

THE EVOLUTION OF MALAYSIAN CARTOON ANIMATION

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ABSTRACT

A cartoon can be defined as an unrealistic style of sketching and or funny figures that can make people laugh. Aside from entertainment purposes, cartoons are also used to send messages without a serious tone and indirectly telling something sarcastically. In April 2019, Malaysia was shocked by the headline that ‘Doraemon’ had been selected to represent the Japanese themed cartoon exhibition in conjunction with Visit Malaysia 2020. Malaysian art activists, specifically those who has a cartoon animation background, were very upset and expressed their dissatisfaction with the news. Local legendary cartoonist Datuk Lat also showed his disappointment and made a stand that a local cartoon character should have been chosen to represent Malaysia. Therefore, this research aims to illustrate the development of Malaysian cartoons from when they first started in newspapers, until their existence today in the form of animation on digital platforms. In sequence, Malaysia produced cartoons in newspapers, magazines, blogs, television and cinema, whereby this is in parallel with the development of technology. From hand-drawn art for ‘Usop Sontorian’ to digital animation for the film ‘Upin dan Ipin’, Malaysians should be more appreciative and proud of our local cartoons rather than those from other countries.

Keywords: *Local identity, Characteristic, Animation, Comic, Character design.*

Introduction

Cartoons are fundamentally known as entertainment for kids. But due to cultural values, technological development and education, our cliché perception has changed to that cartoons are actually a source of effective communication for all ages (Mulyadi, 2001, 2010, 2015). Cartoons can be defined as an unrealistic style of sketching and or funny figures that can make people laugh. Aside from entertainment purposes, cartoons are also used to send messages without a serious tone and telling something with sarcasm (Rudi, 1985; Leeuwen, 2000; Markova et al. 2007:72; Mohd Johari, 2008; Arthur, 2011). In sequence, cartoons were produced in newspapers, magazines, blogs, television and cinema, whereby this was in parallel with the development of technology. From hand-drawn art for ‘Usop Sontorian’ to digital animation for the film ‘Upin dan Ipin’, Malaysians should be proud of our local cartoons rather than those from other countries.

In April 2019, Malaysia was shocked by headlines stating that ‘Doraemon’ was selected to represent the Japanese themed cartoon exhibition in conjunction with Visit Malaysia 2020 (Bernama, Jo Timbuong 2019). Malaysian art activists, specifically those in the animation line, were very upset and expressed their dissatisfaction with the news. Moreover, local legendary cartoonist Datuk Lat who created ‘Kampung Boy’ animation series also showed his disappointment and made a stand that a local cartoon character should have been chosen to represent Malaysia worldwide (Chua, 2019).

The ‘Upin dan Ipin’ producer from Les’ Copaque Production Sdn. Bhd. sarcastically stated, “When you can use foreign, why bother using local animation to promote Malaysia?”. This became viral on social media with many reactions and responses from netizens, whereby most of them agreeing that we should appreciate our local cartoon characters (Dennis Chua 2019). Nevertheless, National Art Gallery Chairman Datuk Rashidi Hasbullah then clarified that the statement was actually misinterpreted and that he didn’t mean that the Japanese theme would be able to promote Malaysia worldwide. He said that it was more about how Japan and Malaysia

could collaborate by perhaps organizing events or painting popular characters from both countries in conjunction with Visit Malaysia Year 2020. Hence, Malaysia Tourism, Arts and Culture Minister Datuk Muhamaddin Ketapi also said he never approved of having a Japanese character to be a part of the Malaysian promotion campaign and that it was just a suggestion made by Datuk Rashidi Hasbullah (Bernama, Jo Timbuong 2019).

Japanese cartoon ‘Doraemon’ has already established for a long time and Malaysia should not be wasting their time promoting that well-known cartoon character. Datuk Lat also stated that we have plenty of local cartoons that we should be proud of (Dennis Chua 2019). Malaysia should sell local cartoon character, in a way of promoting Malaysia to the world. Therefore, this research will reveal the development of local cartoon animations that we have, through the history of Malaysian cartoons and those that still have commercial value today. How it started in Malaysia, with various theme, storyline, many styles of drawing by the talented local cartoonist, variety medium of publications (newsprint to digital platform), positive cartoon fans feedbacks, and local cartoon achievements parallel with the different eras from 1957 (Malaysian independent year) until present. This research will also verify local potential cartoon animations to be highlighted in future to proudly stand with other famous cartoon animation characters in the world.

THE EVOLUTION OF MALAYSIAN CARTOON ANIMATION

The first cartoon section in a Malaysian newspaper

It started in 1957 when the first cartoon appeared in the Berita Harian newspaper. It was titled ‘Tenaga dan Keringat di Russia’ by Low, followed by ‘Keluarga Mat Jambul’ by Raja Hamzah and ‘Selamat Zaman Baru’ by Peng. Other newspapers also have cartoon sections with different titles and stories—the newspapers being Utusan Zaman (today known as Utusan), Berita Minggu and The Sun with a total of 43 publications. All of the themes were about daily life in Malaysia, unity, fantasy, horror, superheroes and politics (Mulyadi 2010).

