



ระดับนานาชาติ



The Relationships among Personal Characteristics, Motives for Viewing Korean TV Series, and their Addiction Behavior to Korean TV Series Among Chinese Audiences

ความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างคุณลักษณะบุคคล แรงจูงใจในการชมซีรีส์เกาหลี และพฤติกรรมการเสพติดซีรีส์
เกาหลีของผู้ชมชาวจีน

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Abstract

This survey research aims to investigate the relationship between Chinese audience's personal characteristics and their motives for viewing Korean TV series, and to examine the relationship between their motives for viewing Korean TV series and their addiction behaviors to Korean TV series. Two hundred and fourteen Chinese audiences who have viewed Korean TV series were selected using convenience sampling. The means and standard deviation were being tabulated and analyzed by One-Way ANOVA and Multiple Regression with the significance level of 0.05. The findings revealed the following results:

1. Chinese audience who have different gender, age, and time spent in watching the series had significantly different television viewing motives in respect to relaxation, companionship, habit, pass time, entertainment, social interaction, information, arousal, and escape for Korean television series. Chinese audience who differed in gender had significant different social interaction. Male audience had higher social interaction than female respondents. Those who differed in age had significant different habit, information, and escape. Finally, those who had different time spent in viewing Korean TV series had significant different relaxation, companionship, habit, pass time, entertainment, information, arousal, and escape, respectively.

2. Chinese audience's different television viewing motives in respect to relaxation, companionship, habit, pass time, entertainment, social interaction, information, arousal, and escape for Korean television series were significant predictors of their television addiction behavior in respect to tolerance, withdrawal, unintended use, cutting down, time spent, displacement of other activities, and continued use. The findings suggested that television viewing motives are accountable for 65.4% of their addiction behavior to Korean TV series. Most importantly, Chinese viewers' motives for relaxation, companionship, habit, information, arousal, and escape were positive predictors of their addiction behavior. However, motives for pass time, entertainment, and social interaction were negative predictors of their addiction behavior. The study suggested that Chinese viewers watched Korean TV series because they wanted to escape from reality, to seek information, and to stick to their habits, ranking as the top 3

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motives for viewing Korean TV series. While other motives were not significant predictors of their addiction behavior.

Keywords: *Motives television viewing, television addiction behavior, Korean TV Series*

บทคัดย่อ

วิจัยนี้มุ่งศึกษาความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างลักษณะบุคคล แรงจูงใจในการชมซีรีส์เกาหลี และศึกษาความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างแรงจูงใจในการชมทีวีซีรีส์เกาหลี และพฤติกรรมการติดซีรีส์เกาหลี โดยได้ทำการสุ่มผู้ชมชาวจีนด้วยวิธีการเลือกแบบบังเอิญจำนวน 214 คน และนำข้อมูลค่าเฉลี่ย และ ค่าเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐานมาวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลด้วยสถิติการวิเคราะห์ความแปรปรวนทางเดียว และการวิเคราะห์ความถดถอยพหุคูณ ในระดับความเชื่อมั่นที่ 0.05 ผลวิจัยค้นพบว่า (1) ผู้ชมชาวจีนที่แตกต่างด้านเพศ อายุ และเวลาชมทีวีซีรีส์ มีความแตกต่างด้านแรงจูงใจในด้านความผ่อนคลาย ความเป็นเพื่อน ติดเป็นนิสัยกิจวัตรประจำวัน ใช้เวลายามว่าง ความบันเทิง ปฏิสัมพันธ์ทางสังคม ข้อมูล กระตุ้นเร้า และหลีกเลี่ยง โดยผู้ชมชาวจีนที่แตกต่างด้านเพศ จะมีความแตกต่างด้านปฏิสัมพันธ์ทางสังคม เพศชายมีปฏิสัมพันธ์ทางสังคมมากกว่าเพศหญิง และผู้ชมชาวจีนที่แตกต่างด้านอายุจะมีความแตกต่างด้านการผ่อนคลาย ความเป็นเพื่อน ติดเป็นนิสัยกิจวัตรประจำวัน ใช้เวลายามว่าง ความบันเทิง ข้อมูล การกระตุ้นเร้า และหลีกเลี่ยงตามลำดับ และ (2) ผู้ชมชาวจีนมีแรงจูงใจด้านความผ่อนคลาย ความเป็นเพื่อน ติดเป็นนิสัยกิจวัตรประจำวัน ใช้เวลายามว่าง ความบันเทิง ปฏิสัมพันธ์ทางสังคม ข้อมูล กระตุ้นเร้า ความผ่อนคลาย เป็นปัจจัยที่สามารถพยากรณ์พฤติกรรมการติดซีรีส์เกาหลีด้านความอดทน การหลีกเลี่ยง ความไม่ตั้งใจในการรับชม การลดการชม เวลาในการชม และทำกิจกรรมอื่นแทน และการชมต่อเนื่องอย่างมีนัยสำคัญ โดยแรงจูงใจในการชมทีวีซีรีส์สามารถพยากรณ์ร้อยละ 65.5 ของพฤติกรรมการติดซีรีส์เกาหลี ทั้งนี้ แรงจูงใจด้านด้านการผ่อนคลาย ความเป็นเพื่อน ติดเป็นนิสัยกิจวัตรประจำวัน ข้อมูล กระตุ้นเร้า และหลีกเลี่ยงสามารถพยากรณ์พฤติกรรมการติดซีรีส์เกาหลีในทางบวก แต่แรงจูงใจด้านการใช้เวลาว่าง ความบันเทิง และปฏิสัมพันธ์ทางสังคมพยากรณ์พฤติกรรมการติดซีรีส์เกาหลีในทางลบ ผลการวิจัยเสนอว่า 3 เหตุผลที่ผู้ชมชาวจีนนิยมดูในซีรีส์เกาหลีมากที่สุด ประกอบด้วย ต้องการหลีกเลี่ยงจากความจริง ต้องการรับรู้ข้อมูลข่าวสาร และติดเป็นนิสัยกิจวัตรประจำวันสูงที่สุดเรียงตามลำดับ

คำสำคัญ: แรงจูงใจในการชมทีวีซีรีส์เกาหลี พฤติกรรมการเสพติดซีรีส์เกาหลี ซีรีส์เกาหลี

Introduction

It has been around 35 years since the first time Korean TV series were brought into China in 1983. The debut failed to lead a prosperity for Korean cultural products in Chinese market. The revolution occurred in 1997 when “What is Love,” a TV series that told a story about a marriage involved the interaction between a conservative family and an open family, was broadcasted on CCTV. The TV show gained considerable amount of Chinese audience and has been taken as the beginning of Korean Wave in China (Kim, 2007).

For the past two decades, Korean TV series (along with movies, variety show, music, etc.) have kept entering into China in enormous quantity as a form of cultural transmission (Xu, 2011). Despite the decreasing exposure of Korean entertainment product on Chinese TV ascribed to various factors like regulatory control, developing diversity of cultural products and so on. Chinese audiences exposed to Korean TV series have retained appreciable popularity and rigid audience group on the internet (Wang, 2017). In 2014, Korean TV series took the biggest part of imported TV series in China with the share of

29.88% (Beijing CUC-RZ Media Research Co., Ltd. & Weibo Data Center, 2015). Korean TV series has made significant impact on both material culture and spiritual culture of Chinese teenagers, while there was more influence on material culture than on spiritual culture (Yu, 2011). Korean TV series also have made significant impact on Chinese female audience's dressing, beauty care, and everyday life (Liu, 2014). Considering the significant impact the Korean TV series hold for Chinese audience and Chinese cultural industry, there is a strong necessity to examine Korean TV series in China.

The variety of Korean TV series' content was taken to explain its prevalence in Chinese TV series market. Diverse Korean TV series, including romantic love story dramas like *Endless Love*, *Winter Sonata*, *Fall in Love With Anchorwoman*, *Full House*; Family ethic dramas like *The Bathhouse Men*, *Miss Mermaid*, *Mothers and Sisters*; Costume dramas like *Empress Myeongseong*, *Dae Jang Geum* etc., ensured that audiences could find any content they want to see without exploring new cultural product resource (Li, 2008).

This phenomenon reflected the Uses and Gratifications theory in the Chinese film industry. The Uses and Gratifications theory assumes that people deliberately choose specific media to satisfy specific needs (West & Turner, 2014). The content-diversity-attribution given above assumes that Korean TV series gains audiences' affection because it meets their demand of rich and colorful stories. But interpretation on this level is far too superficial as more basic human needs, including pursuing knowledge, relaxation, social interactions/companionship, diversion, or escape have already been defined (West & Turner, 2014).

McIlwraith (1998) studied adults who identified themselves as "TV addicts" on their personality, imagination, TV watching patterns and motives. He found that comparing to the rest of the sample, the self-labelled "TV addicts" were more neurotic, introverted, and easily bored. The self-labelled "TV addicts" were more likely to use TV with motives to distract themselves from unpleasant thoughts, to regulate moods, and to fill time.

It has been widely discussed by past studies that viewing TV could bring impact to audience on their behavior both physically and psychologically.

Liebert (1986) found that (1) big amount of TV violence viewing relates to the development of aggressive attitudes and behavior; (2) TV viewing helps to cultivate stereotypic views of gender roles and race; (3) TV commercials take advantages of children's naiveté and can foster/reinforce overly materialistic attitudes.

Past studies revealed that motives for using the mobile phone and audience's characteristics such as gender are positively related to addictive behaviors (Hwang & Park, 2015; Chen, et al., 2017) and internet user characteristics and motives have impact on their internet addiction as well (Kim & Haridakis, 2009, 988-1015). Few studies examined the relationship among audience's characteristics, motives, and addiction in terms of particular content consumption as well as in terms of TV viewing. A knowledge gap lies between the investigations into motives-addiction association on new media (internet, and mobile devices) and the investigations into the same association on relevantly "older" media like TV and radio.

