Post Truth" Festival Film Dokumenter Curratorial Notes | Published on ffd.or.id | Estimated readers : 3500

Long before the masses turned toward the convenience of *likes* and *share,* only a few held the power to information and its distribution to public. A small example, during the World War II, radio was a very important tool to spread the news of the ongoing battle of the Allies against Axis. Such importance it held, the news of the Nagasaki bombing received by the movement in our country was a momentum needed for the proclamation of freedom. A proof that media had been, and probably will always be, a driving power behind people's movement. Not to include the writings of intellectuals who spread their progressive ideas through media.

A social critic once argued that democracy gave birth to propaganda-based media, owned by giant corporates. Which means media is not necessarily innocent. Mainstream media such as television, radio, and newspaper are agents of dominant ideology, yet audiences are no longer passive. Audiences push, negotiate, even blatantly refuse the domination of mainstream media through small narrations, campaigns, and their own independent media. Media is never neutral: framing, stereotyping, how the West illustrate the East in its bias perspective. The change of landscape of the media was predicted by Marshall McLuhan in his popular jargon *"medium is the message"*. It's no longer just about the contents, but also medium, how technology change the way people consume media.

McLuhan's prediction brought shift to the media from belonging to a powerful few, to a public's property. Democracy appear to transfer *the* power to the people. In a world with seemingly omnipotent technology and dominant social media, spaces are born for people to created their versions of truth. Quite a problematic phenomenon, since there is no determining of which truth is the *truth*. One loud indication was the polarization of views in the regional head election campaigns. People carrying their personal comprehended truths were free to spread information they believed to be true, even when there is no validation of facts. This type of information gains its billboard with the help of a smart revolution called algorithm. The more a certain information is spread, buzzing with tags in virtual circle, the more it is believed to be the *truth*, as shady as it is. This *truth,* with its believers, has the power to polarize view, attitude, even movement.

Information, it seems, has transgressed truth. Truth has lost the values that made it a truth, becoming nothing more than a concentration of *likes*. The truth is now a sharing-based truth. With algorithm, individuals get their own polarizing views crystalized in posts of their shared taste by virtual friends, eliminating news that is not to their liking—as well as friends that are not to their liking, blinded to the lurking horror of hoaxes. This phenomenon marks the era of *post-truth*, where truth is but an endless relativism. Politic of fear, racial sentiment, and opportunistic behavior, corrupt the essence of *truth*. Objective facts lost its power on public opinions. Truth becomes feelings and personal believe. New claims are made in the base of personal truth.

Instead democracy of knowledge, post-truth brings public to a new form of activism. This monopoly of information based on what the masses prefer is gathering groups who believe in news that transcends truth in legitimating the notions they fight for, stand for, sacrifice for, even when said news has little to no credibility. In retrospect from the definition, appear a question whether or not post-truth is even the by-product of millennials. Long ago, traditional puppet masters created their legacy through puppet acts that served as foundation of truth followed by their audiences. Now, at nights at street markets, medicine sellers sell promises of miracle healing in extravagant demonstrations. Is post-truth even a new thing? The New Order posed a good example on the concept of post-truth in their act of condoning the label of communists without clear objectivity.

Post-truth is a long existed concept. Maybe it used to be understood in different name, maybe it became popular recently as a result of the mass coverages of certain phenomena that reflects the concept. Incidentally, the theme "Post-Truth" was picked in its moment of celebration after being chosen as Oxford Dictionary Word of the Year 2016. This theme is implemented in Festival's choices of documentary films that are 'post-truth' in its definition as a documentary, films said to be forms of documentary in all its ambiguity—an arbitrary claim on the new forms

of documentary. Moreover, the euphoria of the phenomena is a curious thing to be looked upon in its ongoing practices. Not in celebration, but in reflection on what exactly is 'truth'—not in hindsight and passing view while common senses are buried. A place for skepticism for different medium of information is needed, so that a positive relation with criticism can thrive, and vice versa.

Aesthetic Transformation of Video4Change Project through Postmodernism Studies

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Abstract

Related research on community videos commonly limited in the social domain. This may happen because making video community is not classified as work of art, but rather as a tool to convey messages on community organizing method. Video4Change (v4c) project here consist different organizations in four countries; Indonesia, India, America and Israel. The review of videos conducted in textual and visual ethnography. This method used to specify all the things captured in the sense, the visual, the voice (audio) and the symbol on each video. Video as a medium in the postmodernism era considered as an illusion and simulation, now has more authority. Video build new structures and functions that transformed from mere aesthetic imagery into practical media with particular meanings. The video made by common people has been taking control of society to understanding the images by interpret it. This research attempts to trace and shift the study of community video from the perspective of art, vice versa from what have done before. However, the video as a tool has particular rules and approach to effectively deliver 'text' or message in visual language. This study expected to be a reference in a cultural context that comes from the artistic perspective. The analysis will shift the meaning of aesthetic perspective that could be transforming into practical solution-based. Beyond that, this study is able to see how the perspective transforms as the co modification of art in society changes.

Keywords: Community Video, Postmodernism, Aesthetic Transformation, Society Changes

1. Introduction

The advanced technological era and critique of media domination brought many new forms of media in society. The filmmaker, photographer, activist and even researcher are trying to develop audio-visual media broadly. In 1985, Monica Frota, a young filmmaker and photographer from the United States was starting up a strange project at that time. She facilitates the Kayapo Indians in the Amazon jungle to make a video about their own lives. The project entitled *Mekaron Opoi D'jao* (Kayapo language: 'He who Create Pictures') produced a series of videos with different ideas and ways of presentation. The project has a unique breakthrough artistic and technique. Since the early 1990s, the Kayapo people successfully built a network of communication and their own information systems and produce the picture from their own perspective. Kremoro, a chieftain of Kayapo said that "Many photographers came and captured, but they never return the result and taught us anything about this (photograph). Now, we record our own images for our grandchildren someday".[1] At this stage, the video was initially used not only as a conduit of

information and entertainment but also as a tool to demonstrate the existence, voicing public opinion and even further as media advocacy to bring the rights of the forgotten.

