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Abstract

The Internet has engendered a ‘democratizing’ effect, especially in highly censored societies. Young activists are increasingly using online sites, such as YouTube, EngageMedia and MySpace as alternative platforms to raise issues that are of importance to the community, but which are taboo in society (e.g., homosexuality, Orang Asli land rights, and ethnic discrimination, among others). The findings from interviews and focus groups conducted with 80 young adults, and a compilation of video blogging platforms/activities popular amongst Malaysians, clearly demonstrate the significant use of videos in advocating human rights, and social and political justice, as well as in challenging existing regulatory and legislative regimes. This article examines how video-sharing websites are fast becoming popular, albeit contested, spaces for critical documentary and experimental works to inform, educate, and encourage discourse among young adults. It then considers the extent to which such ‘viral videos’ embody and/or confront local/national struggles towards social and political change.

Keywords

Activism, engagement, ICTs, Malaysia, participation, prosumer, social media, video blogging, youth

There’s no looking back . . . even if I stop doing actual political work, the films I make will still be meaningful . . . films that will challenge the audience to think more critically about life . . . be it about gender or media. (M.L., full-time activist, feminist and filmmaker/video blogger)

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In this age of digitization, the term 'mainstream media' has been redefined – various modes of social and cultural engagement are now used to question, parody, and debate the decisions and prerogatives of various institutions of power. Regarded as a new and possibly more effective form of mediation, video blogging is a tool that enables young Malaysians to reach out to their peers, forge links, garner support, encourage discourse and, increasingly, even to mobilize, as suggested by the avid video blogger in the quote above. More importantly, that which is regarded as alternative, activist, oppositional, and radical media (see Lievrouw, 2011) has now become the dominant culture or the new 'mainstream'.

We are increasingly challenged to rethink our 'ways of doing culture' and what exactly constitutes the 'politics of culture'. For decades, we have participated in the discourse on cultural politics, claiming that various cultural forms are expressions of power (Street, 1997; Willis, 1978) and asserting that power in its own right (Frith, 1998; Gilroy, 1993; Jenkins, 1992). Clearly, culture is political, but it is in thinking of politics as becoming 'culture' that we begin to make sense of, first, how new media are increasingly used to address political issues, and second (more importantly), how being 'involved', or participating in political issues, is fast becoming a popular culture among young people. These conditions do not necessarily reflect the extent to which youth is more actively involved in practical politics; such assumptions have led to state interventions that result in desperate measures to impede student involvement in politics (in reference to the highly controversial University and University Colleges Act 1971).¹ Rather, the more pertinent reading of the rise of activism and political engagement among the youth may in fact be that the *notion* of change carries more motivation than the actual *reason* for change. While youth leaders may deliberately utilize video-sharing platforms on social media to achieve their causes, the hundreds, sometimes thousands, of followers, fans, members, and 'likers' participate or join a 'group' for various reasons, and with varying levels of involvement. Are young Malaysians less concerned about issues and more attracted to the idea of participation, and where do differences lie between actual and virtual participation?² This prompted an important inquiry into the level of engagement, above the quantity (number of groups) and method (ICT/social media platform used) of activities. Is politics fast becoming popular culture, equating itself with trash culture (see Highmore, 2001: 60–74)? What forms of dialectics/juxtapositions exist between politics and pop culture?

There appear to be two important sources of influence on today's alternative and activist uses of new media, especially among young adults in Malaysia; one cultural, the other political. The cultural influence relates to the popularity of activist/indie/underground film-making, which combines radical politics with provocative new uses of media, performance, and language. The political influence is the study of social movements as mechanisms or agents of social change, particularly the identity-centered new social movements perspective. A combination of these two influences gives rise to the increasingly popular production and sharing of independent films/video via the method of video blogging: the use of videos to express ideas, articulate interests and needs, organize resources and people, and achieve the causes of these people. It is the very notion of 'creativity' that popularizes video blogging among young adults (but which is also fundamental to activism), which has also been articulated by Touraine and Lievrouw. 'The

shift from industrial to post-industrial societies would depend “much more directly than ever before on knowledge”, and hence the capacity of society to call forth creativity’ (Touraine, 1971: 5), although it still remains a question as to whether there has indeed been such a shift in Malaysia. ‘New social movements tend to be drawn from the ranks of better educated, creative “knowledge workers”; who frame their grievances in symbolic and cultural terms rather than struggle over material goods or economic class interests’ (Lievrouw, 2011: 42). ‘New media have provided a platform ideally suited to the concerns of cultural codes, values, creativity, the search for identity, and meaning and personal experience that typify new social movement’ (Lievrouw, 2011: 42).

Indeed, there is a growing relationship between young adults and video blogging. Young adults are often ‘led’ to these videos when they click on links that are shared on their Facebook/Twitter accounts (see also Wallsten, 2010).³ Produced as ‘viral videos’, the act of sharing, retweeting, and reposting has been cited as one of the fastest, easiest, and most effective ways of spreading messages online. Viral videos are video clips that gain widespread popularity on the Internet, typically through video-sharing sites (YouTube, MetaCafe, and Daily Motion), social media (Facebook, Twitter, Weibo in China), and email. Although research has been conducted on the relationship between video-sharing and its popularity on YouTube (see Broxton et al., 2011),⁴ an improvement in classification and predictive models for understanding online videos is necessary, in terms of mapping out the ‘characteristics’ of viral videos. As a means to analyze the cultural politics of video blogging, and to understand how these videos are produced and shared by young Malaysians, this article references several highly popular online video platforms whilst drawing upon the views of 80 young adults (from 32 in-depth interviews and eight focus groups) consisting of youth leaders, social media activists, and active Internet users in the country.⁵

Production, reproduction, and multiplicities

Always be critical and always push the boundaries ... this is the everyday way of trying to make the policies and living environment better ... as an artist [and activist], you try to push for more creative ways ... you try to reflect the world by giving a more critical outlook and change it for the better through these two elements [art and activism]. (M.L., Malaysian filmmaker and activist)

The spread of activism among youth must be considered before contextualizing the various video blogging activities in Malaysia. Evidence from the fieldwork conducted revealed that young adults were hesitant to refer to themselves as ‘activists’, and to refer to their work as ‘activism’. Given that activism is often regarded in a negative light by right-wing ruling powers (whereby explicit participation in such activities often lead to grave consequences), these young adults would rather refer to themselves as ‘advocates’, as ‘responsible rakyat/citizens’ who ‘care for their country’, many defining their work as ‘subtly political’. As one respondent suggests: ‘Activists always refuse to learn the rules and break everything ... we learn the rules to play the game ... [and] we begin to change the rules.’