There is also a knowledge gap between the investigations into motives-addiction association on media and the investigations into the same association on particular media content like TV series or TV programs.

Thus, this research aims to explore the specific needs that drive audiences to consume Korean TV series, in other words, identifying the motives of viewing Korean TV series. Meanwhile, audiences' addiction behavior on viewing Korean TV series should be investigated. At last, the relationship between the motives and the addiction of audiences is expected to be sketched. Since few researches have done this, by filling this gap, it could be useful for practitioner in TV series industry to gain fidelity from consumers. And as addiction being a behavioral disorder, by defining the psychological causal factor (motives), more solutions for it could be expected.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the motives of viewing Korean TV series and TV addiction behavior among Chinese audiences.
2. To examine how variation in personal characteristics among Chinese audiences influence their motives for viewing Korean TV series.
3. To examine how variation in motives for viewing Korean TV series influence the Chinese audiences' addiction behavior to Korean TV series.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Chinese audience with different personal profile (gender, age, and time spent in watching the series) had significantly different television viewing motives (relaxation, companionship, habit, pass time, entertainment, social interaction, information, arousal, and escape) for Korean television series.

Hypothesis 2: Chinese audience's different television viewing motives (relaxation, companionship, habit, pass time, entertainment, social interaction, information, arousal, and escape) for Korean television series are significant predictors of their television addiction behavior (tolerance, withdrawal, unintended use, cutting down, time spent, displacement of other activities, and continued use).

Scope of Study

1. The population of the research was Korean TV series audience who were Chinese born and grown in Chinese cultural environment and whose ages were less than 16 years old and/or more than 16 years old. They should have experienced viewing Korean TV series in the last two years. Convenience sampling were used in online survey. The questionnaires have filtering questions to recheck the characteristics of the sample.
2. The variables that were investigated included personal characteristics of sample, including genders, ages, time spent in viewing Korean TV series per week (independent variable), television viewing motives, and their television addiction for Korean television series (independent variables or dependent variables).
3. The data collection was conducted during September – November 2018.

Theoretical Framework



Research Procedure

1. Draft the research proposal.

2. Designed the research instrument. There are 3 parts in the questionnaire. Part I had five questions asking personal data of the respondents, including gender, age, and time spend in viewing Korean TV series per week. Part II used Television Viewing Motives Scale (TVMS) developed by Robin (1983), had 27 likert questions. And, Part III, using Horvath (2004)'s Television Addiction Scale, had 35 likert questions. All parts of the questionnaire had acceptable reliability, having cronbach alpha higher than 0.70. The results suggested that the viewing motives scale for Korean TV series were acceptable with the following cronbach alpha:

Cronbach Alpha	Television Viewing Motives	Cronbach Alpha	Television Addiction Behavior
Overall cronbach alpha	0.969	Overall cronbach alpha	0.989
Relaxation	0.881	Tolerance	0.933
Companionship	0.956	Withdrawal	0.858
Habit	0.835	Unintended	0.934
Pass Time	0.876	Cutting down	0.953
Entertainment	0.865	Time spent	0.876
Social interaction	0.964	Displacement of other activities	0.970
Information	0.929	Continued use	0.990
Arousal	0.964		
Escape	0.964		

3. The questionnaire designed in English should be translated into Chinese before distribution. Back translation as a method to avoid distortion on meaning of the questionnaire was used. The questionnaire

was translated into Chinese first, then another person was required to translate the Chinese version back into English.

4. Conducted the data collection via online from September – November 2018. And, the means and standard deviation were being tabulated and analyzed by One-Way ANOVA and Multiple Regression with the significance level of 0.05. One-Way ANOVA was used analyzed hypothesis 1 and Multiple Regression was used to analyze hypothesis 2.

Research Results

1. Descriptive findings

The descriptive analysis on the demographic profile of the sample revealed that 79.4% of the samples are female ($n = 170$) and 20.6% of the samples are male ($n = 44$). Thirty-nine percent of the samples are aged 17-21 years old ($n = 81$), followed by samples aged from 27-31 years old (27.1%, $n = 58$) and 22-26 years old (15%, $n = 32$). Most of the samples have watched one Korean TV series (47.7%, $n = 102$), followed by those who watched two Korean series (20.6%, $n = 44$) and those have watched more than four Korean series (18.2%, $n = 39$) respectively. The majority spent less than 2 hours a week on watching Korean series (74.3%, $n = 159$), followed by those who watched 2-4 hours Korean series per week (15.9%, $n = 34$).

Most of the respondents perceived motives for TV viewing for Korean TV series at the medium level ($\bar{X} = 2.85$). The descriptive findings revealed that Chinese audience had the highest motive for relaxation ($\bar{X} = 3.30$), followed by entertainment ($\bar{X} = 3.27$) and pass time ($\bar{X} = 3.27$), habit ($\bar{X} = 3.08$), companionship ($\bar{X} = 3.00$), arousal ($\bar{X} = 3.00$), social interaction ($\bar{X} = 2.90$), escape ($\bar{X} = 2.85$) and respectively ($\bar{X} = 2.85$), the lowest motive for information ($\bar{X} = 2.76$), respectively. And, the descriptive analysis on the level of the samples' addiction for viewing Korean TV series revealed Chinese audience had the medium level of addiction, having highest addiction for unintended use ($\bar{X} = 2.87$), followed by withdrawal ($\bar{X} = 2.79$) and tolerance ($\bar{X} = 2.73$), time spent ($\bar{X} = 2.68$), cutting down ($\bar{X} = 2.66$), displacement for other activities ($\bar{X} = 2.57$), and the lowest addiction for continued use ($\bar{X} = 2.55$), respectively.

2. Inferential findings

As shown in Table 1, the One-Way ANOVA analysis revealed that samples characterized by gender difference had significant different viewing motives for Korean TV series in terms of social interaction ($F_{(1,213)} = 5.061^*, p < 0.05$), however, the result yielded insignificant different habit ($F_{(1,213)} = 3.316$, $p > 0.05$), information ($F_{(1,213)} = 2.893$, $p > 0.05$), entertainment ($F_{(1,213)} = 2.553$, $p > 0.05$), arousal ($F_{(1,213)} = 1.715$, $p > 0.05$), relaxation ($F_{(1,213)} = 1.627$, $p > 0.05$), escape ($F_{(1,213)} = 0.870$, $p > 0.05$), pass time ($F_{(1,213)} = 0.748$, $p > 0.05$), companionship ($F_{(1,213)} = 0.361$, $p > 0.05$), respectively. As shown in Table 2, men had significantly stronger motives than women in terms of social interaction ($\bar{X}_{\text{male}} = 3.26$, $\bar{X}_{\text{female}} = 2.76$).

Table 1: One-Way ANOVA analysis testing gender difference toward audiences' viewing motives for Korean TV series

Viewing motives	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Relaxation	1	1.976	1.627	0.203
Companionship	1	0.535	0.361	0.548
Habit	1	3.659	3.316	0.070
Pass time	1	0.921	0.748	0.388
Entertainment	1	3.217	2.553	0.112
Social interaction	1	7.07	5.061	0.025
Information	1	4.363	2.893	0.090
Arousal	1	2.424	1.715	0.192
Escape	1	1.313	0.87	0.352

Table 2: Group analysis test of gender difference in relations to viewing motives for social interaction in Korean TV series

	Your gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Social interaction	Male	44	3.2576	1.158
	Female	161	2.7598	1.165

For hypothesis 1 findings, the analysis of One-Way ANOVA in Table 3 revealed that samples characterized by age difference had significant different viewing motives in terms of escape ($F_{(6,213)} = 2.663^*$, $p < 0.05$), information ($F_{(6,213)} = 2.317^*$, $p < 0.05$), and habit ($F_{(6,213)} = 2.216^*$, $p < 0.05$), and but the results yielded insignificant difference with other motives, including entertainment ($F_{(6,213)} = 1.895$, $p > 0.05$), social interaction ($F_{(6,213)} = 1.854$, $p > 0.05$), relaxation ($F_{(6,213)} = 1.754$, $p > 0.05$), companionship ($F_{(6,213)} = 1.553$, $p > 0.05$), arousal ($F_{(6,213)} = 1.387$, $p > 0.05$), and pass time ($F_{(6,213)} = 1.218$, $p > 0.05$).

