

CULTURAL HYBRIDITY AND DYNAMICS IN *HANUMAN CHANSAMON*

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Abstract

The 3-dimensional (3D) animated cartoon entitled Hanuman Chansamon is a presentation of the Ramakian in popular culture style. Cultural hybridity and dynamics make this cartoon appealing for closer investigation. The analysis reveals that hybrid features in Hanuman Chansamon can be categorized into two groups--“omnipresent hybrid feature” and “fractional hybrid feature.” Omnipresent hybrid features are those that can be perceived throughout the show while fractional hybrid features exist in some specific components. The sole yet prominent omnipresent hybrid feature is the blend of traditional story and modern presentation technology. Fractional hybrid features are the co-existence of old-new cultural elements as well as local-global cultural elements which can be found in several components including the overture, dialogues, motifs, characters, and settings. Dynamic features in Hanuman Chansamon include new meaning and emphasis, new behavioral traits of some characters, change in language form from verse to prose, and adaptive eulogy to teachers (bòtwâaykhruu). The commercial purpose and the production policies of this animated cartoon are two significant factors leading to the emergence of cultural hybridity and dynamic features.

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Introduction

Through the course of development, the fundamental concepts of the discipline of folklore, i.e. “folk,” “folklore,” and “culture,” have been modified (See Dundes 1965, 1977, Ben-Amos 1971, Bauman 1992, and Briggs 1992). The greater inclusiveness of these key concepts led to the extension of the scope of folklore studies to cover other cultural practices beyond the limit of traditional folk culture. Hence, popular culture, which was once condemned as trivial and contaminated, has now become a legitimate subject of folklore studies.

The 3-dimensional (3D) animated cartoon entitled *Hanuman Chansamon* is a presentation of the classic epic *Ramayana* or *Ramakian* (in Thai) in popular culture style. It was created in the period during which several Thai literary works and folktales were represented in the form of 3-dimensional animated cartoons. Cultural hybridity and dynamic features make this animated cartoon appealing for folklorists and those who are interested in Thai popular culture. They demonstrate interesting outcomes emerging from the interaction between tradition and modernity as well as that between local and global cultural elements. One among these is the integration of modern presentation technology and the Thai traditional narrative. Also, several new attributes in this animated cartoon make it a distinctive presentation of the *Ramakian*. Therefore, it is worthwhile to investigate the characteristics and causes of the cultural hybridity and dynamic features in this animated cartoon. Moreover, the findings will contribute to the development of folklore research on Thai popular culture.

This paper aims at investigating the 3D animated cartoon entitled *Hunaman*

Chansamon in order to answer two research questions. First, what are the hybrid and dynamic features found in this animated cartoon? Second, why do these features exist in this animation? The paper consists of four sections. The first section provides details of the data used in this study and a brief review of two related fundamental concepts—popular culture and cultural hybridization. Section two focuses on investigating cultural hybridity in *Hanuman Chansamon*. Dynamics in *Hanuman Chansamon* will be discussed in section three. Section four will be devoted to discussion on the causes of cultural hybridity and new elements in this animated cartoon. The last section will conclude the whole discussion.

Data and Fundamental Concepts

Data:

Hanuman Chansamon: A Modern Presentation of the Ramakian

The *Ramakian* has been well known in Thai society since the Sukhothai period (Poonsap and Bankluay 1982: 8). Though adopted from the Indian epic the *Ramayana*, the *Ramakian* has firmly established itself as an element of Thai culture. The *Ramakian* is one of the greatest works of classical Thai literature. The *Ramakian* has been presented in several forms, such as Thai classical mask dance or *khon*, Thai classical drama, puppet shows, and wall paintings. *Hanuman Chansamon* is the presentation of the story in the form of a 3-dimensional (3D) animated cartoon. It can be considered one of the latest versions of the *Ramakian* in contemporary Thai society.



Figure 1: The CD cover of *Hanuman Chansamon*

Hanuman Chansamon was produced by the Fantasy Town Company, part of Dara Video Company and Dida Company, two big corporations in Thai television play production. Dida is well known as a leader in producing television plays based on Thai folk tales and literature. The Fantasy Town Company was founded by Sayom Sangwaributra, one of the executives of Dida. Sayom Sangwaributra had the idea of applying new computer graphic technology and new animation techniques to the production of television plays based on Thai folktales and literature, which were his company's stock-in-trade (Fantasytown 2005). This resulted in the production of the first Thai 3D animated cartoon entitled *Sudsakon*, based on *Phra Aphaimani* – a well known Thai tale written by *Sunthon Phu*. The success of *Sudsakon* led to the production of other 3D animations. *Hanuman Chansamon* is among the latest. It was broadcast on Channel 7 every weekday from 6 p.m. to 6.15 p.m. In May 2005, the final episode of the show was broadcast. In addition to the television show, this animated cartoon is available for sale in video compact disk (VCD) format.

Fundamental Concepts

Popular Culture

Hanuman Chansamon is a version of the *Ramakian* in popular culture style. In order to fully understand this animated cartoon, it is necessary to provide an introduction to the concept of popular culture. To understand “popular culture,” it is suitable to first briefly review the fundamental concept of “culture.”

In a classical sense, culture is the pursuit of ultimate perfection (Matthew Arnold in Briggs 1992). Accordingly, “culture” is sometimes construed as “civilization” and “high art.” From an anthropological perspective, however, culture is not limited to a sophisticated lifestyle but rather it is the whole way of life of people. People of all classes including those in the countryside have their own culture. The ways of life of all people, their shared knowledge, and artifacts constitute culture. Johann Gottfried von Herder proposed the term “cultures” to highlight this multiple and democratic sense of the concept and the term “Culture” to refer to the classical sense of this concept (Briggs 1992; Lyon 1981).

The multiple and democratic sense of “cultures” led to the emergence of other related terms—folk culture, high culture, and popular culture. The terms “*folk culture*” and “*high culture*” are used to differentiate cultures of the high and the low respectively. The term “*popular culture*” refers to the culture of the masses—the newly emerged group of people whose lifestyle is different from the two previous groups.

In the past, scholars with a classical concept viewed popular culture as something fabricated, artificial, degraded, and worthless- not a legitimate object of study.

Berger (1995) discusses this issue as quoted.

In the past, popular culture was dismissed by many academics as unworthy of attention. The texts of popular culture were seen as subliterary junk, and those who consumed them were seen as wasting their time. Obviously, from a literary point of view, a comic book cannot compare with a novel by Hemingway or Dostoyevsky. But such comparisons are both unfair and misguided. (Berger 1995: 161)

Nonetheless, nowadays, scholars recognize the power of the ordinary which once was condemned as unworthy, as Lockard (1998) points out.

