

## Crossings: Asian Cinema and Media Culture

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Wai-Siam Hee

# Malaysian Cinema in the New Millennium

## Transcendence beyond Multiculturalism

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# Introduction: The Malaysian Digital Indies and a Cinema beyond Multiculturalism: New Forms, Aesthetics, and Genres in Post-2000 Malaysian Cinema

'Malaysia got cinema wan meh?' 'Oh, you mean go to the cinema to watch films?' 'Malaysian cinema . . . all Malay films wan right?' 'What is there to study about Malaysian cinema?' 'Why are you studying about Malaysian cinema in Australia?' 'Malay films mostly are about ghosts, love and gangsters, right?' 'You mean P. Ramlee films?' 'Are Malaysian films . . . worth watching?' 'If we don't study about Malaysian cinema, who would study it then?' 'Yeah, I only remember *Sepet* made by Yasmin Ahmad, right?' 'Malaysian films got nice films to watch?' 'Malaysian films are Malay films what . . .' 'Ya, I know Yasmin, she made all the television commercials that made me think back of the good old days.' 'Pontianak films?'

The above responses were among some honest opinions that I received when friends, family members, and academics asked me what the content for this book was about. Malaysian cinema. Is there a sustainable cinematic industry that can appeal to the multiethnic and multicultural population, or does this multiethnic and multicultural population feel a sense of attachment towards being represented by the cinematic representations of this cinema in a nation of 33 million?

The journey in writing this book did begin with my own sense of curiosity that led towards an exploration into what Malaysian cinema is truly all about. Growing up in Malaysia, I had a sense of attachment to Hollywood films. I must admit that I also had a curiosity in browsing through the local dailies just to find out the titles of the latest releases in the local cinemas. This was, of course, before the time of the invention of cineplexes and when cinema halls in Malaysia were standalone buildings such as Odeon, Capitol, Rex, Lido, Ruby, and Cathay that eventually replaced the 'wayang pacak' set up at the various *kampungs* (villages).

These cinema halls that were built in the towns were commonly referred to as 'theatres' or 'pictures' and are the legacies of the cinema chains of the Shaw Brothers and Cathay-Keris that experienced their heyday in the 1950s to the 1990s. These cinema halls eventually closed, and the buildings made into little shops selling items that were sold at warehouse prices. The audiences that visited these cinemas were indeed from various ethnic backgrounds, and the experience of watching a film in them was one that moved beyond multiculturalism.



Figure 0.1: Film poster from New Capitol Theatre. Source: Izzuddin Ramli.

I have vivid memories of visiting these cinemas, the first being an invite by my late uncle who worked as a caretaker/projectionist at a cinema in Malacca. He presented me with my first literal peek into the cinema world when he opened a little window at the back of the cinema to give me a glimpse into the film being shown. As I was not tall enough, I remember being lifted so that I could look through the small window. While I have no memory of the on-screen images, I do recall hearing the grinding projector. Little did I know that this was possibly the start of my journey into the cinema world.

I did not have the opportunity to watch films in these cinemas during the 1950s to the 1980s and missed out on experiencing classics such as *Ben Hur* (1959), *The Sound of Music* (1965), *The Terminator* (1984), and *Back to the Future* (1985). The films I watched growing up were screened on the three local terrestrial channels and were limited to the weekend cigarette company sponsored featured films on television known as the 'Dunhill Double' or 'Perilly's Action Movies', or there were the options of watching Hong Kong or Bollywood films. On the other hand, there were the options of watching films on the VHS (and laser disc), which was a rare treat at home. The viewing of films on the VHS was a challenge for the magnetic tape would often dislodge or 'come out' or be ruined by fungus. These tapes also need to be rewound to the beginning after watching. As there was no remote control then,





**Figure 0.2:** Plaza Cinema Seremban circa 1945. Source: Sakhivel Pathmanathan.

I became the human remote control. I could well predict the plot of many films, which led to my mum asking, did you direct this? You should be a film director (which was and is not the number one choice of occupation for the child of Asian parents), leading me to wanting to experience my first film at a cinema. Most people who grew up in Seremban before the 2000s would be familiar with the ‘naughtier’ posters put up at a local cinema that infamously screened ‘not suitable for kids’ and adult-themed films.

To experience my first film in a cinema, in 1993, I had to take a bus to the Rex cinema in Seremban and wait almost an hour before the gates opened, so that I could purchase a ticket to *Jurassic Park*. When the caretakers attempted to open the shutters to the ticket booth, I was standing at the front of the line and was constantly pushed into the shutters, due to the unruly crowd. This was when there was no internet purchasing of tickets. When the shutters did open, I had no idea what to do or where to go, and it appeared that the other cinemagoers, who were from all ethnic backgrounds, had no idea what queuing up meant. Noticing the mad dash to purchase tickets for the film, I soon realized that I had to purchase the ticket from a ticket booth. I was fortunate enough to get one, as they quickly sold out.

Malaysians who had the opportunity to visit these standalone cinema halls can vividly share some of the memories of watching a film in them. The first memory is the entrance to the cinema, mostly a stairway. At the entrance were huge glass casings that contained film posters of ‘now showing’ or ‘next change’ films. The purchasing of the ticket was done through a ticket booth via a little glass opening. Next was the snack counter that did not sell popcorn but rather a variety of snacks such as *kuaci* (pumpkin seeds), *kacang putih* (local nuts), and *murukku* (Indian snacks), cuttlefish, fruits, and crisps sold in a cone-shaped wrapper. The staff at these cinemas did not wear matching uniforms but were mostly politely and respectfully

greeted as 'uncle'. The entrance to the cinema hall was closed by a heavy curtain, and cinemagoers had to present their tickets to the uncle, who either ushered them to their seats or used a torchlight as a guide towards the area where the seats were located.

The journey to the seat itself was memorable, as cinemagoers had to walk onto *kuaci* seed shells, chewing gum, wrappers; and at times, an 'unknown creature', suspected to be a mouse, could run over their feet. Woe to those who chose to wear slippers instead of shoes. Over time, the seats changed from a foldable wooden seat to one that had a worn-out cushion. As smoking was permitted at that time, I remember the beam from the projector being clouded by the grey cigarette smoke that floated upwards, accompanied by the grinding sound of the projector. Pity the projectionist should the sound suddenly go off or should he be unable to replace the reel in time, as he missed the 'cigarette burn', for this would be greeted by loud jeers and booing. Air-conditioning was eventually introduced, so cinemagoers had the opportunity of experiencing watching films from a higher floor (or the balcony) and paying a higher price. Little did we know that hot air moves upwards, and eventually the entire cinema hall became air-conditioned.

Growing up, I had only heard the term 'Malay films' and was never exposed to the term Malaysian cinema until the 2000s. The term Malay films was simply an accepted term to describe Malaysian cinema, as Malaysian films mostly portrayed Malay actors, speaking in the Malay language, and highlighting issues faced by the Malay community. The films also commonly revolved around the melodramatic elements of melodramatic elements of *suka* (love), *duka* (tragedy), and *jenaka* (humour). The titles were also in Malay, and I hardly recall a non-Malay name in the opening and end credits in Malaysian films. Like so many other Malaysians, I am accustomed to preferring Hollywood-, Hong Kong-, and Bollywood-made films. Such trends continue, as Malaysian cinemagoers still prefer watching Hollywood, Hong Kong, and Bollywood films over Malaysian-made films in cineplexes.