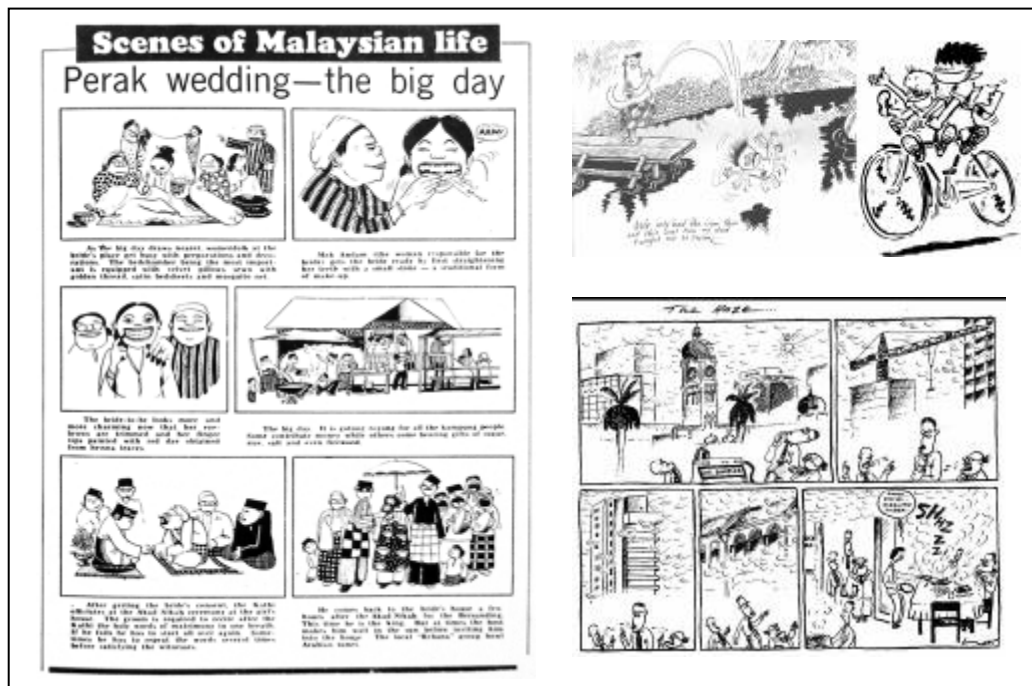
Year	Cartoonist Name and Local Newspaper
1. 1957	‘Tenaga dan Keringat di Russia’ by Low, Berita Harian
2. 1957	‘Keluarga Mat Jambul’ by Raja Hamzah, Berita Harian
3. 1957	‘Selamat Zaman Baru’ by Peng, Berita Harian
4. 1959	‘Sumpah Hantu Jerangkong’ by Raja Hamzah Utusan Zaman
5. 1959	‘Flash Gordon’ by Dale Barry, Utusan Zaman
6. 1959	‘Tangan Hantu Jerangkong’ by Raja Hamzah, Utusan Zaman
7. 1959	‘Dol Keropok & Wak Tempeh’ by Raja Hamzah, Utusan Zaman
8. 1960	‘Ferd nand’ by Mik, Berita Minggu
9. 1960	‘Tok Misai’ by Rouson, Berita Minggu
10. 1961	‘Raja Bersiong’ by Raja Hamzah, Berita Minggu
11. 1962	‘Melati Pujaan Temasek’ by Raja Hamzah, Berita Minggu
12. 1963	‘Si Panjang by Rae, Berita Minggu
13. 1963	‘Wak Aksi’ by Guy Bara Berita Minggu
14. 1963	‘7 kartun konfrontasi Malaysia & Indonesia’, by Rahim, Utusan Zaman
15. 1963	‘Pembunuh Si Durjana’ by Raja Hamzah, Berita Minggu
16. 1964	‘Moonraker’ by Ian Fleming, Berita Minggu
17. 1964	‘Sinbad di Pulau Puaka’ by Raja Hamzah, Berita Minggu
18. 1965	‘Kapal Puaka’ by Raja Hamzah, Berita Minggu
19. 1965	‘Sinbad Berlayar Lagi’, by Raja Hamzah, Berita Minggu

20. 1965 'Pembela', by Raja Hamzah, Berita Minggu
21. 1965 'Keris Puaka', by Raja Hamzah, Berita Minggu
22. 1966 'Mas Merah', by Raja Hamzah, Berita Minggu
23. 1966 'Pembalasan' by Raja Hamzah Berita Minggu
24. 1966 'Kota Maut' by Raja Hamzah Berita Minggu
25. 1966 'Putus sudah kasih sayang...' by Razali MHO, Utusan Zaman
26. 1967 Shukorlin, (ilustrasi domestik & politik antarabangsa), Utusan Zaman
27. 1967 Rizalman, (ilustrasi domestik & politik antarabangsa), Utusan Zaman
28. 1967 'Ketawa Pagi Minggu' by Rejabhad, Utusan Zaman
29. 1967 'Cikgu Mogok' by Mishar Utusan Zaman
30. 1967 'Mungkir' by Raja Hamzah Berita Minggu
31. 1967 'Perwira', Raja Hamzah, Berita Minggu
32. 1972 'Nancy' by Ernie Bushmiller Berita Minggu
33. 1972 'Batman', Berita Minggu
34. 1972 'Tarzan' by Edgar Rice Burroughs, Berita Harian
35. 1972 'Keluarga Si Mamat' by Lat, Berita Minggu
36. 1972 'Mat Dalang' by Lazuardi, Berita Minggu
37. 1972 'Kelana' by Raja Hamzah, Berita Minggu
38. 1987 'Ragam' by Zoy, Berita Minggu
39. 1987 'Tok Aki' by Abib, Berita Harian
40. 1989 'Papa' by Zunar, Berita Harian
41. 1992 'Barber's Corner' by Nan, Utusan Malaysia
42. 1992 'Din Teksi' by Nan Mingguan Malaysia
43. 1993 Rossem (ilustrasi isu politik), The Sun

Figure 1: Cartoonist and Newspaper
Source: Mulyadi Mahamood (2010)

'Gila-gila' magazine (inspired by MAD magazine from the West) was published on 1st April 1978 and has since created many successful cartoonists with different drawing styles. For example, Mishar, Jaafar Taib, Zainal Buang Hussein, Azman Yusof and Rejabhad. Amongst the earliest cartoonists during that time were Nan, Rossem, Zoy, Zunar, Reggie Lee and Nud, all of whom had gone international and usually preferred to use local themes in their artworks (Mulyadi, 2015).