While the term 'activism' itself is taboo, resisted, and, to some extent, even feared among the youth respondents, many felt that their use of videos should not merely mobilize opinion. As interviewee M.C. suggested, 'a regular Facebook page will simply suffice for that job', thus, the desired outcome from their efforts in video blogging is often one that would mobilize actual change. Viral videos, such as those posted by jinnyy-boytv.com, for example, often contain humorous/satirical content, including parodies of political events or national issues (e.g., *Only in Malaysia*, which has had 3,352,224 views on YouTube⁶). Eyewitness videos (e.g., videos posted by Internet users following the worldwide *Bersih*⁷ rally in July 2012;⁸ a child abuse video of an eight-month-old⁹) and CCTV footage (e.g., footage of a young Malaysian woman being beaten by her husband) have also achieved widespread 'viral' status. The sharing of these videos is seen as a 'civic responsibility', often to press for action to be taken either by relevant authorities to resolve/respond to the situation, or to mobilize the online community to support a cause. Nonetheless, to what extent do these viewing habits lead to action and change? To what extent do the authorities take the number of views into account when deciding on how to run a country? Does viewing these videos influence a change in mindset and motivate people to sign petitions against censorship, discrimination, and abuse?

A separate category of video blogging is the production and dissemination of music videos (such as the *Bersih Tribute Song – Tears of Malaysia* by Mic Hoo¹⁰ and songs written by singer, songwriter, and activist Mei Chern¹¹ to raise awareness of the lack of democracy, equality, and freedom of speech in Malaysia), underground, originals and parodies. More recently, independent films produced primarily for online consumption, and in response to various online short-video competitions, have become a highly popular platform among the youth. As I will further exemplify, online video platforms and projects, such as 15Malaysia(107Malaysia).com, FreedomFilmFest.komas.org, Engage Media.com, and PopTeeVee.net, among others, act as mediators in encouraging this emerging form of engagement with video blogging.

Beyond motivating locals to produce their own films primarily to be posted online, these projects generate interest and encourage consumption of the films through regular video blogging of trailers and short clips, via Facebook and Twitter. To a certain extent, Malaysian youths are better equipped (compared to those in Bangladesh and India) to employ new media both for political expression and individual interest. Based on the growing number of Malaysian activist bloggers, there seems to be a significant group of sophisticated youths who use the new media to explore political alternatives, despite attempts by the ruling government (or the state) to control dissent.¹²

Thus, while at risk of overhyping this platform, video blogging may in fact be crucial in disseminating or dispersing a type of micro politics that need no longer take a hidden form of expression. Akin to *rhizomatic* qualities (Deleuze and Guattari, 1980), social media allow for the videos to foster connections between the texts and (ultimately) between the individual bloggers, their online connections, etc. Furthermore, the nature of the multiplicity, through each video blog, allows for an extension of the *rhizome*; when the videos/films are distributed and shared online. It is possible then, to think of video blogs/video platforms as mediators in this circle of convergence. Although each of these initiatives may drive different, and at times contrasting and contradictory,

causes, their varied approaches to content and meaning-making are more *enabling* than they are limiting.

According to Miles (2003: 230): '[Video blogs] are less about consumption (watching others' content) than exploring models for authorship and production . . . it is the ability to participate as communicative peers that is much more significant and viable for distributed networks than our reconstitution into new consumers.' In addition, most video bloggers look to other video bloggers and friends for feedback and support (Luers, 2007), which, to a large extent, exemplifies Blumler and Katz's (1974) uses and gratifications theory. Luers (2007) further identified several social needs that are fulfilled by video blogging: a feeling of being connected, finding validation for one's experience and ideas, and being a producer as well as a consumer (prosumer). Both Miles and Luers offer very useful perspectives on understanding video blogging activities, one being the notion of community, which is hardly surprising given that the primary feature of the Internet is interconnectivity. Nonetheless, their ideas (along with those of Armstrong and Hagel, 1996; Gupta and Kim, 2004; Li, 2004; Preece, 2000; Wang et al., 2002) also point us to the fact that the act of sharing and belonging to a 'community' takes precedence over content, reaffirming the earlier argument that the idea of participation is more attractive than pursuing the actual cause.

To delve deeper into this argument, the politics of Internet usage (which leads to the critique of video blogging) in the context of Malaysia requires further investigation and understanding. The notion of video blogging as a form of participation (as highlighted earlier) becomes even more relevant against the strict control and ownership of the media in this country (coupled with legislation that threatens and restrains freedom of speech and information). It means that many have chosen to express their views online, be it via personal blogs (e.g., Nathaniel Tan, Anil Netto, Zorro Unmasked), or by using independent online news portals, such as Malaysiakini.com and MalaysianInsider.com. These platforms encourage sharing of links via 'share buttons' that are strategically placed on individual pages and videos. In cases where online materials have been viewed as either 'opposition-led', 'left-wing', or 'activist-centered', their sharing has often been viewed as participatory activism. Do such forms of participation eventually lead to significant political/social changes, or, at the very least, provoke critical debate? For many, online media have been the 'alternative' platform, which several researchers claim (e.g., Zhang and Lim, 2012) has a major influence in persuading undecided voters, and in mobilizing voters to take political action, as well as even changing the public perceptions of various political/social issues in Malaysia.¹³

The awareness that this happened as a result of Internet use forced the State to begin closely monitoring the Internet, to the extent that it proposed the imposition of a 'Green Dam' (akin to China's Great Firewall) in Malaysia, with a further intention to amend the current Printing Presses and Publications Act (1984) to include the Internet.¹⁴ Although these proposals were not enforced, due to the strong opposition on the part of netizens, local non-governmental organizations, youth groups, and the general public, an amendment to the Evidence Act 1950 was passed in parliament (without debate) in April 2012, and this legislated for 'presumption of fact in publication' on the Internet.¹⁵ Following this, a viral video¹⁶ was produced by the Center for Independent Journalism (CIJ) and posted on the International Freedom of Expression Exchange network,¹⁷ in addition to

other social media sites, including the website and Facebook page of the CIJ itself, to create awareness about the Act, and to call for support of the #Stop114A petition.