The denigration of popular culture by scholars has moderated in recent years and there is now an enormous theoretical, analytical, and descriptive literature (some of it interdisciplinary) on such fields as music, films, television, sports, and fiction. This redefinition of popular culture studies has made earlier views about the degraded mass culture and elevated elite culture problematic. New studies recognize the power of the ordinary, view the commonplace as a legitimate object of study, challenge arbitrary divisions, and ask serious question about the role of popular culture in socio-political life. (Lockard 1998:10)

The changing concept makes popular culture a legitimate object of study. Nowadays, scholars from different fields of study pay attention to popular culture

and other related issues (See Chandra Mukerji and Michael Schudson 1991, Storey 2004, and Kitti-Asa 2003a).

The term *popular culture* seems to resist definition (Chandra Mukerji and Michael Schudson 1991: 3; Berger 1995: 161). Despite this challenge, various definitions of popular culture have been proposed by scholars from different fields of study such as cultural studies, anthropology, sociology, communications, and folklore. Rather than proposing another definition of popular culture, it is more practical to discuss the characteristics of what is called popular culture. Among the various definitions, some features of so-called popular culture are in agreement.

First, popular culture is culture of the masses. Industrialization and urbanization brought about the emergence of the masses who live together in cities, share similar knowledge, use similar products, and enjoy the same leisure activities (Grossberg et al. 1998: 35). These people and their ways of life, shared knowledge, practices and artifacts comprise popular culture (Chandra Mukerji and Michael Schudson 1991: 3; Lockard 1998: 3; Grossberg et al. 1998: 37). That is, popular culture is culture of the majority of the population, as Lockard (1998) explains.

Perhaps one major key is perceiving popularity as the *sine qua non* of popular culture. It is a 'majority' culture involving aspects of culture (ideological, material, social) that are widely spread, believed in, or consumed by large number of people (generally on a leisure basis). (Lockard 1998: 3)

Examples of popular culture include watching Hollywood movies, TV game shows, and commercials, listening to popular music, reading Japanese cartoons, international bestselling novels such as *Harry Potter* and *The Da Vinci Code*, using cell phones and SMS (Short Message Service), playing computer games, eating fast food such as *McDonalds*, *Kentucky Fried Chicken* and *Pizza Hut*, and drinking *Coca Cola*, etc. These activities and products are enjoyed and consumed by large numbers of people.

Secondly, popular culture is involved with the mass media and commercialization (Strinati 2004: 2). Mass mediation and commercialization make possible the wide distribution of products and the dissemination of cultural knowledge and practices in a society. The capacity of mass communications and business transportation overcome geographical boundedness. It facilitates the emergence of new cultures shared among large numbers of people who may live in different areas. Consequently, in addition to high culture and folk culture, popular culture emerged as a new form of culture in society. In the past, it might be possible to demarcate the area of these three types of culture. But today, such demarcation seems impractical as the lines separating these cultures have become blurred. To illustrate, nowadays, it is not only urban people but also people in the countryside and members of high society that enjoy watching television shows, surfing the Internet, eating fast food, and drinking *Coca Cola*.

Hanuman Chansamon is an example of popular culture in Thai society. This animated cartoon is produced for a large audience. The main target audience of this animation is Thai kids. In addition, this

animated cartoon is accessible to other audiences due to the fact that it was broadcast on television and, it is available for sale in VCD format. The involvement with mass mediation and commercialization is also a characteristic that *Hanuman Chansamon* shares with other forms of popular culture. These features will be taken into account in the study in order to see whether they are related to the issues of cultural hybridity and dynamics of this animation.

Cultural Hybridity

Among the various issues associated with popular culture, cultural hybridity is an interesting aspect (Storey 2004). A cursory look at *Hanuman Chansamon* reveals that cultural hybridity is a distinctive feature of this 3D animated cartoon. Hence, a discussion of the issue of cultural hybridity is essential for this study.

Cultural hybridity is a phenomenon in which two or more cultural forms from different domains co-exist. *Hybridity* is primarily a biological term meaning the outcome of a crossing of two plants or species. This term serves as a metaphor for describing the combination of two or more cultural forms (Brah and Coombes 2000).

In Thai society, cultural hybridity can also be found, especially in the realm of popular culture. For instance, *mǎ̌lamsǐ̌n*, which is the blend of traditional northeastern Thai folk music called *mǎ̌lam* and modern and western string music, represents an instance of cultural hybridity in Thai music. In the case of food in Thai society, a *McDonald's* burger called *Mc Kaproa Muu* (Basil Pork hamburger) blends the western hamburger and the Thai dish called *Phat Kapraw Muu* or fried pork and basil. Potato chips with Thai flavors such as *Poo Phat Phong Krarii*

(fried curry crab), *Laap* (a northeastern Thai dish), *Phat Krapraw* (fried basil), and *Sauce Krathiam Prikthai* (garlic-pepper sauce) illustrate the hybridization of Western snacks and the tastes of local cuisine. The on-line computer game "*Ragnarok Ayodhaya*" serves as a good example of the global-local intermix. *Ragnarok* is based on modern technology. The new version "*Ragnarok Ayodhaya*" uses *Ayudhaya*, the second capital of Thailand, as the game's setting. Using this ancient Thai city as the game's setting adds local flavor to this foreign game.

Globalization plays an important role in the debates on cultural hybridity. Globalization leads to the interaction between global cultural flows and local culture, the result of which is global-local intermingles (Nederveen Pieterse 1995, Samper 2001, Storey 2004). Nonetheless, it is crucial to state that all cultures were in fact hybrid before the advent of the globalization era. As Said (1993: xxix) explains, "All cultures are involved in one another; none is single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogeneous, extraordinarily differentiated and unmonolithic." Correspondingly, Nederveen Pieterse (1995: 64) states that "Cultures have been hybrid all along, hybridization is in effect a tautology: contemporary accelerated globalisation means the hybridization of hybrid cultures." Therefore, it is more precise to state that globalization accelerates the speed and extends the scope of hybridization of hybrid cultures. According to Samper (2001), cultural hybridity brings newness to the world as quoted.

It is through globalization that cultural expressions are deterritorialized and decontextualized, and together with other cultural expressions are recontextualized in different

settings and places. Hybrid expressions are thus created; in other words, a little bit of this and a little bit of that brings newness into the world. (Samper 2001: 28)

Nonetheless, in addition to celebrating cultural hybridity, this phenomenon should be brought under critical study in order to see the factors and impacts involved with it such as the issues of cultural commodification and politics of culture (Storey 2004; Brah and Coombes 2000). Hence, in addition to the analysis of cultural hybridity in *Hanuman Chansamon*, this study will also include a discussion on the causes of such features.

Another issue to be pointed out is that a study on cultural hybridity should include the hybrid features caused by the mixture of elements of the same culture but from different periods. For instance, the intermix between traditional Thai culture and modern Thai culture should be considered cultural hybridization. This would make a study on hybridity more complete.

