

A Study of Cultural Transmission Through Thai Television Drama

Sanpach Jiarananon, Bansomdejchaopraya Rajabhat University, Thailand

The IAFOR International Conference on the City 2017
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

This research entitled “A Study of Cultural Transmission Through Thai Television Drama” were 1) to study a policy of drama television producers on transmitting content of Thai cultures through television drama and 2) to study content of television drama presenting Thai cultures. The result revealed that the majority of producers’ policies have been focused on target audiences by producing Thai history-based drama with the addition of Thai cultures in order to make themselves outstanding. Thai identity was presented through each television drama based on its plot which had been selected since pre-production process. Moreover, Thai ways of life was also perfectly integrated together with the presentation of lessons learned based on Thai cultures. The contents presented were to remind audiences of human mind, family life and ways of living which were considered as contemporary cultures rather than authentic Thai cultures.

Keywords: Cultural Transmission, Thai Culture, Television Drama

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Introduction

Nowadays, television media plays very important role in society, television media is one kind of approachable media to the audiences because it became very important thing in living factor of people. It's evident that every home has 1-2 televisions at least and interesting of television a media both attractive audio and video or excitement made audiences impress and keep follow up contents offered through television media and abide by their value in sometimes.

The viewpoints of Cultivation Theory referred to that in the Material object way - television as only "Display Cabinet" but in the Abstract or symbolic way-television is more than display cabinet. This Cultivation Theory concentrated on television is not news and entertainment transmitter not only Thai ways of life reflection but also cultural generator in society. There are important cultural institutions in the late 20th century.

The most of Thai dramas television are one kind of popular culture with meticulous creativity to reach the emotions of masses. Raymond Williams (1988) divided soap operas definition as commercial is 4 level, 1. Popular Culture refers to popular among people 2. They are as remainder of the high culture 3. They are meticulous created and 4. Created by they own characteristics. Although he gave different definitions of "Culture" are classification and equality. In many cultures usually is defined culture in term of culture product including material objects (consumer goods) or traditional customs (Critical culturalism). Raymond Williams who is mastermind gave definition culture in terms of "Cultural process" because of Birmingham which is thinker group influenced by the Marxist concept that concentrated on production procedure and reproduction.

Cultural Transmission, Raymond Williams who is English thinker involve Culturalism said "a society consists of many Social Practices assembled to be holistic, there is Concrete Social Whole Totality and culture constitution of Social Practices that refers to practice inducement cause society aims at achieve their target which is cultivated from society and methods and process to be success must under the framework of their society". In addition the influences on thought of Political Economy of Media that made Raymond Williams focused on the way to study cultures must be considered in concrete object means study whole culture production and culture reproduction for inherit culture and must study how to production, who are produced and how about procedures.

Thai television drama is type of culture reproduction, believe, value to society and reflect to current society situation. Thus if Thai television drama is used as cultivate culture tool, it able to transmit one opinion to society. Reference from Economic and Social Development Plan No. 11 described the way encourage social institutions support all sections to create value and good Thai culture to be ideological for improving people and society. Besides, one of the supports is encourage educating moral in family institution unit. Ethics in the way of life response to good culture restoration and build good value in family unit such as helpfulness and relative in