When examining the difference among age in relations to the motives for TV viewing, the LSD analysis revealed that in respect to the motive for information (1) the samples who were 17 years old to 21 years old had significant higher motive for information than those who were 27 years old to 31 year old ($I-J = 0.42^*$, $p < 0.05$); (2) the samples who were 17 years old to 21 years old had significant higher information than those who were more than 41 ($I-J = 0.84^*$, $p < 0.05$); (3) the samples who were 22 years old to 26 year old had significant higher information than those who were 27 years old to 31 year old ($I-J = 0.55^*$, $p < 0.05$); (4) the samples who were 22 years old to 26 year old had significant higher information than those who were 32 years old to 36 year old ($I-J = 0.70^*$, $p < 0.05$); (5) the samples who were 22 years old to 26 year old had significant higher information than those who were more than 41 ($I-J = 0.97^*$, $p < 0.05$). And in respect to escape, the LSD analysis revealed that (1) the samples who were 17 years old to

21 years old had significant higher escape than those who were more than 41 ($I-J = 1.26^*$, $p < 0.05$); (2) the samples who were 22 years old to 26 years old had significant higher escape than those who were more than 41 ($I-J = 1.33^*$, $p < 0.05$); (3) the samples who were 37 years old to 41 year old had significant higher escape than those who were more than 41 ($I-J = 1.50^*$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 3: One-Way ANOVA analysis testing age difference toward Chinese audiences' viewing motives for Korean TV

series	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Relaxation	6	2.092	1.754	0.11
Companionship	6	2.256	1.553	0.163
Habit	6	2.389	2.216	0.043
Pass time	6	1.487	1.218	0.298
Entertainment	6	2.347	1.895	0.083
Social interaction	6	2.577	1.854	0.09
Information	6	3.399	2.317	0.035
Arousal	6	1.946	1.387	0.221
Escape	6	3.838	2.663	0.016

As shown in Table 4, the analysis of One-Way ANOVA revealed that samples characterized by different time spent in watching Korean TV series had significant viewing motives in terms of entertainment ($F_{(4,213)} = 10.114^*$, $p < 0.05$), relaxation ($F_{(4,213)} = 8.115^*$, $p < 0.05$), habit ($F_{(4,213)} = 7.010^*$, $p < 0.05$), arousal ($F_{(4,213)} = 6.841^*$, $p < 0.05$), pass time ($F_{(4,213)} = 6.599^*$, $p < 0.05$), companionship ($F_{(4,213)} = 5.599^*$, $p < 0.05$), escape ($F_{(4,213)} = 2.828^*$, $p < 0.05$), and information ($F_{(4,213)} = 2.522^*$, $p < 0.05$), but the results yielded insignificant difference with social interaction ($F_{(4,213)} = 2.333$, $p > 0.05$).

Table 4: One-Way ANOVA analysis testing difference on time spent in watching the series toward Chinese audiences' viewing motives for Korean TV series

	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Relaxation	4	8.721	8.115	0.000
Companionship	4	7.605	5.599	0.000
Habit	4	7.024	7.01	0.000
Pass time	4	7.338	6.599	0.000
Entertainment	4	10.962	10.114	0.000
Social interaction	4	3.24	2.333	0.057
Information	4	3.731	2.522	0.042
Arousal	4	8.744	6.841	0.000
Escape	4	4.126	2.828	0.026

Table 5: One-Way ANOVA analysis testing difference on time spent in watching the series toward Chinese audiences' viewing motives for Korean TV series

	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Relaxation	4	8.721	8.115	0.000
Companionship	4	7.605	5.599	0.000
Habit	4	7.024	7.01	0.000
Pass time	4	7.338	6.599	0.000
Entertainment	4	10.962	10.114	0.000
Social	4	3.24	2.333	0.057
Information	4	3.731	2.522	0.042
Arousal	4	8.744	6.841	0.000
Escape	4	4.126	2.828	0.026

For hypothesis 2 findings, Model Summary in Table 6 indicated that the correlation coefficient (R) is equal to 0.809 ($p < 0.05$), it means that Chinese audience's television viewing motives had strong statistical significant influence on their television addiction behavior. For the coefficient of determination (R^2) is equal to 0.654 ($F_{(9, 204)} = 42.795^*$, $p^* < 0.05$), which means that if the level of Chinese audience's television viewing motives increase or decrease, it will affect their television addiction behavior increase or decrease at the rate of 65.4%. It means that null hypothesis was supported. Therefore, Chinese audience's television viewing motives are significant predictor of their television addiction behavior at the 0.05 significant level.

When examining the influence of each dimension of the motives for viewing Korean TV series and its prediction on their addiction behavior, the unstandardized coefficient (Beta) in the Coefficient table revealed that sample's motives for relaxation, companionship, habit, pass time, entertainment, social interaction, information, arousal, and escape were equal to 0.018, 0.022, 0.172, -0.086, -0.020, -0.008, 0.250, 0.049, and 0.262 respectively, while the standardized coefficient (Beta) are 0.021, 0.028, 0.194, -0.102, -0.024, -0.010, 0.331, 0.063, and 0.344, respectively.

The findings suggested that Chinese viewers' motives for escape (Beta = 0.344*, $p < 0.05$), information (Beta = 0.331*, $p < 0.05$), and habit (Beta = 0.194*, $p < 0.05$) are the most significant factor to predict their addiction behavior to Korean TV series. While other factors such as relaxation (Beta = 0.021, $p > 0.05$), companionship (Beta = 0.028, $p > 0.05$), pass time (Beta = -0.102, $p > 0.05$), entertainment (Beta = -0.024, $p > 0.05$), and social interaction (Beta = -0.010, $p > 0.05$) are not significant predictors. Chinese viewers' motives for relaxation, companionship, habit, information, arousal, and escape were positive predictors of their addiction behavior. However, motives for pass time, entertainment, and social interaction were negative predictors of their addiction behavior. The study suggested that Chinese viewer watched Korean TV series because they wanted to escape from reality, to seek information, and to stick to their habits, ranking as the top 3 motives for viewing Korean TV series. While other motives were not significant predictors of their addiction behavior.

Table 6: Multiple Regression Analysis of Predictors of Chinese Audiences' Television Addiction Behavior

Model Summary										
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.809 ^a	.654	.638	.56144	.654	42.795	9	204	.000	1.743

Model Summary						
a. Predictors: (Constant), Escape, Pass time, Relaxation, Social interaction, Habit, Companionship, Arousal, Entertainment, Information						
b. Dependent Variable: Addition behaviors						
ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	121.409	9	13.490	42.795	.000 ^b
	Residual	64.305	204	.315		
	Total	185.713	213			
a. Dependent Variable: Addition behaviors						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Scape, Pass time, Relaxation, Social interaction, Habit, Companionship, Arousal, Entertainment, Information						

Table 6: Multiple Regression Analysis of Predictors of Chinese Audiences' Television Addiction Behavior (Continued)

Coefficients								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	.827	.135		6.137	.000	.562	1.093
	Relaxation	.018	.069	.021	.261	.794	-.118	.154
	Companionship	.022	.064	.028	.336	.737	-.105	.148
	Habit	.172	.068	.194	2.519	.013	.037	.307
	Pass time	-.086	.064	-.102	-1.346	.180	-.211	.040
	Entertainment	-.020	.083	-.024	-.238	.812	-.183	.144

Social Interaction	-.008	.066	-.010	-.121	.904	-.137	.121
Information	.250	.088	.331	2.832	.005	.076	.424
Arousal	.049	.073	.063	.669	.504	-.096	.194
Escape	.262	.078	.344	3.350	.001	.108	.416
a. Dependent Variable: Addition behavior							

Conclusion and Discussion

This research revealed that Chinese audiences who had different personal characteristics had significantly different television viewing motives for Korean television series and Chinese audience's different television viewing motives for Korean television series are significant predictors of their television addiction behavior.

According to hypothesis 1 and its sub-hypotheses, Chinese audiences characterized by gender difference had significant different viewing motives for Korean TV series in terms of social interaction, The result coincided with the assumption of Individual Difference theory which posited that basic personal characteristics have impact on audiences' reaction to media content in terms of their motivations (Aggarwal & Gupta, 2001; DeFleur, 1970, as cited in Baran & Davis, 1995). Chinese audiences had significant different viewing motives in terms of habit, information, and escape due to different age. The results coincided with the assumption of Individual Difference theory which posited that basic personal characteristics have impact on audiences' reaction to media content in terms of their motivations (Aggarwal & Gupta, 2001; DeFleur, 1970, as cited in Baran & Davis, 1995). Chinese audiences had significant viewing motives in terms of entertainment, relaxation, habit, arousal, pass time, companionship, escape, and information. The results agreed with the positive relations between the amount of TV viewing and TV viewing motives as suggested by Pavic, Jadranka, & Rijavec (2013).

According to hypothesis 2, Chinese audience's television viewing motives are significant predictors of their television addiction behavior. This study revealed that Chinese viewer watched Korean TV series because they wanted to escape from reality, to seek information, and to stick to their habits. The more they want to escape from reality, to seek information, or to stick to their habits, the more possibility there may be that they addict to Korean TV series. This suggests that to avoid addiction to Korean TV series, one could try to look for alternatives to meet their needs for escaping from reality, for seeking information, and for sticking to their habits such as gym for escape, reading for seeking information and other hobbies for sticking to habits. For the makers of TV series, they could keep making their products a dream that helps people to stay away from real world and making their products a reliable source of new information to maintain their loyal audiences...The Uses and Gratifications theory assumes that people deliberately choose specific media to satisfy specific needs (West & Turner, 2014). Rubin (1983) located five principal TV viewing motives: passing time, information, entertainment, companionship,

and escape. Two viewer types were identified: (1) people used TV out of habit, to pass time, or for entertainment, and this type of viewer exhibited sizable levels of TV viewing, affinity, and realism; (2) viewer used TV to seek information or to learn, but not for escape, this kind of viewer shown higher level of TV viewing of talk-interview, news, and game show programs. The result supported the assumption of the Uses and Gratification theory that the viewing activity is related to audience's motives for TV Korean series.

Recommendations

1. Customization is needed in future film making as group with different ethnographic features should be offered particular content to meet their own needs. Given by the result, since male audience has higher social interaction than female, makers of TV series should focus in meeting the needs of audiences to increase male audiences' interest and engagement. As younger audience has significantly higher escape and information, TV series producers could rich their content by more new information or entertaining stories that help them forgetting real world to gain more attention from youth community.

2. The study revealed that Chinese viewer watched Korean TV series, because they wanted to escape from reality, to seek information, and to stick to their habits. The more they want to escape from reality, to seek information, or to stick to their habits, the more possibility there may be that they addict to Korean TV series. The findings suggested that to avoid addiction to Korean TV series, individual viewer should try to look for other alternatives to meet their needs for escaping from reality, for seeking information, and for sticking to their habits such as gym for escape, reading for seeking information and other hobbies for sticking to habits. For the makers of TV series, they should keep producing a good television series that inspire the audience's passion to create their personal dream, by customizing the contents according to different needs and lifestyle of today's audience in China and in other countries; while recognizing the role of the media serve as a reliable source of new information to maintain their loyal audiences.

