

Hollywood and Thai Science Fiction Films: *Differences, Similarities, and Narrative Perspectives*

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Abstract

Hollywood science fiction films are commercially and critically successful in many countries, including Thailand. Yet Thai science fiction films do not achieve the same result in terms of box office sales, even for Thai spectators. This research explores the similarities and differences of Hollywood and Thai science fiction films in both narrative and formal terms. The researcher examines *Jurassic Park*, *The Matrix*, *Kawao tee Bangpleng*, and *Cloning: Khon Copy Khon* to compare themes, plots, characters, setting, costumes, cinematography, and editing in order to consider techniques and approaches to develop Thai science fiction films for international audiences.

Introduction

Few Thai science fiction films have been produced, though the genre plays a significant role both commercially and artistically in the domestic market. It seems that science fiction films from Hollywood dominate the market, while other genres (for example, action, comedy and horror Thai films) would compete with Hollywood films in the country. Furthermore, *Ong Bak* (dir.: Prachya Pinkaew, 2003) and *Shutter* (dir.: Banjong Pisanthanakun and Parkpoom Wongpoom, 2004) demonstrated that Thai films could reach an international audience and that the film industry could grow from that. Yet one of the most successful genres in the worldwide box office, science fiction, needs to be studied and produced more. Probably, some Thai directors do not make it because it is believed that the genre needs high-budget visual effects, as Hayward (1996: 165) notes when he observes that science fiction films inevitably need special effects, otherwise the audience may be disappointed; but it is not always be so.

Tudor (1974) categorizes a genre by considering two entities, formal elements and narrative (Etherington-Wright and Doughty 2011: 23).

The formal elements include the genre iconography such as costumes, setting, staging and stars, and tone such as cinematography, lighting, editing, and sound and music. Narrative relates to how a story is portrayed and constructed; it also covers theme, character, and plot structure. Stories that have those elements in common are considered as the same genre. Then if the story or setting is science-related and good enough, the film could be successful without a high budget.

In order to understand the composition of successful Hollywood science fiction films and what would be Thai elements that can be developed for an international audience to recognize and look at, the research aims to answer the question: What are the similarities and differences in the narrative elements in Western and Thai science fiction films? Nevertheless, we should first understand what science fiction is.

Definition of Science Fiction

Some critics consider the genre as a sub-genre of horror films, whereas others say that it is a sub-genre of fantasy films (Hayward 1996: 302). Seed supports the statement, “Science fiction is repeatedly linked with two proximate modes – the Gothic and fantasy” (2011: 118). But Bordwell and Thompson (2003: 109) explain that the genre “features a technology beyond the reach of contemporary science.” Thus the story, subject matter, and/or setting fantasize the possibility of the knowledge of science in either positive or negative ways that is similar to the definition given by Johnston (2011: 1):

A potential future development within science or the natural world, caused by human or unknown force, which has to be understood, tamed or destroyed. Technology is key to many of these definitions, a suggestion that science fiction is as reliant on the ‘science’ element as the ‘fiction’.

The science element includes “the future, artificial creation, technological invention, extraterrestrial contact, time travel, physical or mental mutation, scientific experimentation, or fantastic natural disaster” (Johnston 2011: 1). For the subject matter, Hayward (1996: 305) says that there are three types within the genre, which are space-flight, alien invaders, and futuristic societies, while Schmidt (2005: 26) simply divide it into two sub-genres; supernatural and realistic. The supernatural is like fantasy science fiction that includes fantastic creatures, aliens, monsters, miracles, unusual powers and

abilities such as superheroes, vampires, and mythological gods; the realistic deals with normal situations that has science and technology involved. Pramaggiore and Wallis (2011: 397-8) suggest the four subgenres that are differentiated by narrative and visual conventions are: exploration film, invaders encroaching on supposedly safe territory, explicitly criticized unbridled scientific inquiry, and dystopia. Here science fiction can be divided into subgenres:

1. **Supernatural:** Hybrid with fantasy. Science is slightly involved and no need based on the contemporary science information.
2. **Space exploration:** Journey to space by space crafts to seek new planets and may meet aliens.
3. **Alien invaders:** Encounter with aliens. However, the aliens may conquer the planet Earth or just visit humans benevolently.
4. **Criticizing unbridled scientific inquiry:** The subject matter is to explicitly criticize the technological advancement.
5. **Futuristic dystopian society:** Center with the futuristic society or system that is led negatively by humans who take advanced technology for granted. The setting is the future world.

