



Research Summary

INDONESIAN FILMMAKERS ON HAYAO MIYAZAKI

A TRUE INSPIRATION

A video report made for the Sumitomo Foundation

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The starting point of this project is personal as much as it is professional. I am an admirer of Hayao Miyazaki's films and I know that a number of friends in the Indonesian film industry share the admiration of his works too. The research project was to examine the different ways of influence that Miyazaki's films have on our thoughts and practices. So far, academic research has neglected the relationships (potential or real) between Indonesian film production and the region, while at the same time we hear comments on the rise of an 'Asian film' industry. Finding the question intriguing, I decided to focus on the question of influence that the works of Hayao Miyazaki may have on Indonesian films.

As a practitioner I have the advantage of access that other researchers may not have, but still it took me months to start a discussion about this somewhat 'sensitive' issue of *influence*. It was a matter of willingness to open up. All of my interviewees are respected and established filmmakers, winners of different international awards, who do not easily share their creative process with other people, let alone announce it publicly. So it was a matter of convincing them about the need to look at the larger ramifications of this seemingly simple question of influence.

I conducted all the interviews in an informal setting with the assumption that it would allow the interviewees to discuss these issues openly. I used a small video camera with modest supporting equipments. The ten filmmakers that I interviewed in this research are Mira Lesmana (producer) and Riri Riza (director) of the Miles Films company, Edwin (director) and Meiske Taurisia (producer) of babibutafilm, Titien Wattimena (scriptwriter), Mandy Marahimin (producer) from Tala Production, Agung Sentausa (director), Nia Dinata (producer/director) from Kalyana Shira Film, Ifa Isfansyah (director), and Mouly Surya (director).

Initially I was planning to organize an informal discussion or 'hang out' with around 4-5 filmmakers at the same time, and let each of them participate in the recording of the discussion, so that I could also evoke the way things are discussed in the film community. But alas, things have changed. It was difficult to organize such a 'happening' as each of the filmmakers was busy working on different projects.

In order to get the academic perspective on the matter, I also interviewed Prof. Dr. Bambang Wibawarta, the dean of Faculty of Humanities in the University of Indonesia, who is also an expert on Japanese culture, and Hilmar Farid a historian and a cultural worker who is also a founding member of the Jaringan Kerja Budaya (Network for Cultural Work). Their comments and thoughts on the subject allowed to get a better sense of the way Japanese popular culture, animation in particular, influenced and shaped cultural production in Indonesia.

The result of the research process is rendered in a 1h15m video. I included footages from Hayao Miyazaki's films. Unfortunately I could not get permission from the Ghibli Studio in Japan to use the materials for this purpose. I wrote several e-mails but without response. Several people that I contacted, including the Japan Cultural Center and the organizers of the Jakarta International Film Festival (JIFFest), confirmed the problems of contacting the Ghibli Studio. Mr. Lalu Rosaimi of the JIFFest said that he had been trying to contact them in the last six years with no result. Knowing that the footages are essential in my research to prove my case I decided to take several shots from the official trailers of Miyazaki's film. I really hope that we can resolve this copyright issue in the future.

I am now planning to screen the 'audio-visual report' of the research at the University of Indonesia, the biggest national public university in the country, and also at the Paramadina University, one of the most important private universities in Jakarta. I also hope that I could organize another event at the Japan Cultural Center in Jakarta. I expect to receive positive responses and constructive criticism that would help me to develop the report into a documentary film in the near future.

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Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

- August 2011, INDONESIA FILMMAKERS ON HAYAO MIYAZAKI, Preview and discussion in the University of Indonesia
- September 2011, INDONESIA FILMMAKERS ON HAYAO MIYAZAKI, Preview and discussion in Paramadina University
- INDONESIA FILMMAKERS ON HAYAO MIYAZAKI, Preview and discussion in Japan Cultural Center, Jakarta

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)