It has never been an easier time to start using videos possible to make a better world. Video cameras have gotten ever cheaper—they're now integrated into cell phones—and editing software comes repackaged with many home computers. Since the early 1990s, the increasing availability and affordability of technology has fuelled the world of social justice video activism. The movement has also been strengthened by new method for online and offline distribution, by novel ways to get around the traditional gate-keepers of media, and by the proliferation of nongovernmental organizations and people's movements asserting their rights, voices and identities. Pioneer organizations like Appalshop in the US, the Chiapas Media Project in Mexico, CEFREC in Bolivia, the Drishti Media Collective in India, Undercurrents in the UK, Labor News Production in South Korea, INSIST in Indonesia, and innumerable others, have been made video as integral part of campaigns focused on human rights, environmentalism, corporate globalization, and indigenous rights.[2] With democratized access to production and distribution, many more people are now able to participate in the tradition of filmmaking with video, not only to documenting but also challenge prevailing social ills.

Video could elicit powerful emotional impact by connecting viewers to personal stories. The images on video for activism can illustrate stark visual contrasts and provide direct visual evidence of abuses. It can be a vehicle for building coalitions with other groups working on an issue. Motion pictures can reach a wide range of people since it does not require literacy to convey information. It can help counter stereotypes and assistance in reaching new, different and multiple audiences, particularly if broadcast is a possibility. Close into television impact, video can be used in segments of varying lengths for different contexts.

Video4Change (v4c) is the use of video to support social movements, document human rights violations, raise awareness on social issues, and influence social change. Video activism becomes an effective and necessary approach for social movement rapidly. Video4Change is initiatives that emphasize the use of video for creating change, whether a personal or individual changes. This focused on group, specific issue or broader social level. So far, it includes guerrilla video, participatory/community video and advocacy video.[3]

Research on the process and impact in video maker community has been studied several times, such as Mhando (2003), Ferreira (2006) & Lunch (2007). However, not many studies review this video activism as 'art' which have aesthetic values. The phenomena of hybrid media increase the bias on what so called 'art' nowadays. But since video itself has been influence with the elements of aesthetic, they could be seen as 'artwork'. V4c that studies here comes from different perspective and presentation. This differences drives into broader analysis of aesthetic element and how it is implied to society change.

Svasek on his book argue that art exist in all society, it constitutes a universal category that can be used not only to explain what art is, but also can be used as an analytical tool to explore similar types of behaviour involved in the production, use, and consumption of objects and artefacts in different parts of the world. Roy Sieber still in Svasek book said that art proposed the definition by eight principal qualities, 1) namely that art is man-made, 2) exhibits skill, 3) exhibit order, 4) conveys meaning, 5) is the product of conscious intent, 6) is effective, 7) conveys a sense of unity and wholeness, 8) and evokes a response that is immediate.[4]

Argumentation of what art was also defines by Jacob Sumardjo on his book 'Art Philosophy'; Artwork is an object or artefact that can be seen, heard, or seen once heard (visual, audio, and audio-visual), such

as painting, music and theatre. But the so-called art it is outside of art, because art is a value. What is called beautiful by someone may not be beautiful to others. The values are subjective based on experience and knowledge.[5] With this understanding, the videos on v4c project suited on eight requirements that Sieber claimed as art as well as understanding the art by Sumardjo that based on the experience of audience and creator subjectivity. The videos here can be categorized as art. It is a real artefact and could not separate from the values of individualistic and collective understanding.

Therefore, this research attempts to trace and shift the study of v4c project from the perspective of art. Starting from this broad context of art, v4c can transform into a variety of instructional media, organizing and advocacy. However, the video as a tool has certain rules and approach to effectively deliver 'text' or message in visual language. This study is expected to be a reference in which a cultural context could be seen from the shifted artistic perspective. This shift resulted shift of meaning, where there is an aesthetic transformation into practical solution-based then expected to be solve the problems in the society.

2. Aims

2.1. To trace and shift the study of v4c project from the perspective of art.

2.2. To be a reference in which a cultural context could be seen from the shifted of artistic perspective.

2.3. To know what v4c values and meanings in society with postmodernism view.

3. Material and Method

Object material from this research is the result of Video4Change project. V4c is the platform method involves 15 organization and institutions within 11 countries around the world using video to support social movement, human right violation, social issues awareness, and social change. The videos from v4c that I studies here were coming from Indonesia, America, India and Israel. This project has varied activities such as; provide toolkit for guideline strategies, planning and preparation the video, how to filming, saving and storing video, video editing, until distribution and mobile video. V4c has ongoing study on measuring the impact of video for change and held the annual meeting of v4c network. However, what I focus here is just the video result of v4c project, instead of other matter. I will preview and found every aesthetic detail on the videos, make interpretation and analyzed what is beyond the 'text' through postmodern paradigm.

I used postmodernism paradigm as formal object in this study. Art and aesthetics started studied during the postmodernism era. Since then, the collective interest (industry) started to develop. We can see the industrialization process influence the problem in these video. This study will talk about the transformation of aesthetic and practical effect in the present context. I try to relate each video by their context. The aesthetic on videos must be seen to make a clear limitation to interpretation. Here, I try to look up how the element such as line, space, light, colour, sound, even words represent on the videos have the powerful impact beyond what visible through the context.

All the videos will be watch and review from the aesthetic matter and find the broader context to know how it's affects to social change. I will preview all the videos and looking for detailed element of aesthetics and analyze how the piece of shots produce the meanings that affect people for further changes. This is according of postmodern paradigm about how the video represent reality. Postmodernist believe that video camera have an ability to move variety events or activities and human action in the form of live

image-voiced perfectly (vivid images). This paradigm I guess suited in reviewing the material objects of videos v4c.

4. Result

4.1. B'Tselem case study: How to Build a Fence in Hebron

This video was made in Israel and talk about Israeli security forces divided a road in the centre of Hebron, separating it into a paved road for Jews and a narrow, rough passage for Palestinians. Musa Abu Hashhash and Manal al-Ja'bri, B'Tselem field researchers, also tried to reach the wide, paved side of the street. However, because they are Palestinians, Border Policemen prevented them from doing so. The policemen told them explicitly that the paved side of the street is for Jews only.
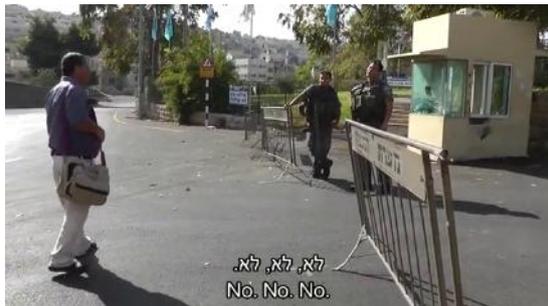

Fig. 1. The prohibition crossing over the fence by police.