King and Krzywinska suggest that the lack of consistent iconography in science fiction films “means that definitional efforts need to rely more on syntactic propositions than on the relatively concrete semantic dimension” (qtd. in Langford (2005: 188). Setting, staging, costumes, and actors are variously different in science fiction films. The story can be located on earth and in any period of time, not necessarily in the future, such as *Jurassic Park* that is set in the present, and *Star Wars* where the story happens “a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away...”. Hence, themes, subject matter, and narrative structure are more valid to categorize science fiction. And whatever the narrative structure is, the basic resolution of a science fiction film is to balance between science-technology and art, or intellectual and emotional responses; for example, *Star Wars*’ Luke Skywalker abandons autopilot, and believes in his ‘force’ to destroy evil. Although science fiction emphasizes technological advancement, its ideology tends to value humanity rather than advanced technology.

From this understanding, The researcher selected two Hollywood and two Thai science fiction films that are popular in their own market with similar sub-genres and themes. These films reflect the effect of technological

advancement and human qualities, and were released in a similar period of time: *Jurassic Park* (dir.: Steven Spielberg, 1993), *The Matrix* (dir.: Andy Wachowski and Larry Wachowski, 1999), *Kawao tee Bangpleng* (dir.: Niratisai Kanjaruek, 1994), and *Cloning: Khon Copy Khon* (dir.: Piti Jaturapat, 1999) to compare and contrast according to Tudor's genre classification elements: narrative and formal elements. In terms of the narrative, plot structure, characters, and themes in the overall story are examined, whereas the formal elements: setting and costume, cinematography, and editing are examined only for the opening sequence of each film.

Narrative Elements: the Similarities and Differences

Characters

Vladimir Propp defines the characters as 'spheres of action'. They are part of a story that motivates plots. He studied Russian folktales and categorizes characters into seven general roles as the following (Etherington-Wright and Doughty 2011: 51-4):

- i. The Hero: the leading character.
- ii. The Villain: the leading character's opponent who blocks the hero's achievement.
- iii. The Donor: the character who provides the hero a magic tool.
- iv. The Dispatcher: the character who send the Hero to the mission.
- v. The False Hero: the character who confuses the Hero.
- vi. The Helper: the character who assists the Hero in the mission.
- vii. The Princess and Her Father: the reward to the Hero and the one who provides it to him.

Here the researcher applies Propp's character roles to generate and analyze the main characters from the selected films as follows:

	<i>Jurassic Park</i>	<i>The Matrix</i>	<i>Kawao tee Bangpleng</i>	<i>Cloning: Khon Copy Khon</i>
The Hero	Grant	Neo	Siri	Niwat
The Villain	Dinosaurs	Agent Smith	Somporn	B7
The Donor	-	Tank and Morpheus	-	-
The Dispatcher	Hammond	Morpheus	Father Term	Dr. George
The False Hero	Malcolm	Cypher	Somporn	B7
The Helper	Sattler	Trinity	Father Term	May
The Princess	Lex and Tim	Trinity	Joi	May

The Hero: They are all male. Both Grant (a dinosaur expert) and Niwat (a programmer) are put into a situation that they did not begin, but the protagonist from *Jurassic Park* is more active. Grant protects Hammond's grandchildren, although he does not like them at the beginning. He has learned how to get along with them eventually. Neo (a programmer) chooses to adventure in 'the wonderland' himself. He has learned how to control his mind to overcome the monster at the end. On the other hand, Niwat does not choose to be involved with the situation. He does not take a risk to break into the laboratory himself. Besides, he is not the one who resolves the final conflict; it is the antagonist that gives up. This is the same for Siri (a professor) who, although he tries his best to find out the background behind the baby-boom at Bangpleng village and to rescue people, cannot defeat the antagonist.

Actually, Grant does not defeat the monster himself. However, he is the decision maker in saving Hammond's grandchildren. But the two Thai heroes are not decision makers. Therefore, the characters' roles are quite similar and the gender is the same, but the personalities are different. A Western concept of masculinity through physical strength and aggressiveness is reflected more in the Hollywood characters. They are more active, taking action immediately, and successfully resolving problems by themselves, using their own inner resources, whereas the Thai protagonists do not dare to take risks. Problems in Thai culture tend to be solved by cooperation with other

people. Furthermore, the Thai characters' perspective does not clearly change, yet it evolves a lot for the Hollywood characters.