And like so many other Malaysians who, when asked what their favourite Malaysian film is, or who is their favourite Malaysian filmmaker, would either locate and point to Malaysian cinema in the 1960s to the films of P. Ramlee or to the 2000s to the films of Yasmin Ahmad. I too found myself similarly guilty of this, probably due to the lack of exposure or even interest in Malaysian cinema. Even as a university student who majored in film, I do not recall watching Malaysian-made films, other than *Amok* (1995), nor were there many discussions about Malaysian films or about their rich history. This situation remains unchanged despite Malaysian films and filmmakers winning numerous accolades in film festivals and competitions abroad. The exposure about the importance of preserving the rich cultural heritage of Malaysian cinema remains wanting. The study of Malaysian cinema within the public and private institutions of higher education that offer film studies or communication programmes still do not place much importance on the study of Malaysian cinema. Ironically, it was in Australia where I found my interest in

and Indonesia. I have also written articles about Malaysian cinema in my media columns at MalayMail.com and Aliran.com.

## Chapter Outline

Chapter 1 discusses how Malaysian cinema has been subjected to the forces of capital and state control. Malaysian cinema has always been a transnational cinema, as each phase of Malaysian cinema has been built on transnational forces and utilised to contest various issues. The rise of the MDI makes Malaysian cinema transnational in new ways in the post-2000 era. This chapter also discusses how, according to state imaginings, cinema has been utilised as a site for contesting exclusion and inclusion. Issues of race, ethnicity, and class are often manipulated within the general production of Malaysian cinema. In line with state policies of creating an ideal middle-class Malay society from the 1970s, this process had sidelined other ethnic minorities. These marginalised communities experienced a form of social and cultural negation and potentially longed for the shared space of cultural identity from which they were excluded. It is crucial to examine the importance of capital and policy control in determining the nature of culture, class, and consumption. Malaysian cinema is not exclusive of politics, mainly when race and ethnicity is a fault line within that cinema. The chapter also discusses a detailed history of how Malaysian cinema has always been a transnational cinema. This begins with how cinema's formation during the era of colonisation and decolonisation using the transnational framework resulted in a heterogeneous multicultural cinema and how modernisation and the neoliberal policies of the 1980s and the 1990s have pushed for creating the ideal middle-class Malay society.

Chapter 2 identifies, defines, and examines this new independent cinema; it also examines the political economy of the MDI and how it came into existence through the different socio-cultural and political changes within an era of intensified modernisation and globalisation. The chapter then outlines the modus operandi of the MDI by examining the transnational production, exhibition, and distribution methods employed. Although this film movement is not entirely a 'radical' cinema, nor does it amount to being anti-establishment, it provides a space for the critical discourse in the socio-cultural and political representations of contemporary Malaysia. This chapter also examines how the MDI has elevated the status of a relatively unknown Malaysian cinema. Using digital technology and the internet, the MDI contests and renegotiates national policies and ethnic and national identities. These transnational methods have allowed the MDI to bypass repressive cinematic regulations while breaking and ignoring habituated cinematic conventions and traditions. This ideology, which discusses taboo subject matter and themes such as politics, ethnicity, sexuality, marginalisation, and gender, depicts a more positive construction and more even-handed representation of society. While not formally belonging to an established organisation or movement, MDI filmmakers have

established a distinctively new set of filmmaking elements. These new elements are created through new transnational production methods and funding, distribution and exhibition, and a new audience that relates to the subject matter and themes.

Chapter 3 locates the works of the MDI within the framework of a 'postethnic cosmopolitan cinema'. This framework continues the book's argument that the MDI is a transnational cinema by combining the terms 'postethnicity', 'cosmopolitanism', and 'cinema'. Chapter 3 also analyses how the themes of a postethnic cosmopolitan cinema distinguish the MDI from the ethnocentricity of mainstream cinema. The MDI uses cosmopolitan themes 'beyond multiculturalism' to examine the changing Malaysian socio-political and cultural environment. Rather than focusing on elements of race and ethnicity, the MDI envisions a nation that is both postethnic and cosmopolitan. The usage of cosmopolitan themes has enabled the MDI to deconstruct the stereotypes of race and ethnicity while focusing on contesting issues of interracial relationships, cultural and ethnic diversity, humanistic philosophies and universalism, and ideals of global justice, sovereignty, and multiple and coinciding modernities. The discussion of the envisioning of a postethnic nation asserts that Malaysia's national identity and ethnicity are still undergoing contestation and renegotiation. The MDI contests the accepted construction of 'race' and 'ethnic' communities by proposing coexistence, tolerance, and diversity to create equality through the universality of humanism. This construction allows the MDI to challenge the ethnocentricity of Malay hegemony in Malaysian cinema. The chapter then discusses how the MDI shifted Malaysian cinema from hidebound representations of ethnoracial communities composed of discrete ethnic and racial identities toward envisioning a utopian Malaysian society. The films challenge the disagreeable ethnic history of Malaysian cinema by using the humanistic themes of engaging and embracing the Other.

Chapter 4 examines the (re)popularisation of horror in Malaysian cinema through the key characteristics of the Malaysian horror film or *filem seram*. This chapter also explores how 'The Malaysian Horror Renaissance' and *filem seram* are used as a conscious attempt at reclaiming a positive view of Islam. The chapter also discusses how the boundaries between MDI and commercial filmmaking practices are blurred. This is achieved by analysing the characteristics of contemporary Malaysian horror cinema, which are to some extent common across MDI and commercially produced films. The chapter discusses how the Malaysian horror film is a reflection of the social, cultural, and political anxieties of its time. To examine the Malaysian horror genre from a cinematic, socio-cultural, political, and religious perspective, the historical and cultural functions of the monster in these horror narratives is analysed. This study of the monster is essential in explaining the social-cultural and political anxieties reflected at particular moments. The chapter then discusses how the commercial horror films produced by MDI filmmakers diverge from the works of mainstream horror filmmakers based on different representations

of religion, its resistance to cinematic regulations regarding horror films, and the MDI inclination towards pan-Asian themes. The two, however, diverge through their different representations of religion, and the horror films of MDI filmmakers have an inclination towards pan-Asian horror films. MDI filmmakers continue their preference for transnational filmmaking methods, as their horror films are embedded with pan-Asian aesthetics, subject matter, and themes, and are distributed and exhibited beyond Malaysia. Because their popularity led them to be paradoxically reincorporated into the traditional national film culture by producing mainstream films, they continue their preference of using the transnational to contest national issues.