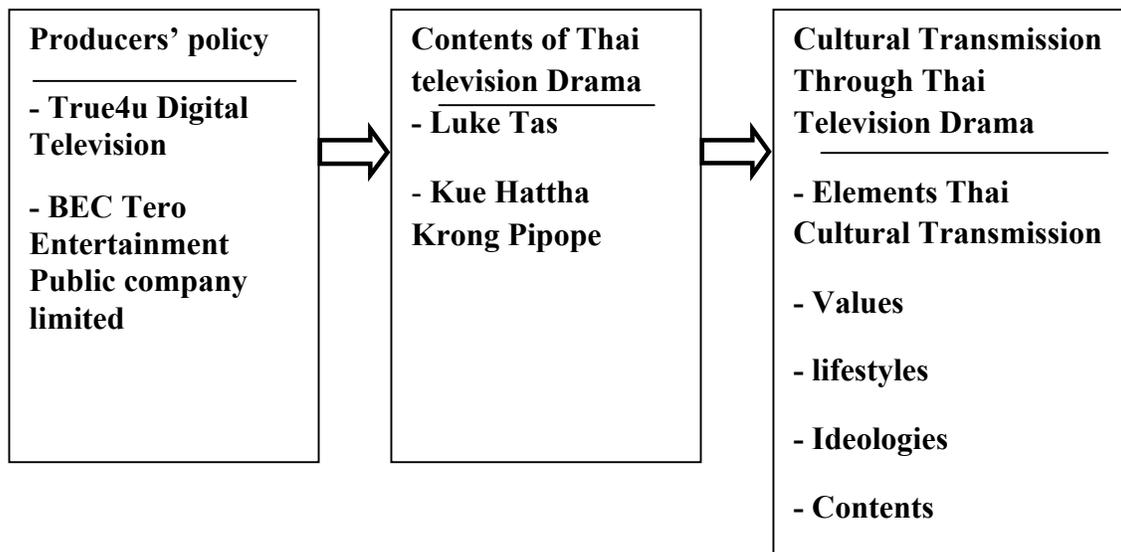
their life with moral instruction. The purpose is family member able to solve any problems in right way and build conscious mind to beware of impacts on cultural deviation.

The reason, drama influence to audiences so present the contents of story will impact on their mind, attitude and opinion. Thus researcher interested on Cultural transmission through Thai television drama to study a policy of drama television producers on transmitting content of Thai cultures through television drama and to study content of television drama presenting Thai cultures including the producers have targets or policies to intervene in Thai television drama makes tend to great change in Thai drama such as Korean television drama have been intervene Korean culture through their drama and made them are well known in the world

Objectives

1. To study a policy of drama television producers on transmitting content of Thai cultures through television drama and
2. To study content of television drama presented Thai cultures.

Research Framework



Methodology

This research is qualitative research especially content analysis gathered information about Thai drama on air in year 2014 on Thai television channel 3 and Bangkok Broadcasting Television Channel 7 by purposive selecting 2 highest rating television and dramas from audiences. It were presented Thai culture in content all stories to compared cultural transmission through Thai television dramas are Thai Television drama named Luke Tas written by Rapeeporn or Suwat WoraDilok another drama is Thai Television drama named Kue Hattha Krong Pipope written by Nam-Aob television script by Salaya Sukhaniwat.

This research used In-Dept Interview with 2 producers from 2 companies who are continuous produced dramas and have been produced Thai television drama are Pimploy Bunjachaiyokul who is producer drama in True4u digital TV company, and another interviewee is Jittima Thunyapiroj who is producer from BEC Tero Entertainment Public company limited.

Results and Discussion

The results of this research found that the majority of producers' policies in each company have been focused on target audiences by producing. True 4u digital TV 's policies indicated to create Thai drama that specific Thai drama at the present focused on reproduction presenting as heartburn, envy, rivalry or chasing love which are dominated with Thai television drama market in long time. However when this company set new policies in production Thai drama to intervene more substance contents in differentiated and intervene marketing chance not only substance contents but also added more entertainment. In addition quality of production that required as movie production, so their dramas are different in contents and production from others.

The producer of BEC Tero Entertainment Public company limited, Thai television channel 3, said about their policies in production that most of producers focused on their target market and majority audience are middle class society or urbanite and not expand broad audience. So their Thai television drama will presented concern about middle class people or modern styles. Many Thai television drama in the company are not considered from Channel 3 senior board sometimes submitted 10 stories but may be considered a few story only and Thai television drama in this channel often produced relate Thai national history such as Thai television drama named Luk Tas which was produced by TV Seen Company limited, Natthanun Chaveewong who is producer, they focused on reproduction as they often did before they may not produce history drama or nationalistic drama but main their dramas related to human mind, family life, married life or life styles reflection.