The Villain: The cloned dinosaurs, Agent Smith (artificial intelligence), and B7 (Niwat's clone) are created by humans, though not by the protagonists. As such, they are the threats to the creator and the hero. Even though Somporn (an alien) is not born by humans, he is a stranger to the hero and harms everyone in the village, not specifically only the hero. All four villainous characters are portrayed as emotionless and merciless. They can and will try to destroy every one that obstructs them, yet Somporn and B7 from the Thai science fiction films do not have an intention to harm their own direct creator, Somporn's mother (whose body is for giving birth to the alien) and Dr. George (the scientist who clones B7), whereas the Dinosaurs and Agent Smith may destroy all humans. This deference to their creators may reflect Thai culture values in terms of one's gratefulness to parents. This applies even for the villains.

The Donor: This character's role is to be the one who provides 'a special object' that assists the hero for defeating the villain. Since *Jurassic Park*, *Kawao tee Bangpleng*, and *Cloning: Khon Copy Khon* are also operating as thrillers, the protagonists' task is to escape from the situation, so they do not need such objects with which to fight. Therefore the donor is not necessary to have here for either Hollywood or Thai science fiction films.

The Dispatcher: This role is usually portrayed as an old man that represents wisdom. He is superior to other characters and is the one who leads the hero or shows the path to defeat the villain. Hammond (Jurassic Park's owner), Father Term (Buddhist monk), and Dr. George look really old, while Morpheus is not that old, yet he is the oldest and is more mature than the other active characters in *The Matrix*. All four characters are superior in age and knowledge. They represent different values that each culture respects. Hammond is a rich businessman; Morpheus is a senior crew captain; Father Term is a calm Buddhist monk; and Dr. George is a knowledgeable scientist. Although they have different careers, there is no significant difference in the different characters in terms of their role, motivation, and personality.

The False Hero: This role is quite complicated. It could be a villainous character that looks good, a good character that acts badly, or a villainous character that turns to help the protagonist in the mission eventually. All the characters here are male. Malcolm (an unorthodox mathematician), Cypher (Morpheus' crewmember), and B7 want the hero's girlfriend. Malcolm,

Somporn, and B7 become part of those who resolve the conflict. They all look dark and potentially brutal. These are the similarities, and there is no significant difference between them.

The Helper: The characters that assist the hero are Sattler (a botanist and Grant's girlfriend), Trinity (Morpheus' crewmember and Neo's love interest), Father Term, and May (a trainee doctor and Niwat's girlfriend). Interestingly, three of them are female. Trinity and May also take the role as the Princess. While Sattler can potentially play the princess role, she is more likely the helper. Generally the role is filled by the hero's friend, who is usually male. Nevertheless, the female characters from Hollywood are masculine. Trinity holds weapons and fights like a man. Sattler volunteers to take risks before Hammond thinks of volunteering. For the Thai characters, May actually is the one who gets through to the laboratory, but it is her duty because she is one of the staff members there. Father Term is male, however as a monk, he cannot take physical actions, but just give advice. So both cultures view the female as a helper. However, even if the characters are gendered, they are more masculine in the Hollywood films by appearance, personality, and attitude. In the Thai films, they are more likely soft and passive.

The Princess: Normally, this role is given to a female character who is rescued by the hero and becomes the reward for him. All the characters here, Lex and Tim (Hammond's grandchildren), Trinity, Joi (a school teacher), and May are not the exception. May and Trinity happily end up together with Niwat and Neo respectively. Even though Trinity is as strong as men, the hero is better or more powerful and skilful than her. Lex and Tim, (although the latter character is male, he is a child,) need Grant's protection, and become like Grant's children eventually. Yet, Joi is the only character that the Thai film does not show in a clear relationship between her and Siri. Besides, the relationship is not built up in the story. Then she is not the reward for the protagonist. However, the relationship is fulfilled by another couple, Praphan and Kaew. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the representations of such roles and personalities between Thai and Western films.

Plots

Block (2008: 222-9) classifies the plot structure into four basic elements: exposition, conflict, climax, and resolution. The explosion introduces the

identity of the main characters, time period, setting, and plot situation. Conflict drives the plot and increases the story's intensity. The climax is the critical conflict where the film's intensity reaches the maximum point. Lastly, resolution is the sequence in which the conflict is resolved by the main character, and in which the tension declines.

