Cinematic realism, documentary film website

HTTP://DIGITAL.LIB.HKBU.EDU.HK/DOCUMENTARY-FILM/
Documentary film in South and South-East Asia
Research Programme

- To understand the post-war movement of British official film-making into South-East Asia
- To research the history of the HK documentary film, including current affairs TV production of ATV, TVB and RTHK
- To explore the work of the National Film Board of India
- To explore colonial film-making in S and SEA
Types of materials on the website

- Not all of the previous is on the website, some exist as publications. What is on the website:
  
  - Official documents and memos written by British officials in Britain, Singapore, Malaya/Malaysia and Hong Kong
  
  - Reports written by RAs involving specific research projects
  
  - Film Reviews/analysis
Original location of materials

- National Archives in Kew, London
- National Archives of Singapore
- National Archives of Malaysia
- Hong Kong Records Office
- HKBU Library collection of films by RTHK, TVB, ATV
- Hong Kong Film Archive
GRF projects involved

- HK Documentary Film (Aitken)
- HK Documentary Film Series (HKFU and RTHK) (Aitken)
- Influence of the British official film post-war on HK, Malaya and Singapore (Aitken)
- Documentary films of ATV and TVB (Aitken)
- *Berita Singapura* (Aitken)
- National Film Board of India (Deprez)
Outputs: Books

- Books:
  
  
  
  
  
  - (2014), *Hong Kong Documentary Film* (two chapters by M. Ingham, six by Aitken), Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.


Outputs: Journal articles: I


Journal articles II


Issues/areas explored as gaps in the research record I

- HKFU 1963-9
- Early years of the Malayan Film Unit (1946-52)
- Beginnings of TV in Malaya/Malaysia and Singapore (1945-64)
- Role of the British Council in HK, Malaya/Malaysia and Singapore (1945-1975)
- Change to a postcolonial situation in Singapore and Malaysia
- Analysis of the films of RTHK, TVB, ATV, *Berita Singapura*
Issues/areas explored as gaps in the research record II

- Interaction between CO/FO and Griersonian traditions
- Changing conceptions of the colonial, late-colonial and postcolonial/post-colonial official film
- Roles played by colonial governments in Singapore, Malaya and HK, and British organisations: FO, CO, CRO, FO IRD
- General context of the Cold War
What do the files reveal?

- Files record chronological debates taking place over a number of issues, eg. Fate of the Malayan Film Unit.

- Objective of the researcher: to understand the main parameters of the story that emerges.

- This means that the files have not been captured comprehensively, but according to the evolving interpretation of the researcher.
Role of the website

- To place the files online
- To provide synopsis of content of documents
- To enable cross-referencing
- Provide online platform for research programme reports and film analysis
- Provide updates on publications and other activities
Possible new projects emanating from files

- Malcolm MacDonald
- FO IRD
- Different positions on the role/impact of the official film
- Decline of CO and conflict with post-colonial organisations (FO, CRO)
New Direction: Cinematic Realism

- Cinematic realism
- Currently:
  - ‘Introduction’ to *The Major Realist Film Theorists* (2016, 2017), 20,000 words
- In preparation: General bibliography of writings on cinematic realism

- The website: