The Structural Analysis of the Hindi and South-East Asian Versions of the Indian Epic, the Ramayana:
With Particular Reference to Hindi, Javanese, and Thai Versions

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Abstrak


Rama and Sita as Described in the Hindi Version of the Ramayana
**Introduction**

The Indian epic, the *Ramayana*, dates back to about the fourth century BCE according to recent studies. It was composed by Valmiki in the classical language of Indian Sanskrit. Almost every individual living in India is aware of the story of the *Ramayana*, to some degree or other. The *Ramayana* pervades their socio-cultural life in one form or another at all times (Narayan 1972:ix). Coming into South-East Asia with Hinduism, the *Ramayana* has had diverse implications for the cultures of the region. Hinduism has mingled with other indigenous values in the South-East Asian region, producing a complex socio-cultural syncretism which differs from culture to culture in the region. In this context, the *Ramayana* itself has changed to accommodate the local culture and, in so doing, developed into a number of variant stories, while much of the original content has remained common to all versions of the text.

Bearing in mind the development and contextualisation of the *Ramayana*, the aim of this article is to analyse, using the structural analysis (especially Claude Lévi-Strauss’s idea of ‘bundles of relations’ and systemic analysis methods), the variant versions (Hindi, Javanese, and Thai) of the *Ramayana* and then to attempt to describe their socio-cultural implications in moulding the systems of value in South-East Asia. The reason why I choose the Indian version in Hindi, the Javanese version illustrated in the Indonesian shadow puppet show (*wayang kulit*), and the Thai version re-edited by King Rama I of Siam is on the grounds that they are generally recognised as the most pervasive and representative in each country in the matters of language, the socio-cultural popularity of the shadow show, and the editor respectively.

In the following part, I will introduce Claude Lévi-Strauss’s structural interpretation of myths. Then, I will present the *Ramayana* (Hindi version, Javanese version, and Thai version) in general. This article will then proceed to analyse their structures and contents. I will conclude by sketching the socio-cultural implications of the *Ramayana* in the South-
Claude Lévi-Strauss’s structural interpretation of myths

In studies of myth, anthropologists, and also folklorists, point out that myth is either strongly structured and logical, or emotional and pre-logical, traditional and primitive, or part of contemporary ideology. Dealing with such confusion, it may be suggested that studies on myth form two large classes: 1) ‘critical’ theory of myth; and 2) ‘applied’ writing about myth. The first class deals with the basic assumptions about myths, it chiefly prescribes what the concept of ‘myth’ is and how it should, therefore, be studied and used. The second class seeks primarily to use the ideas of myth. In this classification, the structural analysis of Claude Lévi-Strauss may belong to the first category (Strenski 1987:1).

Lévi-Strauss sees myth as a ‘universal’ and ‘timeless’ dimension of operational modes of the human mind in the social world. As he puts it:

They (myths) made it possible to discover operational modes of the human mind, which have remained so constant over the centuries, and are so widespread (....) that we assume them to be fundamental and can seek to find them in other societies and in other areas of mental life, where their presence is not suspected (Lévi-Strauss 1981:627).

And,

A myth always refers to events alleged to have taken place long ago. But what gives the myth an operational value is that the specific pattern described is timeless; it explains the present and the past as well as the future (Lévi-Strauss 1978:209).

Lévi-Strauss’s main methodological contribution to the interpretation of myth as a ‘universal’ and ‘timeless’ dimension of operational modes of the human mind is surely a radical shift from the ‘isolated-approach’ to the search for common ground in the study of myth: not just the study of ‘text’ but of ‘text’ in ‘context’ on the basis of ‘bundles of relations’. As he convincingly says:

The very core of our argument: The true constituent units of a myth are not the isolated relations but bundles of such relations, and it is only as bundles that these relations can be put to use and combined so as to produce a meaning (Lévi-Strauss 1978:211).

To Lévi-Strauss, the meaning of the myth is thus internally linked to its textual ‘structure’ in the given context. According to Lévi-Strauss, a myth consists of all its versions; there is no one ‘authentic’ version (Lévi-Strauss 1978:216-217). It follows from this that a structural analysis should take them all into account, a view underpinned by the belief that when all the versions, sub-versions and secondary elaborations have been examined, a structural law common to them all will be the final outcome, and that this law is the governing law of the myth as a whole (Clammer 1978:25). In other words, Lévi-Strauss’s interpretation of myths relies on a sorting out and rearrangement of the narrative features in all the versions of the myth (Dorson 1972:36).

For the purpose of this article, I will employ the structural properties of Lévi-Strauss’s interpretation of myths, especially the idea of ‘bundles of relations’ and ‘systemic analysis of various versions of the myth by sorting out and rearranging’. First of all, in the following section, I will present variant versions of the Ramayana.

Hindi version of the ‘Ramayana’
(Mackenzie 1910:1-180)

Prelude [H-7]

Once upon a time, there were two mighty kingdoms in sun-bright Hindustan. These were Kosala, whose King was Dasaratha, father of Rama, and Mithila, which was ruled over by Janaka, the father of beauteous Sita. Kosala was
full of glory, prosperity and happiness. There also lived Ravana, the monarch of demons, in Lanka. He oppressed all gods and obstructed sacrifices and despoiled the Brahmanas. So Vishnu said gods to go toward the earth and assume the guise of apes, and Vishnu divided himself into four parts and was incarnated in the four sons of Dasaratha: Rama, Bharata, Lakshmana, and Satrughna. Rama was once sent to kill a demon, Taraka. After the mission a hermit took Rama to the court of Janaka, where Rama surpassed all his rivals in an archery contest and won the beautiful princess Sita for his bride.

Rama banished [H-?]
Dasaratha was growing old. So he appointed Rama to Yuvarajah [Young Raja]. But while the coronation was being prepared, Kaikeyi, mother of Bharata, reminded Dasaratha that he had vowed to grant her two boons, and demanded the fourteen-year banishment of Rama and the installation of Bharata as Yuvarajah. In the end, Rama, Sita and Lakshmana took their departure toward the jungle of Chitra-kuta. Soon after, Dasaratha died in great grief.

Sita abducted by Ravana [H-?]
One day, in the jungle Sita was abducted by Ravana and was taken to Lanka. On the way, Jatayus, Monarch of Vultures, tried to rescue Sita, but only to sacrifice his life.

Rama and his ally search for Sita [H-?]
Rama and Lakshmana started his vain search for Sita. On Rishyamukha mountain, they met Sugriva, King of the Vanars, and Hanuman, a counsellor of the Ape King. They then gained armies of apes in countless numbers. At first, Hanuman resolved to visit Lanka to discover where Sita had been hidden. On his return from Lanka, preparations were at once begun to rescue Sita. But they faced a vast sea between the main land and the island of Lanka. So, with his Celestial weapons, Rama demanded that the King of Ocean allow them to construct a bridge to Lanka. After that, in five days the strait was spanned.

Rama defeats Ravana and returns to Kosala with Sita [H-?; ?]
In the end, after the great battle with Ravana, Rama and his allies rescued Sita. Then Rama and his wife returned to Kosala. Rama was crowned on the morrow amidst the rejoicing of the people, and prosperity returned once again to the kingdom.

Sad ending [H-?]
Time went past, but the sorrows of Sita were not ended. The people whispered against the innocent queen, doubting her virtue, because she had been taken away by Ravana. At length Rama banished Sita from the kingdom. Sixteen years later, in the hermitage of Valmiki, Rama came across Sita with his two sons. But Sita refused to come to Rama and disappeared before the eyes of people. Then Brahma appeared and said “well thou knowest that life is but a dream, a bubble of water.”

Eventually Rama ascended to heaven, and as Vishnu, found Sita, who was the goddess Lakshmi.

Javanese version of ‘Ramayana’
(Haditjaroko 1988:64-71)

Prelude [J-?]
Once upon a time, there was once a vast country, called Kosala, which was known far and wide as a great and glorious land. This happy and prosperous country was governed by a noble king Dasarata, who always put his subjects’ interests before his own. He had four children: Rama, Barata, Lesmana and Satrughna.