Chapter 5 provides a conclusion to the book and examines the Fourth Phase of Malaysian cinema by looking at the way Malaysian society and its cinema attempt to further move 'beyond multiculturalism'. The chapter begins with a summary of how the historical outline of Malaysian cinema discussed Malaysian cinema as consistently influenced by transnational forces and how it has progressed from a cinema built for capitalist purposes from the 1940s to the 1960s, 1970s to the 1990s, and in the post-2000 period. The chapter then summarises how the MDI has revived a lacklustre Malaysian cinema through the employment of transnational platforms and networks and the employment of postethnic and cosmopolitan issues. This approach has allowed the MDI to intervene in debates about interracial relationships, cultural and ethnic diversity, humanistic philosophies and universalism, and ideals of global justice, without the need to focus on race and ethnicity. The chapter summarises how MDI filmmakers entering mainstream commercial filmmaking could be seen as an acceptance of mainstream filmmaking methods and themes, as well as the acceptance of dominant discourses of race and ethnicity in Malaysian cinema. The chapter then examines the possibilities for prospective research within the fourth phase of Malaysian cinema. Firstly, the chapter proposes that further research be made about production collaborations with China in a search for more funding, co-productions, and distribution and exhibition opportunities. Secondly, research could be done in mapping out the growing interest in filmmaking as well as the various sites of gathering for filmmakers and film lovers that have increased in Malaysia, alongside the festivals and competition circuits that are available in Malaysia. Third, this chapter suggests how research in the fourth phase should examine the rise of filmmakers and filmmaking efforts in the east Malaysian states of Sabah and Sarawak as a recognition towards the prominent names making prominent films about the socio-cultural and political narratives that need to be equally examined. Lastly, this chapter proposes how research into the emergence of more Chinese- and Tamil language-films in the fourth phase of Malaysian cinema and a supposed 'postethnic nation' can actually be recognised as efforts to move 'beyond multiculturalism'. Or, could this phenomenon be studied as a return towards the establishment of ethno-centric cinemas that would segregate Malaysian cinema into a Malay, Chinese, Indian, and a Sabah and Sarawak-centric film industry?

## **Book Research Questions**

As the introduction to my book, this chapter has demonstrated how Malaysian cinema has been subjected to the forces of capital and state control. Throughout this chapter, I have noted and outlined the changing phases based on the networks of power that summarise the ownership and control of Malaysian cinema. I have divided these changes according to three phases: the era of colonisation and decolonisation, the era of government intervention, and post-2000 Malaysian cinema. The key argument of this chapter is that Malaysian cinema has always been a transnational cinema, as each phase of Malaysian cinema has been built on transnational forces and utilised as a site of contesting various issues; however, the rise of the MDI makes Malaysian cinema transnational in new ways in the post-2000 era.

Cinema has been utilised as a site for contesting the progression of exclusion and inclusion according to state imaginings. Issues of race, ethnicity, and class are often manipulated within the general production of Malaysian cinema. In line with state policies of creating an ideal middle-class Malay society from the 1970s, this process sidelined the existence of other ethnic minorities and marginalised non-Malay communities. These marginalised communities experienced a form of social and cultural negation and potentially longed for the shared space of cultural identity from which they were excluded. I examine the importance of capital and policy control in determining the nature of culture, class, and consumption.

My study of the formation of cinema during the era of colonisation and decolonisation using the transnational framework has illustrated the favourable existence of a heterogeneous multicultural cinema. Modernisation and neoliberal policies within the 1980s and 1990s have pushed for the creation of the ideal middle-class Malay society. State intervention and involvement have created a homogeneous national cinema through the practice of exclusion. While the mainstream cinema of this era failed to capitalise on the benefits of globalisation, the MDI has emerged as a transnational cinema. Lacking support in state funding, locations for exhibition, and oppressive laws barring its creativity, it moved beyond the Malaysian borders and was widely accepted by the audiences of international film festivals. The deterritorialisation of this transnational and cosmopolitan cinema then problematises the accepted notion of Malaysian national cinema constructed on elements of race and ethnicity, influenced and determined through the control of capital and policies. It offers a site for contesting hegemonic ideologies by providing a voice for the marginalised subaltern community untouched by mainstream cinema.

This introduction has established the hypothesis and background for my research questions while underlining the importance in the study of contemporary Malaysian cinema. Using the framework of transnational cinema, I review the elements that constitute Malaysian cinema and search for changes, if any, that can be found in post-2000 Malaysian cinema. How can Malaysian cinema be theorised as transnational cinema? How does the MDI help construct the national identity of

postcolonial Malaysia? What changes, if any, can be found in the representation of the marginalised in society? What are the new genres and new forms emerging in post-2000 Malaysian cinema and through the MDI? How does the MDI advance the growth and development of interethnic relationships in a multi-ethnic community such as Malaysia? What are the best methods for studying the financing, production, distribution, and reception of the MDI when its 'nationality' is questioned due to its movement across Malaysian borders? How does the framework of transnational cinema help us to critically examine the specificity of the national cinema against the overwhelming force of transnational capital? This book analyses how the MDI is constituted as a site for contesting these state policies and ideologies in a postcolonial nation undergoing socio-cultural and political transitions.

## 'Beyond Multiculturalism': The Malaysian Postethnic Cosmopolitan Cinema

The MDI works within the framework of a 'postethnic cosmopolitan cinema' to argue that it is a transnational cinema that combines 'postethnicity', 'cosmopolitanism', and 'cinema'. It is crucial to analyse how a postethnic cosmopolitan cinema's themes distinguish the MDI from mainstream cinema. The MDI uses cosmopolitan themes that go 'beyond multiculturalism' to examine the changing Malaysian socio-political and cultural environment. The MDI envisions a postethnic and cosmopolitan nation. The usage of cosmopolitan themes has enabled the MDI to deconstruct race and ethnicity stereotypes while focusing on contesting interracial relationships, cultural and ethnic diversity, humanistic philosophies and universalism, and ideals of global justice, sovereignty, and multiple and coinciding modernities.

This chapter discusses how cosmopolitan themes have enabled the MDI to transcend borders. MDI films can move across borders in search of overseas capital and a sympathetic audience because of the universal relevance of cosmopolitan themes, which are broad, humanistic, and universal. Trans-ethnic/trans-racial love, hope, and humanism, easily translate across cultures, appeal to a globally prominent ideology. Because cosmopolitan themes renegotiate multiculturalism and deconstruct the stereotypes of race and ethnicity, MDI films adopt a postethnic approach to challenge mainstream cinema's hegemonic exclusivism and negation of a culturally diverse Malaysia.<sup>1</sup> This postethnic approach is necessary in demonstrating how the nation-building process remains incomplete and suggests that it is better to conceptualise the Malaysian nation as a single yet diverse/heterogeneous community and not a nation of separate ethnicities and absolute races. To achieve this, the MDI employs *Bangsa* Malaysia as a postethnic concept that refigures race and ethnicity, religion, and other cultural differences.<sup>2</sup> *Bangsa* Malaysia projects an egalitarian society with shared fundamental characteristics by incorporating differences and

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1. As discussed in Chapter 1, ethnic contestation and integration have often been the focal point in the Malaysian nation-building process. Although history states that the struggle for independence was successfully achieved through compromise and cooperation among the ethnic communities, it was ethnicity itself that has been greatly contested.

2. See the discussion of *Bangsa* Malaysia in Chapter 1.



cultivating solidarity. In short, the MDI envisions an imaginary *Bangsa Malaysia* that is both postethnic and cosmopolitan.

How this digital independent cinema, termed the Malaysian Digital Indies (MDI), created a new informal film culture that challenged the hegemony of Malaysian cinema needs to be further examined. The MDI emerged from a repressive political and cultural environment to employ transnational production, exhibition, and distribution methods that challenge Malaysian cinema's current political economy. These transnational networks allowed, even forced, the MDI to move abroad, as they were mostly denied any form of state support. The MDI then used these transnational influences to create new production methods, aesthetics, and cosmopolitan themes to narrate Malaysian nationhood's alternative stories.