This is only two minute video but have a strong issue of discrimination and human right violation. The opening of this video is handheld recording during the conversation with policeman. The chaos in Israel is showed by the first establish shot of the road by a patriarch. This shot will be a clue for other shot about fence building. The visualization of fence building becomes the main conflict of this video. After the fence build, many Arabs across the road difficulty, contrast to Jews road next to it. Again, Musa try to cross, but still prohibited by policeman.

This video has a key point of aesthetic. On the elements of design, line becomes the important aspect that draws the symbol of emotion. Line is the simplest medium as the most economical achievement compared with other medium.[6] Line here translated with the fence. As the symbol of emotion, the fence building makes the clear distinguish of Jews and non Jews (especially Arabs). This makes a clear sign of emotional intervention between what shows in video and what the audience get. The line represent by fence become the main conflict. Musa has to be complained twice, before and after the fence building, but he got nothing to explain why Jews and others distinguished.

Fig. 2. Line on the fence

Fig. 3. Crossing next to the fence difficulty

Fig. 4. Jews crossing while Musa prohibited

In the case of this video, there was not an official investigation into the incident recorded, because the denial of access to the road for Palestinians was a part of the officially sanctioned policies of the government. "This was not about a proper investigation, but a policy issue," Yoav –Director of B'Tselem Video Department- notes. However, after this video was released, it raised questions how the army reacted by changing the policy around this specific checkpoint.'

The B'Tselem webpage featuring this video also notes, "Since the video footage was aired, Border Police officers at the checkpoint allow Palestinian pedestrians to walk on either side of the road." For B'Tselem, this video provides a successful example of impact, using the content of the video to leverage a particular behaviour change on the part of authorities that alleviated the discriminatory practices that were documented. However it draws the distinction between behaviour and broader policy change. As Yoav notes, 'the more classic (trajectory for a successful B'Tselem video) would be, for example, if a police officer beat up a kid, no one heard of it, then the video comes out, and he is sent to trial." While here there is no official legal / policy change (in this case, the broader policies of discriminatory access to roads in Hebron), the shift at this particular checkpoint signals a successful use of B'Tselem video and a moment of impact that is tangible or track able.[7]

On this video discussion, we can see clearly how the element of aesthetic, dominated by line represented the fence, could be a sign of discrimination. This video has a strong statement against discrimination. With this two minute video, we would not need any other elucidation but picture. The fence construction makes the video statement strong and no wonder that this video effective as advocacy tools.

2. Video Volunteers case studies: Indian Railway Blind to Disability

Amol Lalzare is one of 120 Video Volunteer Community Correspondents who works with the Indian NGO, Video Volunteers. In October 2012 he posted the above 5-minute video to Video Volunteers, 'IndiaUnheard' video-sharing platform. The video tells the story of a community of 350 visually impaired residents of Vangani, a town located in the outlier districts of the city of Mumbai, who earn their living by selling wares to commuters in train compartments. Amol's video focuses on the tragic accidents and near-accidents that have taken place because there is no foot-bridge to allow the visually impaired community to safely access the train platform.

The video was embedded on IndiaUnheard with additional information and a call to action that provided instructions for people to call Central Railways to demand a bridge be built. A petition was also started on Change.org, which received more than 6000 signatures. Four months after the video and campaign were launched, and after multiple meetings, the Central Railways announced that they had allocated funds to construct the bridge. IndiaUnheard is a network of more than 100 Community Correspondents reporting from remote parts of India. It is also the name of Video Volunteer's video-sharing platform and is considered to be 'a community news service' by Video Volunteers. Launched in 2010 it supports Video Volunteer Community Correspondents to tell unique stories; stories about their own communities; stories which otherwise left untold. Since 2010, Amol has published 25 videos on the IndiaUnheard website. Amol is now a full-time correspondent for Video Volunteers, having given up his job as a taxi driver to focus on this role.[8]

This video opening with Amol statement, "Here is no guarantee of blind people coming back after work in Vangani. It caused by lack of bridge facility for blind". Then it is cut to the statement from disabilities point of view. All the stories told with background of the railway. From the scenes, we can clearly hear the train crossing sound or see blind people crossing the railway. This film dominated with the interview and statement that have strong argument about limited accessibility and facility especially for blind. The most interesting scene on this video is when a blind couple waiting for the train stop. Without proper guidance and crowded situation, blind couple does not have special space and facility on the crowded and people jostle, even it was a sign for disabilities. Many accidents happened and there is no such attention so far.

Fig. 5. Blind jostle entering the train even there is the sign to take disabilities on advance

The study of aesthetic that could be found in this video is the elements of space and sound. We clearly see that space here is about the background setting of railway. From this railway, viewer can construct their illusion into a real space form. The railway that shows here is located in Mumbai, India that might be does not have direct correlation with the viewer, but the space, situation, colour and sphere will connect the viewers experienced into the common real railway on their own perspective. The similarity of perspective from space here takes the viewers on the dramatic situation as told by the blind experience. Viewers can imagine how the condition faced by the blind while crossing the railway everyday without facility that caused risky accident.

Fig. 6. Risk of blind crossing the railway

The sound that I studied here is about how commentary, statement and interview with the blind and other people can construct the way of viewers thinking. It has been raised the empathy of humanity with involving viewers on their feeling. The strong story of train accident victim engaged audience in emotional condition. From here, it might be raised the question "how comes it happened to them?". This feeling bother the sense and encourage desire of action. The video tell the real story of life with sound has dominant impact of narrative point for the viewers. It s not surprising that this video has a powerful effect after distribute.

Fig. 7. The actual voice and activity take an audience into 'their reality'

3. WITNESS Case Studies: TRUST Colorado Climate Change

Xiuhtezcatl Martinez is an 11 year-old boy from Boulder, Colorado. In this video, Xiuhtezcatl shares his story about why he joined youth from across the country to ask the courts to hear their lawsuit, Alec L., et al., v. Lisa P. Jackson, et al., which is based on one of the most fundamental principles of civilized society: TRUST.

Xiuhtezcatl is asking that our atmosphere be protected, because he loves playing in Colorado's mountains, forests, lakes and streams. He afraid that the resources he enjoy will not be there for next generation if we continue emitting carbon at current rates. Xiuhtezcatl shares, "The proof of climate change is everywhere, I look. In my lifetime, the amount of forest killed by pine beetles has expanded. The number of acres burned has intensified. My generation is losing our forests. We are losing our homes. It's not too late to ensure my generation has a livable future. But we need to listen to the science and act now."

