UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

MALAYNESS AS CULTURE-POLITICAL CRITICISM: A CLOSE TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF COMEDY FILMS (2006-2010)

AYU HASWIDA BT ABU BAKAR

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the result of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This thesis has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any degree or qualification.

I, hereby, acknowledge that I have been supplied with the Academic Rules and Regulations for Post Graduate, Universiti Teknologi MARA, regulating the conduct of my study and research.
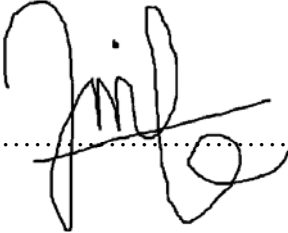
Name of Student	:	Ayu Haswida bt Abu Bakar
Student I.D. No.	:	2013414542
Programme	:	Doctor of Philosophy (Film) – FF950
Faculty	:	Film, Theatre and Animation
Thesis Title	:	Malayness As Culture-Political Criticism: A Close Textual Analysis of Comedy Films (2006-2010)
Signature of Student	:	………………………………………………..
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ABSTRACT

Comedy has been a popular mode of presentation in Malaysian Cinema since the studio era and has remained so until today . Comedy films can be taken as the object of scrutiny in the matter of identifying class, gender, as well as low and high culture through their story of representation. Thus, comedies have the potential to criticise the existing socio and political as fiction. Having said that, comedy genre is often subjected to critical neglect and is categorised as of low standard - as they are viewed as of inferior quality due to their subject matter by the print media. The insight developed of this thesis constructed through a qualitative research design. Focuses on a close textual analysis method. It rest on the framework of cultural and political representation that draws on the notion of national identity through the selected films. The objectives of the study are to identify, analysed and interpret the Malay comedy cinema, elected for this study, capable of functioning in a significant role in circulating and legitimising particular conception of Malay national identity. Thus, potential in manifesting particular national sense of community among Malaysian society. This thesis rests on five themes: (1) The notion of 'zombies' which in this account is used as a critical metaphor for the social ills of society, notably political and social corruption within a Malaysian perspective, (2) the Malaysian 'noir' film, (3) the rural political space, (4) modernisation in relation to nationalism in an urban space, and (5) plural society and culture in relation to globalisation and localisation. Regards to the finding, it shown that comedy genre does to a degree which strongly influenced by socio-political events and change, does it serves as representational system of constructing and manifesting a particular Malay national identity. Comedy films does to a certain extent serve as an 'agency' of meaning and is viewed as having the potential to criticise the existing political hierarchies and oppressive, and cultural discourses by underlining their status as fiction. Thus, illustrated the capability as a medium of constructing and manifesting a particular sense of Malay national identity (s).

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