Cosmopolitan themes have enabled the MDI to transcend borders. MDI films can move across borders, searching for overseas capital and a sympathetic audience because of the universal relevance of cosmopolitan themes, which are broad, humanistic, and universal. Trans-ethnic/trans-racial love, hope, and humanism easily translate across cultures, appeal to a globally prominent ideology, and go beyond discussions of race and ethnicity without belonging to any particular community or nationality. Because cosmopolitan themes renegotiate multiculturalism and deconstruct race and ethnicity stereotypes, MDI films draw away from the Malay-centric mainstream cinema.

The MDI adopts a postethnic approach to challenge mainstream cinema's hegemonic exclusivism and negation of a culturally diverse Malaysia. This postethnic approach is necessary for demonstrating how the nation-building process remains incomplete and suggests that it is better to conceptualise the Malaysian nation as a single yet diverse/heterogeneous community and not a nation of separate ethnicities. To achieve this, the MDI employs *Bangsa Malaysia* as a postethnic concept that prefigures race and ethnicity, religion, and other cultural differences. *Bangsa Malaysia* projects an egalitarian society with shared fundamental characteristics by incorporating differences and cultivating solidarity. As such, MDI films are about the envisioning of an imaginary *Bangsa Malaysia* that is both postethnic and cosmopolitan.

How the MDI consciously contests these racial and ethnic assumptions and stereotypes by dismissing the need to propagate racial and ethnic ideologies is another element that requires further investigation. This chapter examines the imaginary *Bangsa Malaysia* of the MDI. Because *Bangsa Malaysia* is both postethnic and cosmopolitan, this chapter merges these concepts to suggest the framework of a 'postethnic cosmopolitan cinema'. The 'postethnic cosmopolitan cinema' concept will support this book's argument of the MDI challenging the backdrop of Malay cinema because postethnicity uses cosmopolitan themes to move 'beyond [official] multiculturalism' (Hollinger 1995). This framework is both timely and necessary for examining the changing Malaysian socio-political and cultural scene. Malaysians today have become more aware and increasingly critical of ethnic consciousness.

Since its independence, Malaysia has been one of Asia's most plural and multi-ethnic societies. Malaysia celebrates ethnic tolerance and understanding with an economic blueprint influenced by various social and cultural experiences. During independence, one of the main challenges was to establish a stable economy with equal wealth distribution. From the socio-cultural perspective, one of the governing forces influencing the modern nation is Islam as its religion. Conversely, globalisation has introduced the growing influences of secularism from Western culture. The adoptions of neo-liberal and modernisation policies have altered Malaysia's socio-political and economic environment from an underdeveloped nation fast-tracked into a global economic force. This phenomenon led by the new forces of global, transnational capitalism has caused a renegotiation of the joint production and reproduction characterisations of the nation-state, culture, identity, and modernity (Ong 1999, 22). Over the past few decades, the Malaysian socio-economic and political policies have been primarily dictated and built on former prime minister Mahathir Mohamad's mix of neo-liberalist socio-political-economic interests until the emergence of post-2000 Malaysian cinema. Today's cosmopolitan and internet-savvy generation are exposed to and emancipated by Western notions of democracy, meritocracy, and liberalism. They acknowledge that race and ethnicity are increasingly contested and negotiate the continued state indoctrination of racial and ethnic allegiance (Azly 2009, 429).

While one could acknowledge that race and ethnicity remain inseparable from the daily negotiations in everyday life, in the reading of MDI films, perhaps it is worth imagining a postethnic cosmopolitan nation that moves beyond indoctrination by race and ethnicity. In defining ethnicity's nature, it must be understood that the nature of ethnic relations in Malaysia is uniquely different, as ethnicity has always been deeply embedded in the workplace, schools, and politics. The concepts of race and ethnicity appear difficult to distinguish, for race contains an ethnic dimension. Ethnicity generally seems to be racialised (Gracia 2007), and both concepts are often used interchangeably in Malaysia. Both concepts, however, have negative connotations and labelling that promote prejudice, discrimination, and abuse, for these concepts support the status quo of inferiority imposed on dominated groups by dominant groups to control and oppress (Gracia 2007). This matter is further complicated, as religion becomes the critical marker of ethnic boundaries and a symbol of differentiation (Chee 2010, 99–110). Ethnicity, race, and religion are commonly used in official and non-official discourses. Filing a form for the application of a banking account requires the declaration of ethnicity and religion. The Malaysian identification card (MyKad) categorises Malaysians into 'Islam' and 'non-Islam'. This method of defining an ethnic community through its distinctive physical characteristics, language, religion, customs, institutions, or cultural traits is wrong-ended, has significant consequences for ethnic relations, and cannot be an adequate method of optimistic public administration (Corlett 2007). The country has to therefore move beyond ethnic allegiance and work through the trauma

caused by the 13 May 1969 race riots that altered the course of Malaysian history (Khoo 2006) and its ensuing policies supposedly formulated to restore ethnic and race relations. This chapter, therefore, suggests the postethnic cosmopolitan cinema as a new model for examining ethnic and race relations in Malaysia.<sup>3</sup>

The discussion on how the MDI fits within a postethnic cosmopolitan cinema framework will be in two sections. Section one defines the terms 'postethnic' and 'cosmopolitanism' and discusses how they complement each other in creating a 'postethnic cosmopolitan cinema.' It then examines how cosmopolitanism and the postethnic perspective problematise ethnic identity and move beyond discussions of multiculturalism. The postethnic perspective breaks the deadlock within multicultural debates by favouring a cosmopolitan approach over pluralism.

Cosmopolitanism then proposes creating new transnational networks connecting social movements that identify with a moral concern for humanity regardless of borders. This situation allows cosmopolitanism to recognise diversity without categorising it according to nationality, ethnicity, religion, language, and race. In doing so, cosmopolitanism promotes a form of postethnic diversity with a sense of empathy that proposes harmonious coexistence through tolerance and acceptance of different beliefs, culture, religion, and opinions.

The terms 'postethnic' and 'cosmopolitanism' complement each other in creating a 'postethnic cosmopolitan cinema' that problematises ethnic identity and moves beyond multiculturalism discussions. Therefore, it is crucial to establish how they complement each other. To further define the postethnic cosmopolitan cinema, the significant features shared by the postethnic cosmopolitan cinema, Third Cinema, and accented cinema are examined. A theoretical framework will thus be established better to comprehend the functions and operations of the MDI. This framework will explain how the postethnic cosmopolitan cinema has similar features such as the oppositional and revolutionary themes of Third Cinema and issues of belonging and marginalisation of accented cinema.

The second section demonstrates the characteristics of the Malaysian postethnic cosmopolitan cinema. It explores the potential of using the postethnic cosmopolitan framework in reading the MDI works and supplements these characteristics with examples from MDI films. Finally, it offers a close reading of *Sepet* (2005) as a model example of a Malaysian postethnic cosmopolitan film. This section will address the following questions: How can the two concepts of postethnicity and cosmopolitanism be reconfigured to provide an instructive reading of the MDI as a 'postethnic cosmopolitan cinema'? How do MDI films imagine constructing a postethnic Malaysian nation that looks beyond multiculturalism and ethnic allegiance? How do MDI films deconstruct the portrayal of Malaysians in the mainstream cinema in favour of a nation built on mutual respect, protection of cultural diversity, humanity, and universal equality? How do MDI films acknowledge and

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3. I have briefly outlined the cause and effects of the 13 May 1969 race riots in Chapter 1.