On the other hand, the theme of unity was a favorite amongst most artists especially Datuk Lat. Such can be seen in his comic entitled 'Scenes of Malaysian Life' which was published in 1975 (Picture 1). Besides conveying messages through art, competition amongst cartoonists became greater, not only due to their desire to produce funny artwork, but also to keep up with new media and technological developments. Cartoonists then became more progressive and hence started to find different approaches and styles to attract cartoon lovers (Mulyadi, 2010, 2016).



Picture 1: 'Scenes of Malaysian Life' by Lat
Source: Mulyadi Mahamood 2015

This situation was the reason why local cartoonists started to get influenced by other countries. For example, Japan which is famous for 'anime' (animation). The strategy was proven successful when the response from local cartoon fans were overwhelming and thus met the market demand. This also shows that Malaysians are open to accepting other cartoon styles that have artistic value to improve local culture (Mulyadi, 2010).

As shown on the list of 'Cartoonists and Local Newspapers', local newspapers not only accepted local cartoons but also those from abroad. For example, 'Batman', 'Tarzan' from Edgar Rice Burroughs and a cartoon series entitled 'Nancy' by Ernie Busmiller. All of the artworks had been published in Berita Minggu in 1972. On the other hand, inserting Western cartoons in local newspapers actually impacted our local cartoonists as they were exposed to artworks that were different in terms of drawing style, theme and storyline (Mulyadi, 2010).

From Newspapers to Magazines

The 1980s was the golden age of Malaysian cartoon magazines. Due to encouraging response by the audience, cartoon publications spread from newspaper to magazine. Local magazine sales increased exponentially, especially Gila-Gila whereby the publisher had to reprint more copies after 9000 had been sold in a week. Inspired by MAD magazine from the United States, Gila-Gila applied the same formula of this magazine, which was adapting famous local movie characters into the storyline (Picture 2). In addition, Gila-Gila also maintained local community storylines and this proved successful in winning the hearts of cartoon fans (Mulyadi, 2010).



Picture 2: 'Gila-Gila' Magazine and *Mad* Magazine
Source: star2.com dan cnnindonesia.com

Referring to the Malay Magazine directory for the 20th century, Hamed (2005) observed that since their first appearance in the 1970s to the 1980s, cartoon magazines or comics had increased their number of publications from 15 to 25 copies. Studies also showed that humour magazine *Gila-Gila* was ranked 3rd after the magazines 'Wanita' and 'Utusan Radio and TV'. About 79 local magazines and 31 foreign magazines were listed on the report, and this report indirectly showed that humour magazines were relevant enough to be published for market purposes (Hamed, 2008).



Picture 3: 80s Comic
Source: rudimahmood.wordpress.com

According to SRM Media Index source in 1990, *Gila-Gila* reported that it had a dominant Malay reading market at 95% for those 15 to 24 years old. Therefore, since *Gila-Gila* magazine's first appearance on 1st April 1978, it had become a trendsetter and inspiration to other humour magazines like 'Batu Api', 'Gelihati', 'Gelagat' and many more to be produced. Daily Malaysian

life with scenarios involving different races was always the preferred theme as it was a reflection of the local culture and lifestyle (Hamedi, 2008) (Picture 3).

From Comics to 2D Cartoon Animations

Besides the glorious time for local cartoon magazine publications, the evolution of cartoon animation in 1980s was happy to celebrate the first Malaysian animation to ever be produced and aired on television in 1984. The animation in question was 'Hikayat Sang Kancil'. Hassan Abd Muthalib, together with Anandam Xavier, were the people behind this animation which used animal characters to give moral lessons via storytelling. Due to good feedback from the audience, more animation series were produced with new animal characters involved. In the same year, 'Sang Kancil dan Monyet' and 'Gagak yang Bijak' were aired, followed by 'Singa Yang Haloba' in 1985, 'Arnab yang Sombong' in 1986 and 'Hikayat Sang Kancil dan Buaya' in 1987 (Picture 4). All animations were published by Institut Filem Negara and Hassan Abd Muthalib became the Father of Malaysian Animation (Mulyadi, 2015; Hassan, 2016).



Picture 4: Animation published by Institut Filem Negara
Source: Youtube

The glorious legacy of local cartoon animations continued with the first Malaysian animated series 'Usop Sontorian' in 1995. 'Usop Sontorian' was acknowledged in the Malaysian Book of Records as the first local animation series on television, which was the earliest 2D animation using Animator-Pro software. 'Usop Sontorian' was a character that was first developed in Gila-Gila before being transformed into a 2D animated character on a digital platform. This was done using a personal computer brand called Amiga in 1986. Kamn Ismail was the person responsible for developing this character with his graphics team. They succeeded in producing 49 episodes, all of which were published by Kharisma Pictures Sdn. Bhd (Hassan, 2016).