Rama banished [J-?]
In consultation with his people, the aged king Dasarata appointed Rama his heir. While preparations for Rama’s coronation was begun, however, the king’s other wife Kekayi, reminded him of a vow made to her long ago, in which Dasarata had promised to fulfil anything she might wish. Kekayi demanded the banishment of Rama and the coronation of her own son Barata. Eventually, Rama honoured his father’s obligation and went into exile, in the forest of Dandaka, followed by his wife Sinta and his brother Lesmana. The banishment of Rama was soon followed by Dasarata’s death in sorrow.

Sinta kidnapped by Rawana [J-?]
One day, Sinta was kidnapped by the king of demons, Rawana, who ruled Alengka. Rawana
took Sinta to his kingdom. On the way Jathayu, king of birds, tried in vain to rescue Sinta by attacking Rawana in flight, Jathayu was mortally wounded in the fight and only managed to tell Rama of Sinta’s abduction before dying.

Rama and his ally cooperate to search for Sinta

The great search began. Wandering with Lesmana through the dense and dangerous woods and in the Reksamuka mountain, Rama in vain sought some traces of Sinta. In the mountain, eventually, Rama gained powerful allies: the king of the Wanaras, Sugriwa, Hanuman and so on. As the first step towards rescuing Sinta, Hanuman volunteered to investigate Alengka where Sinta was captive. After Hanuman’s return, Rama and his allies left for Alengka, keeping in mind the saying: ‘By mutual confidence and mutual aid! Great deeds are done and great discoveries made!’

Happy ending

In the end, they defeated Rawana and rescued Sinta. Then Rama and Sinta returned to their native land Kosala. Under Rama’s wise governance, Kosala progressed from strength to strength, becoming daily more prosperous and more pleasant.

Thai version ‘Ramayana’ (Ramakien) (King Rama I of Siam 1967:11-101)

Prelude

Once upon a time, there were two cities: Ayudhaya built by Shiva for men and Lanka built by Brahma for the giants. One day Nonduk, a giant serving Shiva in heaven, was incarnated as Ravana, the wicked king of Lanka, after fighting with the god Narayana, father of Anomatan who was the first king of Ayudhaya. There was a town called Saket near to Ayudhaya. Its king was Kodom. He had a wife called Nang Ajna. She bore him a daughter named Nang Savaha. But she was so adulterous that she made love to the god Indra and the Sun god. Then she bore them two sons. Knowing her adultery, Kodom cursed the two sons to be turned into monkeys: one into a green monkey known as Palee, the other one into a red monkey known as Sugriva.

Afterwards Nang Savaha bore the Wind god a son called Hanuman. Near to Ayudhaya was another city called Kaiyaket with a king of the same name ruling over it. Kaiyaket had a daughter called Kaiyakesi. Having heard that Achabarn, the king of Ayudhaya, had a son called Tosarot, Kaiyaket wanted his daughter to marry Tosarot. Then they got married. So Tosarot had three queens: Kaosuriya, Samutra and Kaiyakesi. One day Tosarot was called to fight a wicked giant in the heaven. During the fight Kaiyakesi saved Tosarot’s life. Then he promised her that whatever she asked of him would never be refused.

Once the god Narayana, together with the goddess Lakshami and many other gods, was reincarnated to protect all living beings from the aggressiveness of the giants. Narayana was born to Kaosuriya as Rama, and three brothers were also born after him: Lakshaman, Barata and Satru. Lakshami was born in Lanka to Ravana. But soon she was put in a glass bowl and floated down the stream. She was found by the hermit Janaka, the former king of Mithila, and brought up by him. She was given the name of Sita. After that, he went back to his kingdom and ruled as before. When Sita grew of age, Janaka sought a husband for her. Finding Rama, he wanted Sita to marry Rama and they got married.

Rama refuses the throne and goes into exile

Tosarot was growing old and wanted Rama to succeed him. When the news was known to Kaiyakesi, mother of Barata and Satru, she became very jealous. So she reminded Tosarot of the promise made to her, and asked that Barata succeed him to the throne for fourteen years first and that Rama should come to the throne afterwards. So Rama himself refused to accept the throne and went into a forest with Lakshaman and Sita.