# Conclusion: Towards the Fourth Phase of Malaysian Cinema

As the existing scholarship on Malaysian cinema has been inadequate to date, this study of post-2000 Malaysian cinema has added comprehensive and detailed examination to complement existing scholarship. First, the continuous progression of Malaysian cinema as a transnational cinema through three different phases has been explored. The purpose of outlining these three phases was to examine cinema's political economy alongside the nation's corresponding socio-cultural milieu at each given moment. This historical examination outlined Malaysian cinema's progression through a directory of filmmakers and films produced, while critically assessing the national policies that influenced Malaysian cinema at each historical moment. This historical outline showed how Malaysian cinema has consistently been influenced by transnational forces and has progressed from a cinema built for capitalist purposes in the 1940s to the 1960s to the attempted nationalising and Islamisation of cinema in the 1970s to the 1990s, and finally to a cinema heavily influenced by globalisation in the post-2000 period. In short, Malaysian cinema has remained transnational. It progressively shifted from Chinese ownership and control to a Malay-centric industry and eventually to the emergence of a postethnic cosmopolitan cinema of the MDI.

Second, the way the MDI has significantly revived a lacklustre Malaysian cinema has been explored. Even though the ratio of mainstream to MDI films stood recently at approximately 3:1 (see Appendices I and II) and are located at the margins, MDI films managed to surpass mainstream films in aesthetics, subject matter, and themes and gained greater overseas prominence and standing. This transition from the national to the transnational was achieved through the MDI's employment of globally resonant aesthetics, cosmopolitan themes, and transnational funding, production, exhibition, and distribution. While these transnational networks provided opportunities for co-productions, funding, exhibition, and distribution, MDI filmmakers could access these networks because they employed postethnic and cosmopolitan themes. These transnational networks have also provided a space that allowed the MDI to critique national issues. The MDI, therefore, emerged as a platform that contested national issues such as hegemonic state-led policies on

race and ethnicity, culture, and national identity. As a result, MDI films were globally exhibited across Asia, Europe, the Americas, and Africa. In turn, mainstream filmmakers themselves began to emulate this practice of procuring overseas co-productions and exhibition and distribution sites. This progressive transition from the local to the global led by the MDI has allowed Malaysian films to be exhibited and circulated more extensively than ever before.

Third, MDI's emergence alongside a series of state policies and national developments has been investigated. The five national policies are: the New Economic Policy (NEP) (1971), National Culture Policy (NCP) (1971), Vision 2020 (1991), National Development Policy (NDP) (1991), and the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) (1996). The three developments in society are: the awakening of civil society, censorship and rampant piracy, and the Malaysian 'New Wave' filmmakers, who have indirectly shaped the MDI.

These policies and developments have introduced *Bangsa* Malaysia, inexpensive DV equipment, and the internet. MDI filmmakers have also contested these policies, which institutionalised class and ethnic segregation, modernisation which led to rapid urbanisation, and the institutionalisation of race and ethnicity in Malaysian cinema. While inexpensive DV equipment allowed for easier filmmaking access, and the internet helped democratise social space, the adoption of *Bangsa* Malaysia and an increased cultural and political awareness has led MDI filmmakers to contest race and ethnicity, national identity. They have also provided a voice for the marginalised. MDI filmmakers employed the *Bangsa* Malaysia and its call to create an egalitarian society and cosmopolitan themes to move 'beyond multiculturalism'.

These cosmopolitan themes have enabled the MDI to intervene in debates about interracial relationships, cultural and ethnic diversity, humanistic philosophies and universalism, and ideals of global justice. Without needing to focus on race and ethnicity, the MDI envisioned creating a nation that is both postethnic and cosmopolitan. It was this postethnic cosmopolitan orientation that distinguished the MDI from the ethnocentricity of mainstream cinema.

Fourth, this book has examined the MDI's incorporation into the mainstream. The subsequent popularity of the MDI also meant its reincorporation into the mainstream. As discussed in Chapter 4, the horror genre has allowed mainstream and independent filmmakers to converge. This shift is comparable to that of the Sixth Generation Chinese filmmakers who continuously shift between the independent and the mainstream or do well within the conventional film establishment. James Lee, Amir Muhammad, and Woo Ming Jin are MDI filmmakers constantly shifting between underground and mainstream filmmaking. Nam Ron, Woo Ming Jin, and James Lee have ventured into the occasional mainstream production through the horror genre. Besides *Seru*, Woo Ming Jin has directed horror features such as *KL Zombi* (2013) and *Zombitopia* (2021). Amir Muhammad is the managing director of Kuman Pictures which produced *Roh*, Tamil-language horror film *Irul: Ghost*

*Hotel* (2021), and James Lee's *Two Sisters* (2019). As the fourth phase witnesses these independent filmmakers venturing into commercial Malaysian mainstream cinema as filmmakers, producers, or actors, this shift represents their flexibility in shuttling freely between the periphery and the centre and back again. Although their commercial films have been screened in commercial mainstream cinemas across Malaysia, online, and are made available in bootlegged DVD copies, they have continued making independent films. Their incorporation into the mainstream could be paradoxically understood as their acceptance of mainstream filmmaking methods and themes, particularly the acceptance of dominant discourses of race and ethnicity in Malaysian cinema.

Instead of writing off these filmmakers as sell-outs by producing mainstream horror films, we should note that their films diverge from those of the long-time mainstream filmmakers by not entirely conforming to conventional methods and themes. As this book focuses on their horror films, a different opinion is uncovered. MDI filmmakers' horror films are more inclined towards pan-Asian aesthetics and themes, as their films refuse to comply with the guidelines set by the LPF. These films tend towards the employment of characteristics synonymous with pan-Asian horrors such as blood and gore, superstition and myths, and high-level violence. By refusing to conform, MDI filmmakers continue their approach of defying and confronting accepted conventions and norms even when working inside mainstream genres and filmmaking structures.

The developments of the three phases of Malaysian cinema have been explored in this book. In particular, it scrutinises the MDI located within the third phase of Malaysian cinema. Although MDI film production has generally slowed down and ended in 2011, the planned relocation of Da Huang Pictures to Beijing and the incorporation of MDI filmmakers into the mainstream represent the latest development in Malaysian cinema. Speculatively, these developments are shifting Malaysian cinema from the third phase into an unfolding fourth phase. Bearing in mind that Da Huang has been supportive and responsible for the growth and development of Malaysian cinema, their far-sightedness in a planned relocation to Beijing will likely offer new and emerging filmmakers more access to transnational filmmaking opportunities. It is also crucial to explore how this fourth phase is likely to witness the continued democratisation of Malaysia's social and political spaces. Malaysians have become bolder and more intrepid in speaking out against injustice and discrimination. This mindset is likely to be increasingly applied to Malaysian cinema. The resistance to state policies and the democratisation of cinematic rules and regulations could lead to the democratisation of cinematic space and the acceptance of more MDI filmmakers into the mainstream.

Given that MDI filmmakers have now successfully demonstrated that it is possible to resist conforming to the restrictiveness of cinematic rules and guidelines through the horror genre, they need to look for other prospective genres which would enable them to contest from within the confines of mainstream issues related

(for example) to politics, race and ethnicity, and marginalised communities. These filmmakers' audacity in calling for an egalitarian society without restriction by race and ethnicity or oppressive cinematic regulations could lead towards the material realisation of the postethnic and cosmopolitan society envisioned in the MDI films and possible changes in the fourth phase of Malaysian cinema. Examples of such films are as *Ola Bola*, *Jagat*, *The Journey*, *Guang*, *Miss Andy*, and *Lelaki Harapan Dunia*.