Picture 5: Usop Sontorian Cartoon

Source: jiwatempatan.blogspot.my

In 1997, 'Kampung Boy' by Datuk Lat was published as a joint effort by international production companies, namely Mattinee Entertainment from United States of America, Philippines Animation Studios (PASI) from Manila and finally, the film was finished in Vietnam. Malaysia then cooperated with ASTRO to make sure that the comic version of Kampung Boy was successfully shifted into an animated version (Jayasankaran & Manavalan 1999; Mulyadi Mahamood 2001; Hassan Muthalib 2016). During the past 4 years, 26 episodes had been produced and Mat (Datuk Lat's character) was maintained as a Kampung Boy who lived in a village and city in his artwork. This series can be watched not only in Malaysia but also in Germany and Canada (Mulyadi Mahamood 2001; Hassan Muthalib 2016).

Another television adaptation of a comic was 'Anak-anak Sidek' (1995-2005) by Raja Azmi, which was published under Kumpulan Pelukis J.A.S. Sdn. Bhd. It is a biographical series about 5 siblings who were all badminton players who brought Malaysia to the world's eyes when they succeeded in winning the Thomas Cup in 1992. In 1999, this comic series was shown on RTM channel for 3 seasons totaling at 39 episodes until 2003. In the same decade, Malaysia had its first animated film titled 'Silat Lagenda' by Hassan Abd Muthalib, which was published by Peninsula Pictures Sdn. Bhd. It then went on to win the Jury Special Awards at the Malaysian Film Festival (Hassan Muthalib 2016).

Other series from the 90s era were 'Yokies' (1996) which was published by Skyroom Studios, 'Sang Wira' (1997) by Urusan Jutakira, 'FrooTees' (1997) by Eurofine Media Group, 'Jumbo Manja' (1998) by Filem Negara Malaysia, 'Edi dan Cici' (1995) by Pengedaran JAS Sdn Bhd, 'Bobby the Red Ant' (1995) by TGVC, 'Di Mana Joe Jambul?' (1995) by TGVC, 'Che'Nat' (1999) by Q-Plex Communications & RTM, 'Kartini' (1999) by Reka Pintar & Multi Triple Vision (MTV) and 'Keluang Man' (1998) by UAS Animation Sdn Bhd. The way 'Keluang Man' came about was different compared to 'Usop Sontorian', 'Kampung Boy' and 'Anak-Anak Sidek' because it was shown on television first (1996) before having a comic version published in 1999 by Homework Studio. Animation became a creative approach that people enjoyed watching on television. Therefore, about 1065 animated advertisements were then produced by Malaysian animation production companies at the end of decade and are still being developed today (Lent 2004).

New era for 3D Animation and their achievements

Three Dimension (3D) Animation was a new technique that was better than 2D animation as the animation produced comes with more detail and better quality. Most of the animations produced in this era were done using various software such as 3D Studio Max, Lightwave and Maya. From 2000 till 2010, starting with 'Nien Resurrection' and 'Skyland' by Young Jump Animation, about 15 animations were produced—9 of which were films, 4 were short films and 6 were animated series. Besides, in 2000, other animations that were published were 'Badang' by Jutakira, 'Menantu Diraja' by Reka Pintar and new name Bombyx Studio (Hassan Abd Muthalib 2016).

In 2001, about 9 animations were produced. 3 of which were films, namely 'Cheritera' by Matahari Animation & Production Sdn Bhd, 'Bangau oh Bangau' by Filem Negara Malaysia and 'Putih' by Fine Animation. The other 6 were animations named 'Alif' (Fine Animation Sdn Bhd), 'Lagenda Kinabalu', 'Toman', 'Kumang', 'Pusaka' and 'Pejuang' by Quest Animation. In addition, more animations were published, for instance, 'Abang Sidi' the animated series by Fine Animation, 'Wiseman' (2002) and 'Mergastuah' (2003) by Makmur Megah's Animation,

'Hidayat' by Jutakira (2003) and 'Rimba' (2004) by Jutakira. 'Man Spider' was an animated film by Sean Sulong which completed in 2004 but has yet to be published till today. Next were 'TD2' (2004), 'Tok Tam', 'Setelur' (2005) and 'Sam's Small World' (2005) by Makmur Megah's Animation (FINAS 2015).



Picture 6: *Nien Resurrection* and *Skyland Animation*

Source: www.young-jump.com

Filem Negara Malaysia (FINAS) kept producing short animated movies with moral values while still utilizing 2D techniques. Examples of such movies were 'Bangau oh Bangau' (2001), 'Telur Sebiji Rihh Sekampung' (2003), 'Anak Rusa Nani' (2004) and 'Pancaroba' (2005). In 2005, TGVC produced an animated series titled 'The Journey Home' (FINAS 2015). The 13-episode animated series 'Saladin' published by Silver Ant and Young Jump Animation in 2005 was a local 3D animation of high quality. The series won the Best Technology category at The Seoul International Cartoon & Animation Festival (SICAF); and the Tokyo Big Sight Award for the 3D CGI, Special Visual Effects and Animation category at The International Anime Fair 2007 (FINAS 2015). In 2006, 2 animations were released, which were 'John and Lucy' by Makmur Megah's Animation and 'Duwi' by Quest Animation. These were followed by 'Ranggi', which was a unique animated series that had been made with clay and had thus been called clay animation. This technique, which was introduced by Will Vinton, was quite outdated and was also known as 'claymation'. (Hassan Muthalib 2016).