Cultural Hybridity in *Hanuman Chansamon*

The conspicuous cultural hybridity in *Hanuman Chansamon* distinguishes this presentation of the *Ramakian* from other versions. The co-existence of different cultural forms in *Hanuman Chansamon* is the result of the integration of the traditional narrative, i.e. the *Ramakian*, and the new technology of 3-dimensional animation. In addition to the application of new graphic computer technology, other new features are inserted to make this animated cartoon attractive and thus marketable. Apart from this economic outcome, cultural hybridity is another consequence. Hybrid features found in this

3D animated cartoon can be divided into two groups. This paper proposes two terms for these two categories of hybrid features, namely omnipresent hybridity and fractional hybridity.

Omnipresent Hybridity

Omnipresent hybridity refers to hybrid features that can be perceived throughout this animated cartoon. The omnipresent hybrid feature in *Hanuman Chansamon* is the blend between classic Thai literature and modern presentation technology. The *Ramakian*, a Thai masterpiece composed by King Rama I, was adapted as the plot of this animated cartoon. The story begins with the background of the main characters including Phra Ram, Thotsakan, Sida, and Hanuman. The main conflict of the story is set in motion by Thotsakan. After being incited by his younger sister—Sammanakkha, Thotsakan kidnaps Sida, Phra Ram's consort, and takes her to his city-Langa. The main part of the story is about Phra Ram's quest to rescue Sida, and the combat between Phra Ram's army and Thotsakan and his relatives' army. In these missions, Hanuman plays a significant role as key warrior in Phra Ram's army. In the climactic episode, Hanuman helps terminate Thotsakan's immortality by stealing and destroying the casket containing Thotsakan's heart. This brings successful mission ultimate triumph to Phra Ram. Losing the casket, Thotsakan becomes mortal. Consequently, he is later killed by the arrow of Phra Ram.

After killing Thotsakan, Phra Ram rescues Sida and her back to the city of Ayodhya. As a reward for Hanuman's great assistance, Phra Ram gives him the city of Lopburi. At first, Hanuman enjoys being a king. But soon, he gets tired of this worldly happiness and decides to seek

sacred contentment. Therefore, he goes to see Naratha the hermit and asks to be ordained. However, as Hanuman is not a human being, he can not be ordained. Hence, to fulfill his wish, Hanuman has to become a human being. Naratha helps him by lighting a fire and telling Hanuman to jump in. After this refinement, Hanuman can be reborn as a human being. Therefore, Hanuman jumps into the fire, the event that concludes this cartoon.

Although *Hanuman Chansamon* uses the traditional story of the *Ramakian*, the technique of presentation is absolutely modern. *Hanuman Chansamon* is a 3-dimensional (3D) animated cartoon which relies on technology, first developed by Hollywood film companies during the 1990s. *Toy Story* was the first full-length computer 3D animated motion picture. It was produced by Pixar Studio in 1995 (*History of Computer Animation*). The Fantasy Town Company applied this technique to the production of animated cartoons based on folk tales and Thai literature. The combination of the traditional narrative of the *Ramakian* and the modern presentation technology is an instance of the hybridization of old and new cultural elements. Since this hybrid feature can be perceived throughout the whole cartoon, it is considered the most conspicuous and major omnipresent hybrid feature in *Hanuman Chansamon*.

As a blend between the *Ramakian* epic and a 3D animated cartoons, *Hanuman Chansamon* can also be viewed as a mixed or hybrid genre. Epics are solemn and dignified. On the contrary, animated cartoons are a playful genre. Mixing these two genres leads to the emergence of hybridity. That is, *Hanuman Chansamon* is a playful and informal presentation of the solemn and dignified story of the

Ramakian. Moreover, in order to harmonize these two different genres, some adjustments are necessary. These adjustments can be considered a dynamic aspect of *Hanuman Chansamon*. The discussion of this issue appears in section three.

Fractional Hybridity

Fractional hybridity refers to hybrid features that can be found in some particular elements of the animation. These hybrid features are caused by inserting elements of the contemporary world into some components of this animated cartoon. As discussed, the main plot of *Hanuman Chansamon* is adapted from the *Ramayana*, specifically from the *Botrakhon Ramakian* written by King Rama I. Besides adapting this Thai classic, the makers of this animated cartoon have inserted several elements of the real contemporary world into this animation. The co-existence of the real world elements in the imaginative world of the *Ramakian* epic can be seen from the following components of this animation.

Overture or Title Song

The presentation of *Hanuman Chansamon* begins with a prelude. The prelude consists of two main elements— a teacher-praising poem (*bòtwâaykhrui*) and an overture.

The lyrics of the overture demonstrate the hybridization between traditionality and modernity. The lyrics are composed in a form of traditional Thai prosody called *klònbòtlakhwòn* (drama poem) as shown below.

Text in Thai:

บัดเอช บัดนั้น

กำแหงหนุมานชาญสมร

สัญลักษณ์ภักดีพระสี่กร
 รุ่งเรืองฤทธิ์อรอนขจรฉาย
 กำหนดจดจำคำพ่อแม่
 มุ่งแต่สุจริตจิตมุ่งหมาย
อาสาจ้านจนตัวตาย
 ไว้ลายฝีมือให้ลือชา
 พวกเราหนุมานชาญสมรจรมมาแล้ว
 ขอเชิญเพื่อนแก้วและก๊ี้ผู้กล้า
ปราบยักษ์ทุจริตย์กัศติดยา
 อย่าให้รักถิ่นแผ่นดินเรา
อนุรักษ์สิ่งงามความเป็นชาติ
 ตามรอยพระบาทไม่คลาดเกล้า
 กำจัดสิ่งชั่วพามัวเมา
 พวกเราหนุมานชาญสมรเอย

Transcription:

bàt ?əy bát nán
 kamhǎəyhanúmaan chaansàmvǎn
 sǎnyalák phákdií phrásuikwǎn
 rúnghaŋ rítthirǎwǎn khacwǎnkhacaay
 kamnòt còtcam khamphǎwǎmǎə
 mún tǎə sùtcarìt cìt múnǎay
?aasǎa cǎw ton con tua taay
 wáy laay fīm̐ hây h̐hcha
 hànúmaan chaansamvǎn cǎw maa lǎəw
 khǎw chǎən phǎankǎəw lǎə kǎ phūuklāa
pràap yák thútcarìt yák tít yaa
 yàa hây rók thìn phǎəndin raw
?anúrák sìŋŋaam khwaam pen chāt
 taam rǎw phrǎbàat mây khláat khláw
 kamcàt sìŋ chūa phaa muamaw
 phūakraw hànúmaan chaansamvǎn ?əy

Translation:

Here comes
 the brave warrior Hanuman Chansamon

Who is the symbol of loyalty to Vishnu
 who is widely known for his great power
 Who believes in what his parents taught
 who aims at being honest
**who volunteers himself for his master
 until he dies**

In order to exhibit his capability.