Sita stolen away by Ravana

One day, in the forest, Ravana stole away Sita from Rama and took her to Lanka. On the way to Lanka, he encountered Sadayu, a huge bird. Sadayu sacrificed himself trying to save Sita from Ravana.

Rama and his allies search for Sita

Rama and Lakshaman began searching for Sita. At Kallivan Forest, they came across Hanuman.
On seeing Rama, Hanuman recalled his mother’s words to wait for Rama and join his service. Hanuman went back and brought Sugriva, who volunteered to go and fight by the side of Rama with all his army. So Rama gained allies in strength. As the first step, Hanuman investigated Lanka with a selected group of soldiers. Then they built up a bridge to Lanka across the sea.

Rama defeats Ravana and returns to Ayudhya with Sita [T-?; ?; ?]

After the fierce fight with Ravana and his enormous army, Rama and his allies defeated their enemy and at last saved Sita. But Sita would not come to meet Rama because she could not show her purity was unsullied by her kidnapping. But she was proven innocent by walking safely through an ordeal of fire. Then they came back to Ayudhya, and Rama was crowned the king.

Sita accused of unfaithfulness [T-?]

But the battle with Ravana’s friends was still going on. By the time the battle was over, a ghost of a giantess called Adula, a relative of Ravana tempted Sita by drawing Ravana’s face. Seeing the picture, Rama thought she was unfaithful. Then he ordered Lakshaman to take her away and have her executed. But Lakshaman allowed her to go away on her own into a forest. In the forest she met a hermit called Vajmarika. Sita was already pregnant before she left the palace and very soon gave birth to a son called Mongkut. The hermit also made Sita a son called Lob with a sacred ceremony. One day Rama came across the two boys and found that they were his sons. He also met Sita there. But though she permitted Rama to take away her two sons, she refused to come along.

Happy ending [T-?]

After a good while, Shiva ordered and begged that they be reconciled. Then they were reconciled. But there still remained an attack by a wicked giant and his son. So Rama sent his son and his brother to fight them. In the end, all the enemies were destroyed and peace and unity reigned once more in Ayudhya.

Structural analysis

In this section, I will move on to analyse the Ramayana versions within a structural framework so that we may draw their socio-cultural implications in their contexts out of the structural difference and contextualisation. I will divide this section into two parts: structural arrangement and structural comparison.

Structural arrangement I: the content

Common features of the content shared in the Ramayana versions are that: i) Rama is banished into exile; ii) Sita (Sinta) is stolen away by Ravana (Rawana); iii) Rama gains monkey allies and they defeat Ravana (Rawana). On the other hand, however, distinctive elements also exist in each version. First, in the ‘Prelude’ it appears that each version gives a unique setting of the whole plot, according to its socio-cultural context. Thus, while the Hindi version stresses the Hinduistic elements, the incarnation of the Vedic gods and the inevitable conflict between the good gods and the evil gods, the Javanese version puts emphasis on the syncretistic stories of heroes and the Thai version gives attention to the Buddhist concept of the ‘Wheel of Life’ (Circulation) and the ‘Karma’ achieved by good and evil merits and the indispensable struggle between good and evil. Second, in the ending part, the Javanese version results in a happy ending after the defeat of Rawana and rescue of Sinta, whereas the Hindi version closes its story with a sad ending, due to the doubt of Sita’s purity. The Thai version has an ultimate happy ending but is rather complicated, since Sita comes through two stages of transition to prove her purity (see Table 1).

Structural arrangement II: the structure

Although there are distinctions between them in the content of the ‘Prelude’ and ‘ending part’, the three versions also apparently share similarities in the structure as a whole. In the ‘Prelude’, for example, a similar structural...
pattern of moving on to the main body is found in each version. Similarly, in the ‘ending part’ it is revealed that each version has similar structural components. In other words, the systematic analysis of the structure of each Ramayana version reveals that the original content of the Hindi version is developed and even contextualised with and in each socio-cultural context, while the structural implications still remain underneath the plot (see Chart 1).