In 2007, another phenomenon happened in the Malaysian animation industry when 'Upin dan Ipin' by Les'Copaque Production Sdn. Bhd. received a positive response not only in Malaysia but other Asian countries such as Singapore, Brunei and Indonesia. Besides 'Upin dan Ipin', other animations that were also produced in the same year were 'Bujang Lapok' by Quest Animation and 'Captain Hans' by Makmur Megah's Animation. In addition, Makmur Megah's Animation went on to publish 2 more animations in 2008 and 2009, the animated films being 'Mac & Ted and Yusrie & Friends' (2008), and 'Colourful Voices' (2009). In 2009, KidsCo & Inspedia published an animated series titled 'Boo & Mee' (FINAS 2015).

Figure 2: Local Cartoon Animation (1978 – 2016)

Year	Animation	Category	Producer/ Publisher
1. 1978	Hikayat Sang Kancil	Filem (Pendek)	Filem Negara Malaysia
2. 1984	Sang Kancil dan Monyet	Filem (Pendek)	Filem Negara Malaysia
3. 1984	Gagak yang Bijak	Filem (Pendek)	Filem Negara Malaysia
4. 1985	Singa yang Haloba	Filem (Pendek)	Filem Negara Malaysia
5. 1986	Arnab yang Sombong	Filem (Pendek)	Filem Negara Malaysia
6. 1987	Hikayat Sang Kancil dan Buaya	Filem (Pendek)	Filem Negara Malaysia
7. 1995	Bobby the Red Ant	Series/ Episodes	TGVC
8. 1995	Di Mana Joe Jambul	Series/ Episodes	TGVC
9. 1996	Usop Sontorian Sdn Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Khaarisma Pictures
10. 1996	Yokies	Series/ Episodes	Skyroom Studios
11. 1997	Kampung Boy	Series/ Episodes	Lacewood Studio
12. 1997	Sang Wira	Series/ Episodes	Urusan Jutakira
13. 1998	Edi & Cici Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Pengedaran JAS Sdn
14. 1998	FrooTees	Series/ Episodes	Eurofine Media Group
15. 1998	Jumbo Manja	Filem (Pendek)	Filem Negara Malaysia
16. 1998	Kluang Man Studios (M)	Series/ Episodes	UAS Animation
17. 1998	Silat Lagenda	Filem	Peninsula Pictures Sdn Bhd
18. 1999	Anak-anak Sidek Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Pengedaran JAS Sdn
19. 1999	Buat Baik Dibalas Baik	Filem (Pendek)	Filem Negara Malaysia
20. 1999	Che' Nat	Series/ Episodes	Q-Plex Com & RTM
21. 1999	Kartini Vision	Series/ Episodes	Reka Pintar & Multi Triple
22. 2000	Badang	Series/ Episodes	Jutakira
23. 2000	Menantu Diraja Studios	Series/ Episodes	Reka Pintar / Bombyx
24. 2000	Nien Resurrection Bhd	Filem	Young Jump Animation Sdn
25. 2000	Skyland Animation Sdn Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Young Jump
26. 2001	Bangau Oh Bangau	Filem (Pendek)	Filem Negara Malaysia
27. 2001	Alif	Series/ Episodes	Fine Animation (M) Sdn Bhd
28. 2001	Cheritera &Production	Filem	Matahari Animation
29. 2001	Legenda Kinabalu	Series/ Episodes	Quest Animation
30. 2001	Toman	Series/ Episodes	Quest Animation
31. 2001	Kumang	Series/ Episodes	Quest Animation
32. 2001	Pusaka	Series/ Episodes	Quest Animation
33. 2001	Pejuang	Series/ Episodes	Quest Animation
34. 2001	Putih	Filem	Fine Animation (M) Sdn Bhd &

			Eurofine (M) Sdn Bhd
35. 2002	Abang Sidi	Series/ Episodes	Fine Animation (M) Sdn Bhd
36. 2002	Wiseman Animation	Series/ Episodes	Makmur Megah's
37. 2003	Hidayat	Series/ Episodes	Jutakira
38. 2003	Mergastuah	Series/ Episodes	Makmur Megah's Animation
39. 2003	Telur Sebiji RiuH Sekampung	Filem (Pendek)	Filem Negara Malaysia
40. 2004	Anak Rusa Nani	Filem (Pendek)	Filem Negara Malaysia
41. 2004	Kacang	Series/ Episodes	Lensa Film Sdn Bhd
42. 2004	Man Spider	Filem	Sean Sulong
43. 2004	Rimba	Series/ Episodes	Jutakira
44. 2004	TD2	Series/ Episodes	Makmur Megah's Animation
45. 2005	Sam's Small World Animation	Series/ Episodes	Makmur Megah's
46. 2005	Setelur	Series/ Episodes	Makmur Megah's Animation
47. 2005	The Journey Home	Series/ Episodes	TGVC
48. 2005	Tok Tam Animation	Series/ Episodes	Makmur Megah's
49. 2005	Pancaroba	Filem (Pendek)	Filem Negara Malaysia
50. 2005	Saladin	Series/ Episodes	Silver Ant and Young Jump Animation
51. 2006	Duwi	Series/ Episodes	Quest Animation
52. 2006	Johnny & Lucy Animation	Series/ Episodes	Makmur Megah's
53. 2006	Ranggi	Series/ Episodes	Lensa Film Sdn Bhd
54. 2007	Budak Lapok	Filem	Anwardi Jamil
55. 2007	Captain Hans	Series/ Episodes	Makmur Megah's Animation
56. 2007	Upin dan Ipin Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Les' Copaque Production Sdn
57. 2008	Mac and Ted	Series/ Episodes	Makmur Megah's Animation
58. 2008	Yusrie and Friends Animation	Series/ Episodes	Makmur Megah's
59. 2009	Boo & Me	Series/ Episodes	KidsCo & Inspedia
60. 2009	Colourful Voices Animation	Series/ Episodes	Makmur Megah's
61. 2011	Pada Zaman Dahulu Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Les' Copaque Production Sdn
62. 2012	Akis Nickelodeon	Series/ Episodes	Inspidea Sdn Bhd & Asia
63. 2012	Boboiboy	Series/ Episodes	Animonsta Sdn Bhd
64. 2012	Buzzy Bee & Friends Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Lemon Sky Animation Sdn
65. 2012	Cingkus Blues	Series/ Episodes	Third Rock Creation Sdn Bhd
66. 2012	Dunia Eicak	Series/ Episodes	Addeen Multimedia Sdn Bhd
67. 2012	Eori	Series/ Episodes	Ed-Online & NHC Media
68. 2012	Flea-Bitten	Series/ Episodes	Vision Animation Sdn Bhd
69. 2012	Haiya Biddoa	Series/ Episodes	Tulus Fikir Sdn Bhd
70. 2012	Mat Jo	Series/ Episodes	Elite Animation Sdn Bhd