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THE AMERICAN OTHER IN THAI COLD WAR NARRATIVES¹RUNGCHAI YENSABAI²

Abstract

This paper investigates the American Otherness in the contest of Cold War narratives between the Thai government and Thai leftists.³ The paper proposes that the Thai actors actively and subjectively employed the American depiction to serve their own political purposes. While the Thai state secured their legitimacy and controlling power through the American Other, Thai leftists employed an alternative story narrating the United States as the imperialist enemy who tried to benefit from Thailand and this region by causing the Indochina conflict while the military government to attack the Thai authority. The study also found that the Thai rulers also selectively adopted and promoted the American-ness to justify their power by ‘Thai-inising’ and ‘Other-ising’ the United States rather than entirely embraced the American concepts and values, or completely Americanised as suggested in Benedict Anderson’s the ‘American Era’, an influential concept Anderson coined to describe Thailand in 1958-1973 under heavy American influence. To investigate roles of the Thai agents in constructing the United States as foreign Other and revisit the American Era, extensive materials and document produced by Thai authority (official narrative) and Thai leftists (counter-narrative) were gathered and analysed by using narrative reading techniques. From these narrative texts, depiction of ‘we-ness’, or ‘Self’, and ‘them’, or ‘Other’, in relation to the narrators, Thai nation, and the Cold War situation were pointed out. The paper is composed of three main parts. The first part revisits Anderson’s the American Era by investigating the intention of leftist writers particularly contributors of the selected short stories in his collection *In the Mirror*. The second and third part examine the Thai-inisation of the American from both sides of the political struggles: Thai leftists and the government, respectively.

Benedict Anderson and the ‘American Era’

In studies on the American presence in Thailand in the Cold War period, Benedict Anderson’s coinage of the term the American Era is frequently referred to explain the purported ‘Americanisation of Thailand’ that allegedly produced drastic changes to Thai society.

The concept first appeared in the introduction to Anderson’s 1985 volume *In the Mirror: Literature and Politics in Siam in the American Era*, a book containing translations of thirteen Thai

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³ The definition of ‘leftist movement’ in the research needs to be clarified. Here, the leftist movement means the movement that was influenced by leftist ideologies in general (using leftist perspective, rhetoric style, and terms), and thus people who took part in the movement were called ‘leftists’ despite the variety of individual political ideology. He or she could be, for example, liberalist or humanist, or mixed, but what they had in common was a shared disagreement with the military government and the United States particularly on their policies towards the Cold War conflict and how they ruled the country.

contemporary short stories by young intellectuals.⁴ The American Era, according to Anderson, started in 1958, the year that Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat took premiership, and ended in 1973, when Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn and Prapas Charusathien, Sarit's associates and successors, were forced to step down.⁵ During that period of time, Thai society underwent an enormous change. Sarit, according to Anderson, led the country in a way that differed greatly from the Phibun era, thus marking a new chapter of Thai modern history. With the American support, the Thai rulers intensively took administrative control of the Thai population and enthusiastically promote 'development'. In terms of development, the American government meant 'unhindered access to Siam by foreign capital (in his [Sarit's] lifetime mainly American)'.⁶ Sarit was able to follow the American preferred development plan by dismantling state enterprises and trade unions, and lowering wages, for example. Followed by huge American assistance and aid from 1964, it led to a boom in the Thai economy, with great and very mixed social consequences, including the expansion of Thai middle class and much tighter control of the rural areas by the capital.⁷ Thailand's education and infrastructure was also greatly developed and expanded to the rural areas, encouraging the spread of capitalist relations in many parts of Thailand, which resulted in fundamental changes in Thai rural society. Additionally, it was this period of time that huge number of American servicemen stationed in Thailand brought 'Americanisation' to the country's rural areas.⁸ The rural people did not only have direct experience of American culture, but also was burdened consequences from an increase of prostitution, the births of children between Thai women and the American men (the children usually ended up effectively fatherless), and drug addiction, for illustration. In general, Anderson claims that, in the 'American Era', Thailand was culturally and socially decayed when the American consumerist culture entered through American films and products.⁹

The impact of the 'American Era' on scholars of Thailand, both inside and outside the country, is far and wide. Anderson is one of the first scholars who challenged a profound argument of Thai exceptionalism as a lone survivor of colonialism in this region and pointed out at the powerful American impact on the country after the Second World War leading to drastic political, economic and cultural

⁴ Benedict R.O.G. Anderson, introduction to *In the Mirror: Literature and Politics in Siam in the American Era*, ed. trans. Benedict R.O.G. Anderson and Ruchira Mendiones (Bangkok: Duangkamol, 1985).

⁵ Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat, an ultra-royalist military dictator, came into power after he staged a coup in 1957. Under his leadership, the American-Thai relationship was strengthened to counter the communist expansion in the region and the King's prestigious status was restored.

⁶ Anderson, introduction to *In The Mirror*, 20.

⁷ According to Anderson, the expansion of Thai middle class refers to new bourgeois strata who benefited from an influx of the American capitals in the Cold War period and were partially antagonistic to the old feudal-bureaucratic upper class. These strata, for example Sino-Thai commercial class, some middle and high bureaucrats, and people of occupations related to the American presence in Thailand, emerged and grew rapidly since the late 1950s. Benedict Anderson, "Withdrawal Symptoms" in *The Spectre of Comparison: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World* (London: Verso, 1998), 142, 147.

⁸ By 1968, there were no less than 46,000 American servicemen stationed in Thailand. See, Anderson, introduction to *In The Mirror*, 23.

⁹ Anderson, introduction to *In The Mirror*, 21-24.

changes.¹⁰ After Anderson until now, studies on how the American influence on development of the Thai state have been continuously and pervasively produced. Rachel Harrison and Janit Feungfu have taken cues from Benedict Anderson in their studies of Thai culture and literature. In ‘Mit Chaibancha’s *Insi Thorng* and the Hybridization of Red and Yellow Perils in Thai Cold War Action Cinema’, Rachel Harrison uses the concept of the American Era to provide a historical concept of this article.¹¹ By exploring mass and popular media namely Thai cinema, she analyses the Cold War paranoia and fear of communism Thailand witnessed in the American Era and points out how Thai cinema culture was Americanised.¹² To support Anderson’s disagreement of Thai exceptionalism and uniqueness, the concept that has been confirmed and strengthened by the United States in the Cold War era, Rachel systematically employs postcolonialist approach to clarify semi-colonial status of the country dating back to the period of colonisation of Southeast Asia by providing in-depth analysis of Thai literary cultures.¹³ In *(Ir)resistibly Modern: The Construction of Modern Thai Identities in Thai Literatures during the Cold War Era, 1958-1976*, Janit Feangfu investigates how the American Era impacted identities of the Thai writers which ‘vitally intertwined with the process of “becoming modern”’.¹⁴ Matthew Phillips’ *Thailand in the Cold War* is another case in point. Drawing closely on Anderson’s the American Era, Phillips investigates the problematic issue of Thai-ness in the Cold War period by focusing on the impact of the American media on shaping Thai identity.¹⁵

The contributions of the concept of the American Era to the study of Cold War Thailand are many. It sheds lights on the impact of American factor and evolved structures of Thai politics, economy and society due to international dynamics. This was a novel perspective when it was published leading to further development of a study of Thailand until now. The American Era also provides a novel approach to Thai literature study by challenging a conventional view of literature in Thailand that literature is pure and disconnected to social context. This is probably one of the primary objectives of this lengthy introduction as *In the Mirror* is a compilation of thirteen Thai contemporary short stories. To Anderson,

¹⁰ On Anderson’s argument on Thailand’s colonial status, see, Benedict Anderson, “Studies of the Thai State: the State of Thai Studies” in *Exploration and Irony in Studies of Siam over Forty Years* (Ithaca, NY: Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 2014), 15-45.

¹¹ Rachel V. Harrison, “Mit Chaibancha’s *Insi Thorng* and the Hybridization of Red and Yellow Perils in Thai Cold War Action Cinema,” in *Cultures at War: the Cold War and Cultural Expression in Southeast Asia*, ed. Tony Day and Maya H.T. Liem (New York: Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 2010), 197.

¹² Harrison, “Mit Chaibancha’s *Insi Thorng*,” 199.

¹³ Rachel V. Harrison, Introduction to *Disturbing Conventions: Decentering Thai Literary Cultures*, ed. Rachel V. Harrison (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2014), 6-12. Her postcolonialist position on investigating the West in Thai culture is explained in *The Ambiguous Allure of the West: Traces of the Colonial in Thailand*. Although her focus in the book does not include Thai-U.S. relations after the second World War and the Cold War in Thailand as she addresses this matter in “Mit Chaibancha’s *Insi Thorng*”, Harrison points out the continuity of the way that Thailand has been interacted with the West from 1850 to the present day. See Rachel V. Harrison, introduction to *The Ambiguous Allure of the West: Traces of the Colonial in Thailand*, ed. Rachel V. Harrison and Peter A. Jackson (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011), 9.

¹⁴ Janit Feangfu, “(Ir)resistibly Modern: the Construction of Modern Thai Identities in Thai Literature during the Cold War Era, 1958-1976” (PhD thesis, SOAS, 2011), <http://eprints.soas.ac.uk/12761/>, 15.