Over a century ago, the U.S. Supreme Court recognized that their federal government has an absolute legal duty to protect essential common natural resources, such as air and water, for present and future generations of Americans. The American youth are simply asking their third branch of government to compel legislative and executive branches to do their jobs.[9]

This video is opening with the text of US Supreme Court on 1907 about the state has a sovereign obligation over "all the earth and air within its domain, and it is called public trust." The word of 'trust' is becoming bigger and makes another sentence that shows the aim of this video. The opening scene is showing the activity of Xiuhtezcatl with his dad in the forest and the snow. He expresses how he likes the forest as his play and learns ground. The images in this scene are very sharp with good natural lighting arrangements. Landscape scenes with vibrant colors dominate this video.
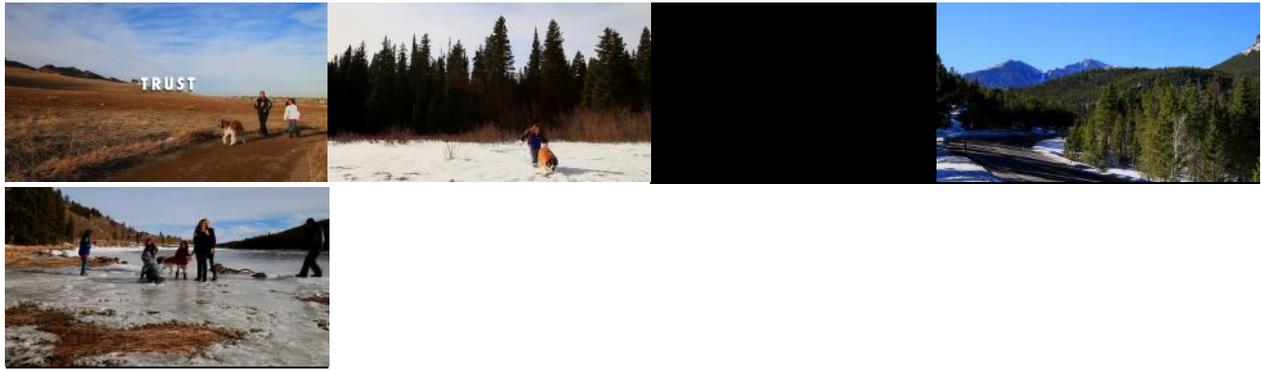
Fig. 8. Xiuhtezcatl enjoy the beautiful scenery of Colorado Forest

Here, light and color as the element of aesthetics has been studied. The combination between light that fall under the object produced a good color of images. Our eyes pampered with the rich of beautiful Colorado forest. With the images, viewers can feel the same feeling while Xiuhtezcatl playing on the snow or when the sun shines. The problem begins when the beautiful scenery of Colorado forest jumped cut into the brown color of degraded forest. The color of forest was contrast with the blue of the sky.

Fig. 9. Burned house & deforestation

We clearly see that the visual shows beyond the video itself. In reality, Xiuhtezcatl action begins far before the video comes. But, this video with powerful light and color construct the idea of deforestation process on Colorado. It was not shot by real time but continuous to makes narrative structure. Narrative and strong shots with the light and color decoration makes video able to tell the true feeling of a child. More than that, this brings the 'virus' to impress many other people to do the same action as Xiuhtezcatl.

Fig. 10. Xiuhtezcatl action against global warming footage

4. EngageMedia Case Studies: Love Letter a Soldier

Love Letter to the Soldier is a 7-minute video that tells the story of Maria 'Eti' Goreti, who was still a student in 2008 when she was courted by Samsul Bacharudin, an Indonesian soldier from Java who was stationed at her village in Bupul, near the border of West Papua and Papua New Guinea. Samsul left Bupul when Eti was five months pregnant and promised to return; but Eti never heard from him again, even after the birth of their daughter, Yani. This video was made by Wenda, a West Papuan activist who had made just one video prior to this.

The 'Love Letter' video was one of more than forty that was made as part of the Papuan Voices project, led by EngageMedia in partnership with Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation. Papuan Voices is a video for change

initiative that worked with Papuan activists for one year, starting in 2011, to support them to more effectively tell their stories to the world in order to raise awareness about the everyday realities for West Papuans who have endured decades of hostility and violence.

The film is also embedded within the Papuan Voices project website and it comes with a 'Study Guide' which summarizes the video and asks questions to the audience. The video has been screened all over the world, including in Indigenous communities in the US and Bolivia and at a number of film festivals. The video also won South to South Documentary Film Festival in Jakarta, which included prize-money of 7 million Rupiah (around US$720).[10]

The film presents the Eti's story with narrative technique. The narrative comes from a letter she wrote to Samsul, In her letter, Eti telling her daily life, her daughter and her objection in the cost of living. Eti remember Samsul promises to return, but she just can wait. She intend to deliver the letter to Samsul from the nearest Indonesian soldier office from her home. It takes several times public transportation change and the video closed by the fact of sexual abuse and neglected Papuan woman caused by Indonesian soldier in border area of Indonesia.

Fig. 11. Eti and her son with Indonesian Soldier

Words are the medium to bring the contents or extrinsic elements in some kind of art. The words are called intrinsic just because of the word choice, processing and structure have a direct sentence with a wonderful favor to be heard or to be read.[11] This video shows the descriptive and lyrical about the situation explanation and feeling expression. The visual aspect here was used to give clearly representation from what Eti says in her letter. The visual does not 'says' many thing but the words from her letter.

Figure 12. Eti keep waiting Samsul come.

Here I found another element of aesthetic that can be defined from words. Words have a strong position to influence the thought. Without tendencies of other elements in this video, Eti's voices and her choice of words have a strong and clear statement of Papuan minority woman who found the justice. This video has special impact to the viewers, especially on how Eti engage the audience feeling through her point of view, in this context by words.

5. Discussion

The term 'aestheticsation' describes the process by which objects are perceived and the ensuing sensory experience used to provide a basis for description of 'aesthetic experience', which in turn are used to reinforce abstract ideas or beliefs. Aesthetic experience is likely being conveyed to others in a verbal discourse that draws on vocabulary from artistic discourse to articulate and give meaning to it. The type of discourse used might depend on the viewer's own knowledge and background, or how publicly well known and well regarded the work is. [12]

With the above explanation, the concept of aesthetics focus on process which object and sensory experience has been used to aesthetic experience. This aesthetic experience used to reinforce abstract ideas or beliefs at the end of process. Aesthetic experience will be delivering to others by oral and artistic discourse to giving meaning. This meaning is highly dependent on the knowledge and background of art lovers. Aesthetic concepts in the audio-visual medium are not only departed from the final result, but it is a whole process in creating the work.