71.	2012	Seefood Children's	Filem	Silver Ant & Al Jazeera
				Channel (JCC)
72.	2012	Shezow Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Vision Animation Sdn
73.	2012	Soccerbugs	Series/ Episodes	Third Rock Creation Sdn Bhd
74.	2012	Supertots	Series/ Episodes	Netcarbon Sdn Bhd
75.	2012	Tritans 2	Series/ Episodes	Clover Sky Sdn Bhd
76.	2012	War of the Worlds : Goliath	Filem	Tripod Entertainment Sdn Bhd
77.	2013	Apak	Series/ Episodes	Don Studio Sdn Bhd
78.	2013	Bola Kampung Extra	Series/ Episodes	Animasia Studio Sdn Bhd
79.	2013	Bola Kampung Movie	Filem	Animasia Studio Sdn Bhd
80.	2013	Dandendon	Series/ Episodes	Don Studio Sdn Bhd
81.	2013	Geng Sekolah	Series/ Episodes	RTM & Digiloc (M) Sdn Bhd
82.	2013	Imran & Friends Technologies Sdn Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Ed-Online
83.	2013	Knowsy Nina Wants To Know Studios Sdn Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Avant Garde
84.	2013	Kobushi Zagtoon	Series/ Episodes	Inspidea Sdn Bhd &
85.	2013	Little Hanna	Series/ Episodes	Animonsta Sdn Bhd
86.	2013	Mask Master	Series/ Episodes	Mirayi Sdn Bhd
87.	2013	Ninja Cat Ichi, Ni, San! Sdn Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Avant Garde Studios
88.	2013	Ribbit	Filem	KRU Studios Sdn Bhd
89.	2013	Rose & Roy: Journeys to the past Sdn Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Creative Media Point
90.	2013	Ummi.. Ceritalah Pada Kami Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Hud Hud Media Sdn
91.	2014	Abu dan Otak	Series/ Episodes	Ano Pica Studios Sdn Bhd
92.	2014	Alvie and Eddie Studio	Series/ Episodes	Joove Animation
93.	2014	Chuck Chicken Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Animasia Studio Sdn
94.	2014	Dadudido Production Sdn Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Les' Copaque
95.	2014	Didi & Friends Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Digital Durian Sdn
96.	2014	I Love Ddee	Series/ Episodes	Creative Media Point Sdn Bhd
97.	2014	Jinggo Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Backbone Entertainment Sdn
98.	2014	Pendekar Matatiga	Filem	Don Studio Sdn Bhd
99.	2014	P.S.T	Series/ Episodes	Don Studio Sdn Bhd
100.	2014	Puteri Delima Sakti Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Infinite Motion Sdn
101.	2014	Puteri Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Les' Copaque Production Sdn
102.	2014	Satria: The Warrior of Seven Elements	Series/ Episodes	Funcel Sdn Bhd
103.	2014	Supersquad The Movie	Filem	Netcarbon Sdn Bhd
104.	2014	Tail of Wisdom Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Hud Hud Media Sdn

105.2014	The Amazing Awang Khenit	Series/ Episodes	SEAD Studios
106.2014	Vektor 58	Series/ Episodes	Chain-FX Sdn Bhd
107.2014	Kiddos on The Block	Series/ Episodes	Moondo Sdn Bhd
108.2015	Ejen Ali Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Wau Animation Sdn
109.2015	Bubble Bath Bay Sdn Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Lemon Sky Animation
110.2015	Mr Hooty's Toyshop	Series/ Episodes	Lil Critter Workshop Sdn Bhd
111.2015	Oh! Lala	Filem	Infinite Motion Sdn Bhd
112.2015	Pumpkin Reports Animation Sdn Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Young-Jump
113.2015	Supa Strikas (Musim 4&5) Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Animasia Studio Sdn
114.2015	Supersquad	Series/ Episodes	Netcarbon Sdn Bhd
115.2015	Sydney Sailboat	Series/ Episodes	Ideate Media Sdn Bhd
116.2015	The Adventure of Cheong Fun Animation Sdn Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Young-Jump
117.2015	Origanimals	Series/ Episodes	Giggle Garage Sdn Bhd
118.2015	Outlaw Dark	Series/ Episodes	Lil Critter Workshop Sdn Bhd
119.2016	Boboiboy The Movie	Filem	Animonsta Sdn Bhd
120.2016	Call For Chichi Entertainment Sdn Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Backbone
121.2016	Harry and Bunny Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Animasia Studio Sdn
122.2016	Hogie The Globehopper Sdn Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Lil Critter Workshop
123.2016	King of Shadows	Filem	Creative Media Point Sdn Bhd
124.2016	Mat Kilau	Series/ Episodes	Quest Animation
125.2016	Megabear	Series/ Episodes	Mirayi Sdn Bhd
126.2016	Oh! Lala Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Infinite Motion Sdn
127.2016	Rimba Racer	Series/ Episodes	GLUE Studios Sdn Bhd
128.2016	The Kingdom of FooDoo Bhd	Series/ Episodes	Frogtale Studio Sdn
129.2016	Tony Jetskate	Series/ Episodes	Blindspot Studios Sdn Bhd
130.2016	Toof Toof	Series/ Episodes	cCube TV Sdn Bhd
131.2016	Upin dan Ipin	Filem	Les' Copaque Production Sdn Bhd
132.2016	Zero Hero	Series/ Episodes	Creatvtoon