The fourth phase of Malaysian cinema therefore holds possibilities for further prospective research. In such a fourth phase, research could focus on how Da Huang Pictures' efforts to penetrate the China market could lead to more opportunities for funding, co-productions, and distribution and exhibition circuits. One such example is Tan Chui Mui's third feature film, *Barbarian Invasion* (2021), which was produced after a decade. Produced by Da Huang Pictures on a budget of RMB1 million (MYR640,000), the film was funded by China's Heaven Pictures and Hong Kong International Film Festival Society under a new initiative known as 'Back to Basic (B2B: A Love Supreme)'. The film was co-produced by Woo Ming Jin and Bianca Baibuena from the Philippines. The film, which also starred Tan Chui Mui as the lead actor, Moon Lee, who is given the opportunity to jumpstart her career as an actress through a martial arts film, went on to win the Jury Grand Prix at the 2021 Shanghai International Film Festival. This win was widely covered by the Malaysian mainstream press.

The fourth phase also witnesses more opportunities for the emergence of new filmmakers as digital filmmaking and the Internet provide easier access to cheaper equipment, better ideas, and a wider platform for transnational funding, co-productions, exhibition, and distribution opportunities. As cinema halls in Malaysia that were shuttered during the various lockdown phases slowly reopen, in 2021, Malaysia's first online cinema service Film Wallet Premium Video-on-Demand (PVOD), an over-the-top (OTT) service offering hundreds of on-demand content from various continents was launched. The availability of online streaming channels such as Astro First, Netflix, and Disney+ Hotstar provide Malaysian films with greater avenues of premiering their films and as exhibition sites with more than 100 Malaysian films such as *Jagat*, *One Two Jaga* (2018), *Mukhsin*, *Talentine*, and *Bunohan* made available. *Roh*, which premiered at the 2019 Singapore International Film Festival, was also screened at the 2019 Jogja-Netpac Asian Film Festival, 2020 Udine Far East Film Festival in Italy (July 2020), New York Asian Film Festival 2020, and at the Italy TOHorror Fantastic Film Fest 2020. It has been acquired by New York-based North American distributor of independent and foreign films company Film Movement to distribute theatre and virtual cinema release as well as home entertainment and digital roll-out in North America in the fourth quarter of 2021. In 2021, Chiu Keng Guan released the film *On Your Mark*, a co-production with the Chinese Jiangsu Hao Di Cultural Development, Sports Culture Development Center of the State General Administration of Sports (China Sports Museum),



# Appendix I: Database for the Malaysian Digital Indies, 2000–2011

Filmmaker	Film title	Year	Production Company	Language	Genre	Format	Length (mins)
Amir Muhammad	<i>Lips to Lips</i>	2000	Artsee.net, Kino-I	English	Drama	Digital	102
Chris Chong	<i>Minus</i>	2000	N/A	English	Short film	Digital	3
Ho Yuhang	<i>Semangat Insan – Masters of Tradition</i>	2000	Planet E!	English	Documentary	Digital	N/A
Osman Ali	<i>Bukak Api</i>	2000	Pink Triangle Malaysia	Bahasa Malaysia	Documentary	35 mm	80
Teck Tan	<i>Spinning Gasing</i>	2000	Niche Film, Spinning Gasing Films	English	Drama	35 mm	90
Ho Yuhang	<i>Good Friday at the Zoo</i>	2001	N/A	English	Short film	Digital	12
James Lee	<i>Sunflowers</i>	2001	Doghouse73 Pictures	Cantonese	Short film	Digital	8
James Lee	<i>Snipers</i>	2001	Artsee.net, Doghouse73 Pictures	English	Thriller	Digital	90
James Lee	<i>Beautiful Man</i>	2001	Doghouse73 Pictures	N/A	Experimental	Digital	14
James Lee	<i>Ah Beng Returns</i>	2001	Doghouse73 Pictures	Mandarin	Gangster	Digital	75
Osman Ali	<i>Malaikat Di Jendela</i>	2001	Nuansa	Bahasa Malaysia	Short film	Digital	N/A
K. Shanmugam	<i>Me, My Mother and Mosquito</i>	2001	N/A	N/A	Short film	Digital	8
Devan R	<i>My Father and His Celluloid</i>	2001	N/A	N/A	Short film	Digital	10
Amir Muhammad	<i>Lost (In 6horts)</i>	2002	N/A	English	Short film	Digital	9
Amir Muhammad	<i>Friday (In 6horts)</i>	2002	N/A	Bahasa Malaysia, Cantonese	Short film	Digital	8



Filmmaker	Film title	Year	Production Company	Language	Genre	Format	Length (mins)
Amir Muhammad	<i>Mona</i> (In 6hours)	2002	N/A	Bahasa Malaysia	Short film	Digital	6
Amir Muhammad	<i>Checkpoint</i> (In 6hours)	2002	N/A	English	Short film	Digital	7
Amir Muhammad	<i>Kamunting</i> (In 6hours)	2002	N/A	Bahasa Malaysia	Short film	Digital	15
Amir Muhammad	<i>Pang Yau</i> (In 6hours)	2002	N/A	Bahasa Malaysia, Cantonese	Short film	Digital	12
Amir Muhammad	<i>Digital Compassion 02</i>	2002	N/A	N/A	Short film	Digital	N/A
Ho Yuhang	<i>Not Far From Here</i>	2002	N/A	English	Short Film	Digital	38
James Lee	<i>Think Positive!</i>	2002	Doghouse73 Pictures	N/A	Short film	Digital	12
James Lee	<i>Ah Yu's Story</i>	2002	Doghouse73 Pictures	N/A	Short film	Digital	35
James Lee	<i>Room to Let</i>	2002	Doghouse73 Pictures	Cantonese	Drama	Digital	108
Linus Chung	<i>Demolition Frog</i>	2002	N/A	N/A	Short film	Digital	N/A
Liew Seng Tat	<i>Don't Play Play</i>	2002	N/A	N/A	Short film	Digital	6
Ahmad Yazid	<i>A Day in Beggar's Life</i>	2003	N/A	N/A	Short film	Digital	14
Anna Har	<i>When Buddha Touched Tamaole</i>	2003	Red Films	N/A	Documentary	Digital	18
Amir Muhammad	<i>The Big Durian</i>	2003	Doghouse 73 Pictures	Bahasa Malaysia, English, Mandarin, Hokkien, Cantonese	Documentary	Digital	75
Bryant Low	<i>The Son</i>	2003	Ten on Ten	N/A	Drama	Digital	45
Desmond Ng	<i>Tetangga</i>	2003	Ten on Ten	N/A	Drama	Digital	N/A
Haanim Bamadhai	<i>Moris Rasik</i>	2003	N/A	N/A	Short film	Digital	16
Ho Yuhang	<i>Min</i>	2003	N/A	Bahasa Malaysia	Drama	Digital	78
James Lee	<i>Emu Kwan's Tragic Breakfast</i>	2003	Doghouse73 Pictures	English	Short film	Digital	25
James Lee	<i>Teatime with John</i>	2003	Doghouse73 Pictures	English	Short film	Digital	9
Linus Chung	<i>3-Minute Life</i>	2003	N/A	English	Short film	Digital	3
Low Ngai Yuen	<i>Your World My World</i>	2003	Red Films	N/A	Short film	Digital	10