Such desperate attempts to exercise control over online media often result in users being compelled to practice self-censorship. Surveillance and/or hacking (by State/religious authorities) into the social media accounts of various citizens, to keep track of their 'tweets' (Twitter), status comments (Facebook), and geographical locations (Four-square) clearly affected youth political engagements and their use of ICT. Alongside such repressive activities is a trend to demonize bloggers with statements claiming that 'the information [in weblogs] is posted ... by people with no authority ... [and] may be ... provocative, politically-motivated, inaccurate, and is mostly rumors floated for the interests of certain parties' (Information Minister Zainuddin Maidin, in *Bernama.com*, 2007). These conditions become part of the motivation to provoke state dissent, and encourage the unabated growth of 'underground' online activities. In addressing the issue of (offline) censorship in Malaysia, the youths who participated in the present research confessed that the Internet is a primary channel to post information that would otherwise be censored in Malaysia's mainstream media. Youth activists are somewhat optimistic that Internet users actively seek information and are constantly forwarded links to 'important' news, especially news involving government policies, general/by-elections, etc. 'If the information is important enough, it will reach you no matter what the form' (Fahmi Fadzil, Information Chief for the Parti Keadilan Rakyat [PKR] *Lembah Pantai* and manager of *PopTeeVee.net*).

When considering the current social and political conditions within Malaysia, it is important to revisit ideas of 'online democracy' in any discussion of Internet content posted by (young) Malaysians. Youth leaders use a range of new media resources and tools to reach out and communicate with the *rakyat*, especially young adults, on these issues. Due to their ability to attract high numbers of 'followers', Facebook pages/groups and Twitter accounts exist alongside attempts to find spaces to articulate concerns and demands. Among the viral videos are those that advocate human/citizen rights, those that explain alternative information on government policies, those that highlight discriminatory acts carried out by certain (political) parties, and those that raise issues that are otherwise subject to societal taboo, such as homosexuality/sexual orientations, Orang Asli land rights, and ethnic/racial prejudices. Democratization of the media is evident (e.g., through the *107Malaysia* project, which will be discussed later) via user-generated content to user-generated feedback and user-generated distribution (see Wesch, 2008) and focus group participants agree that members of social media groups take on an implicit (at times unconscious) sense of social responsibility, whereby 'what needs to be shared, must be shared' for the sake of expanding knowledge and power to the rest of the online community. However, the production and sharing of these activist videos do not suggest (and certainly cannot guarantee) that these 'realities' (of social/political issues) are explainable, nor can they even be seen to forge the necessary links to an 'explanation'.

The following section draws on examples of online projects and online video-sharing sites that were frequently cited by interviewees and focus group participants during the fieldwork; the majority of these young adults were either directly or indirectly involved in the use of video, the Internet, and free software technologies to engage in video

blogging. The idea of the 'prosumer' (Luer, 2007) within the video blogging community is clearly evident in these online initiatives that have been set up by local communities to 'engage with young Malaysians to help create a far more democratic media space' online (PopTeeVee, 2012). The aim of these groups is to see young Malaysians create their own media experience rather than being reduced to mere consumers.

Video blogging: Engaging creative Malaysians

Activists must be creative in terms of implementation ... more interactive participation.
(M.L.)

EngageMedia.com, a non-profit media, technology, and culture organization set up in Asia-Pacific, is a video-sharing site that focuses on social justice and environmental issues in the region. Popular among young Malaysians, EngageMedia primarily works with independent filmmakers, video activists, technologists, and campaigners to generate wider audiences, and create an online archive of independent video productions, using open content licenses. Their aim to 'produce an online media delivery platform under a free software license that others are free to use and modify for their own media projects' is reflective of the *rhizomatic* behavior of such platforms (as discussed previously). In collaboration with Unweb.me, EngageMedia has produced Plumi, a free software video-sharing content management system that enables video bloggers to create their own video-sharing site, as well as to facilitate video distribution and community creation.¹⁸

Great emphasis is placed on building skills to encourage individuals to explore possibilities relating to video production, including strategic distribution and campaigning, compressing and uploading videos, and the issue of creative commons as a licensing solution in local contexts (Andrew, 2010). Described as 'pushbutton publishing for the people' (Shiano et al., 2004), young activists such as M.L.¹⁹ view such sites as a space for critical documentary, fiction, artistic, and experimental works that challenge the dominance of mainstream media. M.L. sees the Internet as a 'safe space' for female artists like herself, who are faced with media restrictions due to the content of their work:

We want women to share their stories about love, and sexuality in a space where they will have more control, autonomy and they can tell it in their own way ... hopefully we can share it with the public and people will understand women better. (M.L., *Her Stories Malaysia*)

An interviewee whose work as an activist includes conducting workshops relating to online video distribution, for example, 'How to get your critical videos out there' and 'How to increase your audience through the social networking sites', testifies to the popularity of these workshops and their influence in encouraging video blogging, especially amongst Malaysian youth:

They are encouraged to use the camera as a tool for social documentation and filmmaking focusing on social issues affecting ordinary people such as HIV/AIDS, poverty and the environment. (M.L.) (see Appendix 1 for list of videos on such causes)

Nonetheless, the fear of 'Big Brothers watching us everywhere' (M.L.) is deemed a threat to these 'safe spaces' although, simultaneously, there is much resistance to this fear: 'it's scary'; 'really risky'; 'especially when it comes to politics, we can't talk about it openly, people feel fearful'; 'I don't want to live in fear'. Several video activists find an outlet for this fear by encouraging the use of platforms such as EngageMedia:

It is very accessible to a lot of people who have computers . . . more than 60% of Malaysian films are wired online, so that's growing and that's amazing. We should teach people to use them responsibly and wisely, critically as well . . . the only way to produce good work is by being more critical. (M.L.)

As shown in Appendix 1, videos posted on EngageMedia (under the category of Malaysia) are largely the result of a group of young activists who believe in teaching youth, especially in the rural areas (e.g., Simpang Renggam, Johor), to embrace citizen journalism, 'to stay curious, and stay in'. More importantly, these videos may signal the onset of a different kind of revolution: 'once you open up to more progressive ideas, you rarely choose to be regressive again' (M.L.).