We, Hanuman Chansamon and his friends
 have come.

[We] would like to invite our dear friends
 and those brave ones to join us
 to wipe out the **corrupted ogres** and the
addicted ones.

Do not let them occupy our land.

**Let us preserve beautiful things and our
 nation,**

Strictly follow the path of His Majesty the
 King, and

Get rid of those sinful and indulgent
 things.

The content of the lyrics consists of
 traditional and modern issues.
 Traditionally, they describe the qualities
 and personality of Hanuman according to
 the *Ramakian*: he is brave and loyal to
 Phra Ram. The phrase *?aasǎa cǎw ton con
 tua taay* (serve his master until he dies) is
 noticeably adopted from the *Ramakian*.
 Despite its traditional sense, the lyrics
 include issues of corruption, drugs,
 cultural preservation, and nationalism.
 These issues are social concerns of
 contemporary Thai society. One will not
 find the issues of corruption, drugs, and
 cultural preservation in the original
 version of the *Ramakian* as they are
 anachronisms. Inserting these issues in the
 overture adds a sense of modernity to this
 presentation of traditional literature.

Dialogues

The dialogues in this animated cartoon
 demonstrate the intermingling of
 contemporary social issues and the

traditional story. The following translated extracts illustrate some contemporary social issues found in the dialogues of this cartoon.

OTOP Goods

In volume six, Sida tells the ogress servants that she is making flowers made from fish scales that she hopes can be “OTOP” goods. “OTOP” is a newly created term standing for “One Tambon One Product.” It is the name of a project initiated and promoted by the Thaksin Shinnawatra administration. It aims at developing and promoting local products for commercial purposes. The acronym of this project’s title, was later used as the brand name of products developed in this project. When Thotsakan comes to see Sida, he asks the ogress maids about Sida. Below is part of their conversation.

Thotsakan: What is Sida doing?
Ogress servant: My lady is painting
a flower made from fish scales.
I have heard that these would be
promoted as OTOP goods.

This conversation exemplifies the existence of an element of contemporary Thai society in animation based on classic literature.

Bird Flu Epidemic

The bird flu epidemic occupied public concern and media interest in Thailand during the time the animation was broadcast. The following dialogue illustrates the inclusion of this issue in this animated cartoon.

After Maiyarap is killed, Thotsakan sends his servant, the City Guardian Demon (Asoon Suemuang), to the City of

Chakkawan in order to ask his friend Sattalung to fight against Phra Ram’s army. The following is the conversation when the City Guardian Demon first meets Sattalung and his son, Trimek.

Trimek: Is Uncle Thotsakan all right?
City Guardian Demon: He is not quite
good, my lord.
King Sattalung: Oh... What’s wrong?
Or.. Is it the *Bird Flu epidemic*?
Trimek: Is it?
City Guardian Demon: No, no, my lords.
Please take a look at this letter.
Then, you will understand the
everything, my lord.

Subway

During the battle with Intharachit, Naratha Hermit comes to report to Phra Ram. In the conversation with Sukhreep, Phra Ram’s soldier, Naratha Hermit mentions riding the subway, which is an activity of the modern real world, is the excerpt below.

Sukhreep: How did you get here, Naratha Hermit?
Naratha: I came by air as usual. Do you think that I rode the *subway*, Sukhreep?
Sukhreep: No. I just wanted to ask if you passed by the battlefield.
Naratha: I would like to let you all know that now and at this moment Intharachit, who defeated Indra, is leading a great army against Phra Lak and Hanuman Chansamon. Don’t you know that?

Globalization Era

In the battle with Intharachit, before killing this ogre, Phra Ram needs to prepare an appropriate container for keeping Intharachit’s head. If his head

falls onto the ground, there will be a great fire that destroys the whole world. In so doing, Phra Ram assigns Ongkhot to see Phra Phrom in order to ask for the special footed tray for containing Intharachita's head. When he meets Phra Phrom, Ongkhot reports to Phra Phrom, the god talks about globalization, as below.

Ongkhot: This is what happened, my Lord.

Phra Phrom: I have heard this too.

Ongkhot: Oh... the news so spread quickly.

Phra Phrom: *Now, it is the globalization era* (yúkklookaaphíwát; ยุคโลกาภิวัตน์). The news of what happened in the world will soon be transmitted to heaven.

Ongkhot: This is so amazing, my Lord.

Bio-chemical Weapons

In the war with Saeng-Athit, before encountering Phra Ram, Saeng-Athit asks his astrologer, Jitpairee, to forecast his future. Jitpairee tells Saeng-Athit that the war is approaching. The opposite army has destructive weapons, including bio-chemical weapons. Actually, this is not what really happened in the story. That is, Phra Ram's army does not have such high technology weapons. However, as terrorism and bio-chemical weapons have currently become public concern, they were intentionally mentioned in this cartoon. Doing so makes this presentation of the *Ramakian* sound up-to-date.

Current Celebrities and Their Works

Current Celebrities are also mentioned in *Hanuman Chansamon* as shown in the following examples.

Hanuman fights with the King of Naga. Hanuman explains his fighting style to the King of Naga as quoted.

Hanuman: This is called Tae Kwon Do (Korean fighting style). Do you know? *Nong View* is now famous for this.

"Nong View" is the nickname of Yaowapa Buraphonchai, a Thai athlete who won a bronze medal in the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens. Her triumph captured public and media interest.

In the war between the monkey soldiers of Phra Ram's army and the ogre army, Ninlarat, one of the head soldiers, and his friends fight skillfully against the ogres. Ninlarat boasts about the capability of his friends and himself as quoted.

Ninlarat: Have you ever heard the song *Prikkheenuu* (guinea-peppers) by *Brother Bird*? We are like guinea-peppers—small but hot and spicy.

Ninlarat refers to this song and its lyrics in order to explain that he and his friends are like peppers. That is, they are capable and brave though they are small in size. "Bird" is the nickname of Thongchai McIntire, a Thai superstar one of whose famous songs is *Prikkheenuu*.

In the fight between Phra Ram and Thotsakan's soldier, the City Guardian Demon who observes the fight, talks to Thotsakan about Phra Ram's capability as quoted.

City Guardian Demon: That is really like *Ja Panom*, my lord.

Thotsakan: Really? Like *Ja Panom*?

“Ja Panom” or “Tony Ja” is a Thai movie star who is well-known for his fighting. Recently, owing to his fighting performance, his movie, *Tom Yam Kung* (Thai style hot and sour shrimp soup), was sold to the Hollywood market. Comparing Phra Ram to this famous celebrity makes it more understandable and appealing for the kids. Including these celebrities in the dialogues results in the intermingling of traditionality and modernity.