Postmodernism was debate largely around the issue of art. Some central aspects associated with postmodernism in the arts include; elimination of the boundary between art and everyday life; collapse hierarchy distinction between popular culture and elite culture, stylistic eclectics and code mixing. The collapse of artistic creator's that having special intelligence view has been replaced the assumption that art is nothing more than repetition. [13]

Postmodernist acknowledge art as an information system and a commodity shaped by the electronic media, its messages and its modes of communication. The postmodernism is pluralistic, that is it suggest that meaning is many facered and fleeting, rather than absolute and fixed; and that the indivisual has numerous (and often contradictory) identities. [14]

Baudrillard says we are in the universe of more information with less meaning. We are bombarded with images with detail in every moment of life. The only way to overcome this is the overflow of information to take control of our lives by understanding the images merely as a marker, just as the appearance, refused the meaning of signified. [15]

Audio-visual medium is known as the type of media that has huge persuasive effect on the audience. This media has the ability to imitate (mimetic) from video cameras to transfer variety of events or activities of human action in the form of image-voiced in almost perfect ways (vivid images). According to postmodernism, this character represents reality.

Hegemonic system, all anomalies media and art perspective in the view of postmodernism are creates criticism and resistance. Criticism and resistance to the domination of the media by blocking the response of postmodernist thought, privatize individual, putting the audience in a visual bias and reject meaning, marked by the lowest class of society which became maker, creator, determining the meaning and messages of their own. They can build their own public space with a variety of advanced media such as broadcast television stations and even their own video.

Video as a medium in the era of postmodernism is considered as an illusion and simulation now has more authority. Video build new structures and functions that have transformed from mere aesthetic imagery into practical media with specific meanings. Out of the notion of postmodernism, a video made by common people, especially the lower middle class can actually take control of our lives by understanding the images not just as a signified, but also interpret it.

6. Conclusion

Aesthetic means thing that can be absorbed by the senses. Therefore, aesthetics is often interpreted as a sensory perception (sense of perception). The experience of art could be uses as the perfection of sentient knowledge. There are various kinds of division and differentiation of the concept of aesthetics. This is a philosophies question with different answer. One of that is looking for common traits in an object that considered beautiful and then equate the characteristics to aesthetic understanding. It means that aesthetics contains an amount of particular principal quality in something.

There are no standard rational-universal assessment criteria to determine what art is. In fact, the artists and writers must constantly seek and formulate art own rules. As I studied here, various video from v4c project has their own aesthetic values, such us; line, space and sound, light and color, include words. Here, we can conclude that the videos made by v4c project are categorized as art. V4c projects were just focused on the process and the impact of the videos before. But, from this research, the result of the whole process could be studied separately as an art work. I found the 'beauty' in the four videos. This beauty from the artwork; How to Build the Fence in Hebron, Indian Railway Blind to Disability, TRUST Colorado, and Love Letter A Soldier could be found by the aesthetical studies. Each artwork has their own elements and specification apart from their function as tools of change.

In addition from that, I try to look up how the v4c artwork uses in the society by the postmodernism paradigm. This paradigm believed that there is no distinction of art and everyday life. What we called art now is integrated and has specified messages with several mode of communication. The media has mixed with reality. This condition supports the developing of new media that handled by personal or community. Postmodernist does not believe the public media because it makes boundaries of self statement. Through this paradigm, the videos on v4c project could be understood as the representation of community/organization/institution art work with the aesthetic elements that have the aims for society development apart from mainstream media.

Four videos from this discussion show us more than the sensory experience but power to engage, invoke, provoke, even action. Texts become not so important than its impact. Video uses just as the medium to telling what happened. Here we found the society that does not enough to see beauty on art. Art itself, melting into another perspective. What

so called art is not about the form in aesthetic, but the complexity of their context and content. Viewing these videos make the postmodern society ignored the unperfected shots, jumping cut, short duration, and break the conventional video form. They do not need art as expressing nor premature appreciation, but how arts can tell more that it shows. This discussion brings us to paradigm transformation that I found from traditional aesthetic of art into the meaning and function of art.

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Narrative Analysis of Nationalism on Usmar Ismail Film *Darah dan Doa* (1950)

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Abstract

Films made by Usmar Ismail, *Darah dan Doa* (1950) considered as a milestone of Indonesian national film. His works has been stated by several authors suited to represent Indonesia, made by Indonesian under the banner of the Indonesian film company. Yet according to Anderson (1983), there is a problematic issue to define nationalism because it is possibly product of historical imagination. Since 1926 until the early 1940s, filmmakers were European and Chinese, but the story and the play mostly adapted from local knowledge, even film actor/actress were local. Usmar Ismail was not the first local filmmaker, but he is the one who made film independently without foreigner intervention. He used everyday-popular theme and worked with local crew and talents. This research is not considered other aspect but film itself. In this context, film works as a powerful text to find the ideology of nationalism on Usmar's film. This research used narrative methodology to analyze one of his fundamental film, *Darah dan Doa*. This film launched in the middle of independence euphoria and memories of revolution. *Darah dan Doa* considered as the first nationalist film. Soon after, Usmar became the father of Indonesian national film. This research stands between two arguments; first accept claim related to the identification of national film offered by film historians, second, also critically re-examine what kind of nationalism expression that considered as an important ideology in Usmar's film. The notion of national films is actually a political construction that makes film as the foundation for defining and articulating nation. Emerging idea of nationalism claim in the early Indonesian film that formed by native were underlined with ethno-nationalist spirit. *Darah dan Doa* narratives highlight the love life of captain in revolution era. This film uses the setting of war only as a story background. This research found that nationalism claimed on Indonesian early cinema needs to be criticize.

Keyword : nationalism, film narrative, *Darah dan Doa*

1. Introduction

Usmar Ismail started to build his own film company, *Perusahaan Film Nasional* (Perfini) just after independence. He produced first film *Darah dan Doa* at March 30th 1950. Recently, the date of first day *Darah dan Doa* shooting became the National Film Day. Usmar Ismail then legitimate as the Father of National Film. *Darah dan Doa* considered as a milestone in Indonesia national film history. His works has been stated by several authors (Said: 1991&1982, Arief: 2009, Biran: 2009) suited to represent Indonesia, made by Indonesian under the banner of the Indonesian film company. Biran claimed that films before 1950s was not based on national consciousness and therefore cannot be referred as "Indonesian Film" (Biran, 2009: 45). Usmar Ismail shows idealism in filmmaking while other filmmaker focuses on profit (Said, 1982: 7).