Video blogging: A trend with human rights groups

Technological advances have brought about a democratizing effect to film-making in recent years. With a video camera in hand, almost any person on the street, and even entire communities, can share their story in the way they want to tell it. Video bloggers are better equipped now to explore and express their skills and passion to produce socially relevant films. (freedomfilmfest.komas.org)

Human rights organization Pusat KOMAS (Pusat Komunikasi Masyarakat) was set up in 1993 to support marginalized grassroots communities and NGOs.²⁰ KOMAS runs the annual FreedomFilmFest (FFF; www.freedomfilmfest.komas.org), in accordance with its aim to advocate the use of creative and participatory forms of communication to advance human rights. The FFF program serves as a venue for the Malaysian public to use video as a tool for special documentation and film-making. Roadshows are organized to screen and discuss these and other human rights films; one of the most popular screenings to date is the film *Gaduh* (dir. Brenda Danker and Namron, 2009).²¹ Calls for video proposals are posted bi-weekly, inviting the Malaysian public to document their stories through film. Facebook posts by FFF encourage participation from the public – professionals, amateurs, and students:

1 March 2012 – Is it democracy at work when our minister of culture bans a concert when there are some protests against it by a section of society? How should it be handled? And if you're interested in this issue of how the government makes decisions on behalf of the rakyat, why not submit a film proposal on it?

13 March 2012 – Can you turn this cartoon's message [The people don't know their true power] into a film? We await your proposal.

Table 1. List of basic statistics for KOMAS.

[YouTube] Komavideos channel**94 Subscribers; 81,564 Views; 93 videos:**

- 37 video documentations (on presentations, rallies, talks, press conferences, interviews, etc.)
- 16 promotional videos (short film trailers, calls for action, calls for entries, etc.)
- 11 FFF short films (most of the films have been divided into a three-parter, some are incomplete)
- 11 non-FFF short films (produced/commissioned/compiled by KOMAS for mass dissemination; e.g., *Bangsa Malaysia* compilation, clips from *Gadoh*)
- Eight videos of interviews with FFF winners

Vimeo**29 videos:**

- Four video documentations (on rallies, talks, etc.)
 - Six promotional videos (short film trailers, calls for action, calls for entries, etc.)
 - 14 FFF short films
 - Five non-FFF short films (*Selepas Tsunami*, *Gadoh*, *Bestlah Punk*, etc.)
-

2 October 2012 – New activists out there who want your voices and ideas to be heard but need guidance to organize campaigns and use a variety of tools and methods in spreading your message, then this is the workshop for you. Come and join us.

The project adopts a recurring theme, ‘Dare to Document, which challenges the public to share their stories without fear or hesitation, regardless of their background. Subsequently, these videos are publicized on Facebook to ensure they reach a wider audience (and if possible, achieve viral status):

16 June 2012 – How is your Saturday getting along? Want to watch a movie? ... log on to FFF website and watch the many award winning movies. Bet it will be interesting and entertaining at the same time. Have a great night peeps!

The online platform is very important in helping us disseminate information on key events, to gather support and get a wider audience for the videos. For example, *Selepas Tsunami* received more than 500,000 clicks within two months of it being uploaded. (L.M.Y., studio coordinator, Pusat KOMAS)

Nonetheless, it is in questioning the strategy of KOMAS that we begin to understand the active participation that is evident in producing, consuming, and sharing these independent films (see Table 1).

Indeed, ‘Dare to Document’ best explains the role of KOMAS as a human rights organization that utilizes *narrative documentation* as a form of resistance and empowerment: ‘The difference is that we use popular communication tools to communicate our objectives, so as a creative person, I enjoy producing the tools to help in this process.’

It is through such narrative that the public is encouraged to draw upon experiences, memories, and connections that can win the hearts and minds of the target audience. Furthermore, the idea of ‘failure’ is capitalized as a narrative strategy. The purpose of

the majority of KOMAS videos (FFF included, the competition per se is directed at addressing 'failures') was to address local sociopolitical problems. The acknowledgment of failure becomes an easier and more effective narrative strategy because 'people tend to agree more on what is going wrong than what is going right' (Browning and Boudès, 2005; Swoden, 2003) – a communicable story with a shared frustration. Therefore, by identifying the common enemy (the detractors of human rights), viewers can easily buy into the narratives, and are further motivated to expand the reach of these videos via other video-sharing platforms.

Video blogging: Treating media as media

In referencing the claim of PopTeeVee that 'the promise of *media* hasn't really come to pass' and advocating the need to 'shun media, and create *wedia*' (PopTeeVee, 2012, emphasis in original), it is clearly the element of 'community' that sustains the popularity of video blogging here. It is further acknowledged that information via the media (in this case, online videos) may be used to add signals to the conversations already taking place on various networks; the ultimate goal being to tap into the social stream on sites like Facebook and Twitter and engage young Malaysians in creating a more democratic media space: 'rather than being reduced to mere consumers, we'd like to see young Malaysians create their own media experience' (PopTeeVee, 2012). Produced as independent videos, PopTeeVee programs (see Appendix 2) are social media-dependent (on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and the official website PopTeeVee.net). Each of the eight programs comprises an independent creative team who hold on to an underlying belief that 'all information needs and *wants* to be free', thereby all program content is posted online.

In thinking of dissemination as a mere starting point, it becomes evident that transmission of information is achieved following post-viewing practices; society partakes of indies to be entertained, and because members of society are able to *talk* about it and *talk to* it. Opportunities to comment, feedback, and join discussion groups are easily accessed by commentators/viewers, often either on their official website or via Facebook accounts:

Twitter, I don't know how many people are online at the same time, and because it's kind of a stream of consciousness, so after a while the message gets dropped. I think Facebook has a longer attention span. (F.F., manager of *The Fairly Current Show* on PopTeeVee.net)

If juxtaposed with offline underground/independent film screenings, this is very much in keeping with the participatory culture of such screenings, whereby highly engaging question and answer sessions take place prior to the crowd dispersing when the film has ended:

We get comments on our PopTeeVee.net site after each episode, beneath the video player. It also depends on whom we invite and on the excitement of the issue. What you see is a mass mobilization if not in terms of physical bodies in the streets, at least in terms of online, in terms of virtual bodies on the internet . . . this is a very formidable landscape for either side to partake in and parlay with, to really engage with or to disengage. (F.F.)

Table 2. List of basic statistics for PopTeeVee.

[YouTube] PopTeeVee channel

4369 subscribers; 788,216 views; 168 videos:

- 103 videos of *The Fairly Current Show*
- Eight videos of *Why You Not Married, Fussy Is It?*
- 57 videos of *That Effing Show*

*Three videos from *That Effing Show* have received about 60,000 views:

- *That Okay Song* (66,058 views, went viral)
 - *I am a Macha* (62,443 views, went viral)
 - *ThatEffingShow#46TheSt.Valentine'sDayMassacre* (67,203 views)
-

In comparing the strategies adopted by KOMAS (FFF) and PopTeeVee, the latter uses the lens of pop culture (more specifically from the 1980s and 1990s; Mark Teh, in Cheong, 2008) heavily, in order to present various political commentaries. This is reflected in the stylistics and aesthetics of *The Fairly Current Show* and *That Effing Show*. An analysis of the total number of views for videos that 'went viral' on Facebook exemplifies the success of incorporating such a strategy (see Table 2). Nonetheless it is important that we revisit the origins of PopTeeVee in order to understand the use of heavily satirical videos by the producers.