Record until 2016. Sources: *Creatif Malaysia Programme Catalogue: Malaysian An Asian Diversity of Content. 2015 National Film Development Corporation Malaysia (FINAS)*; Mulyadi Mahamood 2015 *Kartun Kartunis di Malaysia Institut Terjemahan & Buku ITBM Malaysia & Hassan Abd Muthalib 2016 From Mouse Deer to Mouse: 70 Years of Malaysian Animation*, ASWARA Kuala Lumpur.

After the success of 'Upin dan Ipin', Les' Copaque Production Sdn. Bhd. produced another 3D animated series titled 'Pada Zaman Dahulu' in 2011 with 108 episodes. About 14 animations had been produced in 2012—for instance, 'Seafood' by Silver Ant; 'Al-Jazeera Children's Channel'; 'War of the World: Goliath' by Tripod Entertainment Sdn. Bhd.; 'Boboiboy' by Animonsta Sdn. Bhd.; 'Cingkus Blues' by Third Rock Creation Sdn. Bhd. (2012); 'Flea Bitten' by

Vision Animation Sdn. Bhd. 'Flea Bitten' had notably received 4 awards, namely the AWGIE Award 2012, the Apra/AGSG Awards 2013, the Asian Television Awards 2012 and the AACTA Award 2012. Vision Animation Sdn. Bhd. also excelled in 'Shezow', which won the Best 2D Animated Programme, Asian Television Awards 2013 and the Best New Show 2013. 'Haiya Biddoa' by Tulus Fikir Sdn. Bhd. had been nominated for the NEF Astro Awani Best Animation. 'Supertots' by Netcarbon Sdn Bhd won the Best Animation Award Nef-Awani (FINAS 2015).

In 2012, about 15 animations were produced by different publishers such as 'Akis' by Inspidea Sdn. Bhd., 'Nickelodeon Asia', 'Buzzy Bee and Friends' by Lemon Sky Animation Sdn. Bhd., 'Dunia Eicak' by Addeen Multimedia Sdn. Bhd, 'Eori' by Ed-Online Technologies Sdn. Bhd., 'Mat Jo' by Elite Animation, 'Soccerbugs' by Third Rock Creation Sdn. Bhd., and 'Tritans 2' by Clover Sky Sdn. Bhd. (FINAS 2015). In 2013, about 11 animated series were produced—for instance, 'Bola Kampung' by Animasia Studio Sdn. Bhd. and 'Ummi... Ceritalah Pada Kami' by Hud Hud Media Sdn. Bhd. This animated series of 13 episodes had won Best Animation of the NEF AWANI Award 2011, Best Nasyid Song of the AIM 2011, the MSC/APICTA Award 2014 and the Nasyeed.com Award 2012 (FINAS 2015). KRU Studios Sdn. Bhd., then produced 'Ribbit' in 2013, followed by 'Apak dan Dandendon' by Don Studio Sdn. Bhd., 'Knowsy Nina Wants To Know' and 'Ninja Cat Ichi, Ni, San!' by Avant Garde Studios Sdn. Bhd., 'Geng Sekolah' by RTM, Digilog (M) Sdn Bhd, 'Imran & Friends' by Ed-Online Technologies Sdn Bhd, 'Kobushi' by Inspidea Sdn Bhd., 'Zagtoon', 'Little Hanna' by Animonsta Sdn Bhd, 'Mask Master' by Mirayi Sdn Bhd, and 'Rose & Roy: Journeys to the Past' by Creative Media Point Sdn. Bhd. (FINAS 2015).

In 2014, about 17 animations had been produced. The animations were 'Pendekar Matatiga' and 'P.S.T.' by Don Studio Sdn Bhd.; 'Supersquad The Movie' by Netcarbon.; 'Chuck Chicken' by Animasia Studio Sdn. Bhd., winner of the Best Animation (Silver Award) at Xiamen Animation Festival; 'I Love Ddee', which won the PROFIMA Animation Gold Award'; 'Jinggo', which won Best Animation in Festival Filem Malaysia ke-26; 'Puteri Delima Sakti', which won Quality Content Award from RTM; and 'Tail of Wisdom', which was the Top 5 finalist for Best Animation in the NEF AWANI Award 2013 (FINAS 2015).