Filmmaker	Film title	Year	Production Company	Language	Genre	Format	Length (mins)
Nam Ron	<i>Gedebe</i>	2003	Pustaka Cipta	Bahasa Malaysia	Experimental	Digital	65
Ng Tian Hann	<i>First Take, Final Cut</i>	2003	Doghouse73 Pictures	Mandarin, Cantonese	Comedy	Digital	85
Patrick Lim	<i>Choice</i>	2003	N/A	N/A	Short film	Digital	23
Tan Chui Mui	<i>Esperando Por Felicidad</i>	2003	N/A	N/A	Short film	Digital	8
Tan Chui Mui	<i>Hometown</i>	2003	N/A	Mandarin	Short film	Digital	6
Woo Ming Jin	<i>Love for Dogs</i>	2003	Greenlight Pictures	Bahasa Malaysia, Chinese	Short	Digital	24
Yasmin Ahmad	<i>Rabun</i>	2003	Primeworks Studios	Bahasa Malaysia	Drama	Digital	90
Zan Azlee	<i>I May Be Malaysian, But I Carry a Big Stick</i>	2003	Fat Bidin Media	English	Short Documentary	Digital	2
Zan Azlee	<i>Popiahs, Murtabaks, and a Patriotic Donkey</i>	2003	Fat Bidin Media	English	Short Documentary	Digital	3
Zan Azlee	<i>The Black, White, and Grey</i>	2003	Fat Bidin Media	English	Short Documentary	Digital	13
Amir Muhammad	<i>Wait</i>	2004	N/A	English	Short film	Digital	3
Azharr Rudin	<i>Dancing Kites</i>	2004	Placebo Pictures, Strange Pictures	English, Bahasa Indonesia	Documentary short	Digital	11
Danny Lim	<i>18?</i>	2004	N/A	N/A	Short film	Digital	18
Deepak Kumaran Menon	<i>Wind Chimes</i>	2004	N/A	English	Short film	Digital	13
Ho Yuhang	<i>Anybody Home? (In Visits. Hungry Ghost Anthology)</i>	2004	Red Films	Mandarin	Horror	Digital	110
Ho Yuhang	<i>Sanctuary</i>	2004	Doghouse73 Pictures	Mandarin, Cantonese	Drama	Digital	80
James Lee	<i>Goodbye</i>	2004	Doghouse73 Pictures	Mandarin	Short film	Digital	33
James Lee	<i>The Beautiful Washing Machine</i>	2004	Doghouse73 Pictures	Mandarin	Drama	Digital	113

## Appendix II: Database for Commercial Mainstream Films in Post-2000 Malaysian Cinema, 2000–2011

Filmmaker	Film title	Year	Production Company	Language	Genre	Format	Length (mins)
Aziz M. Osman	<i>Senario Lagi</i>	2000	Primeworks Studios, Paradigm Film	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	118
Aziz M. Osman	<i>Leftenan Adnan</i>	2000	Primeworks Studios, Paradigm Film	Bahasa Malaysia	War	35 mm	120
Eddie Pak	<i>Syukur 21</i>	2000	Metrowealth Movies	Bahasa Malaysia	Drama	35 mm	N/A
Jack Ad'Din	<i>Anaknya Sazali</i>	2000	Eurofine	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	96
Othman Hafsham	<i>Soal Hati</i>	2000	Serangkai Holding	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	117
Shuhaimi Baba	<i>Mimpi Moon</i>	2000	Pesona Pictures, Primeworks Studios	Bahasa Malaysia	Drama	35 mm	120
Young-Jump Animation	<i>Nien Resurrection</i>	2000	Young-Jump Animation	N/A	Animation	Digital	N/A
Yusof Haslam	<i>Pasrah</i>	2000	Primeworks Studios, Skop Production	Bahasa Malaysia	Romance	35 mm	N/A
Aziz M. Osman	<i>Lagi-Lagi Senario</i>	2001	Primeworks Studios, Paradigm Film	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	110
Aziz M. Osman	<i>Seri Dewi Malam</i>	2001	Primeworks Studios, Paradigm Film	Bahasa Malaysia	Romance	35 mm	115
Azman Mohd Yusof	<i>Cinta Tiada Restu</i>	2001	Dreamwalk	Bahasa Malaysia	Romance	35 mm	105

Filmmaker	Film title	Year	Production Company	Language	Genre	Format	Length (mins)
Erwin Argh	<i>Cheritera</i>	2001	Matahari Animation & Production, Red Rocket Animation	Bahasa Malaysia	Animation	35 mm	82
Rashid Sibir	<i>Putih</i>	2001	Fine Animation	Bahasa Malaysia	Animation	35 mm	90
S. Mohan	<i>The Deadly Disiple</i>	2001	Dynacoral Productions	English	Action	35 mm	90
V. Nagaraj	<i>Getaran</i>	2001	SV Productions	Bahasa Malaysia	Musical drama	35 mm	115
Yusof Haslam	<i>Gerak Khas The Movie</i>	2001	Skop Production	Bahasa Malaysia	Crime	35 mm	N/A
Z Lokman	<i>No Problem</i>	2001	Metrowealth Movies	Bahasa Malaysia	Romantic comedy	35 mm	100
Mahadi J. Murat	<i>Putera Merdeka</i>	2001	Karya Impian	Bahasa Malaysia	Drama	35 mm	N/A
A. Razak Mohaideen	<i>Anak Mami The Movie</i>	2002	Primeworks Studios	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	N/A
A. Razak Mohaideen	<i>Mami Jarum</i>	2002	MIG Production	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	95
Ahmad Idham	<i>Mr. Cinderella</i>	2002	Kuasatek Pictures, Skop Production	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	N/A
Aziz M. Osman	<i>Idola</i>	2002	Tayangan Unggul	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	105
Bade Azmi	<i>KL Menjerit</i>	2002	Tayangan Unggul	Bahasa Malaysia	Action	35 mm	107
Erma Fatima	<i>Embun</i>	2002	FINAS, Filem Negara Malaysia	Bahasa Malaysia	War	35 mm	135
Othman Hafsham	<i>Soalnya Siapa?</i>	2002	Serangkai Filem	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	132
Shadan Hashim	<i>Cinta 200 Ela</i>	2002	JAS Production	Bahasa Malaysia	Romance	35 mm	N/A
Yusof Haslam	<i>Gerak Khas The Movie 2</i>	2002	Skop Production	Bahasa Malaysia	Crime	35 mm	125
Z Lokman	<i>Mendam Berahi</i>	2002	Metrowealth Movies	Bahasa Malaysia	Drama	35 mm	100
A. Razak Mohaideen	<i>Mami Jarum Junior</i>	2003	Metrowealth Movies	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	100
A. Razak Mohaideen	<i>Mistik</i>	2003	Metrowealth Movies	Bahasa Malaysia	Horror	35 mm	100
A. Razak Mohaideen	<i>Jutawan Fakir</i>	2003	Metrowealth Movies	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	83