According to Barker who questioned the idea of national films, he found the principles of national films that its nationalists in scope. Criteria for national film were 'always' and 'limited' on military struggle story (Barker & Cheng, 2011: 11-12). The notion of national films is actually a political construction that makes film as the foundation for defining and articulating nation. The cultural elite in Indonesia encourages film emergence that can be used as a tool of forming the idea of national identity and national culture to the audience (Barker & Cheng, 2011: 16). Emerging idea of nationalism claim in the early Indonesian film that formed by native were underlined with ethno-nationalist spirit. Then, Thomas Barker with Dunn claims that the historians notion actually simplify the 'richness" Indonesian film history because it uses irrelevant narrow definition of 'national film'. They argued that the films made through the hands of the Chinese give the feeling as 'Indonesia' that perceived by the scope of the multi-ethnic. Nationalists patterned films are not narrowly interpreted through the identification of the ethno-nationalists, but inter-ethnic meetings, both natives, Indo and Chinese who form the images of Indonesia through his films (Barker & Cheng, 2011: 34).

This research stands between two arguments; first accept claim related to the identification of national film offered by film historians, second, also critically re-examine what kind of nationalism expression that considered as an important ideology in Usmar's film. This research should be done considering despite of Usmar Ismail regarded as the father of national film, there has been no comprehensive study related to the idea of nationalism, especially in film narrative. The predicate was granted without any critical effort to re-examine the claim. Claim that Usmar Ismail films brings national mission has a superiority perspective of other films. Re-examination of historical archive needs to be done considering the lack of such a critical writing on the film history reading.

2. Research Questions

2. 1. How does the idea of nationalism in the film narrative elements of *Darah dan Doa*?

2. 2. What kind the expression of nationalism embodied in *Darah dan Doa* film narrative?

3. Aims

3. 1. Explorative study the idea of nationalism in film narrative.

3. 2. Fill the gaps of critical thinking on national film claims offered by earlier historians.

3. 3. Contribute rescue in the Indonesian film archive.

4. Material and Method

The main data in this study is a film *Darah dan Doa* as a text. *Darah dan Doa* was the first movie

made by Usmar Ismail under first national film company PERFINI. As mentioned by film historian notes, this film has important remark on stepping Indonesian national filmmaking. *Darah dan Doa* known as the first Indonesian film that directed and played by Indonesian.

Living resource and activity related to this research topic has been hardly found. Usmar Ismail was died on 1971. He left only the great name that was inaugurated as the name of the Film Central Building. Because of limited data sources and compliances with the study, this research conducted by study document method. Document study allows researcher used archive footage, the public media such as movies, personal documents such as living history, diaries, letters and other visual objects (Sarantakos, 2005: 293). Film is the main material will be used in this research. The original material of *Darah dan Doa* was record on celluloid film, but it has been converted to digital and can accessed publically by Forum Lenteng, an organization focused on media based educational program such as film and video. The availability to access film material is also the reason to pick this film as a main data.

Film historian and critics argued that Usmar's film considered a milestone in the emergence of nationalist expression in growing national film industry. *Darah dan Doa* produced on 1950 when Indonesia began to reorganize nation after escapes from 1949 revolution. In addition to forming the state, nationalism became mandatory stance in the independence. The euphoria of independence in those days certainly affects various aspects where film includes. Hypothesis in this study have the strong influence of nationalism spirit in films during 1950's. This hypothesis drives the research to found the appropriate methods for answer the research questions.

The material of this study is related to the film archives and documents in the past, nevertheless this is not historical research. This is textual research that film as a cultural product

will studies to found latent theme in the text and make connections between them. In attempt to study the whole stories or narrative text, this research uses narrative analysis. This method takes the whole text as the object of analysis, focused on the structure of story or narration. Narrative analysis frequently used to explore the meaning of the works. This approach will reveals cultural material structure. The researcher should interrupt the story to do deeper investigation and analysis (Stokes, 2006: 72-73).

Narrative analysis that applies in this study refers to the theory and methodology coming from film theorist, David Bordwell. This should be done to see how film can represent reality or just build a broader meaning. Narrative analysis can be used to examine the text and find the ideology behind the structure of the text. Bordwell (1985: 12) emphasis that narrative on cinema is bound to incorporate and combine a large number of "co-creative" techniques "constructing the story world for specific effects". On his next book, he specifies the meaning of film narrative:

> We can consider a narrative to be a chain of events in cause-effect relationship occurring in time and space. A narrative is what we usually mean by the term story […]. Typically, a narrative begins with one situation; a series of changes occurs according to a pattern of cause and effect; finally, a new situation arises that brings about the end of the narrative' (Bordwell & Thompson, 2008: 75).

Bordwell thesis shows the important component to form the narrative, which consists of causality, time and space. However, before explores the narrative further, he also noted to distinguish story and plot to recite the narrative in the film. Overall incidence, both visible and what is a viewer allegedly known as *story*. *Plot* covers all incidents in the story which directly depicted through audio and visual

representation. This is the diagram of Bordwell definition of story and plot:

STORY		
Presumed and inferred events	Explicitly presented events	Added nondiegetic material
	PLOT	

Diagram 1. The differences between story and plot

Source : Bordwell & Thompson, 2008: 77

Bordwell initial definition and the distinction between plot and story constitute a set of tools for analyzing how narrative works. Researcher shall see that the story-plot distinction affects all three aspects of narrative: causality, time, and space. Narrative depends on cause and effect. The agent of cause and effect are characters. By triggering and reacting to events, characters play roles within the film's formal system. Along with a body, a character has traits. Traits are attitudes, skills, habits, tastes, psychological drives, and any other qualities that distinguish the character.

The other aspect in narrative is time. Causes and their effects are basic to narrative, but they take space in time. Here again the story-plot distinction helps clarify how time shapes understanding of narrative action. In film, even if events are shown in chronological order, most plots don't show every detail from beginning to end. Any event in the plot no needs to go chronologically, but the audience always associate each event in chronological order and set them in the duration and frequency.

Space is another element of narrative. Frequently, the space depicted in the story is the same space shown in the plot. However,

sometimes the plot makes audience to speculate elsewhere as part of the story. Because of this, narrative asks the audience to imagine the space and events which not visible on the screen.

Bordwell offers the way to do narrative analysis with initially formulating a narrative synopsis. This narrative synopsis is made by summarizing the story with assumption and conjecture over the instructions from the earliest events until the film ended. Synopsis must be contains a series of chronological order in space and time that can be understood by audience. In this way, the rules of narrative operation have been performed. Furthermore, the study of narrative can be used to find the "ideology" or "system of belief" which is hidden in the message. The goal is to find hidden meanings and values which may not be explicit in the first reading (Stokes, 2006: 83).