PopTeeVee was initiated after the political tsunami in Malaysia whereby there was a flourishing (or popularizing) of alternative platforms.²² The local art industry was also building momentum at that time. Artists were demanding free speech and there were attempts to revive the National Arts Council (set up in April 1952, now defunct). PopTeeVee can be understood as one such activity that was responding to the burgeoning artistic sphere. Understanding the context, the deliberate use of pop and humor (it was injected with much humor and sarcasm) became an experimental attempt at negotiation with the still-nascent art scene, which remains under the strict surveillance of the authorities. Indeed, PopTeeVee has produced numerous episodes of political satire, especially with *That Effing Show*, which takes advantage of humor as a strategy for indirect criticism. Focus group respondents who suggested that the videos made them 'think about politics' expressed the importance of comedy ensuring that it remained sarcastic, rather than presenting direct accusations.²³ In recent videos, costumes and props were more frequently employed for more efficient representation. Akin to FFF, the programs are predominantly responsive to local issues, with deliberate attempts to use the local accent, multi-dialect and other notable words, such as *macha* and *mamak* to localize the contents of the humor (although arguably, this may also be read as a western-educated middle-class hijacking of the local terms/language). Nonetheless, this appeal to the popular allows for yet another space enabling/embodying sociopolitical critiques.

Video blogging: The 'real' Malaysia?

Another short film project that relies on social media for engagement and outreach is *15Malaysia*, consisting of 15 short films made by 15 Malaysian filmmakers. These films not only deal with sociopolitical issues in Malaysia (i.e., corruption, race relations, inflation, Islamic banking, social apathy, ethical commerce, pedophilia, government health

warnings, etc.), but they also feature some of the best-known faces in the country, including actors, musicians, and top political leaders. Publicized alongside *15Malaysia* on the official website is *107Malaysia*, a project that takes the video blogging experience a step further by encouraging the Malaysian public to participate, albeit in contrast to FFF, as videos should reflect ‘the country we all love’. A discussion around this theme sparked questions among focus group participants about what it means to be Malaysian and what exactly *is* Malaysian. A video interview (available on YouTube) with the sponsor of *15Malaysia*, P1 (Packet One), reveals how the advancement of technology has affected the direction of the country’s arts and culture industry:

There’s no culture without arts . . . that’s why we are supporting arts . . . without creativity, there’s no innovation . . . that’s the fundamental why we embark on this project. A Malaysia that can talk to each other . . . and understand each other, I think that provides the basic fundamental for understanding, for arts, and from there we build a better Malaysia. (Michael Lai, Chief Executive Officer)

CC Puan (Group CEO, P1) further emphasizes the notion of freedom in bringing broadband to the people: ‘we want to enable people to bring broadband with them, to bring the Internet with them, to bring freedom with them’. The aim is to grow and enable the Internet as a platform for discovering Malaysian talents: ‘to be seen, in a way that previously you couldn’t’ (James Chong, CEO). Invariably, this would become a platform for young budding directors to experiment with the medium, inspired by the works of independent film directors Ho Yuhang and the late Yasmin Ahmad.

Here, new media are regarded as an *enabling platform*, capitalizing on the Internet’s ability to enable networks, innovations, and creative opportunities. As well as content-sharing, focus group participants who supported *15Malaysia* highlighted the effort made by the sponsors to further promote the videos via the available e-banners filed under ‘Goodies’ in the official website.²⁴ Nonetheless, while this view of the media as an enabling platform has certain similarities with that of PopTeeVee, both have very different approaches to content and meaning-making. In terms of political jamming, *15Malaysia* (or *107Malaysia*), made in 2009, is a direct response to the singular *1Malaysia* (introduced by Prime Minister Najib Razak in September 2008). This can be interpreted as a grassroots reclamation of ‘Malaysia’, an appropriation of the ‘1Malaysia’ state ideology, recognizing a ‘nation’ as constitutive and socially constructed, and which should therefore be multiplied (from 1 to 15 to 107?), diverse, and open-ended.²⁵

It may be useful to put into perspective the idea of ‘transference’ via these videos (in this case, *15Malaysia*, garnering over 5 million views – see Table 3). High profile and, at times, controversial celebrities and politicians are invited to participate in the short films, which is crucial to garnering public support and attention from the mainstream media. By associating the cultural products with a person, there is often a potential transfer of value involved, be it positive or negative.²⁶ Henri Lefebvre’s (1961) theorization of ‘moments’ comes close to describing how we can attempt to make sense of the film’s effects on the individual who experiences and consumes it. Inevitably, it is the perceptions and opinions of the producer, his or her identity, community, nation, nation-state,

Table 3. List of basic statistics for 15Malaysia.**[YouTube]**

RedbagMusic channel (Pete Teo) 1067 subscribers; 5,008,512 views; 102 videos:

- 73 videos of *15Malaysia* (with subtitles in different languages)
- 16 promotional videos (15 The-Making-Of and one video on sponsor)
- Six videos of Pete Teo
- Five videos of *Undilah*
- Two videos on *Here in My Home/Malaysian Artistes for Unity*

and the overall struggles of the society for a sense of belonging, which gets transferred via the video. Nonetheless, for as long as such ‘transfers’ are regarded by the nation-state as a threat to the ‘national image’ that is itself alien and ‘other’ to its own people, such videos will continue to be closely monitored and reworked into other forms to reflect ‘the country we all love’ (*107Malaysia*, 2012).

Conclusion

This article (and indeed the research itself) has invariably raised more questions than it has resolved. This was largely due to the scope of the research, which sought to identify various types of ICTs used by young adults for engagement in civic, community, and political spheres. Thus, having chosen to focus this article on video blogging, while taking youth responses to other forms of ICT/new media/social media into account, allows us to at least begin to address more pertinent issues on engagement levels, motivations, and implications, rather than be contented with a general overview of the (sluggish) evolution of ICTs in Malaysia.