Filmmaker	Film title	Year	Production Company	Language	Genre	Format	Length (mins)
A. Razak Mohaideen	<i>Cinta Kolestrol</i>	2003	Cinta Kolestrol	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	108
Adman Salleh	<i>Paloh</i>	2003	FINAS, Filem Negara Malaysia	Bahasa Malaysia	War	35 mm	120
Ambri Kailani	<i>Black Maria</i>	2003	Simfoni Makmur	Bahasa Malaysia	Action	35 mm	105
Aziz M. Osman	<i>Gila-gila Pengantin</i>	2003	Skop Production, Ace Motion Pictures	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	120
Din CJ	<i>Mr. Cinderella 2</i>	2003	Kuasatek Pictures, Skop Production	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	111
Mamat Khalid	<i>Lang Buana</i>	2003	Primeworks Studios	Bahasa Malaysia	Drama	35 mm	N/A
Murali Abdullah	<i>Aku Kaya The Movie</i>	2003	Boommax; A&A Pictures	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	95
Rashid Sibir	<i>Laila Isabella</i>	2003	Tayangan Unggul	Bahasa Malaysia	Romantic comedy	35 mm	124
V. Nagaraj	<i>Iskandar</i>	2003	SV Productions	Bahasa Malaysia	Thriller	35 mm	110
Yusof Haslam	<i>Sembilu 2005</i>	2003	Skop Production, Lotus Five Star AV	Bahasa Malaysia	Drama	35 mm	110
Yusof Haslam	<i>Janji Diana</i>	2003	Skop Production	Bahasa Malaysia	Drama	35 mm	N/A
Yusof Kelana	<i>MX3</i>	2003	ME Comm., Skop Production	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	N/A
Zulkeflie M. Osman	<i>Diari Romeo</i>	2003	Tayangan Unggul	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	102
Zulkiflee Md. Said	<i>Gila Bola</i>	2003	Nizarman	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	92
A. Razak Mohaideen	<i>Kuliah Cinta</i>	2004	Metrowealth Movies	Bahasa Malaysia	Romantic comedy	35 mm	106
A. Razak Mohaideen	<i>Hingga Hujung Nyawa</i>	2004	Metrowealth Movies	Bahasa Malaysia	Romance	35 mm	105
A. Razak Mohaideen	<i>I Know What U Did Last Raya</i>	2004	Primeworks Studios, MIG Beats	Bahasa Malaysia	Horror-comedy	35 mm	95

Filmmaker	Film title	Year	Production Company	Language	Genre	Format	Length (mins)
A. Razak Mohaideen	<i>Potret Mistik</i>	2004	Metrowealth Movies, Primeworks Studios	Bahasa Malaysia	Horror	35 mm	N/A
A. Razak Mohaideen	<i>Tujuh Perhentian</i>	2004	MIG Beats, Metrowealth Movies, Primeworks Studios	Bahasa Malaysia	Horror-romance	35 mm	95
A. Razak Mohaideen	<i>Tangkai Jering</i>	2004	Metrowealth Movies, Primeworks Studios	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	70
Afdlin Shauki	<i>Buli</i>	2004	Primeworks Studios	Bahasa Malaysia	Romantic comedy	35 mm	114
Anwardi Jamil	<i>Ah Loke Café</i>	2004	N.Finity Production	English	Comedy	35 mm	90
Aziz M. Osman	<i>Biar Betul</i>	2004	Nizarman, Ace Motion Pictures, Gitu-gitu Productions	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	N/A
Aziz M. Osman	<i>Bintang Hati</i>	2004	Tayangan Unggul	Bahasa Malaysia	Romantic comedy	35 mm	93
Aziz M. Osman	<i>Trauma</i>	2004	Tayangan Unggul	Bahasa Malaysia	Thriller	35 mm	N/A
Aznil Nawawi	<i>Aku No. 1</i>	2004	Boommax; A&A Pictures	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	105
Bade Azmi	<i>Berlari ke Langit</i>	2004	Tayangan Unggul	Bahasa Malaysia	Drama	35 mm	100
Rashid Sibir	<i>Cinta Luar Biasa</i>	2004	Tayangan Unggul	Bahasa Malaysia	Romantic comedy	35 mm	119
Rosnani Jamil	<i>Bicara Hati</i>	2004	RJ Production	Bahasa Malaysia	Romance	35 mm	N/A
S. Baldev Singh, Aziz Sattar	<i>Father</i>	2004	Sri Saheb Production	English	Drama	35 mm	150
Saw Teong Hin	<i>Puteri Gunung Ledang</i>	2004	Enfiniti Productions	Bahasa Malaysia	Drama	35 mm	145
Shuhaimi Baba	<i>Pontianak Harum Sundal Malam</i>	2004	Pesona Pictures, Jugra Publication	Bahasa Malaysia	Horror	35 mm	115
Silver Chung	<i>Di Ambang Misteri</i>	2004	Cosmos Discovery	Bahasa Malaysia	Horror	35 mm	95

Filmmaker	Film title	Year	Production Company	Language	Genre	Format	Length (mins)
Silver Chung	<i>Makar</i>	2004	Cosmos Discovery	Bahasa Malaysia	Horror	35 mm	105
U-Wei Saari	<i>Buai Laju-laju</i>	2004	Lebrocquy Fraser	Bahasa Malaysia	Drama	35 mm	93
Zek Zukry	<i>SH3 The Movie</i>	2004	AD Niaga	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	N/A
Zulkeflie M. Osman, Din Glamour	<i>Bisikan Remaja</i>	2004	Berjaya Film Production	Bahasa Malaysia	Romantic comedy	35 mm	N/A
A. R. Badul	<i>Tak Ori Tapi Ok</i>	2005	Nusanbakti Corporation	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	N/A
A. Razak Mohaideen	<i>Anak Mami Kembali</i>	2005	Metrowealth Movies, MIG Beats, Gitu-gitu Productions	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	104
A. Razak Mohaideen	<i>Cinta Fotokopi</i>	2005	Metrowealth Movies	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	100
A. Razak Mohaideen	<i>Lady Boss</i>	2005	Metrowealth Movies, Gitu-gitu Productions	Bahasa Malaysia	Romantic comedy	35 mm	110
Afdlin Shauki	<i>Baik Punya Cilok</i>	2005	Tayangan Unggul	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	115
Aziz M. Osman	<i>Senario XX</i>	2005	Primeworks Studios	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	105
Aziz M. Osman	<i>Gila-Gila Pengantin Popular</i>	2005	Skop Production, Ace Motion Pictures	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	115
Bade Azmi	<i>KL Menjerit 1</i>	2005	Tayangan Unggul	Bahasa Malaysia	Drama	35 mm	100
Bade Azmi	<i>Gangster</i>	2005	Tayangan Unggul	Bahasa Malaysia	Gangster	35 mm	90
Bernard Chauly	<i>Gol &amp; Gincu</i>	2005	Red Films	Bahasa Malaysia	Romantic comedy	35 mm	102
Bjarne Wong	<i>The Legend of the Red Curse</i>	2005	Hock Star Ent. Industry	English, Mandarin, Bahasa Malaysia, Iban	Horror	35 mm	78
Mamat Khalid	<i>Rock</i>	2005	Primeworks Studios	Bahasa Malaysia	Comedy	35 mm	107
Meor Hashim Manap	<i>Kemarau Cinta</i>	2005	Nusanbakti Corporation	Bahasa Malaysia	Drama	35 mm	96

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