

= Lily van Java =

Lily van Java ( Lily of Java ) , also known as Melatie van Java ( Jasmine of Java ) , is a 1928 film from the Dutch East Indies directed by Nelson Wong . Initially meant to be produced by South Sea Film and shot by an American director , the film ? which follows a woman told to marry a man she does not love ? was ultimately completed by Wong 's Halimoen Film . Details on its cast and performance are contradictory , although the film is recognised as the first of a long series of ethnic Chinese @-@ produced films in the country . It is likely a lost film .

= = Premise = =

The young daughter of a rich man , already in a loving relationship , is forced to marry someone she does not love .

= = Production = =

The first two films produced in the Dutch East Indies , Loetoeng Kasaroeng ( 1926 ) and Eulis Atjih ( 1927 ) , were made by the Dutch filmmakers L. Heuveldorp and G. Kruger , respectively . Ethnic Chinese businessmen , capitalising on the success of films produced in Shanghai , China , established two production houses , one in Batavia ( modern day Jakarta ) and the other in Surabaya . South Sea Film , the production house in Batavia established by Liem Goan Lian and Tjan Tjoen Lian , was advertised as the first Chinese filmmaking cooperative in the country . Its first script was for Lily van Java ; which the company had to pass through the Film Commissie ( national censorship bureau ) for fear of violating traditional values .

According to JB Kristanto 's Katalog Film Indonesia ( Indonesian Film Catalogue ) , an American named Len Ross was initially booked to direct the film ; Ross was reportedly in the country to film a work entitled Java for Metro @-@ Goldwyn @-@ Mayer and shot several scenes in mid @-@ 1928 . The cast was ethnic Chinese , and the female stars ? Lie Lian Hwa and Lie Bo Tan ? were reportedly daughters of the Surabayan gangster Lie Bauw Kie and trained in silat ; other cast members included Kwee Tiang An and Yah Kwee Pang . However , after Ross withdrew the script was put on hold .

Nelson Wong , who had formerly been booked with his brothers Joshua and Othniel to record a film for Tio Tek Djien , approached David Wong ( no relation ) , a high @-@ ranking General Motors employee in Batavia , for funding . With this the Wong Brother 's Halimoen Film was able to finish the film . Some sources indicate that the same cast was used , while others suggest that the leading role was taken by a student from Shanghai named Lily Oey .

The silent film was shot in black and white ; its intertitles were bilingual , written in both Malay and Chinese . The American film historian Richard Abel writes that the film 's technical quality , like all other local productions of the time , was poor and unable to compete with imported works , and the Indonesian film scholar Misbach Yusa Biran writes that the shots were considered blurry even at the time .

= = Release and reception = =

Lily van Java was released in 1928 . Its success is disputed . The reporter Leopold Gan wrote that the film was highly successful , to the point that after several years copies were worn through from overplaying . However , Joshua Wong later recalled in an interview that the film had been a failure ; David Wong is reported to have avowed to no longer fund any films after Lily van Java . Lacking a backer , the Wong Brothers went on hiatus .

Lily van Java continues to be recorded as the first Chinese @-@ produced film of the area . Although the Wongs went on hiatus , other ethnic Chinese became involved in film . Several Chinese owned start @-@ ups are recorded from 1929 on , including Nancing Film with Resia Boroboedoer ( 1928 ) and Tan 's Film with Njai Dasima ( 1929 ) . By the early 1930s Chinese @-@

owned businesses were the dominating force in the country 's film industry .

The film is likely a lost film . The American visual anthropologist Karl G. Heider writes 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 Biran writes that several Japanese propaganda films have survived at the Netherlands Government Information Service .