

= Asmara Moerni =

Asmara Moerni ( [ as?mara m?r?ni ] ; Perfected Spelling : Asmara Murni ; Indonesian for True Love ) is a 1941 romance film from the Dutch East Indies ( now Indonesia ) directed by Rd Ariffien and produced by Ang Hock Liem for Union Films . Written by Saeroen , the film followed a doctor who falls in love with his maid , as well as her failed romance with a fellow villager . Starring Adnan Kapau Gani , Djoewariah , and S. Joesoef , the black @-@ and @-@ white film was cast and advertised to cater to the growing native intelligentsia . Despite mixed reviews , it was a commercial success . As with most films of the Indies , Asmara Moerni may be lost .

= = Plot = =

After four years of doing his residency in Singkawang , Borneo , Dr. Pardi ( Adnan Kapau Gani ) returns to Java to open a practice . Before then , he goes to Cigading to visit his family and give them souvenirs . Upon arrival he is stunned to find that his family 's maid Tati ( Djoewariah ) , who had been his childhood playmate , is now a grown and beautiful woman . He secretly begins to fawn over Tati , although he does not tell her the reason . When Pardi 's mother tells him he should marry quickly , he refuses all of her suggested brides . He says only that he already has someone in mind , aware that his mother would never approve an inter @-@ class marriage with the maid .

Tati 's fiancé , Amir ( S. Joesoef ) , is jealous of all the attention that Tati is receiving , which leaves her no time for him . He plans to leave Cigading for the capital , Batavia ( today Jakarta ) , where he will find work . Tati , upon learning this , joins him . She lives at her aunt 's home in the city , making a living by washing clothes , while he finds lodging with a local man and learns to drive a becak ( pedicab ) . Together they begin saving for their wedding . Unknown to them , Pardi has cut short his time in Cigading to move to Batavia , both to begin his new job and to find Tati .

Days before the wedding , Amir is playing his flute when he is approached by a singer known as Miss Omi , who asks him to join her troupe on an international tour . Amir refuses , even after Omi hires him to drive her around the city in an attempt to convince him . After dropping Omi off , Amir is approached by a man who asks him to deliver a package ; however , before he can deliver the package Amir is arrested and charged with smuggling opium .

When Amir does not return , Tati and her aunt are worried : as Tati saw Amir with Omi , she fears that the two have run away together . Heartbroken , she intends to return to Cigading . When she and her aunt visit their boss , Abdul Sidik , they unknowingly pass Pardi ? Abdul Sidik 's doctor . Upon returning home , Pardi calls Abdul Sidik and asks him to take Tati in as if she were his daughter and educate her . Tati is a fast learner , and is soon comparable to any woman from a wealthy family .

After being held eighteen months without trial , Amir is released and returned to Batavia . He is unable to find Tati , leaving him to wander the streets . Omi spots him , and again she asks him to play with her troupe . Amir agrees , and soon newspapers are filled with advertisements touting his name . Spotting one , Tati and Abdul Sidik go to a performance , only to learn that Amir was the victim of a car accident . At the hospital , where Amir is being treated by Pardi , Tati learns the truth behind Amir 's absence . On his deathbed , Amir asks Pardi to take care of Tati ; the two are later married .

= = Production = =

Asmara Moerni was directed by Rd Ariffien , a former journalist who had been active in the nationalist and labour movements before turning to theatre . He had joined Union Films ? the company behind Asmara Moerni ? in 1940 , making his debut with Harta Berdarah ( Bloody Treasure ) . Union 's head Ang Hock Liem produced , while the story was written by journalist Saeroen , who had joined Union after commercial success on Albert Balink 's Terang Boelan ( Full Moon , 1937 ) and with the production house Tan 's Film .

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was the feature film debut of Gani and Joesoef , while Djoewariah had been on Union 's payroll since *Bajar dengan Djiwa* ( *Pay with Your Soul* ) the preceding year .

At the time there was a growing movement to attract native intelligentsia , educated at schools run by the Dutch colonial government , and convince them to view domestic films , which were generally considered to be of much lower quality than imported Hollywood productions . This was blamed , in part , on the dominance of theatrically trained actors and crew . As such , Ariffien invited Gani , at the time a medical doctor and a prominent member of the nationalist movement , to join the cast . Although some nationalists considered Gani 's involvement in *Asmara Moerni* as besmirching the independence movement , Gani considered it necessary : he believed audiences needed to have higher opinions of domestic film productions .

= = Release and reception = =

*Asmara Moerni* was premiered on 29 April 1941 at Orion Theatre in Batavia ; the crowds were mostly natives and ethnic Chinese . Rated for all ages , advertising for the film emphasised Gani 's education and Joesoef 's upper @-@ class background . It was also advertised as breaking away from the conventional standards of stage theatre , such as music , which were omnipresent in the contemporary film industry . By August 1941 it was screened in Singapore , then part of the Straits Settlements , and billed as a " modern Malay drama " . A novelisation was published later in 1941 by the Yogyakarta @-@ based Kolff @-@ Buning .

The film was a commercial success , though reviews were mixed . An anonymous review for the *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad* found the film " fascinating " , with good acting , though another review for the same paper found that , though the film was better than contemporary works such as *Pantjawarna* and *Sorga Ka Toedjoe* , its claim to abandon stage standards was to be taken " with a pinch of salt " . A review from the Surabaya @-@ based *Soerabaijasch Handelsblad* found the film full of drama , describing it as " Western motifs , played in the native environment , with a specifically Sundanese situation " .

= = Legacy = =

After *Asmara Moerni* , Union produced a further three films ; only one , *Wanita dan Satria* , was by Rd Ariffien , who left the company soon after , as did Saeroen . Gani did not act in any further films , but instead returned to the nationalist movement . During the Indonesian National Revolution ( 1945 ? 49 ) he became known as a smuggler , and after independence became a government minister . In November 2007 Gani was made a National Hero of Indonesia . Djoewariah continued to act until the 1950s , when she migrated to theatre after receiving a series of increasingly minor roles .

*Asmara Moerni* was screened as late as November 1945 . The film is likely lost . Movies in the Indies were recorded on highly flammable nitrate film , and after a fire destroyed much of *Produksi Film Negara* 's warehouse in 1952 , old films shot on nitrate were deliberately destroyed . As such , American visual anthropologist Karl G. Heider suggests that all Indonesian films from before 1950 are lost . However , JB Kristanto 's *Katalog Film Indonesia* ( *Indonesian Film Catalogue* ) records several as having survived at *Sinematek Indonesia* 's archives , and film historian Misbach Yusa Biran writes that several Japanese propaganda films have survived at the Netherlands Government Information Service .

= = Explanatory notes = =