In 2015, 11 animations had been produced. For instance, 'Oh! Lala', which was the first Malaysian Musical Animation by Infinite Motion Sdn. Bhd; 'Pumpkin Reports' by Young-Jump Animation Sdn. Bhd.; 'Supa Strikas' (Season 4 & 5) by Animasia Studio Studio Sdn. Bhd., which had been shown in 120 countries and became the Top 2 show on the Disney XD channel; 'Supersquad' by Netcarbon Sdn. Bhd.; and 'Origanimals' by Giggle Garage Sdn. Bhd., which had won 3 awards—SPP Best Planning Award 2012 at Seoul Korea, 2012 Golden Award TBS Digicon6, Malaysia and Best Animation/Games di NEF-Awani in 2013 (FINAS 2015). Other famous local animated series were 'Ejen Ali' by Wan Animation Sdn. Bhd., 'Bubble Bath Bay' by Lemon Sky Animation Sdn. Bhd, 'Mr Hooty's Toyshop', 'Outlaw Dark' by Lil Critter Workshop Sdn. Bhd., 'Sydney Sailboat' by Ideate Media Sdn. Bhd. and 'The Adventure of Cheong Fun' by Young Jump Animation Sdn. Bhd. (FINAS 2015).

'Boboiboy' by Animonsta Studios, was another achievement that made the Malaysian Animation Industry proud after it hit RM19 million in the 2016 box office. Besides 'Boboiboy', other animations in the same year were 'Harry and Bunny' by Animasia Studio Sdn. Bhd., 'Hogie The Globehopper' by Lil Critter Workshop Sdn. Bhd., 'King of Shadows' by Creative Media Point Sdn. Bhd., 'Tony Jeskate' by Blindspot Studios Sdn. Bhd., 'Toof Toof' by CCube TV Sdn. Bhd., 'Call For Chichi' by Backbone Entertainment Sdn. Bhd., 'Mat Kilau' by Quest Animation, 'Mega Bear' by Mirayi Sdn. Bhd., 'Rimba Racer' by GLUE Studios Sdn. Bhd., 'The Kingdom of FooDoo' by Frogtales Studio Sdn. Bhd., 'Upin dan Ipin' by Les'Copaque Production Sdn. Bhd.

and ‘Zero Hero’ by Creatvtoon (FINAS 2015).

Discussion and Conclusion

Starting from the first cartoon newsprint in Malaysia, all the artists had shown their creativity with different styles of illustration. Unity was always a favorite theme for storytelling as it was a theme that was close to the heart of Malaysians. Theme can be an interesting topic to be discussed in further research. Since long time ago, Malaysians grew with locally touched cartoon animations which reflected our local identity and culture. If we are not aware of the local cartoon animation evolution, this research proves that we have a lot of quality cartoon animations to be proud of and they obviously reflect local identity.

Datuk Lat’s famous animation series, titled ‘Kampung Boy’, ‘Usop Sontorian’, ‘Bola Kampung’ and the latest animation produced in 2019 was ‘Upin dan Ipin, Keris Siamang Tunggal’ are amongst Malaysia’s most prevalent animation character with local identity (Figure 3 & Picture 7) (Faryna 2016). Upin dan Ipin, Kampung Boy, ‘Bola Kampung’, and ‘Usop Sontorian’ can be chosen to represent Malaysia. To be more specific, ‘Upin dan Ipin’ are now the most influential character not only in Malaysia but also Indonesia, Singapore and Brunei (Rezki 2009). Therefore, Malaysia should select ‘Upin dan Ipin’ that reflects local identity thus to represent Malaysia rather than Doraemon.

Record for 1957-2016	Total
Cartoon Animations	132
Publisher	68
Achievements by Most Prevalent Local Cartoon Animations	Usop Sontorian (1996): First Malaysian Animation series for Malaysian Book of Record
	Kampung Boy (1997): 1998 – <i>Eisenhower Fellowship</i> 2002 – <i>Asian Fukuoka Cultural Awards</i> 2005 – <i>Petronas Reporter Awards (Special Jury Award)</i> 2007 – <i>Doctorate (Honour) in Anthropology & Sociology</i> 2010 – <i>Civitella Ranieri Visual Arts Fellowship</i> 2015: <i>Kampung Boy Awards for a cartoonist.</i>
	Bola Kampung (2007): English translation titled Football Kids on Disney Channel for 16 countries.
	Upin dan Ipin (2007): Most Successful Local Animation in 2011 by Malaysian Book of Record.

Figure 3: Local Cartoon Animation Record Summary

From 1978 until 2016, the Malaysian animation industry has produced about 132 animations including animated series, short movies and movies which involved 68 publications. Furthermore, animated series like ‘Kampung Boy’ by Datuk Lat achieved about 6 awards, which were the Eisenhower Fellowship (1998), the Asian Fukuoka Cultural Awards (2002) and many

more. The same goes to ‘Saladin’ that won the Best Technology category in The Seoul International Cartoon & Animation Festival (SICAF) and the Tokyo Big Sight Award at The International Anime Fair 2007 for the category of 3D CGI, Special Visual Effects and Animation. ‘Boboiboy’ reaching RM19 million in 2016 was the proudest moment for our local animation industry, as it was the first time they had hit such a number whilst competing with other blockbuster movies. Despite the major hurdles in front of them, they had succeeded.



Picture 7: ‘Usop Sontorian, Kampung Boy and Upin dan Ipin’
Sources : Tumblr & Youtube

The latest to highlight is ‘Upin & Ipin Keris Siamang Tunggal’, which achieved RM25 million in 2019, again become the most successful local animation since it first transition to digital platform occurred in 2007. This again proves that Malaysians always support our local cartoon animation industry. On the other hand, the evolution has improved Malaysian animation with a new technology thus become more competitive in producing a good quality of cartoon animations. To conclude, we have the value, many award achievements, good content and storyline, folklore attractions, strong characters and local characteristics—we have it all. So why do we need to use foreign characters when we have good ones of our own? We do not have to! Let’s go for locals!

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