The main conflicts in three of the four selected films, *Jurassic Park*, *The Matrix*, and *Cloning: Khon Copy Khon* have as the premise the effect of advanced technology: what if artifacts harm their creators? In contrast, *Kawao tee Bangpleng* comes up with a different subgenre about alien invasion. The conflicts in both *Jurassic Park* and *Cloning: Khon Copy Khon* occur because of human greed. This weakness unleashes uncontrollable monsters. The protagonist's task is to survive and protect other people. The monsters in *Jurassic Park* confront the protagonist many times as various species and in increasingly more dangerous situations. This is also the structure in *The Matrix* where the hero confronts other villains before having a showdown with the villain leader Agent Smith. It is different in *Cloning: Khon Copy Khon* where Niwat fights B7 four times throughout the whole film and fights nobody else, and in *Kawao tee Bangpleng*, where only Somporn leads the Children to make trouble for the villagers. This shows that the way Hollywood films build up the plot in similar way to computer or arcade games where the hero has to go through more and more challenging opponents until the climax, or until the final meeting in an arcade game. This structure is how they create intensity. Whereas in the two Thai films, the hero opposes the same opponent, but in different forms and contexts.

In the climax scene in *The Matrix's*, after the protagonist is enlightened in the dream world, he defeats the antagonist by himself. Yet for the other three films, the antagonist is defeated because of itself. In *Jurassic Park*, Velociraptors are overthrown by T-Rex, another villain. In the two Thai films, Somporn and B7 decide to abandon their goals. So the critical conflict for both Hollywood and Thai science fiction films can be solved by the protagonist or even by other factors. However, the antagonist in the Hollywood films has a strong goal and never changes, but the villains' will/intention or plan in the Thai films can be changed. This specific form of resolution in Thai films may be explained in terms of Thai culture that tends to value compromise and forgiveness; this is less of a value in Hollywood culture.

There is a similarity between the two cultures' films in that, after the resolution, the conflict does not totally disappear; it can potentially be back in the next episode if the film is sequeled. Dinosaurs are alive on the island, and they can breed for new generations. Only Agent Smith is destroyed, but the artificial intelligence system still remains in *The Matrix*. There is another B7 watching Niwat and May in the very last scene of *Cloning: Khon Copy Khon*. Somporn drops his intention to invade Earth and goes back to his planet; nevertheless who can be sure that other aliens will not come again? Therefore, there will always be an unresolved conflict in the story that provides an opportunity to continue it in the future. This is a marketing tactic that happens in both cultures.

Lastly, in terms of the cloning-issue in films from both markets, the subplot is about the relationship between the protagonist and the character that he rescues. However, the subplot in *Jurassic Park* is gradually developed. The protagonist does not open up with children and new things at the beginning, but because the dangerous situation brings them together and there is no one else, he gradually changes his attitude and the conflict is resolved eventually. In *Cloning: Khon Copy Khon*, the subplot is about a relationship of a workaholic man who does not have time for the girlfriend. The conflict is not developed along with the story. Although Niwat has a vacation with May at last, it just happens; it does not gradually change. This reflects the respective time that each culture values. Hollywood characters need time to change, but Thai characters' attitude is expected to change immediately.

Themes

A theme is a central idea of the story. At the communication level, it represents the message that the filmmaker intends to convey to the audience and reflects his or her ideology. Themes can be illustrated subtly throughout the story that the audience has to interpret, or directly via dialogue.

Both *Jurassic Park* and *Cloning: Khon Copy Khon* talk about the effect of cloning and view it as a threat. But the issue is likely portrayed by the Thai film as one-sided, while the Hollywood film represents it more neutrally: Hammond shows his perspective toward the cloning of dinosaurs in a positive way, whereas Malcolm disagrees. He believes that the extinction of dinosaurs is explained in terms of natural selection, so the cloning is "the rape of nature". Then Hammond argues that if he cloned emus or other animals, Malcolm would not say so. Malcolm just opposes him, "At least,

emus don't eat men." He does not totally disagree with cloning. The film does not judge that the cloning technology is wrong or not; it depends on the situation. Yet *Cloning: Khon Copy Khon* tends to conclude that cloning is totally wrong. Even after B7 is defeated, there is another clone watching the protagonist.

If technology is applied against nature, it can be a threat to humans. This message is also reflected in *The Matrix*. The action/ science fiction film shows both advantages and disadvantages of technology; artificial intelligence enslaves humans, but humans also use the computer to add power to the protagonist to be the tool to overcome the antagonist.

