Pedang*) 1933. Ouw Peh Tjoa (*Doea Siloeman Oelar Poetih en Item*) 1934. Poci Sie Pa Lui Tay (*Kian Liang Koen Yoe Kang*) 1935. and many others. In 1941 there were 2 films adaptation of the novel produced: *Noesa Penida* film and *Siti Noerbaja* film adapted from a novel with the same title by Marah Roesli. *The Noesa Penida* film was adapted from *Noesa Penida* novel, this film is the work of the first "native" director, Andjar Asmara.

2.2 Period of 1942-1944

Japanese colonial period. There were very little film production was recorded, only 11 titles of film and controlled by Japan for propaganda purposes. And the company that produces the film was only the Japanese film company, such as Nippon Eiga Sha. In this period there was no film adaptation of the novel produced.

2.3 Period of 1945-1947,

No films were produced.

2.4 Period of 1948-1965

The early era of independence during the reign of President Soekarno or the Old Order era. In this period some companies and "indigenous" filmmakers have emerged and the presence of Chinese companies and filmmakers have begun to decline. It can also be said in this era, was the beginning of the birth, growth and development of "real" Indonesian films. Some company names appear. South Pacific Film, Perfini (Usmar Imail), Persari (Djamiludin Malik) etc. Names emerged which later became national film figures such as Usmar Ismail, Jamaludin Malik, D. Djayakusumah, Asrul Sani, Andjar Asmara, etc. Ratna Asmara (Andjar Asmara's wife, and she became Indonesia's first female director in the film *Sedap Malam* 1950).

In this period only two films were adapted from the novel: the film *Harta Karun* (1949) adapted from the novel "L'AVARE" by the French writer, Moliere. As well as a film of the *Anak Perawan di Sarang Penyamun* (1962) from the novel of the same title by Jeck Lesmana. (Jeck Lesmana is the parents of Mira Lesmana and Indra Lesmana).

2.5 Period of 1966-1990

This period was a period after the rebellion of G 30S PKI and the beginning of President Soeharto's government and was known as the New Order period. And from 1965-1970 only one title of the adaptation film produced that was the *Senja di Jakarta* film (1967). Starting in 1970, to the end of 1989 was the glorious or the golden age of Indonesian films. Lots of films are produced including films adaptation from novels, also from comic stories, from songs, stage scripts, legends etc. The following are films adaptation from the novel. Because a lot of film titles identified, here in writing, only the film title and year of production are written, and they were written according to the year order and alphabetical order in each year. If after the year of production the title of the novel is not written, means that the title of the film can be interpreted as the same title with the novel. And if after a year of production there is a two-point (..) means that the title of the film and the title of the novel are not necessarily the same or different (because the exact information has not been obtained yet).

Senja di Jakarta (1967). *Jang Djatuh Dikaki Lelaki* (1971). *Salah Asuhan* (1972). *Si Doel Anak Betawi* (1973). *Karmila* (1974). *Jinak-jinak Merpati* (1975) from novel "Akhir Sebuah Sengketa". *Senja di Pantai Losari* (1975). *Bungalow di Kaki Bukit* (1976). *Embun Pagi* (1976) from novel "Selembut Embun Pagi". *Kampus Biru* (1976) from novel "Cintaku di Kampus Biru". *Liku-liku Panasnya Cinta* (1976). *Ali Topan Anak Jalanan* (1977). *Cintaku Tergadai* (1977) from novel "Buaian Asmara". *Direktris Muda* (1977) from novel "Nyonya Merry Direktris Muda". *Kemelut Hidup* (1977). *Kugapai Cintamu* (1977). *Petualang Cilik* (1977). *Sejuta Duka Ibu* (1977). *Selangit Mesra* (1977). *Semau Gue* (1977). *Terminal Cinta* (1977) from novel "Terminal Cinta Terakhir". *Ombaknya Laut Mabuknya Cinta* (1978) from novel "Gali lobang, Gila Lobang". *Perempuan Tanpa Dosa* (1978). *Satu Malam Dua Cinta* (1978) from Novel "Satu Ranjang Dua Cinta". *Gadis Kampus* (1979) from novel "Berlalu Dalam Sunyi". *Puspa Indah Taman Hati* (1979).. *Sepasang Merpati* (1979) from import novel "You and Me, Baby".