¹⁵ Matthew Phillips, *Thailand in the Cold War* (London: Routledge, 2015), 11-12.

the American Era determines tone and style of the literature. He considered all the writers and their works in the anthology are both a product of modernisation of the country and Americanisation. Their lives, mostly, share similar background: provincial origin, lower-middle-class family, education and/or work in the city.¹⁶ To Prajak Kongkirati, Anderson's the American Era illuminates cultural aspect of political movement of the Thai students and intellectuals. It demonstrates that the reaction from the Thai intellectuals and students towards social and economic changes originated from cultural realm, by a small group of the young intellectuals to a bigger group, and finally affecting the mass public. In the American Era, culture and ideas from the United States significantly influenced these young educated people leading changes of lifestyle, values, and, ironically, critical political perspective against the American itself.¹⁷

However, a number of critical observations can be raised about the American Era and Americanised Thailand. First of all, in these depictions all the Thai actors are passively Americanised. This does not fit the political trend of hyper nationalism in Thailand in the Cold War period that the three-part Thai shibboleth 'Nation, Religion, King' was remarkably promoted, especially the King in the Sarit era.¹⁸ Even though its increasing role was related to the anti-communist policy promoted by the United States, it needed the Thai state to exert import modes of agency in its relations with the United States and domestic policies during the Cold War. The cooperation from the Thai rulers is indispensable and the strengthened of Thai-ness is undeniable.¹⁹ In addition, contrary to Anderson's view of the Thai student movement as being Americanised, these young intellectuals used the American to serve their political ideology. The American Era also overlooks the Japanese influence in Thailand in the Cold War period and its time period is rigid, raising a question of American influence in Thailand before and after 1958-1973.

The American Era is essentially a sequel to Anderson's critique of the mainstream historical view of an independent, never colonised Siam, a critique which he proposed in the article 'Studies of the Thai State: The State of Thai Studies (1978)', Anderson's academic debut in Thai studies. The article proposes that the country was subject to an indirect form of colonisation and the nation-building and modernising role of the Chakri dynasty was in the same sense of Western colonial regimes.²⁰ The concept of the American Era offers an elaboration on the country's neo-colonial status by proposing that Thailand was

¹⁶ Chusak Pattarakulvanit, "ปรัศวภาควิโถมววรรณกรรมไทยสมัยใหม่ ในสายตาเบเนดิกท์ แอนเดอร์สัน" [Lateral Inversion of Thai Modern Literature in Perspective of Benedict Anderson], afterword to *ในกระจก* [In the Mirror], 324, 331-336.

¹⁷ Prajak Kongkirati, "อะไรอยู่ในกระจก?" [What is in the Mirror?], afterword to *ในกระจก* [In the Mirror], 353-356.

¹⁸ One of the most influential works on the return of Thai monarchy in the Sarit era, please see, Thak Chaloemtiarana, *Thailand: The Politics of Despotic Paternalism*, second ed. (Ithaca, NY: Southeast Asia Program Publications, Cornell University, 2007). For a recent study, see, Nattapoll Chaiching, *ขอฝันใฝ่ในฝันอันเหลือเชื่อ: ความเคลื่อนไหวของขบวนการปฏิวัติสยาม (พ.ศ. 2475-2500)* [Let Me Believe in the Unbelievable Dream] (Bangkok: Same Sky, 2013). Chapter 8 investigates how the United States promoted the Thai monarchy as a national symbol through psy-ops campaigns in Thailand.

¹⁹ On a sense of Thai-ness in rural areas was promoted by USIS, please see, USIS, *Report the 16th Mobile Information Team Field Trip Visits to 11 Villages in Nakkorn Phanom Province, January 15-30, 1964* (Thailand Information Center or TIC 175), and USIS, *Report the 14th Mobile Information Team Field Trip Visits to 21 Villages in Nongkhai Province, November 8-28, 1963* (TIC 176).

²⁰ Anderson, "Studies of the Thai State: the State of Thai Studies," 18-20.

indeed colonised by America in all aspects. This argument neglects or downplays important roles of the Thai elites in exercising agency between the United States and domestic policies during the Cold War. In other words, Anderson challenged the historical claim of the country's lone survival of European colonisation to a fully colonised state, a different end of the spectrum, but his over-zealous revisionism led him into an alternative overs implication: Thailand went from never colonised by anyone, to totally colonised by America.

The most important reason why the American Era needs to be revisited lies in how Anderson extracted the concept from his 'readings' of the short stories selected in *In the Mirror*. As Anderson focuses on identifying social and economic structure in Thai society during the Cold War that 'produced' this group of authors, he reads the texts *symptomatically*, or the short stories 'is seen to express symptomatically the conditions out of which [they come]'.²¹ In his discussion of 'The Pink Pills' and '12.00 Noon', Anderson focuses on the medial capitalist and teacher. The increasing number of teachers and doctors were a result of 'Americanised' policies of development and modernisation in Thailand during the Cold War.²² In discussing 'The Railway Hamlet' and 'The Book-Learners', Anderson described the dilemma that the two protagonists with provincial origins had with 'double provincialism' caused by Americanisation: a dilemma experienced by the villagers who had moved into Bangkok, especially those who were successful in tertiary education.²³

However, Anderson's view is different from Suchart Sawatsi, a prominent figure in the Thai contemporary literary world who selected the thirteen short stories for Anderson to translate.²⁴ Since Suchart is the person who actually chose all the short stories, his perspective on the selection is crucial to illustrate discordances between Anderson's interpretations and the views of leftist writers, which implies what Anderson and the American Era misses or overlooks from reading the texts.²⁵ To Suchart, these stories demonstrate the rebellious nature of writers who are challenging long-established traditions in the Thai literary world and refusing to acquiesce in the face of a repressive and unjust society. This mode of writing also targets the conservative intellectual circles that reject the young (and progressive) intellectuals' ideology and political position, since the latter challenged worldview of the former. Suchart

²¹ H. Porter Abbott, *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 105.

²² Chusak, "Lateral Inversion of Thai Modern Literature in Perspective of Benedict Anderson", 334.

²³ Benedict, introduction to *In The Mirror*, 42-43.

²⁴ Suchart Sawatsi is one of the most influential figures in the contemporary Thai literary world and is strongly committed to fighting against injustice in Thailand. Despite himself publishing only a limited number of fictional works, Suchart has been a key figure in promoting awareness of social predicaments among Thai intellectuals, especially the younger generation, through his newspapers and magazine articles, lectures, seminars and editorial roles. He is probably best known in Thai intellectual circles as an editor. After assisting SulakSiwaraksa for approximately two years, Suchart succeeded Sulak as the editor of *Social Science Review* [สังคมศาสตร์ปริทัศน์], the leading intellectual journal of the 1960s and 1970s. See more in David Smyth, "Suchart Sawatsi: Thailand's First Man of Letters," *Asiatic* 1, no. 1 (2007).

²⁵ Suchart actually sent the works to Anderson to choose from for translation, but Anderson thought that Suchart already made a decision on his behalf, so all of them were translated. Suchart Sawatsi, Interview by Rungchai Yensabai, 25 October 2016.

clearly states that, ‘I compiled contemporary Thai short stories into an anthology... because of three reasons. They are, first, to prove that contemporary Thai short stories have been continuously developing, not failing as has been claimed. Secondly, to publish the short stories of lesser-known “new writers”, and, lastly, to pick out distinctive short stories’.²⁶ However, Suchart was impressed when he learned about Anderson’s different opinions and analysis of the short stories. According to Suchart, from these short stories, ‘Ben [Benedict] discerned clear “connections” and “ruptures”, which formed the basis of what he called ‘the American Era’. He figured it out by himself.’²⁷

As Suchart focuses on the intention to struggle and rebel against the dominant structure in Thai society in the texts, he reads the short stories *intentionally*, or interpreting the texts according to what he perceives as authorial intention.²⁸ To Suchart, this is a general trait of these young (and leftist inclined) writers. Not only these thirteen stories and the authors, but other works produced by their peers, were written to reflect problems in Thai society from the angles that were often overlooked: the perspectives of underprivileged and oppressed people. This new generation of writers demanded answers to confusing and frustrating situation of Thai society and institutions. They often expressed their sense of social alienation and feeling of not belonging to the society: this was a common characteristic of contemporary literature in Suchart’s definition.²⁹ They resented and blamed the education system and the ruling elites for distorting the truth and social realities. The form of this contemporary literature was also strikingly different from the previous era. The stories are not strictly attached to unity of plot but focus on ‘situations’ in which the characters find themselves. A narrative hook and a surprise ending that used to be crucial elements of traditional literary forms are deemed unnecessary by these writers. The ambiguity of modern life, a non-specific time frame and unclear characters open more space for readers to ponder about the meanings of the story. The length of the short story often seems arbitrary and many more narrative techniques are employed, for example, flashbacks, backstory, flashforwards, stream of consciousness or interior monologue. The protagonist is an ordinary person leading a simple life in modern society wishing to control his fate but becomes a victim of ‘carnivorous’ society. The protagonist, thus, is no longer prominent nor able to understand himself and others thoroughly like the main characters in traditional literature but negates or rebels against himself. Some of these stories aggressively reject the monopoly exercised on literature by the elites through both content and pattern.³⁰

²⁶ Suchart Sawatsi, preface to *คลังเชิญ: รวมเรื่องสั้นร่วมสมัยของไทย* [Drought: An Anthology of Thai Contemporary Short Stories], ed. Suchart Sawatsi (Bangkok: Duangkamol, 1975), (9).

²⁷ Suchart Sawatsi, “ความรำลึกย้อนหลังเขียนให้เบนเนดิกแอนเดอร์สัน” [Reminding of the Past, A Writing for Benedict Anderson] afterword to *ในกระจก* [In the Mirror], 312.