Indeed, we are seeing complex discourses of politics and ideology within conversations with these young Malaysians. Video blogging may encourage participatory culture, but, more importantly, it allows for taboo issues to be raised, expanded, and disseminated, for the purpose of civic consciousness rather than mere cultural consumption. What is more obvious is that embedded in these videos are (subtle) allegories of a nation that is struggling to confront ‘real’ issues pertaining to democracy and free speech. Therefore, we must look further to examine each individual video (rather than collective platforms as presented here), including personal video channels on online video-sharing platforms that have garnered ‘high viewership’, and develop a relevant framework to analyze its contents.

More importantly, if the youth are commonly regarded as reformists seeking to change or to ‘infect’ society with their unworldly views, what we are witnessing is an attempt by this group²⁷ to re-enter society. This is in accordance with Brake’s suggestion that ‘youth groups in the structural-functionalist model appear at moments of “disintegrating” with a “reintegrating” function’ (see Brake, 1990: 25).²⁸ However, the reintegration of youths into society does not necessarily signify their acceptance of its law (be it imposed on them or on the nation in general). Superficial actions to reintegrate may serve only to mask the actual intent of setting up changes in society. Rather than appear to defend the intentions and needs specific to young people, efforts are increasingly made by youth leaders to be more society-centered, so their voices become more

dominant than defiant. There is a greater chance for this group to influence changes to create a 'new mainstream' in meeting their specific interests and demands, through prominence gained via video blogging. The 'creative alternative platform' of video blogging has opened the door to a new kind of citizen-based 'grassroots' journalism; videos are cheap to produce, do not require extensive skills, and, more importantly, allow for once-silenced voices to speak out and engage a wider (external) audience.

The online platforms highlighted in this article further exemplify the notion of cultural politics found in video blogging activities. The idea of prosumerism facilitated by cheap, copyright-free productions has enabled and, to an extent, empowered various social groups that have long been silenced (or had chosen to be silent due to the culture of fear) to find their voice in a less threatening, albeit highly significant, form. Glaser (2008: 33) writes: 'the world is watching' the content of blogs 'to learn about stories the press in their countries dare not tell'. The spread of videos online reflects a society that is undergoing fundamental change, both internally and externally, and the key is to allow these to mobilize the youth in facilitating social/cultural/political changes. Thus, regardless of whether *Halal* (a video on the *15Malaysia* list)²⁹ is deemed as information or entertainment, it has gone viral, has been seen by over 100,000 viewers, has been downloaded and further shared offline, parodied, and responded to (via other video postings online). It will continue to be shared and, inevitably, the sociopolitical nuances embedded in the film will continue to be transmitted and transferred within and throughout society, both online and offline.

Appendix I

EngageMedia.org video listing (Malaysian videos – 13 of 23 videos posted in 2012; all videos listed below were accessed on 23 September 2012)

Indrani Kopal *The Tale of Three Women's Struggle for Justice and Equality*. Available at: www.engageMedia.org/Members/indra05/videos/the-tale-of-three-womens-struggle-for-justice-and-equality/view

The tale of three women's struggle for justice and equality, this is about Guppy Union, which was started by female workers who worked in a plastics factory in Balakong, Cheras. Their struggle and desire to start a union started 14 years ago, when they were frustrated with their bosses for increasing their wages by a mere 10 sen.

Christine Leong Pengerang: *Where Rain and Tears Mixed*. Available at: www.engageMedia.org/Members/cjmy/videos/pengerang-where-rain-and-tears-mixed/view

Residents, young and old, gathered in Pengerang between 2 and 5 p.m. on 26 May 2012 to express their feelings regarding the petrochemical project, RAPID.

S Kumar *Remnants of Life in a Container*. Available at: www.engageMedia.org/Members/cjmy/videos/remnants-of-life-in-a-container/view

Tadiyapan is a senior citizen who has been living in a container in Tanjung Bunga Penang for the last four years, after being dismissed from employment. He now hopes that the government and the welfare department will help him to find a permanent solution to his dire circumstances.

Jimmy Leow *EngageMedia Supports CJMY*. Available at: www.engageMedia.org/Members/cjmy/videos/engageMedia-supports-cjmy/view

Video on the EngageMedia training for CJMY, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Lococonut *Camp Sambel 2: Learning and Working Together*. Available at: www.engageMedia.org/Members/thecamp/videos/the_camp2012_final/view

Continuing the success of Camp Sambel, EngageMedia joined forces with Pusat Komang to host Camp Sambel 2 in Malaysia. Alumni joined new members to fill the video camp with videos, fun, music and collaborations in an effort to make a change.

Lococonut *Camp Sambel 2: Chat with Desboy*. Available at: www.engageMedia.org/Members/thecamp/videos/chat_w_desboy.m4v/view

Desboy is a street kid turned video activist. It was her first time both on a plane and in an international video camp, but she held her ground and inspired others.

Lococonut *Camp Sambel 2: Chat with Arvind Raj*. Available at: www.engageMedia.org/Members/thecamp/videos/campsambel2_arvind/view

Arvind Raj of 'Free Malaysia Today' got the calling to become a video maker when he was thousands of feet above sea level. Nevertheless, the Camp Sambel 2 videomaker is all about giving a voice to the minority groups through his writing and videos.

Hisyam Salleh *Bersih 3.0: Dataran Merdeka*. Available at: www.engageMedia.org/Members/hisyamsalleh/videos/bersih3.0_dataran_merdeka/view

Pandemonium erupted along Jalan Raja Laut as defiant protesters armed with planks and water bottles charged at the police. Both the police and the protesters also erected barricades near the closed Light Rail Transit station, with the former using piles of rubbish and discarded planks.

Hisyam Salleh *The Forgotten Job: 'Tukang Kasut'*. Available at: www.engageMedia.org/Members/thecamp/videos/the_forgotten_job_tukang_kasut/view

We often forget that it is the little things in life that actually complete us. A job as a street cobbler is often forgotten and considered 'low class' to some people. However, his determination and courage as a cobbler has helped this man to raise his 10 children. This video aims to become an eye opener to society in that it shows people that they should not look down and judge someone based on what they do for a living. A job is a job, as long as it is halal.

Ineza Roussille *My Bersih 3.0*. Available at: www.engageMedia.org/Members/InezaR/videos/ineza_bersih3.0.mp4/view

Malaysian filmmaker and activist Ineza Roussille chronicled the recent BERSIH rally. The movement was aimed at advocating a clean, free and fair electoral system in Malaysia. BERSIH is comprised of civil society organizations and political parties that share the same 'clean up' objectives.