The Matrix and *Kawao tee Bangpleng* use Buddhism as one of the themes, but the former film shows it implicitly as the message blends with action storyline, whereas the latter presents it explicitly through the teaching of a Buddhist monk. *Kawao tee Bangpleng* does not discuss technology, as it is about aliens. The aliens are the threat, not their technology. Even though they do not destroy humans, they cannot live together with humans. This shows that the theme in Hollywood films tends to open up to new things, including technology and strangers more than Thai films. They show two-sided information of an issue, while Thai science fiction films judge it explicitly. Perhaps it is because Western countries are multicultural, whereas Thai cultural identity tends to be single, under one language and ethnicity, at least in terms of popular Thai nationalistic ideas.

Similarities and Differences in Formal Elements

Setting and costumes

The setting and costume in the four films in the opening scenes of the four films reflect a science-related story. However, the Thai films use iconic setting, costume, and properties such as a laboratory and white gowns (in *Cloning: Khon Copy Khon*), and spacecraft from the moon and ray weapons (in *Kawao tee Bangpleng*), whereas the elements are shown much more implicitly in the Hollywood films. It is reflected through subtle design of the construction and uniforms worn by workers in *Jurassic Park*, and the hint of the theme and computer screen in *The Matrix*. The Hollywood films focus on the intended affect of the film that show the mood and tone of the other mixed genre, while the Thai ones emphasize the iconic science setting and costume, and advancing the information rather than the emotion. This shows

that Thai films tend to adhere to the form as the formal elements shown in the first scene, but Hollywood films stay with the intended affect and leave the science in the background.

Cinematography

The camera angles and movements for all films are dynamic, except in *Kawao tee Bangpleng*, which is lethargic. There are different movements in them, especially in *The Matrix* that establishes a new camera movement technique. Yet the camera framing in the Hollywood films is slightly more various than the Thai films, as there is no close-up and extreme close-up shots in *Kawao tee Bangpleng*, and no long shot in *Cloning: Khon Copy Khon*.

Lighting looks like it is coming from natural sources in the story, in all four films. The color tends to be bluish and greenish in tone, especially in *Cloning: Khon Copy Khon* that illustrates only two colors. Here there is no significant difference in lighting and color.

In the selection of the shot, all four directors choose to begin with the antagonist. The heroes have not yet appeared in the first sequence. However, the antagonists in the Hollywood films are portrayed with action and emotion as shown in the close-up or extreme close-up shots for emphasizing expression, while the characters in the Thai films do not expose any emotion; only their appearance is revealed.

Editing

The first sequence of *Jurassic Park* consists of 44 cuts in 163 seconds, 3.7 seconds per shot on average, *The Matrix* has 134 cuts in 309 seconds, 2.31 seconds per shot on average, *Kawao tee Bangpleng* has one dissolve 95 cuts in 577 seconds, 6.07 seconds per shot, and *Cloning: Khon Copy Khon* consists of one dissolve and 67 cuts in 88 seconds, 1.31 seconds per shot. The average duration for each shot in one Thai film is the longest of the four, while the other Thai film is the shortest in terms of duration of shots. This would suggest that it cannot be concluded that a particular culture prefers a long shot. However, by observing at the transition points in the films, only the Thai science fiction films have the dissolve in the opening scene, but both Hollywood films change from shot to shot by cut. Therefore, the Hollywood films tend to keep quick pacing by using only

cutting as a transition for an immediacy effect, while the Thai science fiction films apply a dissolve for a continuity effect.

Conclusion

From the above observations, the narrative and formal elements of *Jurassic Park*, *The Matrix*, *Kawao tee Bangpleng*, and *Cloning: Khon Copy Khon* can be summarized as follows:

	Hollywood	Thai
Narrative elements		
Plot		
Exposition	emotional	informative
Conflict	external and internal	external and Internal
Climax	hero confronts villain	hero confronts villain
Resolution	hero defeats villain	villain may abandon goal
Explanation of science	yes	no
Theme		
	criticizing advanced technology	criticize advanced technology
	teaching moral and philosophy	teaching moral and philosophy
Character		
Personality	active	passive
Characteristic	masculine	feminine
Role	fix	flexible
Production techniques		
Setting and costume		
Setting	present / future	present / future
Props	subtle through design	iconic
Costume	reflect intended affect	iconic
Cinematography		
Framing	various	limit
Camera angle	various	various
Camera movement	various	various
Lighting	blue / green	blue / green
Editing		
Transition	Cut	Cut
Pacing	fast	fast / slow

Perhaps, Thai film makers are influenced from the West, so production techniques that reflect the formal elements in genre theories have no distinct differences. By comparing two selected Hollywood and two Thai science fiction films, various types of framing, camera angles, and camera movements that are used for showing story and emotions are the same in terms of purpose and methods. The lighting depends on each film's intended affect. The color tone is usually greenish and bluish. Most transitions are undoubtedly to cut from shot to shot, for making the films fast-paced, which can be seen generally in most science fiction films.