Motifs

Some new motifs were created and added to the original plot. These new motifs are elements from contemporary life or other cultures. Adding them to the traditional story of the *Ramakian* creates hybrid features.

Sanitary Concern

In the *Suk Maiyarap* (War against Maiyarap) episode, Maiyarap, Thotsakan's cousin, is assigned to kidnap Phra Ram. To protect Phra Ram, Hanuman grows big enough to put Phra Ram and his pavilion inside his mouth. This motif is known as “*Hanuman Om Plupplaa* (Hanuman holding the pavilion in his mouth).” In this cartoon, before holding Phra Ram's pavilion in his mouth, Hanuman carefully brushes his teeth, washes his mouth, and chews herbs in order to clean his mouth. After entering Hanuman's mouth, Phra Ram and Phiphek wear cloth masks to prevent themselves from smelling Hanuman's mouth odor. This concern from oral hygiene is very modern and does not exist in the original version of the *Ramakian*. Adding this motif to the plot leads to the hybrid feature of old and new intermingling.

Objects of the Modern World

In the episode of the battle with Sattalung, Hanuman fights Sattalung, Thotsakan's friends. Sattalung is about to fail, he escapes to the undersea world. There, he shrinks himself and hides in a grain of sand. Hanuman goes to the undersea world and asks the King of Naga to tell him Sattalung's asylum. After Hanuman finds the grain of sand, Hanuman lights a cigarette lighter to burn Sattalung. Sattalung can not resist the flame and smoke and comes out of the grain. Unlike other traditional narratives, in *Hanuman Chansamon*, a cigarette lighter is used instead of a torch.

In the battle between Phra Ram and Thotsakan, to declare war, both Phra Ram and Thotsakan use electric megaphones to convey their messages to each other.

In the episode of the war with Saeng-Athit, Saeng-Athit goes to consult with Jitpairee, his advisor, about the approaching war. Jitpairee is reading a book in his office. But instead of a traditional Thai palm book, he is reading a modern style bound book. Also, his office is furnished with modern office supplies such as a desk, chairs, and bookshelves.

In the battle between Phra Ram and Thotsakan, the monkey guard wears eyeglasses and uses binoculars to observe the on-going war between Phra Ram's and Thotsakan's troops.

These objects are elements of the contemporary world. Using them in the presentation of the *Ramakian* yields a sense of modernity and hybridity.

Foreign Creatures

In the *Suk Maiyarap* (War against Maiyarap) episode, after Maiyarap kidnaps Phra Ram and takes him to his undersea world, Hanuman goes to rescue Phra Ram. Originally in the *Ramakian*, on the way to Maiyarap's undersea world, Hanuman encounters giant bats (or *kháanphaawmĕækày*, hen-sized bats). In this cartoon, instead of these Thai mythical animals, Hanuman confronts a dinosaur and a mammoth, which are animals found in Western narratives and films.

In the *Suk Saeng-Athit* (War against Saeng-Athit) episode, Chatri, who is Saeng-Athit's soilder, looks like "Shrek," the hero in the 3D animated film of the same name by Dreamwork studio.

Setting

The study reveals that the names of the setting in *Hanuman Chansamon* strictly follow those in the *Ramakian*. For instance, Phra Ram's city is Ayodhya, Thotsakan's city is Langa, Moonplum's city is Pangtan, Saeng-Athit's city is Romkan. However, the physical condition of some settings in the cartoon appears modern and Western. To give an example, Thotsakan's palace in Langa looks like a space station. Next, there are modern high rises in the city of Pangtan. The style of these modern constructions is Western, in contrast with the story of the *Ramakian*, which is local and traditional.



Figure 2: The cover of the Jongthanon episode illustrating the undersea setting.

In the episode entitled "Jongthanon" (pathway construction), in which Phra Ram's soldiers construct a pathway across the ocean to Langa, the undersea setting looks like the setting in the Disney/Pixar film entitled "Finding Nemo" (See Figure 2 above) Using this Westernized setting in a cartoon based on classic Thai literature creates hybridity.

To conclude this section, cultural hybridity in *Hanuman Chansamon* can be divided in to two groups: omnipresent and fractional features. The hybridity of the traditional-modern blend and of the local-global mixture makes this version of the *Ramakian* distinctive. As Samper (2001:8) points out, hybridity takes a little bit of this and a little bit of that and adds newness to the world. This is applicable to the case of *Hanuman Chansamon*. Hybrid features in this cartoon bring novelty to this modern presentation of the classic Thai literary work. Besides hybridity, there are other dynamic features which make *Hanuman Chansamon* a distinctive presentation of the *Ramakian*. The next section will be devoted to a closer look at this issue.

Dynamic Aspects of *Hanuman Chansamon*

Despite this linkage between *Hanuman Chansamon* and the *Ramakian*, there are several changes making this animated cartoon different from the original *Ramakian*. These changes constitute the dynamic aspects of *Hanuman Chansamon*. This section will be devoted to an examination of the dynamic features in this 3D animation.

New Meaning and Emphasis

Several Thai folk narratives have been reproduced and used in the media. Some are adapted as television commercials. In so doing, these narratives have been reinterpreted and modified. New meanings have been assigned to the re-presentation of these folk narratives (See Kaewthep 2002).

As, *Hanuman Chansamon* is the popular culture version of the *Ramakian*, it was modified from a solemn and dignified epic to a simplified, modernized and playful presentation of this literary masterpiece. The changing meaning of *Hanuman Chansamon* is reflected in several changing elements, including the title, changing behavioral traits of some characters, and changing tone of the story. Instead of adults, this version of the *Ramakian* is aimed at kids. Correspondingly, *Hanuman Chansamon* was tailored to be a playful casual presentation of the *Ramakian* rather than a serious and formal performance.

The title of *Hanuman Chansamon* reflects the changing focus of this animation. Unlike *Ramakian*, in *Hanuman Chansamon*, Hanuman is the focus of the story. That is, Hanuman is the main character of the show. Not only does the title reflects this change, but the content of the prelude also

emphasizes the significant role of Hanuman. As shown above, the content of the prelude signals to the audience that this cartoon is about Hanuman and his mission as the great soldier of Phra Ram. To highlight this, the name of this character was modified from “Hanuman” to “Hanuman Chansamon” (Hanuman the great soldier).