Pimploy Bunjachaiyokul, television drama production manager for True4u Digital TV, said the company has 15 Thai television dramas per year with less number of producers there are different from BEC Tero Entertainment Public company limited which produced 1-2 Thai television drama per year because they have to share with others producers within Channel 3. In one year, Thai television channel 3 has 40 Thai television dramas about.

The concepts of story selection criteria in Thai television production of both companies are same as those chosen creative contents, interesting story and innovative production that are different from the past. Which are their dramas have to add both substance contents and target market together. However they attempt to keep their company's drama characteristics as entertain drama production with perfect combination, True4u Digital TV concentrated on modern drama production or often purchased Korean drama license and remake to Thai drama production style with Thai cast.

Intervention value and Thai culture into contents that was selected before arrange to production which present reflection the way of Thai people life according each contents was considered. Besides they attempt to combine Thai culture, attitude, opinion and belief together in Thai television dramas production for example Som-Tom Burger series written by Venerable Pra Ajarn V.Vajiramedhi, presented concepts of combination between Dharma and Capitalism in society and reflected Buddha religion viewpoint with audiences easy understanding, the many audiences have feedbacks involve learning Thai culture by watching Thai television drama. The content is producer requirement, most audience will be aware of it and will give their opinions and comments on online social media such as Facebook or Twitter, that make producers will know of their opinion's audiences while they are watching the drama immediately. In addition, Channel 3 Thai Television also focus on present contents are not be against Thai culture, norm and value otherwise produces will not be considered on Channel 3 Thai Television drama production. They also concentrated on produce contents that able to present good sides or acceptable attitude for audience, not against moral. Channel 3 Thai television also does not support and not encourage contents which their audiences will absorb not good culture by Thai television media.

True4u Digital TV station focus on produce dramas are intervened a Thai culture to society, it depend on kind of the drams because their new policies are not be follow target market as others but they will intervene value, belief, Thai traditional old and new style and Thai culture in widthwise all contents. True4u Digital TV company insists on Thai social creation present entertainment with Thai traditional contents together. On the other hand Channel 3 Thai Television company has policy to producers produce Thai television drama actor or actress will present nationalism, harmony or contents that make their viewers feel love and harmony especially thai dramas was created to encourage about national institution, religion and monarchy contents will be considered. Besides, in the future Channel 3 Thai Television company tend to produce drama presented the way life of thai people concept with historical period drama or modern drama. The company of Jittima produce well versed in modern drama so they will produce modern thai television deama style in different viewpoints but still focus on thai cultural contents and not against moral or thai antique culture.

The contents in thai television drama that are intervened thai culture including presented it all stories, researcher purposive selecting 2 highest rating television and dramas from audiences. It were presented Thai culture in content all stories to compared cultural transmission through Thai television dramas are Thai Television drama named Luke Tas, is historical literature written by Rapeeporn or Suwat WoraDilok, first printed in year 1963 on fortnightly newspaper "Diary Monday" and was reproduced thai television drama by TV Seen and Picture company limited on air Channel 3 Thai television on Monday and Tuesday 20.15 pm begin Monday 3rd march 2014 total 13 on air times. Another drama is Thai Television drama named Kue Hattha Krong Pipope written by Nam-Aob television script by Salaya Sukhaniwat and was reproduced thai television drama by Dara Video company limited, on air

every Friday Saturday Sunday 20.20 pm begin on Friday 6th December 2013 to Saturday 7th February 2014 total 20 on air times.

Cultural Transmission Through Thai Television Drama Analysis

The results of this study found elements in cultural transmission through television drama as below.