Tan Kai Swee *Everyone Has Hope and the Right to Education*. Available at: www.engageMedia.org/Members/tankaiswee/videos/everyone-has-hope-and-the-right-to-education/view

A group of young Taylor's College students and lecturers are stepping forward with their 'Everyone has hope' project to empower a select group of Burmese refugee children from the Chin State in Western Myanmar.

Tan Kai Swee *Story of Randy: Abandoned and Stateless*. Available at: www.engageMedia.org/Members/tankaiswee/videos/story-of-randy-abandoned-and-stateless/view

This story is about Randy, a boy who was abandoned by his parents a year ago. Without parents and any papers, he is considered stateless.

Arvind Raj *Transgender Nun: Rights and Rites*. Available at: www.engageMedia.org/Members/thecamp/videos/transgender_nun/view

Transitioning from a man to a woman is the first change in Sharan's life. She wants to become a nun by dedicating her life to Bauchara Matha, a deity who is known to be the protector of the transgender community. The filmmaker follows Sharan on a journey of several rituals that are rarely performed and have never been recorded on film before.

Appendix 2

PopTeeVee.net programs

These programs are social media dependent (via Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and the official website [PopTeeVee.net]). There are a total of eight programs and their frequency of activity varies. Each program comprises an independent creative team; however, there are overlaps. Information in the first five programs was directly copied from the official website, the latter three programs were written on the basis of conversations with the producer and from personal video-viewing experience).

The Fairly Current Show

Total: 125 videos (since June 2008). *The Fairly Current Show* is a 7-minute web talk show that focuses on current issues in Malaysia. Anchored by Fahmi Fadzil and creatively produced by Mark Teh, the show has featured a diverse range of guests in its over 2 years and 100 episodes of existence. Past guests include politicians, lawyers, civil society activists, artists, journalists, bloggers, writers, fishermen, SUHAKAM commissioners, economists, fortune tellers, students, political commentators, phantom voters, Santa Claus, and even a cow! *The Fairly Current Show* aired its first episode on 12 June 2008, and airs weekly on Thursdays. . . .

That Effing Show

Total: 78 videos (since February 2010). *That Effing Show* is a satirical news show that laughs, pokes fun and points out the (often) obvious and not-so-obvious absurdities of Malaysian socio-political life. In addition to the 'liberal/progressive news-commentary thingy', the show embarks on special projects, such as the wildly viraled *I Am A Macha* music video, and the ASTRO World Cup ad spoofs. *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* is an obvious reference, but the creators also like to think that they suckle at the comedic breasts of P Ramlee, *Monty Python*, *Saturday Night Live*, *The Late Show with David*

Letterman and *Jangan Ketawa*. . . . The show airs weekly, on Tuesdays, and depending on the poor Internet connection, sometimes on Wednesdays. . . .

The Wknd Sessions

Total: 50 videos (since June 2008). *The Wknd Sessions* is a weekly online music and interview show that brings you closer to the forefront of the fast-growing Malaysian music scene. From independent singer-songwriters to big-name bands, hear what inspires, tickles, and makes these emerging songsters tick and talk. Then catch them as they do exclusive performances for *The Wknd Sessions*. *The Wknd Sessions* also has its own website, containing more videos of performances and also an interview session (www.the-wknd.com). . . .

20 Questions

Total: Twelve videos (since September 2008). The basis for new web talk show *20 Questions* is simple: Change perceptions, change the world. *20 Questions* features young, ambitious and passionate people who love their jobs. The fact that this is a rarity in our modern day society is alarming and distressing; indicative of a workforce that is resigned to a mediocre and very likely inadequate life. With *20 Questions*, we hope to dispel the preconceived notion that work cannot be play. While *20 Questions* is fun and can be enjoyed by all ages, the show is primarily aimed at high school and college students. Since they will soon join the workforce, we hope to help create a more vibrant and innovative generation of young Malaysians who are not afraid to break out of the mold to pursue their true passions. *20 Questions* is 7 minutes packed with inspiring information, genuine passion and a lot of laughs. The show features two segments; the first being the interview, the second featuring a game where our highlighted guest is asked *20 Questions* about his/her job and is required to answer them in 2 minutes. *20 Questions* is hosted by David Yeow and Joel Loi, a very fun and funny duo who are talented and inspiring youths themselves.

Buletin Popek

Total: Six videos (since May 2009) . . . we start to see that the blogosphere is really a form of crowd-sourced news-wire. What's really going for it is that there is more journalism happening on blogs than in news rooms. If it is indeed a news wire of sorts, why aren't newsrooms accessing the wealth of journalism it generates? And so we have *Buletin Popek*, an idea still in development. It's about finding the best bits of relevant news items on the BlogWire and creating a weekly (eventually to be daily) news program of the Internet, by the Internets, for the Internets. . . .

#Machagrooming

Total: Six videos (since April 2012) A series of comedy advertisements made for *Rexona Men*. Each episode portrays a *macha* (the main character) in a specific role (e.g., rock star, customer, sportsman, etc.). Without grooming, he seemed to have lost his confidence or elegance, and this is where *Rexona* comes to the rescue (the brand is not directly represented) and he regains his charisma. The brilliance in this clichéd advertisement lies in the truthful message on relationships that is conveyed, despite the branding exercise.

BFM VDO

Total: 32 videos (since January 2012) BFM interview videos.

Why You Not Married, Fussy is it?

Total: Eight videos (since January 2011) A series of short romantic comedies exploring the chemistry between lovers, homosexual or heterosexual. Done with wit and humor, topics on love usually revolved around middle- to upper-class urbanites.

Funding

The data comes from the 'Youth, ICTs, and Political Engagement in Asia' project, which is part of the PANeGOV initiative supported by the International Development Research Centre in Canada. The copyright of the data belongs to National University of Singapore.