The narrative structure in all four films is the three-act structure that goes with exposition, conflict, climax and resolution. The main plot is to confront the effect of advanced technology that humans create and then come into conflict with due to the lack of morals in one or more of the characters. The main characters have to struggle with both external and internal conflicts, which are respectively bad situations and oneself. The messages are to criticize or at least warn against the use and effect of advanced technology, and also to teach moral and philosophical lessons through entertaining stories.

Although the story structure for the selected films includes similar conflicts, the Thai science fiction films begin with informative expositions, while the Hollywood films focus more on building emotion. This suggests that in terms of genre, the Western side gives priority to the intended affect, whereas the Thai films emphasize the genre in terms of form, as seen by the use of distinct iconography such as a laboratory, scientists in white gowns, and spacecraft to appeal to the spectators since the opening scene.

The Hollywood's characters can be categorized to fit with Propp's character theory. Each of them has a clear role and duty. The main characters have strong goals and active motives. But the Thai characters are more passive and compromise. This difference may be due to the fact that Propp's formalism was based on specifically Western cultures of the folktale, not on Asian cultures' tales. In the Thai films, both protagonist and antagonist tend to abandon the goal more easily. The character role is more complicated and flexible. Sometimes the hero may not be as active as the helper, or even not be the one who resolves the conflict, which is hardly seen in Hollywood films.

The formal elements in the four films are not different except in terms of the quantity and quality of visual effects that come from disparity in budgets

with the larger budgets of Hollywood allowing for more effects than are possible in the more modestly funded Thai films. However, one feature not explained by budgetary constraints is that the camera framings in the Hollywood films are more various than in the Thai ones. In Hollywood art, there are all types of framing in just one scene, whereas the Thai science fiction films under consideration in this paper do not use all types of frames; Instead, particularly the extreme close-up shot and close-up shots in *Kawao tee Bangpleng*, and the long shot in *Cloning: Khon Copy Khon* are not featured. This use of shots reflects that Thai films give priority to the information more than emotion that the close-up is for showing facial expression.

However the differences so far noted could be viewed as uniqueness indicators and be developed for an international audience to recognize and look at. The characters in Thai science fiction films are not fixed to a strong role and duty. They do not have a strong motif to achieve the goal. The villain does not have to be always defeated by the hero. He could resolve the conflict by abandoning the goal himself. This could be considered as a weak character in the Western concept, but the characteristic is an opportunity to develop for twisting the resolution to play with the audience's expectations. When the character role is not fixed, the filmmaker can break the audience presumption and emphasize the internal conflict of every main character. This can also make all the characters including the villain more attractive to an audience so that it can sympathize and empathize with the characters in different ways.

The less use of extreme close-up and close-up shots shows that the body language such as gesture and proxemics is more important than facial expression and eye contact in Thai. They can represent emotions. The strength in the use of body movement and personal space, which are part of the staging in genre theory, can be enhanced to become unique qualities. The Thai acting techniques can advance the plot and reflect the personality, relationship of characters, and even emotions.

Some Thai concepts that can be developed and interpreted into a science fiction story are Buddhist philosophy and *Traiphum* cosmology. The Buddhist concept is taught directly by a monk in one of the studied films. Yet to reach an international audience, the concepts can be interpreted in terms of metaphysics such as the birth of the universe, realms, overlapped dimensions, reincarnation, the power of the senses, and the concept of

relative time, and show the theme in the form of science fiction in which the intended affect can be action, drama, comedy, thriller, or even horror.

The selected Thai science fiction films emphasize the plot information more than the emotion that the audience should be involved in experiencing. Therefore, the intended affect should not be neglected. It can even be in every scene, especially the opening scene to lead the audience in the story's emotional direction. Furthermore, the explanation of the concept or interpretation of science should be informed through the story so as to be understandable to an international. By doing so, Thai science fiction films would be understandable and enjoyable for the international audience, as other genres in Thai films have proven to be.

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