1. Plot Element- plot must be consists of a sequence of events in drama that the events will be lead to conclusion. Plot is way to identify character and action role of casts, sequence the events integrated to conflict results. Moreover plot is related to each other as element starting Opening Scene which is important scene because it appeals their audience to follow up the television drama. *Luk Tas television drama was opened scene with scene narration to The event Emancipation Proclamation commemorates the mercy of King Chulalongkorn that affected to Kaew, cast in this drama, got opportunity to out of slavery. This scene depicted events before declaration slavery and focused on creating the atmosphere for the audience to emotionally in this scene.*

Thai television drama Kue Hattha Krong Pipope, in year 2014, opening scene with wedding scene which is Chinese wedding ceremony, presented to cultural and traditional infiltration of Thai-Chinese people who live in Thailand. In this opening scene presented characters dramatic and conversation perfectly integrated for generate interesting quickly that can be attract audience follow up to next scene about cast character and how to affects to other events.

2. Narrative Elements - Luk Tas television drama is outstanding in the subject of action is interesting including production, filming and sequencing by using movie production technique integrated and focus of composition is very well combined to presentation technical of the television drama in terms of creating conflict clues in the drama. Moreover conflicts between human and human and also presented main content is social class struggle and character's opinion with comparing between value in that period and the present. There made this is interesting drama with narrative and sequencing events, sometimes may be events that are different places to switch and intervened history contents.

Narrative of Kue Hattha Krong Pipope thai television drama follow calendar sequence events refers to present story as time sequence in chronological order before the aftermath of the events. They focused on main character drama is Lady Sri who is a wife of Phraya Samitipoom Saban-nga, she is villager girl and parents sent her to work for Phraya Samitipoom Saban-nga house because of in debt and after she is a wife of Phraya Samitipoom Saban-nga but she is not willing to be because she has boyfriend name Sukon, younger brother of lady Sri and Phraya Samitipoom Saban-nga, he is work for official government and Phraya position. The main content is reflecting of the greatness and worthy of praise "womanhood" and "motherhood".

3. Happy Ending Element – Happy ending scene is finish with happy or success of characters, in Luke Tas Thai television drama in year 2014 has reflection scene related to relationships between King and in him court official is a scene where King Rama 5 rubbed on her head that presented success of Keaw from slaver to court official by qualified as a barrister. No. 1 and has worked to serve the King.

At the end of Kue Hattha Krong Pipope thai television drama has continue end part called Kue Hattha Krong Pipope Chob Sakol thai were transmitted happy life of being mother including focused on the unhappy life of women who denied being motherhood as Lady Sri (when she was young) and Mekla, ex-wife of Sean, they meet unhappy life and non-substances. Except Prim who is oldest sister of Saban-nga house chosen her life to be nun of Buddhism with peaceful life. She is responsible for evangel Buddha, her happy life is way does not deny being a mother but this drama is presented define motherhood who have kindness, compassion and scarify to others.

Luk Tas television drama was presented about slave content, indicated to difference among Thai social class in that period. In the past period, people were sold to be slave as goods they was no right and no freedom. They were sold to buyer as goods called “slave”, buyers like owner they have authority to control their slaves or can punished when their slave do something wrong. The slaves have to work hard and be sexual harassment. Producer of this drama attempts to show slave’s character who feel pity, depression and reproduction in many scenes emphasized the image of slave to audience’s awareness that slaves are lowest status in Thai social class with shameful life in noble and Thai caste system.



Figure 1: “Luk Tas” Thai television drama.
(taken from <http://movie.sanook.com/63797/>, Accessed on 1 Aug.2017)

Luk Tas television drama was presented affection in distance elite between social class cannot be reach to each other although men or women slaves have been praised such as slave women is a wife of royal person but she cannot make his proud. Moreover, the endeavor is fatally difficult to be praised specially men slaves, they is

difficult to progress in a career and struggle to overcome many obstacles. In addition, respect of a good slave like high class social accept them to be a part of life and society so some persons will unacceptable this respect who have ever been lowest class change to be the same Luk Tas television drama was emphasized on the anthem of King Chulalongkorn, King Rama V, is the abolition of slavery regime canceled (Emancipation Proclamation) that made thai people has equality without oppression in social life and results thai social progress the point where slavery has been oppressed in the noble house or caste system for hundreds of years. However, reproduction of slaver contents often occurred in Thai television drama many times and will get popularity from audiences demonstrate to severe exuberance of the past in Thai society, they want see and think of old histories value, norm and ways of life in the past.