²⁸ A concept of ‘authorial intention’, ‘the author’s intended meanings or effects’, to the study is one of the earliest approaches in reading narrative texts, its critics grew since the twentieth century. It has been argued that, for example, authorial intention is interminable; the author is fallible and thus an unreliable guide for us to read the text accordingly; it leads to a single privileged interpretation of narrative, for example. Abbott, *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative*, 229. However, this approach is applied to the study because it serves the paper’s focus on investigating the ‘intention’ of Cold War narrators to achieve their political purposes, rendering reading the authorial intention valid in this case.

²⁹ Suchart, preface to *Drought*, (23).

³⁰ Suchart Sawatsi, introduction to *ถนนสายที่นำไปสู่ความตายรวมเรื่องสั้นร่วมสมัยของไทย* [The Road to Death: An Anthology of Thai Contemporary Short Stories], ed. Suchart Sawatsi (Bangkok: Duangkamol, 1975), (41)-(47).

Now let us try re-reading to some of the short stories from *In the Mirror* by focusing on the authorial intention, or ‘reading intentionally’, and see what the American Era might miss. To illustrate the intended meanings of the author in the short stories, I look at the connection between the main conflict and closure of the stories, or what narrated as a conflict and how the choice is or should be made in the end. Given that these writers knew that the audiences would be educated people in Bangkok due to narrow circulation of leftist publications, the intended meanings can be regarded as a message to the intellectual audiences who were likely to be interested in leftist writings.

Chatcharin’s ‘The Book-Learners’ shows the conflict of reading books through two leading characters in the story: an unnamed provincial youth (the narrator in the story) and his cousin, Si. In the story, they are surrounded by people who repeatedly tell them to ‘read books and study hard’ so they can have a bright future. While the former successfully climbs up the educational system and becomes a university student in Bangkok because he ‘reads a lot of books’, Si, by contrast, stays with her cousin’s parents helping housework. She reads a lot of books too, but they are serialised and movie magazines. While the narrator becomes distant to Si and his family due to his ‘study in Bangkok’, Si, his forgotten cousin, commits suicide possibly because of love problem. Anderson points out that ‘The Book-Learners’ (and also ‘The Railway Hamlet’) illustrates how students and intellectuals become separated from their provincial origin and how the provincial like Si ‘falls prey to the no less impersonal force of metropolitan capitalism’s mass culture’.³¹

If we look at the main conflict of ‘The Book-Learners’ and how the story ends, we can see the message Chatcharin would like to pass to the readers. When the main conflict develops, one between the unnamed provincial youth and ‘reading’, Chatcharin provokes the readers to ask themselves the real purpose of ‘reading a lot of books’, in other words, going on to tertiary education. The story ends with the narrator’s decision not to go back to Bangkok, but to visit Si’s parents instead. Similarly, ‘The Railway Hamlet’ also shows the conflict between the unnamed narrator’s Bangkok-ness and his longing for his origin in Railway Community. Anderson explains that it is the changes in the Cold War period that transforms relationship between the unnamed narrator who receives education in Bangkok and his community especially Peng, his childhood friend who is also ‘a victim of the faceless state railway corporation’.³² However, we can see that Chatcharin’s message to readers when the unnamed narrator announces his choice to identify himself after Peng is killed by the train in the end:

The little station-workers like us were never given the opportunities. All we could do was wait and scramble for any chance that might come by...³³

³¹ Anderson, introduction to *In the Mirror*, 63-66.

³² Anderson, introduction to *In the Mirror*, 65-66.

³³ Chatcharin Chaiwat, “The Railway Hamlet,” in *In the Mirror*, 187. English translation here is based on Anderson’s *In The Mirror* with some corrections according to the original version in Thai.

And when he shouts back when told to stop brooding over Peng's death:

You know, he's not really dead at all. Do you see his two little kids? Do you see his wife? Do you see their future? That's just it, no one sees. Where will those two kids end up? It's not over yet. I know for sure it's not over yet. It'll happen again, over and over, because no one gives a damn about these little people.³⁴

But now the readers see that Chatcharin wants them to 'give a damn about these little people'. The connection between these two short stories, by reading intentionally, is a plea to readers, potentially his student and intellectual fellows, to confront the dilemmas and make the right choice for the voiceless and unseen people. Similar view and message appear in Witayakorn's 'As If It Had Never Happened', where the conflict between Thongmuan and student volunteers' intention to develop her village by building a 'Community Hall' is highlighted. Although the story ended with Thongmuan's 'regret' overquestioning the purpose of building a Community Hall because no one in the village can make use of it, readers know that the girl (Witayakorn) sends them a message that they need to ask themselves if they know what villagers need or what their problems are. These examples of 're-reading' the short stories show that Anderson indeed overlooked rebellious intention of the authors and their political perspectives that challenged the Thai authority. Also, as Anderson views that these stories are a reflection of Americanisation in Thailand supporting his argument on Thailand's status of a lone survivor of imperialism, his perception towards these stories is clouded and misleading.

The American Other in leftist Counter-narratives

The previous section gives some illustrations of how the American Era downplays or overlooks the intention to resist/counter dominant power in the short stories. However, the intention to rebel against authoritative power was not limited to these leftist writers but also prevalent in the leftist movement in general. The Cold War stories they narrated clearly expressed this intention, to counter Thai authority and the American imperialism. Thai leftists narrated the American as an imperialist enemy of the nation, the foreign Other, as the United States not only jeopardised Thai nation's sovereignty, but they threatened the essence of Thai-ness such as Thai traditional culture and value. This section explains that the leftists challenged the government authority by promoting an opposite story of the American and the Cold War that invalidated the government's political legitimacy. Also, the counter-narrative of the Cold War allowed Thai leftists to assert a new powerful Self as a true saviour of the Thai nation allowing them to impose the 'un-Thai' identity on their opponent.

In the counter-narrative, the American presence in Thailand and other countries in Southeast Asia was Washington's imperialist scheme to take political and economic advantage under the guise of being a

³⁴ Chatcharin, "The Railway Hamlet," 189.

righteous protector against communism. The American imperialist enemy was a staple topic in leftist publications from early days of leftist movement in the late 1940s to dissolution of leftist movement in the 1980s. The early leftist critics on United States and anti-American activities for imperialist ambition in Thailand became virulent when conflict on the Korean peninsula escalated and the Thai government sent Thai troops in the Korean War in 1950 upon the American request. This later stimulated an anti-war movement against the United States and the Thai government's pro-American policy, which ended after a mass arrest in 1952 known as the Peace Rebellion.³⁵ After the incident, the Thai government revived the anti-communist law and tightened censorship.

Intellectuals and students resumed their political activities including criticisms against the American military role in Thailand during the Thanom government (1963-1973) when the government's control and censorship were loosened due to internal conflicts among rival Thai leaders.³⁶ In late 1966, the *Social Science Review* started explicitly to attack the American policy and engagement in the Vietnam War which escalated in the 1960s. This is the first voice illustrating dissatisfaction towards the United States after long period of political silence. When Suchart Sawatsi succeeded Sulak Sivaraksa, a Thai prominent intellectual, as editor, *Social Science Review* became a clearing house for essays and translations criticising the United States and the Vietnam War. The writings typically depicted the Americans as invaders whom the Thai government served as a subordinate; on this basis, Thailand was no longer entitled to claim that it had averted colonisation.³⁷ This perspective led Thai students to express their discontent with the United States, which became more and more vocal from the late 1960s until 1976. Numerous 'student books' (books by students) and 'one-baht books' appeared that criticised the American military presence in Thailand and the Vietnam War.³⁸ One of the most well-known one-baht book criticising the American role in Thailand was *The White Peril* published in 1971 by a Thammasat

³⁵ The arrest was called a rebellion because anti-war intellectuals and activists were arrested and interrogated under false accusations of plotting a coup. Hundreds of people including prominent leftist intellectuals were arrested in the incident such as Kulap Saipradit, Pleuang Wannasri, and Supha Sirimanond. After the incident, the Thai government revived the anti-communist law and tightened censorship. Many leftist intellectuals and members of the Communist Party of Thailand took part the Peace Rebellion and the Cominform, the Soviet Communist Information Bureau, influenced an origin of the peace movement. However, Sopha Chanamool argues the Peace Rebellion also attracted anti-war intellectuals outside the leftist camp. Sopha Chanamool, "ชาติไทย" ในทัศนะปัญญาชนหัวก้าวหน้า ["*Thai Nation*" in the Perspective of Thai Progressive Intellectuals] (Bangkok: Matichon, 2007), 112-118.

³⁶ Suchart Sawatsi, "จาก อักษรสาส์น ถึง สังคมศาสตร์ปริทัศน์" [From Aksornsan to Social Science Review] in *จาก อักษรสาส์น ถึง สังคม ศาสตร์ ปริทัศน์* [From Aksornsan to Social Science Review], ed. Narong Petchprasert (Bangkok: Political Economy Center, Chulalongkorn University, 2006), 39-40.

³⁷ Puangthong Rungswasdisab Pawakapan, *สงครามเวียดนาม: สงครามกับความจริงของ "รัฐไทย"* [Vietnam War: War with Reality of the "Thai State"] (Bangkok: Kobfai publisher, 2006), 92.

³⁸ For instance, Bunlue Muengsing, "แต่มิตรที่ซอบขี่คอมิตร" [to a friend who rides on a friend's shoulders], in *วารสารเศรษฐธรรม* [Setta Dharma Journal] (Bangkok: Simeung, 1971), 39-40. N.A., "กลับรูของเจ้าเถอะ มะริกันเอ๋ย" [Back to your hole, the American], in *ฉลาด* [Palad] (Literature Club, Chiangmai University, 1973), and Literature Club of Chiangmai University, *Social Science*'15 (Bangkok: Aksornsampan, 1973). See, Prajak Kongkirati, *และแล้วการเคลื่อนไหวก็ปรากฏ: การเมืองวัฒนธรรมของนักศึกษาและปัญญาชนก่อนการเคลื่อนไหว 14 ตุลา* [And Then The Movement Emerged: Cultural Politics of Thai Students and Intellectuals Movements before the October 14 Uprising] (Bangkok: Thammasat University Press, 2005), 308-319.