### Table 1

**Structural arrangement of the Ramayana: the content**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hindi version</th>
<th>Javanese version</th>
<th>Thai version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H-? Prelude (Incarnation; Good-Evil)</td>
<td>J-? Prelude</td>
<td>T-? Prelude (Circulation; Cause-Effect)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-? Rama banished</td>
<td>J-? Rama banished</td>
<td>T-? Rama refuses the throne and goes into exile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-? Sita abducted by Ravana</td>
<td>J-? Sinta kidnapped by Rawana</td>
<td>T-? Sita stolen away by Ravana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-? Rama and his ally search for Sita</td>
<td>J-? Rama and his ally cooperate to search for Sinta</td>
<td>T-? Rama and his ally search for Sita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-? Rama defeats Ravana and saves Sita</td>
<td>J-? Rama defeats Rawana and saves Sinta</td>
<td>T-? Rama defeats Ravana and saves Sita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-? Returns to Kosala with Sita</td>
<td>J-? Happy ending (Rama returns to Dasarata with Sinta)</td>
<td>T-? Rama returns to Ayudhya with Sita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-? Sad ending (Sita’s purity doubted)</td>
<td></td>
<td>T-? Sita accused of Unfaithfulness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Structural arrangement III: the origin of the main characters**

The most complicated and diverse feature of the Ramayana is the origins of the main characters. As mentioned in ‘Structural arrangement I’, and mainly described in the ‘Prelude’, the origins of the main characters, that is, how they originate, and the process through which they incarnate, and even why they originate, imply the socio-cultural context.
Taking some examples, in the Hindi version, the incarnation of Vishnu into Rama is caused by the ultimate conflict between the good gods and the evil god. In the Thai version, however, the origins of the main characters are to a certain extent intertwined with their merit according to the Law of Circulation. On the other hand, in the Javanese version, there is insufficient explanation of the origin of the heroes. Instead, the syncretistic stories of the heroes permeate the proposed plot of the Javanese version of *Ramayana* (see Chart 2).
Structural comparison I: the mediator of dual structuration

In the structural arrangements, the *Ramayana* retains common features in each version. The dualistic opposition [conflict between good and evil] is the predominant element in the structural flow of the plot. In other words, the intrinsic aspect of the *Ramayana* is the ultimate conflict between good and evil.

As shown in Table 2, the primary agents of the conflict are Rama and Ravana (Rawana), and in the process of dual structuring, apes
and giants play the roles of secondary mediators. The way the dual structuring is arranged, however, emerges in heterogeneous or semi-homogeneous style according to the socio-cultural contexts (Hinduistic, syncretistic, and Buddhist). The dual structuring is well demonstrated in Table 3.

**Structural comparison II: the type of transitory action**

In the scene of building a bridge to Lanka [Alengka], we find different types of transitory action in the process of structuration towards the ultimate victory of the good in the Ramayana versions (see Table 4). The different transitory actions give us a clue to the operational value system found in the different socio-cultural contexts in which the Ramayana versions were developed and contextualised. Bridging is an analogy shared in each version, in that the transitory actions play the role of operational ‘hinges’ between the actions of the good and predetermined events. Bridging gives rise to the socio-cultural transition of the good (Rama and Sinta [Sita]) from ‘separation’ through transition to ‘(re)-incorporation’ in terms of ‘structuration’ towards the victory of the good. However, while in the Hindi version the transitory action implies such Hinduistic elements as propitiating sacrifices, in the Javanese version it is based on the syncretistic Javanese virtue of Gotong-Royong (mutual confidence and mutual aid) and in the Thai version it is described within even longer stages in terms of the sophisticated mechanisms of good and evil.

**Comparison III: ending**

The ending part in each version highlights the socio-cultural implications of the Ramayana in each context. The Hindi version seems to seek ultimate spiritual happiness, which may be achieved after realising that ‘life is but a dream, a bubble of water’. On the other hand, in the Javanese version, the ultimate happiness is presented from a simple and down-to-earth Javanese viewpoint. In the Thai version, the ultimate happiness is described in terms of a most complicated mechanism of good and evil according to the Buddhist worldview.