New Characteristics and Behavioral Traits of Some Characters

Hanuman Chansamon

The major traits of Hanuman in this animated cartoon remain the same as in the *Ramakian*. That is to say, Hanuman is courageous, capable and clever. He serves as the valiant general of Phra Ram’s army (Phoonsap and Bankluay 1982: 141-150). He is key to the success of Phra Ram’s quest for Sida. The following dialogue between Hanuman and Phra Ram during the war with Sattalung and Trimek illustrates these traits of Hanuman. Hanuman volunteers to fight Sattalung. Before letting Hanuman go, Phra Ram talks to him as quoted.

Phra Ram: I get bored with war. I don’t want to make war.

Hanuman: I (referring to himself by his name, Hanuman²) know, my lord. Please relax and let it be my duty.

² In Thai, unlike in English, the person’s name or nickname can be used as a first person pronoun “I.” However, this usage occurs most often only in a casual situation in which a younger person talking to an older one. In this conversation, Hanuman Chansamon refers to himself by his name “Hanuman” and “Hanuman Chansamon” and his nickname “Nu” which is a syllable from his full name. This pronominal usage makes the conversation sound less formal.

Phra Ram: I have to thank you very much, Hanuman Chansamon. You truly are my great soldier.

Hanuman: My father, Phra Phay (The god of wind), and my mother, Sawaha, always told me that I was born to devote my life to you, and to work loyally for you. Since then, I have remembered my parents' words. I have never forgotten their words. I (referring to himself as "Nu") might sometimes take a wrong step and make you angry. But that was because of my immaturity. My heart is always full of my loyalty to you, my lord. I would like to be your brave soldier always.

Phra Ram: I am really moved by your loyalty, Hanuman Chansamon.

Hanuman: I (now referring to himself as "Hanuman Chansamon") would like to go to fulfill my duty now, my lord.

Phra Ram: Luck be with you.

Hanuman: That is your graciousness, my lord.

It can be seen from this dialogue that Hanuman realizes that it is his destiny to be Phra Ram's brave general. Likewise, the prelude mentions this great quality of Hanuman that he would like to volunteer to serve Phra Ram until the end of his life.³

อาสาเจ้านจนตัวตาย ไว้ลายฝีมือให้ลือชา

³ I would like to express my thanks to Maneepin Phromsutthirak for bringing this point to my attention.

?aasǎa cǎw ton con tua taay
wáy laay fīm̐m̐ hây l̐m̐chaa

(Hanuman) devotes himself for his master until he dies in order to exhibit his capability.

However, some characteristics and behavioral traits of Hanuman differ from those in the *Ramakian*. In this cartoon, Hanuman Chansamon is still very young unlike Hanuman in the *Ramakian* who is more grown-up. This adjustment gears toward kids, who are the target audience. As displayed in the dialogue above between Phra Ram and Hanuman Chansamon, Hanuman Chansamon refers to himself by his newly created nickname "Nu," which makes him seem more childish.

A major change in Hanuman's behavioral traits is that Hanuman Chansamon is not flirtatious. This new behavioral trait makes Hanuman Chansamon in this cartoon distinctively different from Hanuman in the *Ramakian* (See Poonsap and Bankluay 1982: 151). This changing trait is demonstrated in the subplot in the "jongthanon" (pathway construction) episode. In the *Ramakian*, after finding out that Supannamutcha, a half-fish half-human female creature, obstructs the construction of the pathway to Langa, Hanuman goes down below the sea to catch her. After taming her, Hanuman flirts with her and becomes her husband. In *Hanuman Chansamon*, after Hanuman Chansamon tames Supanmutcha, he asks her to be his "kik" (กิ๊ก; a contemporary Thai slang term for "special friend").

The changing behavioral trait brings about other changes. That is, as Hanuman and Supannamutcha are just special friends, they do not have a child. Consequently, this leads to the deletion of a character and a

sub-plot. According to the *Ramakian*, in the *Suk Maiyarap* (War against Maiyarap) episode, during the journey to the undersea world to rescue Phra Ram, who has been kidnapped by Maiyarap, Hanuman meets his son whose name is Matchanu. Matchanu is the son of Hanuman and Supannamutcha. In *Hanuman Chansamon*, this character is left out and this sub-plot omitted. This is because, according to the new interpretation, Hanuman is still too young to have a family.

This new attribute of the hero-Hanuman Chansamon is a dynamic feature of this cartoon. As the main target audience of this cartoon is kids, changing the characteristics and behaviors of the main character in this way makes it more suitable for the audience and more marketable.

Thotsakan

In addition to Hanuman Chansamon, some characteristics and behavioral traits of Thotsakan are noticeably changed. Thotsakan is a fierce ten-faced ogre. In the *Ramakian*, except for his main face, the remaining nine faces are mostly inactive. In *Hanuman Chansamon*, however, these nine faces are highly active. Moreover, they often do something ridiculous. Sometimes, they argue against Thotsakan himself. Sometimes, they make funny and meaningless remarks. As a consequence, Thotsakan in this cartoon is more pleasant and sometimes even laughable. The following examples illustrate the arguments Thotsakan has with his nine faces.

In the *Suk Intharachit* (War against Intharachit) episode, Thotsakan asks his son, Intharachit, to go to war against Phra Ram. After knowing this, Montho, Thotsakan's consort, goes to see him and asks him to return Sida to Phra Ram. Doing

so Thotsakan and their son would not have to go to war. Thotsakan angrily refuses, saying that returning Sida now is not relevant. At the moment, the war between the Phra Ram and him is for the dignity between men and ogres. However, after this serious remark, his nine faces tease Thotsakan by giving a funny comment.

Thotsakan: If I agree to return her, where shall I put my face?

Nine faces: Just put it there in the same place it was. *Khluukkhlak iluk khluukkhlak*

Thotsakan: Hey. Just shut up! Or I will kill all of you.

The meaningless phrase *Khluukkhlak iluk khluukkhlak* (ขลุ๊กขลุ๊ก อีหลุ๊ก ขลุ๊กขลุ๊ก) is an instance of onomatopoeia. Thotsakan's nine faces often make this funny and non-sensual sound, which affects the overall characteristics of Thotsakan. It makes Thotsakan a more pleasant character.

Next, in the episode on the war with Sahatsadecha, Sahatsadecha, the brother of Thotsakan's friend, is defeated by Phra Ram. The City Guardian Demon comes back to Langa to report the defeat of Sahatsadecha to Thotsakan. As soon as Thotsakan learns this bad news, his nine faces make funny comments as quoted.

Nine-faces: Oh... We've got a headache and full dizzy.

Thotsakan: Why are they this incapable?

Nine-faces: Incomparably incapable. Why are the ogres more incapable than the monkeys? We can not understand.

Thotsakan: That's enough. That's enough. You, nine faces!

The changing characteristics of Thotsakan suit the new meaning assigned to this

cartoon. That is, *Hanuman Chansamon* is a simplified version of the *Ramakian* for kids. Hence, adding humor to the character of Thotsakan makes his more pleasant and this cartoon more appealing to the audience.