University student group under the name ‘Council in Front of the Dome Group’.³⁹ The publication was solely dedicated to criticism and opposition of the Thai government and the American military engagement in the Vietnam War. Examples of writings published in *The White Peril* were translations of Bertrand Russell’s and Noam Chomsky’s works, critiques of imperialism by Thai progressive intellectuals in the Phibun era, and writings by King Rama VI.⁴⁰ The students also promoted the anti-American sentiment in Thai public by holding exhibitions on the Vietnam War, organising protests, and public speaking.⁴¹ However, anti-American sentiments generally appeared together with criticisms of the military government, which students believed bore responsibility as an imperialist accomplice that was jeopardising Thailand’s national security and independence.

These stories of the American in the Cold War promoted by Thai leftists countered the military government’s central legitimacy to remain in power: to protect Thai people and nation from communist threats. They countered the official narratives that the government did not defend Thai nation as they claimed to legitimise themselves, they also betrayed the country by serving the foreign enemy, the American imperialism, in exchange for their own benefits, causing sufferings to Thai people. The stories of the American Other also allowed Thai leftists to construct their identities by claiming themselves as a part of international movement against the American imperialist ambitions, either actual or imagined, connecting themselves to the international.⁴² They also announced themselves as ‘nationalist’ fighters. In their works, American imperialism was narrated as a foreign Other who not only jeopardised Thai sovereignty but also corrupted Thai culture and tradition.⁴³ In this regard, the American as the Other to Thai Self was an enemy of Thai tradition and national sovereignty. While leftists identified themselves opposing to the American enemy, they also ‘Other-ised’ the Thai military government who allied themselves with the American imperialism as an ‘un-Thai’ traitor. In sum, the negative portrayal of the United States promoted by anti-government intellectuals was a part of their power struggle against the ruling military regime. Their political objectives and their subjective position of the narrator cannot be reduced to the simplistic claim that they have been ‘Americanised’.

³⁹ *The White Peril* or ภัยขาว by Council in front of the Dome Group (กลุ่มสภาน้ำโดม in Thai) refers to the United States due to ‘white’ skin colour.

⁴⁰ Prajak Kongkirati, *การเมืองวัฒนธรรมไทย ว่าด้วยอำนาจ/วาทกรรม/อำนาจ* [Thai Cultural Politics: On Memory/Discourse/Power] (Nontaburi: Same Sky, 2015), 124.

⁴¹ Examples of student activities are exhibition on Indochine War at Thammasat and Chiangmai University in 1973, public speaking and debates on “the American Imperialism: an Invader” in 1974, and protest on the Mayaguez incident in 1975. See, Puangthong, *Vietnam War*, 97-101.

⁴² Prajak notes that Thai leftist intellectuals and activists considered themselves connected to anti-American nationalist movements in other countries. He points out that translating writings and speeches by anti-American leaders in neighbouring countries and Asia such as works and speeches by Sukarno, the first President of Indonesia and nationalist leader, and Julius Nyerere, the first President of Tanzania and a political activist. Prajak, *And then the Movement Emerged*, 295.

⁴³ For example, Jaran Ditapichai, “วัฒนธรรมฝรั่งในไทย” [Western Culture in Thailand] in *The White Peril*, 84-87 and S Sujit Wongthes, *เมดอิน ยู.เอส.เอ.* [Made in U.S.A.] (Bangkok: Open Books, 2004).

The American in Official Narrative: Thai-inising American-ness?

Not only anti-government intellectuals but also the Thai state invoked the United States to achieve political objectives. State agencies often repeated that Thailand needed to align with the democratic world against the communist threat.⁴⁴ This official narrative of the Cold War told a story of Thailand being surrounded by communist movements in the neighbouring countries who were eager to occupy Thailand. The United States gave Thai people support to fight against the evil communist threat, based on the US-Thai friendship and peace-loving American foreign policies. According to this narrative, Thailand should welcome American assistance to develop and defend the country. On some occasions the Thai state even invoked American-ness in order to strengthen conservative understandings of Thai identity or Thai values. For illustration, two terms or concepts promoted by the Thai government will be discussed: the ‘Thai-style’ democracy and ‘*kanpatthana*’ (development).⁴⁵

The concept of ‘Thai-style democracy’ is a good example of a representation of American-ness, democracy, was Thai-inised by Thai rulers.⁴⁶ The political concept first emerged in the Sarit era, describing that the Western political ideas and practices (democracy) are needed to be adjusted to suit Thai society and culture.⁴⁷ Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat introduced the term ‘Thai-style democracy’ to justify the coup

⁴⁴ One of the clearest sources narrating the official stories of the Cold War is an official speech and announcement from the Thai government officer. For example, Sarit’s speeches in various occasions, especially when it concerns the Thai-U.S. relations, national security and the anti-communist policy. See, for illustration, Sarit Thanarat, “คำแถลงของ ฯพณฯ นายกรัฐมนตรี ต่อสภาร่างรัฐธรรมนูญ เรื่อง แถลงการณ์ร่วมของรัฐมนตรีต่างประเทศสหรัฐอเมริกา และรัฐมนตรีต่างประเทศไทย เกี่ยวกับการรักษาความมั่นคงและความปลอดภัยของประเทศไทย 15 มีนาคม 2505” [Speech by the Prime Minister to Constitutional Council on Joint Ministerial Statement by the United States Secretary of State and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Thailand, on Maintaining Security and Safety of Thailand, 15 March 1962], in *ประมวลสุนทรพจน์ของจอมพลสฤษดิ์ ธนะรัชต์ พ.ศ. 2505-2506* [A Collection of Speeches by Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat, 1962-1963] (Bangkok: Prime Minister’s Office, 1964), 596-7.

⁴⁵ Here I use *kanpatthana* [การพัฒนา] instead of ‘development’ to highlight its political context. There are other terms in Thai that have a similar sense to ‘development’ such as *watthana* [วัฒนา] and *burana* [บูรณะ]. The former often used by Field Marshal Phibunsongkhram to refer to “creating the outward appearances of modernization and (Western) civilization in Thai society”. *Burana* was used before *watthana* by Siamese rulers before the 1932 Revolution, particularly as in “ราชบูรณะ” [ratsadon burana or restored by Thai people]. The term is opposite to “ราชบูรณะ” or “restored by the King. Harvey Demaine, “Kanpatthana: Thai Views of Development,” *Context Meaning and Power in Southeast Asia*, ed. Benedict Anderson (Ithaca, NY: Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University Press, 1986), 95.

⁴⁶ As the United States always presented themselves at a leader of the Free World as against communism, democracy is one their defining traits. However, it does not mean that the United States had to promote democracy to their allies.

⁴⁷ All studies on the ‘Thai-style Democracy’ focus on internal struggles among Thai rulers in the Sarit era or Thai contemporary politics. None particularly engaged the Cold War in an explanation on the origin of the Thai-style democracy. please see, for example, Chaloeunkiat Phibunuan, *ประชาธิปไตยแบบไทย: ความคิดทางการเมืองของทหารไทย 2519-2529* [The Thai-style Democracy: Political Ideology of the Thai Military (1976-1986)] (Bangkok: Thai Khadi Research Institute, Thammasat University, 1990); Kriangsak Chertpatanavanich, *ความคิดประชาธิปไตยแบบไทย จากยุคชอชราชครูถึงยุคจอมพลสฤษดิ์ ธนะรัชต์* [Thai-Style Democracy: From Phin Choonhavan to Sarit Thanarat] (Bangkok: The Foundation for The Promotion of Social Science and Humanities Textbooks Project, 2007); Kevin Hewison and Kengkij Kitirianglarp, “Thai-Style Democracy: The Royalist Struggle for Thailand’s Politics” in *Saying the Unsayable: Monarchy and Democracy in Thailand*, ed. Søren Ivarsson and Lotte Isager (Copenhagen: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2010), 179-202; and, Michael K. Connors, “When the Walls Come Crumbling Down: The Monarchy and Thai-style Democracy,” *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 41, no. 4 (2011): 657-673.

(‘revolution’ in Sarit’s own word) and criticised the previous governments for installing ‘democratic ideas borrowed from the West’ which was unsuitable to ‘the special characteristics and realities of the Thai’. As a result, it caused ‘severe divisions, intrigues... and the desire to destroy each other’.⁴⁸

From how the military coup explained the political ideology, we can see an explicit construction of the dichotomy between Thai-ness and the West (American). Similar to Thai leftists that identified themselves with the Thai-ness in the dichotomy of Thai-ness and American Other they created to justify their struggle, Sarit also asserted himself a representation of the Thai style he designated in relation to the West/American. At the same time, Sarit also ‘Other-ised’ his opponents, particularly the People’s Party as the ‘un-Thai’. A similar concept is Kukrit’s ‘the Thai-style government’, which is not to be confused with Sarit’s ‘the Thai-style democracy’.⁴⁹ To Kukrit, any foreign political ideology does not suit Thai society as it causes only destruction of harmony in the country and decay of Thai culture and tradition.⁵⁰

Similar to the Thai-style democracy, the concept of *kanphattana* (development) was also introduced in the Sarit era with an implication of the identity politics and the Cold War.⁵¹ *Kanphattana* was often represented by the United States and American technological, scientific, industrial, educational and economic advance, the quality admired by Thai people, especially those in Bangkok and educated.⁵² The American progress was widely promoted and publicised by both the Thai state and the United

⁴⁸ Sarit Thanarat, “คำปราศรัยในวันชาติ” [National Day Speech], June 24, 1959, quoted in Thak, *Thailand: The Despotism Paternalism*, 101.