Notes

1. The Act (amended in 1975) bans students from holding political office in organizations outside the university (such as trade unions and political parties) and participating in political rallies; those found guilty risk academic suspension.
2. In an attempt to understand the implications of ICT on youth engagement in civic, cultural, and political spheres in Malaysia, young adults were identified on the basis of various factors, including the types/total number of groups listed in their social media pages. The majority of young adults who were then asked to reiterate the purposes or objectives of these groups were unable to offer in-depth explanations: 'Stop Lynas? It's environmental I think'; 'Yes, I am a fan of Chow Kit Kita . . . it's about human rights, I believe.' Others struggled to identify all the groups they 'liked' and some were not even aware of their 'membership' of the groups.
3. Wallsten (2010) assesses the interplay between online viewership, blog discussion and mainstream media coverage of the most popular online political video of the 2008 campaign; will.i.am's 'Yes We Can' music video. Using time series analysis, he found strong evidence that blog discussion, not the size of the online audience, played a crucial role both in guiding Internet users to the video and, more importantly, in driving mainstream media coverage.
4. Broxton et al. (2011) refers to this relationship as the 'socialness' of videos, which is quantified by classifying the referrer sources for video views as social (e.g. an emailed link) or non-social (e.g. a link from related videos). While it was found that highly social videos behave differently from the latter (i.e. highly social videos rise to, and fall from, their peak popularity more quickly), the authors conclude that not all highly social videos become popular, and not all popular videos are highly social. Furthermore, only 21% of videos that generate large volumes of views over a short period of time can be classified as viral.
5. Individual interviewees (youth activists) were identified at several youth conferences, including Youth'10 (28–30 May 2010); Asia Pacific Youth Conference (28 July–2 August 2010), and Malaysia Young Female Entrepreneur Forum (26–27 October 2010). Focus group participants were selected based on a snowball sampling strategy – the initial group also consisted of young participants approached at various workshops/conferences organized for young Malaysians. Interview/focus group sessions were transcribed and categorized based on relevant keywords, e.g., civil/community/politics, videos, activism, citizen, social media.
6. Only in Malaysia: www.jinnyboytv.com/?p=138 or www.youtube.com/watch?v=JiosPxt_5kw&feature=player_embedded#!

7. On 9 July 2011, approximately 30,000 Malaysians marched along the streets of Kuala Lumpur to press for a fair and just election. Over a million gathered online to show support by 'liking' Facebook groups, installing *Bersih* PictBadges and changing their profile pictures to yellow-filled images. Malaysians residing in Singapore rallied online, given the regulations against public assembly enforced in that country. An estimate of 5000 others, mostly 'fans' of the Bersih 2.0 Facebook page assembled in 38 other countries for this cause. Those who marched constantly updated their blogs, Facebook and Twitter accounts. Countless others stayed connected indoors, collating information and reposting images of tear-gassed victims while reflecting on the future of Malaysia. Events leading up to the mass rally calling for electoral reform has challenged the way young adults engage with new media in Malaysia.
8. A YouTube channel dedicated to video postings on the Bersih rally – #bersih428 (194 videos, 1,653,517 views): www.youtube.com/user/bersih428?feature=results_main
9. The video 'Insane Malaysian mother beats up 8-month baby' was shared over 16,000 times on Facebook, with over 1,217,005 views. The woman involved has been charged and sentenced to 18 months in prison. The video was circulated to encourage the community to sign an online petition in order to request a longer sentence.
10. www.youtube.com/user/michootube?feature=results_main
11. Songs/lyrics by Mei Chern include: *Do You See Me Like You*: www.youtube.com/watch?v=k3xYPcZBy60; *Good Intentions*: www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ZGsKzMMR1s&feature=related.
12. Other types of viral videos/platforms popular among young activists include 9gag.com/videos; nuffnang.com.my; viralvideos.com/tag/Malaysia.
13. Thus, post-2008 general elections following a large number of parliamentary seats being won by incumbents from the Opposition party (many of whom attested to their use of social media as the main factor), members of the ruling coalition (Barisan Nasional) began actively posting on their blogs, Facebook and Twitter.
14. Following a similar motion in 2006, in 2011, the state again proposed that the existing Printing Presses and Publications Act be amended to include electronically mediated forms of communication, namely the Internet, which would allow monitoring and censorship of yet another public domain. This received much criticism from the general public, especially activist bloggers (National Alliance of Bloggers) who had already been subjected to intense scrutiny from the state, while being threatened by the Internal Security Act. Public protest led to temporary retraction of the proposed amendment and it remains 'under review'.
15. The Act states that any owner, administrator, host, editor, subscriber of a network or website, or owner of computer or mobile device is presumed to have published or republished its contents. It has wide-ranging reach and extends not only to practically everyone who uses any internet platform, from email and social media to blogs and online media, but also those who do not.
16. www.youtube.com/watch?v=YBWQHYO2BpI&feature=player_embedded; 28,689 views.
17. #Stop114A petition and video posted on IFEX - www.ifex.org/malaysia/2012/08/15/evidence_act/
18. Adopting a more 'emergent approach' to online video distribution, EngageMedia takes into account the uneven access to high speed Internet and the need to offer both online and offline video distribution tools (as in the case of Indonesia – see Mauro-Flude, 2010). Where the

- Internet is unavailable or unaffordable, the organization helps grassroots groups to use the technology to develop their communities and to further their rights, calling for government policies to serve the best interests of the general population, especially people living in developing countries.
19. Anonymity granted in the best interest of the respondent.
 20. In many instances, KOMAS has been focused on highly localized issues; working closely with the rural communities where workshops have been specifically crafted to help them create a sustainable resistant/empowered force.
 21. *Gaduh* highlights racial relations amongst two groups of students who fight each other based on racial lines, social environment, and the school system.
 22. Five Arts Centre (a theatre organization of which Mark Teh is a part) produced the Emergency Festival (October 2008) immediately post-tsunami. The more well-known short film produced in tandem with this event is Fahmi Reza's *Sepuluh Tahun Sebelum Merdeka* (2008, produced by Mark Teh).
 23. The host's (Ezra Zaid) statements are usually followed by a diegetic space illustrating the absurdity of the probabilities of outcomes and consequences for certain actions (e.g., the ban on Erykah Badu, the publication of a propaganda comic by Barisan Nasional, the creation of Ah Jib Gor's interest page).
 24. It is useful to note that all information is available on the website in four languages: English, Malay, Chinese and Tamil.
 25. Note the witty 'mymalaysia' in the URL of 107Malaysia: 15malaysia.com/mymalaysia/
 26. The same approach is used in most of Pete Teo's project, such as the making of the video *Here in My Home and Undilah*.
 27. In reflecting the state's mindset in addressing youth as a singular entity (evident in the various 'blanket' laws, accusations and assumptions made of 'Malaysian youth').
 28. The notion of integration is also a much-emphasized term in Malaysia's Vision 2020, where present conditions of racial tolerance should instead become *racial integration* in accordance with the country's aim to be known as a developed nation.
 29. Liew Seng Tat (2009) *Halal*. Available at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=YfAnZooGeuc&feature=player_embedded.
- A Malay lady explains to a Chinese lady the concept of Halal meat and the methods to ensure its Halal status. She also mentions that Halal meat is good for all, including those who are not Muslims.

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