Change in Language Form: from Verse to Prose

The change in language form is a noticeable dynamic feature making *Hanuman Chansamon* different from the *Ramakian*. The *Ramakian* is composed in a poetic pattern, specifically in a Thai verse form called *klɔ̀ɔnbòtlakhɔ̀ɔn* (drama verse). In contrast, *Hanuman Chansamon* is in prose. In addition, slang and foreign terms, i.e., loan words from English, are mixed in the prose used in this cartoon. Consequently, this makes the language usage in *Hanuman Chansamon* similar to that used in everyday life. The following examples display that the language form used in *Hanuman Chansamon* is similar to ordinary language used in everyday life.

When Phra Ram and Thotsakan confront each other on the battlefield, they declare war. Thotsakan asks his servant to hand him an electric megaphone to talk to Phra Ram. Phra Ram also responds to him by using a megaphone. The following is their conversation.

ทศกัณฐ์: ส่งโทรโข่งมา ฮัลโหล วัน พู ทรี โฟว์
โฟว์ ฮัลโหล ได้ยินไหมเจ้าเด็กน้อย
พระราม: ได้ยินแล้วทศกัณฐ์ เจ้าเพียงแค่ส่งสิดามา
ทุกคนก็จะไม่เสียเลือดเสียเนื้อ
ทศกัณฐ์: โอ๊ย ซอรรี่ นางเป็นของข้าแล้ว เจ้ามนุษย์
เอ๊ย
พระราม: เจ้าหน้าไม่อาย นางเป็นชายาของข้า

Thotsakan: Give me a megaphone. Hello.
One, two, three, four, five.
Hello. Can you hear me, little boy?
Phra Ram: Yes, I hear you, Thotsakan.
Just return Sida to me and, nobody will get hurt.
Thotsakan: Ouch! Sorry. She is mine, you mortal.
Phra Ram: You, shameless ogre. She is my consort.

In this dialogue, Thotsakan uses many English words such as *hello*, *one*, *two*, *three*, *four*, *five*, and *sorry*. It can be seen that the language used in this conversation between him and Phra Ram is similar to those used in everyday life in contemporary Thai society.

Next, Phra Lak comments on Naratha Hermit's remark as quoted below:

พระลักษมณ์: เวอร์ไปแล้วพระคุณเจ้า
Phra Lak: You are exaggerating.

The term “ver /vɔ̀ɔ/” used in this example stems from “over.” It is Thai slang for “exaggerate.”

In the *jongthanon* (pathway construction) episode, Thotsakan plans to ask Suphannamatcha, his niece, to help him obstruct the pathway construction by Phra Ram's army, he assigns the Ocean Demon to call Suphannamatcha to see him. After the Ocean Demon tells Suphannamatcha that Thotsakan would like to see her, Suphannamatcha responds:

สุพรรณมัจฉา: โอเค พรุ่งนี้ สุพรรณฯ จะไปเฝ้าแต่
เจ้าเลย
Suphannamatcha: OK. Tomorrow, I
(referring to herself by using her

nickname) will go to see him in the early morning.

In this example, Suphannamatcha uses the English expression “OK” to respond to Thotsakan’s request.

In the Intharachit War episode, Montho, Thotsakan’s consort, cautions Thotsakan that Phra Ram and his monkey army are more capable than Thotsakan thought.

มณโฑ: มนุษย์กับลิงพวกนี้ไม่หมูอย่างที่คิด

Montho: These men and monkeys are not a piece of cake.

This example demonstrates the usage of slang term “*mǔu*”, equivalent to the idiom “a piece of cake.” It is often used in spoken Thai.

It can be seen that the ordinary language used in *Hanuman Chansamon* is similar to that used in everyday conversations. This is in contrast to the poetic language used in the *Ramakian*. Although the poetic language makes the *Ramakian* refined and sophisticated, it is fairly incomprehensible to kids. The simple prose language makes *Hanuman Chansamon* “chewable” and thus more appealing to kids. This change is in agreement with the new meaning of this cartoon.

Adaptive Eulogy to Teachers (*bòtwâaykhrui*)

According to Thai literary and dramatic convention, for the sake of auspiciousness and success, writers and performers pay respect to their teachers (*wâaykhrui*) before composing a literary piece and performing a show. *Hanuman Chansamon* observes this convention by beginning each show with a eulogy to teachers (*bòtwâaykhrui*).

The following is the eulogy to teachers used in this cartoon.

[The backing track of Thai classical music and the picture of a group of performers paying respect to masks used in Thai classical mask dance which symbolize the teachers of Thai dramatic arts.]

Thai text:

นมัสการขึ้นเหนือเศียร

มาจุดธูปจุดเทียน เวียนวันวันทาทุกทิศ

ลูกจะไหว้เดชฤทธิ์องค์พระสิทธา

Transcription:

Namâtsakaan khîn nǎa sǎn

maa cùt thûup cùt thian wianwon
wanthaa thûkthít

lûuk cà wâay dèet rít ?oj phrásitthaa

Translation:

[We] pay homage by putting our hands together and raising them up over our heads.

We light joss sticks and candles as a way to pay respect.

We would like to pay respect to the greatness of our teachers.

Despite the intention to observe Thai convention, the eulogy to teachers in *Hanuman Chansamon* is obviously concise. This is probably owing to the limited television airing time. This change can be considered a dynamic feature of this cartoon. That is, it serves as a practical way to observe Thai dramatic convention.

The Causes of Hybridity and Dynamic Features in *Hanuman Chansamon*

In the previous section, the dynamics and cultural hybridity in *Hanuman Chansamon*

were examined. The next issue to be discussed in this section is the causes of these features. The analysis reveals two factors that play significant parts in the emergence of the cultural hybridity and dynamic features in *Hanuman Chansamon*. The first one is the commercial purpose of this cartoon. The other is the production policies of the Fantasy Town Company.

Commercial Purpose of *Hanuman Chansamon*

Media making as a part of popular culture is more or less involved with commercialism and consumerism. Some media, such as newspapers and magazines, create media products and sell them directly to the audience. Other, such as television and radio, produce programs and then deliver them to their audience for free. Nonetheless, they gain their income and profit from their sponsors who advertise their products via commercials embedded in the programs. In this way, the media makers turn the audience of their programs who are also the audience of the ads into a commodity and sell them together with their airtime to sponsors. Sponsors pay the media makers for the airtime and the audience of their ads who may become the prospective buyers of their products (Grossberg et al. 1998).

Like other forms of popular culture, *Hanuman Chansamon* was produced by for commercial purpose. Owing to this fact, some might denounce this cartoon as the commodification of Thai literature. Nonetheless, this “contaminated” attribute of this cartoon should not be overlooked. A careful consideration reveals that this attribute leads to the emergence of interesting features. As a commercial product, *Hanuman Chansamon* must be attractive and interesting in order to draw a

large audience. The larger the audience, the more income from their sponsors. The target audience of the show is children—the new generation of modern Thai society (Fantasytown 2005).