⁴⁹ Saichol and Connors argue that Kukrit launched the ‘Thai-style government’ to ‘correct’ the Thai-style democracy, which implied some tension between Kukrit and the military. For Kukrit, Thailand was not then ready for democracy and the Thai-style democracy was deemed nonsensical to him. For Kukrit the term ‘democracy’ was also used by the leftists. To solve the problem, Kukrit suggested that the term should be replaced by the ‘Thai-style government’, where a hierarchical relationship between leaders and subject was secured by the state. Connors, “When the Walls Come Crumbling Down,” 667-669; Saichol Sattayanurak, *ศึกยุทธ์กับประวัติศาสตร์ “ความเป็นไทย” เล่ม 2 ยุคจอมพลสฤษดิ์ถึงทศวรรษ 2530* [Kukrit and Construction of “Thai-ness” volume 2, from Field Marshal Sarit Era to the 2530s B.E.] (Bangkok: Art and Culture, 2007), 31-32.

⁵⁰ This is the main theme of his most famous novel, *Four Reign*. Kukrit presented the view through Mae Ploy, the protagonist, who lost her two sons because of their different ‘foreign’ political ideologies.

⁵¹ In this section, I use *kanpatthana* [การพัฒนา] instead of ‘development’ to highlight its political context. There are other terms in Thai that have a similar sense to ‘development’ such as *watthana* [วัฒนา] and *burana* [บูรณะ]. The former often used by Field Marshal Phibunsongkhram to refer to “creating the outward appearances of modernization and (Western) civilization in Thai society”. *Burana* was used before *watthana* by Siamese rulers before the 1932 Revolution, particularly as in “ราชบูรณะ” [ratsadon burana or restored by Thai people]. The term is opposite to “ราชบูรณะ” or “restored by the King. Demaine, “Kanpatthana: Thai Views of Development,” 95.

⁵² In 1960, USIS conducted a survey to study patterns of communication of university students in Bangkok and an image of the United States in their perception. After submitting a questionnaire to 1,104 students from Thammasat University, Chulalongkorn University, Kasetsart University, and College of Education, the survey found that the students perceived that the United States is the most advanced country in the fields of public health, basic science, education, agriculture, social welfare, industrial technology, and atomic energy. However, the students perceived England and Italy surpassed the United States in the fields of literature and architecture, respectively. USIS, *Basic Communication Habits of Thai Students: A Bangkok Survey* (Bangkok: USIS, 1960), 18-21. (TIC 137)

States. The term *kanphattana* became increasingly popular after the Thai government launched the first national development plan, the National Economic Development Plan (1961-1966), which is based on the review from the World Bank mission.⁵³ The National Economic Development Board (NEDB) broadly incorporated the recommendations from the World Bank into the ‘First Plan’. Under the First Plan, with generous support from the United States, many development programmes and projects were carried out such as massive infrastructure construction, road extension, irrigation system, and educational expansion.⁵⁴

The consequences from the Thai-American collaboration and large-scale development plans in Thai society illustrated an overwhelming American influence in Thai society termed by Benedict Anderson the American Era.⁵⁵ However, I find myself in disagreement by arguing that the Thai agents’ usage of the term *kanpatthana* illustrated Thai-inisation of the concept of development, another defining trait of the United States.

The term *kanpatthana* was linked to royal nationalist history of Thailand, thus implying Thai-inisation of the concept. For illustration, the concept of community development was ‘Thai-nised’ or claimed as relating to the central Thai history because the (Central) Thai ruling elites in the past has been practicing the community development.⁵⁶ Field Marshal Prapas Charusathien, Minister of Interior, once claimed that community development was carried out by King Ramkhamhaeng, during the Sukhothai Kingdom, in the thirteenth century. Similar view can be seen in local administrative officers and staffs, with a focus on Siamese monarchs Thailand under the absolute monarchy in the Rattanakosin period. Many articles in *Tesapiban*, a monthly periodical by Department of Provincial Administration, claimed that community development long existed in Thai history as they were practiced by benevolent ruling elites.⁵⁷

Kanpatthana serves as a tool for Thai rulers/ruling class to create a tripartite discursive relationship between the American, rural villagers, and themselves where they are in a dominant position. By promoting *kanpatthana*, the rural was depicted inferior to Bangkok and compelled to follow Bangkok’s footsteps to become *patthana* (developed). The relationship between the American and Thai ruling elites is more perplexing. Theoretically, the American should rank the highest in the relationship

⁵³ The First Plan was followed by five-year plans (1967-71, 1972-76, 1977-81, 1981-86). From the Second Plan onwards, the plan was changed from the National Economic Development Plan to National Economic and Social Development Plan.

⁵⁴ During the First Plan, Thailand received support from the World Bank (under the American control) approximately 2,773,000 US dollars, while the Thai spent 1,900,000 on the plan. IBRD, *A Public Development Program for Thailand*, 5, cited in Thak, *Thailand: The Politics of Despotism*, 169.

⁵⁵ Anderson, introduction to *In the Mirror*, 20-21.

⁵⁶ Community development in Thai is *Kanpatthana chumchon* [การพัฒนาชุมชน].

⁵⁷ Prapas Charusathien, “การปกครองและการพัฒนาท้องถิ่น” [Community Administration and Development], *Tesapiban* 54 (10), October 1959: 1044-1046. Similar examples, please see, Chalor Wanaphut, “เจ้าคุณสุนทรเทพกิจจารักษ์” [Chao Khun Sunthontheperkijjarak], *Tesapiban* 59 (4), April 1964: 401, and, Boontan Chaluaysi, “การพัฒนาการท้องถิ่นในประเทศไทย” [Community Development in Thailand] *Tesapiban* 53 (9), September 1958: 922. Technical Service Division, Department of Provincial Administration, “ผู้ช่วยผู้ใหญ่บ้านฝ่ายรักษาความสงบ” [Assistant Village Headman in Peacekeeping], *Tesapiban* 62 (3), March 1967: 235.

since *kanpatthana* was a miniature of American/Western model of development (we see from the Thai authority applying the World Bank review to the National Economic Development Plan). The advanced and developed America as Thailand's tomorrow was often referred to or implied by the Thai authority and the United States themselves. However, the tricky part is when the Thai ruling elites found that *kanpatthana* might disturb existing hierarchical structure, they introduced cultural relativism, Thai-ness, into the equation, creating an identity dichotomy between American/Western materialistic development and spiritual virtue of Thai tradition and culture, which the latter deemed superior to the former or unique.⁵⁸ This binary opposition embedded in stories of Thai culture being corrupted by the foreign development and American/Western admiration or acknowledgement of Thai tradition. This illustrated that the Thai ruling elites selectively adopted the American development while preserving virtue of Thai-ness at the core.

Conclusion

By examining depiction of the United States and 'American-ness' constructed by the Thai state and by anti-government intellectuals in the Cold war narratives, the study found that the construction of the American Other in the Cold War narratives implies Thai-inising the American-ness, or subordinating it under the Thai-ness. Illustrative examples of Thai ruling elites' Thai-inising American-ness include the concepts of 'Thai-style democracy' and *kanpatthana*. In terms of Thai leftists, the American Otherness was constructed and employed to challenge Thai authority and the American influence in Thailand. Thai leftist intellectuals and students promoted stories of the United States as the country's enemy to undermine the Thai government's legitimacy and reconstruct their self identity, or narrate 'Self story', as the country's saviour who truly represented the nation. For the military rulers who collaborated the United States and served the American benefits, they were narrated as the country's traitor, or Other-ised as the 'un-Thai'.

Stories of the United States and construction of the American Other in both official narratives and counter-narratives point out that Benedict Anderson's the 'American Era' is indeed misleading. This paper re-examines the origin of the concept of the American Era in Anderson's introduction to *In The Mirror*, a set of leftist writings Anderson used to conclude that Thailand was Americanised in all aspects, by focusing on the intention of the leftist authors which was rebellious and resisting against dominant power. The study argues that the short stories in *In The Mirror* illustrated an intention of the leftist writers to rebel against authoritative power rather than a mere reflection of the Americanised society. This leads to an important issue regarding approach to studying the American presence in Thai politics in the Cold War period particularly in terms of identity construction: a potential underestimation of the active roles of

⁵⁸ Kukrit Pramoj is a good illustration. Kukrit enthusiastically promoted superiority and uniqueness of Thai-ness in contrast to American/Western development. For example, Kukrit Pramoj, "สิ่งที่สูญหายไปกับการพัฒนา" [What (we) Lost for Development] in *สยามรัฐ ฉบับพิเศษ ครบรอบ 83 ปี คึกฤทธิ์ ปราโมช คึกฤทธิ์กับความเป็นไทย* [Siam Rath Special Edition the 83rd anniversary of Kukrit Pramoj, Kukrit and Thai-ness] (Bangkok: Siam Rath, 1994), 136-7. And, Kukrit Pramoj, *เมืองไทยในสังคมโลก* [Thailand in International Society] (Bangkok: Prapansan, 1967), 2-27. The same enthusiasm often appears among royalist intellectuals such as Seni Pramoj and Sulak Sivaraksa. S. Sivaraksa, "Siam Versus the West" in *Siam in Crisis: Collected Articles by S. Sivaraksa* (Bangkok: Komol Keemthong Foundation, 1980), 196-202. The article was first published in *Solidarity* magazine in 1970.

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