Having said that, each version constructs its unique plot with some variants (see Table 5). In the Hindi version, for instance, one may find that the priori-plot [P1] is transformed into the post-plot [P2] by the variant (people doubt Sita’s innocence). In the Javanese version, however, no variant and thereby transformation of the priori-plot [P] happens. In other words, the Javanese version maintains its priori-plot to the end. In the Thai version, the presentation is very complicated: two variants [X1, X2] and two transformations [P1, P2] of the plot develop. In the end, however, the story ends in the priori-plot [P1].

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intrinsic Pair</th>
<th>Primary Agent</th>
<th>Second Agent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Good</td>
<td>Rama</td>
<td>Apes (Hanuman etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Evil</td>
<td>Ravana [Rawana (J)]</td>
<td>Giants Kaikeyi [Kekayi (J); Kaiyakesi (T)]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*NB: H (Hindi version), J (Javanese version), T (Thai version)*
Table 3
The process of dual structuration

| Hindi Version | (C) Horse Sacrifice  
|               | (E) Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva and Indra promise four sons to Dasaratha  
|               | (C) Ravana opposes the gods  
|               | (E) Vishnu incarnerates as the four sons of Dasaratha; the gods incarnate as apes  
|               | (C) Kaikeyi demands the banishment of Rama  
|               | (E) Rama goes into exile with Sita  
|               | (C) Sita abducted by Ravana  
|               | (E) Rama and apes search for Sita  

| Javanese Version | (C) Kekayi demands the banishment of Rama  
|                 | (E) Rama goes to exile with Sinta  
|                 | (C) Sinta kidnapped by Rawana  
|                 | (E) Rama and apes search for Sita  

| Thai Version | (C) Narayana defeats a wicked giant, Nonduk  
|             | (E) Nonduk reborn as Ravana  
|             | (C) Nang Ajna bears two sons to Indra and the Sun god  
|             | (E) Kodom curses the two sons to be turned into a green monkey [Hanuma] and a red monkey [Sugriva]; Nang Ajna curses Nang Savaha to give birth to a monkey fighting for Rama  
|             | (C) The giants get more dangerous and more aggressive  
|             | (E) Narayana incarnerates as Rama; the gods also take birth on earth  
|             | (C) Kaiyakesi wants Rama to be banished  
|             | (E) Rama goes into exile with Sita  
|             | (C) Sita stolen away by Ravana  
|             | (E) Rama and apes search for Sita  

NB: C (Cause), E (Effect), (Process of event)

Conclusion
I have attempted to dissect the Hindi and South-East Asian (Javanese and Thai) versions of the Ramayana. In so doing, I have employed a Lévi-Straussian structural analysis of myths and analysed the socio-cultural implications of the Ramayana versions in each socio-cultural context, while remaining faithful to the structural analysis of the texts. After having said that, now, as a conclusion, I move onto the straightforward, and primary, question: what are the socio-cultural implications of the Ramayana in the socio-cultural contexts of South-East Asia? As we have found, especially in the ‘VI. Structural analysis’,
the Ramayana implies certain common features in its structural content as a whole, which tell us about the operational modes of the universal human mind (good and evil), as in India, in the context of South-East Asia. On the other hand, contextualised with syncretistic or indigenous values in South-East Asia, however, the socio-cultural implications of Ramayana also contain the structural difference and even contextualisation and transformation of the symbolic meanings. In the Hindi version, for instance, as we have considered, not surprisingly, Hinduistic elements are commonly found throughout the story: horse sacrifices, circular conflict between good and evil, incarnation of the gods in the ‘Prelude’; the ultimate nature of spiritual happiness in the ending. On the other hand, in the Javanese version, the Javanese syncretistic value system, rather than the orthodox religious worldview, is revealed in the story: the morals of the heroes, not the divinity of the gods as found in the Hindi and Thai versions, and the virtue of Gotong-Royong. In the Thai version, the Buddhist value system dominates the way the story is constructed: for instance, the Truth of ‘Circulation’ by good or evil merit. As a result, it may be said that, as Lévi-Strauss says, the Ramayana in South-East Asia conditions a ‘universal’ and ‘timeless’ dimension of operational modes of the human mind in the forms and patterns of all the versions or sub-versions, such as the Hindi version, the Javanese version and the Thai version. At the same time, in the South-East Asian context the Ramayana plays 1) a role of medium between the Hinduistic text and the socio-cultural contexts and 2) a role of stimulus which strengthens the socio-cultural value systems and syncretises the intrinsic systems of value within the diverse socio-cultural contexts of South-East Asia.