In order to attract the new generation, the production team reinterpreted the *Ramakian*. This revered and sophisticated court literature was digested. The outcome was a simplified prose version presented in a new genre—an animated cartoon. Some character traits were adjusted to make the cartoon more appealing to the target audience. In order to make the show attractive and marketable, several changes were made.

To attract the kids, the original *Ramayana* or *Ramakian* was digested, simplified and converted from a poetic text to a prose narrative. The story underwent a reinterpretation. New meaning was assigned to the show. Some character traits were changed to make it more appealing to kids.

To market this traditional epic to a new generation who have grown up in modern society, both the story and its presentation were modernized. As for the story, several elements of contemporary and globalized Thai society were added. In terms of the presentation, instead of a classical mask dance called *khŏon*, 3-dimensional animation was selected, based on the fact that cartoons have become popular among the new generation.

To summarize, the commercial purposes led to several dynamic attributes of *Hanuman Chansamon*. These adjustments make this cartoon a modernized and simplified version of the *Ramakian*. In other words, this cartoon is a tailor-made version of the *Ramakian* for kids in modern Thai society.

The Production Policies of the Fantasy Town Company

The Fantasy Town Company's policies in producing 3-dimensional cartoons based on Thai literature and folktales comprise two seemingly contradictory issues which brought about the emergence of cultural hybridity in *Hanuman Chansamon*. First, the company aimed at innovating Thai television entertainment by introducing the new technology of 3-dimensional animation. Secondly, it strived to preserve and promote Thai literature and folktales to the new generations (Fantasytown 2005). Blending and enacting these two policies resulted in the production of 3D animated cartoons based on Thai literature and folktales. These cartoons serve as a suitable channel for conveying traditional narratives to kids.

Hanuman Chansamon was produced by the same policies. It aims at presenting the story of the *Ramakian* in an enjoyable way. As nowadays 3D cartoons are widely enjoyed by Thai kids, it was selected as the vehicle this classic epic. This caused the conspicuous hybridity between modern/global forms and traditional/local content. It can be seen that the former production policy gears toward the use of modern technology imported from abroad while the latter focuses on traditional and local culture. The former policy is influenced by the global flows of technology and media into Thai society (See also Appadurai 1996, Phuangrat 1998). The latter policy is correlated to the nostalgic phenomenon in Thai society (See Kittis-Asa 2003b). This nostalgic sentiment led to the retrospection of the good old days. For fear that the past will soon be obsolete, people try to recapture and preserve the elements or cultural forms of the past. The attempt to preserve and

promote Thai literature and folktales is presumably influenced by this sentiment. It is fairly obvious that the former policy is geared to the technology of the future while the latter emphasizes the connection with the past. The enactment of these two policies consequently led to the emergence of cultural hybridity.

Conclusion

The 3D cartoon *Hanuman Chansamon* is a presentation of the *Ramakian* in pop culture style. Cultural hybridity and dynamics make *Hanuman Chansamon* appealing for closer investigation. This study aims at analyzing these two distinctive attributes of *Hanuman Chansamon* in order to answer two research questions, namely what these attributes are and why such features were created. In section one, background on the data and two related concepts—popular culture and cultural hybridity, are provided. Then, the discussion in sections two and three are devoted to answering the first question. Section four focuses on the second question.

Hybrid features in *Hanuman Chansamon* can be categorized into two groups based on conspicuousness. The “omnipresent hybrid features” and the “fractional hybrid feature” are proposed for referring to these two features respectively. The omnipresent hybrid features are those that can be perceived throughout the show. On the contrary, the fractional hybrid features exist in some specific components. As for omnipresent hybridity, the sole yet all-pervading feature is the blend of traditional story and modern presentation technology. Fractional hybrid features can be found in several components including the prelude, dialogues, motifs, characters, and settings. The analysis reveals the hybrid features caused by the co-existence of traditional

and modern elements as well as local and global culture. In terms of dynamics, *Hanuman Chansamon* can be considered a modernized and simplified version of the *Ramakian*. Dynamic features in *Hanuman Chansamon* include the emergence of hybrid features, new meaning and emphasis, new behavioral traits of some characters, change in language form from verse to prose, and the adapted eulogy to teachers (*bòtwâaykhruu*).

The commercial purpose and the production policies of the Fantasy Town Company are two significant factors causing dynamics and cultural hybrid features in *Hanuman Chansamon*. The target audience of *Hanuman Chansamon* is kids. To market this show to the new generation, the producer modernized and modified the story of the *Ramakian* in several ways. They simplified it by changing the style from poetry to prose. They presented the story in the form of a 3-dimensional cartoon which is considered attractive and modern. They reinterpreted the meaning of the story and changed the focus from the honor and greatness of Phra Ram to the bravery of Hanuman Chansamon. Some characters' attributes and characteristics were adjusted, so the show becomes more suitable and appealing to the target audience. Some elements of the contemporary world and global culture were added to the story. This consequently led to the occurrence of hybrid features as well.

The policy of the company to apply new presentation technology to Thai television entertainment and to preserve and promote classic Thai literature and folktales both led to the emergence of cultural hybridity. To preserve and promote the classic *Ramakian* is to maintain traditionality. On the contrary, in order to create novelty, changes took place and new elements were added to

the show. This resulted in the co-existence of old and new cultural elements.

Moreover, the advent of global cultural flows in contemporary Thai society plays a part in the emergence of cultural hybridity. The story of *Hanuman Chansamon* mainly adopted the classic Thai literary text of the *Ramakian*. Nonetheless, some elements of global culture, for instance, computer graphics technology and features from Hollywood films, were blended in this cartoon. This brought about the co-existence of local and global elements in this motion picture.

Cultural hybridity and dynamics not only make *Hanuman Chansamon* attractive but also reflect interesting phenomena in Thai society. That is, this cartoon serves as another illustration of cultural hybridization in contemporary Thai society. It demonstrates the blend between traditionality and modernity as well as the local-global mixture. The blend of these elements brings about hybrid cultural entities.

Last but not least, judging the value of this cartoon is somewhat controversial. Comparing it with the original *Ramakian* and denouncing it is not fairly appropriate. Like other popular culture, it should be viewed and valued on its own. As it was produced for a commercial purpose, this cartoon can be considered a commodification of classic Thai literature. Nonetheless, as a "chewable" and modernized version of the *Ramakian*, *Hanuman Chansamon* can introduce classic Thai literature to the new generation. To be more accurate, these two aspects co-exist and thus should be both taken into account in order to reach a practical perception of this cartoon.

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