

Social Semiotics in the Selected Films of Chito S. Roño

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Abstract : Films are famous expressions of art in the country. As an expression of art, it serves as a medium in which a culture is reflected. This paper studied how films reflected the Filipino culture. In this study, social semiotics was used to analyze the semiotic resources identified in the film. The films studied were 'Feng Shui', 'Sukob', and 'The Healing', which were three of the highest grossing horror films of Chito S. Roño. The objectives of the paper were (1) to identify the semiotic resources in the film, (2) to extract their meanings, and (3) to determine how these resources were perceived in the Filipino culture. The semiotic resources identified in each film are organized into three categories: color, practices and supernatural occurrences. Each semiotic resource is analyzed through the four dimensions of social semiotics, genre, style, modality, and discourse. For color, some of the semiotic resources identified are red, white and blue; for practices, Hagiolatry, and Mariolatry, faith healing and the belief in superstitions; and for supernatural occurrences, haunting ghosts, doppelganger attacks and returning from the dead were identified. The practices that are prominent in the films are Hagiolatry and Mariolatry, belief in feng shui and belief in faith healers and albularyos. The belief of these practices shows that Filipinos have a dual faith; belief in religion and a belief in superstitions. In short, Filipinos highly practice folk Catholicism and because of this, a mixture of different cultures can be seen, as having molded the Filipino culture to what it is today.

Keywords : culture, film, semiotics, social semiotics

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