In the analysis of narrative, researcher point of view will be part of building a hypothesis. Interpretation of hidden philosophy that works in a text becomes the most important parts in textual analysis. Framework of nationalism builds the hypothesis that will be investigated in this research.

5. Result

5. 1. Narrative Synopsis

According to Bordwell, the first step to do narrative analysis is formulating narrative synopsis. *Darah dan Doa* that released internationally with the title *The Long March* is 1950 Indonesian war film. This film tells the story of the Siliwangi Division and its leader Captain Sudarto on a march to West Java during revolution era.

The Siliwangi Division, originally headquartered in West Java, is temporarily based in Central Java owing to the Renville Agreement. The division's leader, Captain Sudarto, meets with an Indo woman named Connie, who is originally from Bandung. The two become friendly, but after a Dutch attack is launched on the capital at Yogyakarta, they must separate as the division heads westwards. Captain Sudarto leads his men – together with women and children – over more than 200 kilometres (120 mile), resting during the day and travelling in the morning and evening. They face hunger, a shortage of supplies, and Dutch air strikes. Along the way, Sudarto begins falling in love with a nurse named Widya.

The division comes across a village which has been razed to the ground by Dutch forces, killing almost all of its inhabitants. Upon directions from the sole survivor, they go to a nearby village and are warmly received, receiving much needed food. As the men settle for the night, Sudarto goes for a walk with Widya, raising the men's ire. That night the men sleep comfortably in beds while the villagers stand guard. In the morning, however, the villagers – who are revealed to be related to the Darul Islam militant group – turn on them. The men successfully fight back, although Sudarto is shot by the village chief.

Sudarto orders the chief executed a deed which ultimately falls on the man's son. Afterwards the division continues west. One night, Sudarto's second-in-command Adam tells him that the men are restless over his relationship with Widya. They argue, and Widya – who has overheard everything – says that she will go. The following morning Dutch soldiers launch an ambush in which many are killed, including Widya and Adam. The division in dire straits, Sudarto offers to go to nearby Bandung on his own for the much-needed supplies, leaving his fellow officer Leo in charge. After meeting with resistance fighters who offer supplies, Sudarto goes to visit Connie and is captured by Dutch forces.

While in prison, Sudarto is tortured and begins to regret his actions, especially his womanizing. After the Dutch recognize Indonesia's independence, Sudarto is released from prison, only to learn that his wife has left him and he is under investigation for poor leadership. After meeting with Leo, he realizes that the division had reached safety. One night, as he reads his diary, Sudarto is accosted by a man whose relatives were killed in Madiun. After the two argue, Sudarto is shot dead.

5.2. Plot and Story Interpretation on Causality

The plot of this film is linear with the story. Without any time and space interruption, the film shows that plot indicates story significantly. The plot began with nondiegetic --the narrator-- description of what happened in revolution era and ended with tragically incident. This plot construct the story that identical with reality during 1950's when people remember of war. Even not dominated with shootout scene, the setting of war implicitly on the plot has been understood as the real situation. People are starving, dying and hurting indicates the story of the real war.

Captain Sudarto as the main character on this film is the leader of Siliwangi Division. He led the long march and faces several obstacles during the guerrilla. He has leadership and loving character. But he easily falling in love, even he already has a wife. *Darah dan Doa* classified as a war movie, but the story of Sudarto's romance oftentimes blow up. He suddenly interests with Connie without specific reason as well as Widya. His soldier raises the rumor and his best friend reproves him. During the time in prison, he knew that his wife left him and ironically he shots dead for revenge reason at the end.

Figure 1. Footage shot of Captain love story and his tragic ending

Figure 2. Footage shot of getting ammunition to Bandung that ended at prison.

Captain Sudarto leadership character could be seen when he negotiate to stop the gunfire, lead the group to sing a battle song, and his initiative to get ammunition stock. He also trusted to lead and organize a big group of civil soldier although it is not explicitly shows in the plot. The cause and effect that highlight in this result is limited to the plot when Captain Sudarto decides to take the ammunition and move out to Bandung. In the plot, two mans with ammunition was waiting for him to come in the hotel. They are afraid of the curfew. Then Sudarto comes and lying down on the hotel bed. He even talks about the comfortable feeling on bed. Then he asks permission to go out. This two mans asked him to leave the hotel before the curfew, but he is neglectful. Sudarto comes to Connie house to keep his promise. They were in short conversation because Connie also worried of curfew. Sudarto back to the hotel too late, the two men already left and suddenly he mugged by police and sent into prison.

The trigger of cause and effect in narrative is a character. Here, in this film, the narrator have important role to tell the story which is not comes up visually. Sometimes, what he says are quite different from the plot. He is success to build Sudarto with the image of hero. In contrary, Sudarto obviously drives by his romantic emotion. It is not clearly shows on the plot, but he never portrays as the real leader, who made a big decision for the long march nor independence struggle. He even going to jail and after released, he has bad record in army. He gets suspension and shots died. But still, from the narrator voice, at the end of the film he remembered as a hero and the long march will be continued.

5.3. Plot and Story Interpretation on Time and Space

The visibly seen differences on the plot of *Darah dan Doa* and the story interpretation already clearly found on the causality. The plot of war told with the story of romance and tragedy. In

this subchapter, time and space as the other aspect of narrative will explore. This film is set at the revolution era and based on the historical notes. It starts from September 1948, exactly the same time when allied forces come to Indonesia. Even this is a fiction film, but the plot, specifically the time option develops by reality.

During the revolution, Indonesia faces the critical moment. At 1949, the capital of Jakarta has to be moved to Yogyakarta for security reason. Allied occupation in several cities complicates limited military strength. Many civil died, families disunited, and villages destruction at that time. Most Indonesian sacrificed for the country. During revolution, many stories occurred. The story of *Darah dan Doa* is one of the fictional fragment constructed according to several issues and moments.

Figure 3. Series of plot indicates the reality during revolution

Seeing the film *Darah dan Doa* takes viewer to the real time setting when the revolution war happened. It might be caused by the time of production (1950) is not very far from the time

on the plot (1948-1949). There is almost no time interruption on the plot besides for duration intention. During 94 minutes film duration, the plot goes linear to the story. It can be observed from the plot when Sudarto and Connie first met. Because of the condition in Sarangan, they have to be apart. Sudarto and his man head to westwards and Connie sent back to Bandung. Then plot moves to the Dutch Military Aggression and Sudarto leads hundreds people long march. During the journey of struggling, Sudarto's story becomes more interesting than the war itself. He seems forgetting Connie easily, immediately falling in love to Widya and having deep sorrow when Widya died right away.