In the another thai television drama is Kue Hattha Krong Pipope was adapted from novel which writer is based on history period, the story begin since year 1919 was early reign of King Rama VI. The author interprets historical events in accordance with the action of the character in the drama including the pass away King Rama VI situation, World War 2, the change of political and the pass away King Rama VIII situations.

Kue Hattha Krong Pipope is transmitted main women characters are Lady Sri and Saban-nga, Lady Sri who is cruel to all servants in his wife, Phraya Smitibhumi who is husband that made Lady Sri feels sad. While Saban-nga who is pretty woman slave, she has to be a reluctant wife of Phraya Smitibhumi but she is very kindness and in the end every characters accept results of their destiny and affect to their descendants with tragedies happened.

The situation related with this drama characters in Luk Tas thai television is later period of Thai history since after reign of King Rama V to King Rama VI, presented about thai life style, political changing and character of slavery. Although slavery regime to canceled but still have slaves in changing period because they did not educate about rights and freedom life, they grew up in noble house without knowledge to use in career only did in order from owner. When they have to make decision by themselves, some people cannot find the way of life and cannot make decision by themselves. They still have to act or those who have knowledge, money, wealth, lifestyle and this result are passed on the present that thai society is still social classification system even through Thai social attempts to present had already changed but thai people sticks to seniority system and social inequality.



Figure 2 : “Kue Hattha Krong Pipope” Thai television drama.
 (taken from <https://pantip.com/topic/31626159>, Accessed on 1 Aug.2017)

Kue Hattha Krong Pipope Thai television drama accorded noble has ending part is Kue Hattha Krong Pipope Chob Sakol which story is focused on the family life of Phraya Smitibhumi who has 2 wives are Lady Sri and Saban-nga. Saban-nga was from lower class family so she tried to improve herself to new Lady in the house. This drama reflected the rearing of Thai people in that period and core content of this drama is reflection of attitude loving in motherhood, sacrifice, benefactress of mother beyond times. She has 2 daughters who are inherit ideology and attitude that believes happiness of women is motherhood. Prawpunnarai who is success in her family life with her husband and 4 children because of motherhood she is discreet when she knew that her husband has sexual relationship with others she can keep warm family with love. Prawpilas who is another sister, she has a child but he died because of her stepson she cannot protect but she attempts to protects Sean and ex wife (Mekla)’s son with mother’s duty .

This content can easily reach the audience because it is close and quite sensitive for people in Thai society as well as the international community, the content presented affection of mother which is a universal symbol for any nation and any language can understand and reach that feeling in this drama.

Conclusions

Both Thai television drama companies similarly selected for their creative contents, interesting, differentiate from original Thai television drama. While this creative contents have to be produced focus on substance integrated with marketing alongside but still keep the unique of main drama characters. It is entertainment drama perfectly integration in both companies. True4u Digital TV Company focused on modern Thai drama or purchased Korean drama license and reproduced to Thai television drama version with casts and conducted in Thailand. They transmitted Thai cultural and Thai traditional according to plot contents was considered. The contents of drama reflecting to the way of Thai life are not only produced to their plot but also transmitted reflecting of Thai ways of life perfectly integrated. Moreover, they presented concepts, Thai value, opinion about Thai cultural in the television dramas.

BEC Tero Entertainment Public company limited or Channel 3 has policy to their producers concentrated on produce Thai television drama presenting Thai values, patriotism, harmony in drama that to make people see the love and harmony in Thai national especially the drama is produced to encourage and support values in Nation, religion and Majesty will be considered. In addition, in the future the company will has concepts to often present Thai ways of life with historical literature including historical period drama or modern drama. The company of Jittima produce well versed in modern drama so they will produce modern Thai television drama style in different viewpoints but still focus on Thai cultural contents and not against moral or Thai antique culture.

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Contact email: Sanpach_bsru@yahoo.com