Beningnya Hati Seorang Gadis (1980). *Disini Cinta Pertama Kali Bersemi* (1980). *Gadis Penakluk* (1980), from novel "Cinta Seorang Penakluk". *Kembang Padang Kelabu*

(1980).. *Permainan Bulan Desember* (1980).. *Sirkuit Kemelut* (1980).. *Bukan Impian Semusim* (1981).. *Dalam Lingkaran Cinta* (1981) from novel “Lingkaran Cinta”. *Detik-detik Cinta Menyentuh* (1981).. *Dr Karmila* (1981) from novel “Karmila”. *Jangan Ambil Nyawaku* (1981).. *Lembah Duka* (1981). *Mawar Jingga* (1981). *Mistik (Punahnya Rahasia Ilmu Iblis Leak)* (1981) from novel “Leak Ngakak”. *Putri Seorang Jendral* (1981).. *Sang Guru* (1981) from novel “Topaz Sang Guru” also adapted from novel “Topaze” by Marcel Pegnot (France). *Darah dan Mahkota Ronggeng* (1983) from novel “Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk”. *Ke Ujung Dunia* (1983).. *Biarkan Kami Bercinta* (1984) from novel “Dari Jendela SMP”. *Dia Yang Tercinta* (1984).. *Ranjau-Ranjau Cinta* (1984). *Saat-Saat Yang Indah* (1984).. *Seandainya Aku Boleh Memilih* (1984).. *Kidung Cinta* (1985)..

Melintas Badai (1985). *Preman* (1985) from novel “Two Different Words”. *Cinta Cuma Sepenggal Dusta* (1986).. *Ketika Musim Semi Tiba* (1986) from novel “Haneda”. *Merpati Tak Pernah Ingkar Janji* (1986).. *Takdir Marina* (1986) from novel “Takdir”. *Telaga Air Mata* (1986). *Yang Perkasa* (1986) from novel “Kuurai Rambutmu”. *Arini (Masih Ada Kereta Yang Akan lewat)* (1987).. *Harga Diri* (1987).. *Kasmaran* (1987) from novel “Misteri Sutra Yang Robek”. *Luka di Atas Luka* (1987).. *Lupus I, dan Lupus II* (1987). *Makar Diguncang Prahara* (1987). *Misteri Sumur Tua* (1987) from novel “Mayat-mayat Merangsang”. *Selamat Tinggal Jeanette* (1987).. *Tatkala Mimpi Berakhir* (1987).. *Kamus Cinta Sang Primadona* (1988) from novel “Sang Cowok Kesurupan Cinta). *Lukisan Berlumuran Darah* (1988).. *Noesa Penida (Pelangi Kasih Pandansari)* (1988).. *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* (1988) from novel “Perkawinan Murtubidan Juminten”. *Siska* (1988).. *Setegar Gunung Batu* (1988). *Suami* (1988).. *Krital-Krital Cinta* (1989). *Lupus III* (1989). *Sepasang Mata Maut* (1989).. *Sesaat Dalam Pelukan* (1989) dari novel “Luruh Kuncup Sebelum Berbunga”

2.6 Period of 1990-1999

This period was actually still in the era of President Soeharto's government. This period was deliberately made in a separate period because there were things that influence the existence and development of Indonesian films. Early in the 1990s came and then the rise of the private television station industry. People who have worked in the film industry such as directors, script writers, camera stylists, editors etc. including players (artists and actors) moved to the television industry. Film companies or Production Houses that have been producing films have changed the function of producing television programs, generally those produced are soap operas (electronic cinema) which are indeed a popular program for television shows. This results in the film that becoming unnoticed and deemed no longer able to make money.

This era is considered as the darkest era in the history of the development of Indonesian films. Indonesian films became suspended, in general films produced far from moral values were also far from aesthetic values. Movies produced are generally semi-sex movies such as: *Gairah Malam*, *Ranjang Ternoda*, *Misteri Janda Kembang*, *Bebas bercinta*, *Gairah Seksual*, and *Gejolak Seksual* movies.

In this period there were eight films adaptation of the novel produced, but the novels chosen to be produced were novels that also smelled sexually. Here are the titles of films and novels adapted. Movies of *Perawan Lembah Wilis* (1993). *Catatan Harian Tante Sonya* (1994) from novel “Hari Ini Tiada Cinta”. *Pergaulan Intim* (1995) from novel “Kupu-Kupu Malam”. *Kenikmatan Terlarang* (1996) from novel “Perempuan Malam”. *Tidak Cukup Satu Cinta* (1997). *Telegram* (1997). *Setegar Gunung Batu* (1998). and *Suami* (1999).

2.7 Period of 2000 – 2018 (Now)

This period is an era of reform. It was marked by the end of President Soeharto's reign which was triggered by the May 1998 chaos. Slowly Indonesian films began to rise again, although it was very difficult due to the economic crisis, the increasingly strong television industry with its superior program, soap operas, the high cost of film material (celuloid ribbons). The Ups of Indonesian films generated by a new generation of film makers, the emergence of young filmmakers, was followed by the emergence of young and new film artists (actrees and actors). The technology used has also shifted from celuloid tape to video tape technology. The use of video technology is considered quite adequate in terms of image recording quality, and is far cheaper than the celuloid band.