Table 4
Structural comparison of the Ramayana: the type of transitory action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Hindi Version</strong></th>
<th><strong>Javanese Version</strong></th>
<th><strong>Thai Version</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heterogeneous</strong></td>
<td>- Lakshmana threatens the unfaithful Sugriva</td>
<td>- Sugriva keeps his promise</td>
<td>- Rama commands Sugriva to build a bridge across to Lanka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Rama performs sacrifices to propitiate the god of Ocean</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Hanuman quarrels with Nipat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Ravana's hindrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Homogeneous</strong></td>
<td>- Rama helps Sugriva restore his kingdom from Bali</td>
<td>- Rama helps Sugriva restore his kingdom from Subali</td>
<td>- Rama helps Sugriva restore his kingdom from Palee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The strait is spanned</td>
<td>- Hanuman bridges the strait</td>
<td>- The bridge is completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Semi-homogeneous</strong></td>
<td>- Hanuman resolves to visit Lanka</td>
<td>- Hanuman volunteers to visit Alengka</td>
<td>- Hanuman and chosen apes are sent to Lanka</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the Ramayana implies certain common features in its structural content as a whole, which tell us about the operational modes of the universal human mind (good and evil), as in India, in the context of South-East Asia. On the other hand, contextualised with syncretistic or indigenous values in South-East Asia, however, the socio-cultural implications of Ramayana also contain the structural difference and even contextualisation and transformation of the symbolic meanings. In the Hindi version, for instance, as we have considered, not surprisingly, Hinduistic elements are commonly found throughout the story: horse sacrifices, circular conflict between good and evil, incarnation of the gods in the ‘Prelude’; the ultimate nature of spiritual happiness in the ending. On the other hand, in the Javanese version, the Javanese syncretistic value system, rather than the orthodox religious worldview, is revealed in the story: the morals of the heroes, not the divinity of the gods as found in the Hindi and Thai versions, and the virtue of Gotong-Royong. In the Thai version, the Buddhist value system dominates the way the story is constructed: for instance, the Truth of ‘Circulation’ by good or evil merit. As a result, it may be said that, as Lévi-Strauss says, the Ramayana in South-East Asia conditions a ‘universal’ and ‘timeless’ dimension of operational modes of the human mind in the forms and patterns of all the versions or sub-versions, such as the Hindi version, the Javanese version and the Thai version. At the same time, in the South-East Asian context the Ramayana plays 1) a role of medium between the Hinduistic text and the socio-cultural contexts and 2) a role of stimulus which strengthens the socio-cultural value systems and syncretises the intrinsic systems of value within the diverse socio-cultural contexts of South-East Asia.
### Table 5

**Structural arrangement: the plot**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hindi Version</th>
<th>[P1 : X] ~ [P2] = [E (P2)]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rama defeats Ravana and returns to Kosala with Sita</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People doubt Sita's innocence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rama banishes Sita</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rama meets Sita in a forest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sita refuses to come with Rama and ascends to heaven</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Javanese Version</th>
<th>[P] = [E (P)]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rama defeats Rawana and returns to Kosala with Sinta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ever-lasting happiness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thai Version</th>
<th>[P1 : X1] ~ [P1] ~ [P1 : X2] ~ [P2] = [E (P1)]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rama defeats Ravana and saves Sita</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sita proves her purity by walking through the ordeal of fire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rama returns to Ayudhya with Sita</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sita is accused of unfaithfulness and banished</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rama meets Sita in a forest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sita refuses to come with Rama</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shiva reconciles Rama and Sita</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*NB: P [Plot]; X [Variant]; E [Ending]; ~ [Connection of the Process]; = [Final Connection]*

### References


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