Sudarto's feeling in the plot is rapidly changing. The absence of time manipulation in the plot makes a gap to generate the story. Viewer could not have strong reason why Sudarto was busy with his love story in the war situation. In the film plot, it shows that he became interested with Widya several days after Connie left. After Widya died, Sudarto soon decide to go to Connie house during his duty. The fast plot of Sudarto loving attitude brings the viewer to interpret his loving stories straightforward. This is actually blurs *Darah dan Doa* as a war movie.

The plot of war can be seen from the air force attack during long march. The chaos situation describes with the sound of shots, air bullets and bomb. But, that war scene screened on short duration. It was not a dominant scene in the whole film. Viewer easily sees the war, but then constructs the story from what happened behind the war, such as love and sacrifice. The more complete plot of war is appears on villagers (DI) uprising after very welcomed acceptance at the night before. But, that plot shows in very short duration, the soldiers' scuttled and inevitable firefight. Sudarto should be makes a fast decision instead of looking for Widya and then get shoot. The plot ended by narrator explanation that Sudarto have known about DI uprising, but he never really knows what they are and how they work. Very short duration in the uprising plot makes it cannot be highlighted. Besides, Sudarto is careless so this series of plot

indicates very few values of war stories. From the causality and time in narrative analysis, it shows that this film have content more love stories with the war background than the war itself.

Besides time, this film uses the setting of space as reality space. There is no space manipulation to distinguish the story and plot. The similarity of space in the plot aims to bring the story close to the history. Viewer can easily generate the spaces used in the plot to the reality. In the film opening, the narrator tells where the story happened. In the few scenes, viewer seems invited in to the war. It is more likely documentary until the characters appear.

This film uses the setting of Bandung, Serangan, Yogyakarta and West Java in the plot. This option indicates that the plot adopted the real space from revolution war. Almost all the spaces, that mention by narrator in plot and imagine in the story, were written in the history book. This space intends to build the whole story of revolution. It means, even the causality and time of *Darah dan Doa* narrate more love story than war story, constantly space setting indicates that there is attempt to keep viewer building a war story.

6. Discussion

In this chapter, the discussion leads to answer the research questions. To answer the first question of how does the idea of nationalism in *Darah dan Doa* narrative elements, the meaning of nationalism is have to be clear. The literature about Indonesian nationalism comes from varied perspective. It is a concept, perception, and ideology which never have constant meaning. The important work on nationalism was coming from Ben Anderson with his concept of imagined communities. According to him, nationalism is a political answer that has the idea of nation imagined as a whole unified who achieve independence because of revolutionary advantages. For Anderson, the word of nation,

nation-ness and nationality is none other than cultural artifacts of a particular kind. He argued that the nation imagined as a community. From Anderson perspective, nationalism is tends to be limited to community objective to achieve independence. It raises dialectic which may arise to anti West nationalism and anti colonialism. Nationalism is a political answer from European imperialist spirit until the end of Second World War. This research adopted this understanding as a framework of nationalism.

This next discussion will elaborate the first and second research question all at once. European imperialist heyday during the Second World War is the basic idea of this film. This concludes especially from the narrative aspect of time and space. This film sets on revolution era from 1948 to 1949 when allied force comes to Indonesia. The plot explicitly shows the time and space setting identically with reality (history). This film also takes space in several cities during revolution, such as Bandung and Yogyakarta. Time and space setting plot goes linear to the story of war. Dutch Military Aggression to Indonesia leads all the conflict in the film story. It is indicates that this film uses European imperialism as a background. The plot even start with the date of first allied force attack on September 1948. In the entire plot, this film uses the idea that soldier, with civil, have to works together in a long march to gain back independence during revolution. This finding shows that the idea of nationalism works but limited to the aspect of time and space in the story.

How about the aspect of causality in narrative? Let starts the discussion from the result above. Captain Sudarto and woman relationship frequently appears in the plot than the war itself. This could be somewhat misleading to classified *Darah dan Doa* as a war film, or further, as a film with the idea of nationalism. The setting of war is apparently only as a background of the story. Most of the plot portrays Captain Sudarto romantic story. He is falling in love with two different women during the war. Both of them ends tragic, Widya died

and the meeting with Connie led him going to jail. Captain Sudarto never understands as a good leader. He is captain, but he sent to jail because passing the curfew. After released, he has bad military record, he gets suspension and shots died.

The film *Darah dan Doa* develops story behind the war. A weak character and fictional love story constructs the critics of the idea of nationalism in this film. This happens because of the independence and the unity of community spirits are not the main story. Revolution war adopts as the setting of the story. *Darah dan Doa*, classify as a war movie, becomes irrelevant because love and tragedy dominates the story. This finding indicates that the idea of nationalism used partially in this film. The ideology of nationalism applied in time and space aspect of *Darah dan Doa* narratives. Meanwhile, narrative depends on cause and effect. But from the analyses above, this research failed to found the idea of nationalism in the causality narratives, except several minor stories.

To answer the second question, first, the research found above has to be understood. The expression of nationalism sees on the plot in narratives analysis of time and space all at once. The revolution era, the real location and the war setting adopted as a film background. But then the love story, the careless captain, and the ironic ending could not consider as the expression of nationalism ideology. Several minor stories such us multicultural love relationship and the fragment of war can be explored in more comprehensive studies.

7. Conclusion

From the result and discussion above, this research obtains several finding on *Darah dan Doa* narratives. This research succeeds to criticize the hypothesis of nationalism in the film of Usmar Ismail, *Darah dan Doa*. This research using Ben Anderson argumentation of nationalism which nation imagined as a community that tends to be limited to community objective to achieve independence. With this understanding, nationalism woks as the ideology on *Darah dan Doa* but limited to the aspect of time and space in narrative. The causality, which formed the narration, indicates quite differences finding. *Darah dan Doa* is the love story with tragedy ending on the setting of war. It is hardly found the idea of nationalism in the plot or in the story of *Darah dan Doa*.

To sum up, this research indicates that the claimed of nationalism embedded to Usmar Ismail and his film, especially *Darah dan Doa* can be criticized. Because this research cannot find the ideology of nationalism in the most important element of narrative from the film *Darah dan Doa*. The love story domination during the war even more highlighted in this film. Is that the idea of nationalism that suited in forming the national film?

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