From 2000 to 2005 only about 80 titles of films were produced, generally films produced using technology in video format. If it was taken on average per year, annual film production in this period is only about 18 titles per year, a very small amount. And the film adaptation of the novel is not so much, but it is very surprising and successful in getting the number of viewers. The film includes: *Ca Bau Kan* (2001) from a novel of the same name by ReMi SiLado. The movie *Ada Apa Dengan Cinta* (2002) The film is able to reach 2.7 million viewers. Film *Eiffel I'm In Love* (2003) this film got 2.6 million viewers. Film *Me VS High Heels- Aku VS Sepatu Hak Tinggi* (2005). Furthermore, there are two films adaptation of the most phenomenal novel produced in 2008, the film *Laskar Pelangi*, director Riri Reza and the film *Ayat-Ayat Cinta*, director Hanung Bramantio. Both of these films are successful when viewed from the number of viewers. *The Laskar Pelangi* film got 4.7 million viewers. *The Ayat-Ayat Cinta* film got 3.58 million viewers. The film *Laskar Pelangi* until now is a film adaptation of the most successful novels to reach the number of viewers and is not yet defeated. While the best-selling film in film history in Indonesia is the film *Warkop DKI Reborn* (2016) with a number of 6.8 million of viewers.

In the year 2010-2017 (now) is the era of the rising of the film adaptation of the novel after the era of the 1970s and 1980s. In this era, the average film adaptation of the novel produced approximately 11 film titles per year. According to KONFIDEN (Komunitas Film Independen) data, there are about 80 film titles adapted from novels produced from 2010-2017. If we look generally from the whole film adaptation. Those films were a film which the story was taken from popular teen novels. But unfortunately many of the film adaptations failed to reach a large number of viewers. This means that if it was seen quantitatively, the number of production increases but the number of spectators decreases.

The following is the film sequence of adaptations from the novel based on the year of production and number of viewers / spectators. 1). *Laskar Pelangi* (2008) 4.7 millions. 2). *Habibie & Ainun* (2012) 4.5 millions. 3). *Ada Apa Dengan Cinta 2* (2016). 3.7 millions. 4). *Ayat-Ayat Cinta* (2008) 3.5 millions. 5). *My Stupid Boss* (2016) 3 millions. 6). *Ada Apa Dengan Cinta* (2002) 2.7 millions. 7). *Eiffel I'm In Love* (2003) 2.6 millions. 8). *Hangout* (2016) 2.6 millions. 9). *5 cm* (2012) 2.4 millions. 10). *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* (2009) 2.1 millions. 11). *Sang Pemimpi* (2009) 2 millions. 12). *Comic 8: Casino Kings Part 2* (2015) 1.8 millions. 13). *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijck* (2013) 1.7 millions. 14). *Surga Yang Tak Dirindukan 2* (2017) 1.6 millions. 15). *Comic 8* (2014) 1.6 millions spectators.

3 Conclusion

Based on the description above, finally it can be known and understood how the existence and development of the film adaptation from the novel in Indonesia from time to time. In certain periods or eras there may be no adaptation films produced. The adaptation film can also be influenced by the dominant ethnic culture of filmmakers such as the era before independence in the Dutch colonial era. Even in certain periods affected by trends, such as

the period of the 1990s -1999, the trend at that time was semi-pornographic films, so the novels adapted to be films were also novels that smelled of pornography. In terms of the amount of film adaptation that production based on certain period also different, there are ups and downs. There was a glorious period and a period of downs. But there was also a period at the beginning of independence (Soekarno's era) only two film titles adapted from the novel, in terms of the length of time, around 15 years. An in-depth study is needed to see and to know the factors (internal and external) that influence the development of film adaptation of novels in Indonesia.

When viewed in terms of quantity of film production, the glorious or golden era of Indonesian films took place in the era of 1970-1980s, this glory was also in line with the film's adaptation. Next, in the era of 1990-2000) Indonesian films were considered suspended, in line with the emergence of the television industry and socio-political development, the end of the Soeharto government era and the beginning of reform. Furthermore, the trend of adaptation of novels to films in Indonesia began to bloom following the success of the film *Ayat – Ayat Cinta* (Hanum Bramantyo, 2008) and the film *Laskar Pelangi* (Riri Reza, 2008). The two films are adaptation films that are very influential in continuing the rising of Indonesian films.

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