

# NOTES ON THE SAGA OF RAMA IN THAILAND

by

Christian Velder

*Vientiane*

## The Legend of Rama in Khmer Tradition

In Angkor in Cambodia the remains of the Hindu religion of the Khmers speak to us from the ruins of more than fifty temples. The most important of them is Angkor Wat, decorated with sandstone reliefs all around its enclosure. On the western side the reliefs show the episode of the fight for Longka from the legend of Rama as it was understood from its Indian sources by the Khmer artists. The Baphuon temple (mid-11th century) is also decorated with reliefs from the Khmer Phrea Ream legend. Bernard Groslier states in *Angkor*<sup>1</sup> that episodes from the story of Rama have often served as decorations in Khmer temples.

When the Thai came from Yunnan and infiltrated gradually the whole of what is now Thailand, they were confronted with the Khmer civilisation which left its imprint forever on Thai soil in the ruins of Phra Wihan, Lopburi and Phimai. The Thai were subjected to the influence of Khmer traditions; their language accepted Khmer words and the Khmer alphabet was taken over and, in fact, was used in central Thailand to recent times as the sole medium in which to write the holy textbooks—the *Trai Pitok*. Among the spiritual values the Thai took from the Khmer, the story of Rama had an important place. The story is also popular among the Thai. Even today the adventures of Phra Ram are best known by the people and the importance of the tales of Rama is matched only by the stories linked with the previous existences and the life of the Buddha.

## Models from the Legend

The stories of Rama transmitted by the Khmers to the Thai immigrants have been transformed and extended. The legend suited the taste and the character of the Thai.<sup>2</sup>

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1) London 1957 p. 213.

2) Sathien Koset *Upakon Ramakien* Bangkok 1952 p. 7 ff. Phrabat Somdet Phra Mongkutklao *Bokoet Ramakien* Bangkok 1960, Introduction. MRW Sumonchart Sawatdikun *Wanakadi thai* unpublished manuscript of university lecture given 28th January 1961.

Parents and educators used to show the figures of the legend as models or as a warning to children. Thus the tales of Rama play their part in the education and the forming of the character of the young Thai. *Phra Ram*, the great hero, is brave and fair. He makes good his mistake towards his wife; thus he merits the grace of the gods. As ruler he is the model of kings. *Nang Sida* is beautiful in soul and body. Her faithful love is imperturbable. Seduction cannot shake her firmness. Her constant character makes her an example for all women. *Hanuman*, the monkey, is the first soldier of the king. His capability, devotion and sense of justice make him the ideal subordinate, especially as he is always friendly and easily satisfied. *Thotsakan*, the ten-headed demon, is in Thailand the personification of all evil. Sympathetic aspects of his character, made clear in the story, are suppressed in the black-and-white painting of popular tradition. The king of the monkeys, *Phali*, shows how a great hero and capable leader ruins himself through hybrid ambitions. *Phra Lak* is the loyal brother of the king, ready to fulfill any wish of the elder, ready to accept and execute orders.

*Phra Ram*, *Hanuman*, *Nang Sida*, *Thotsakan* and the many minor heroes of the legend, *Phali*, *Phra Lak*, the monkey-generals and the demon-princes represent human life in its different facets. The Thai people regard them as examples of human society. This is the reason for the popularity of the main characters of the legend of Rama.

### The Legend in Thai Literature<sup>3</sup>

The first document in Thai language and Thai letters is the stone of King Khun Ramkhamhaeng of 1283. And this first Thai document contains an allusion to the legend of Rama. When it enumerates geographic locations it names the cave of Phra Ram near the Sampat River in the vicinity of Sukhothai. Another cave nearby is known as Sida cave. Two verses for the consecration of water originated under king Rama Thibodi in the 15th century. They speak of Rama and his brother Lak. A poem on the victory of Phra Ram

3) This section follows mostly Sathien Koset *op. cit.* pp. 170-73.

over Longka, the city of the demons, has also to be dated to the fifteenth century, in the reign of King Phra Borom Trai Lokhanat. Verses about Thotsarot, the father of Phra Ram, and about Nang Sida, his wife, date back to the reign of Phra Narai Maharat (1656-1688); another poem speaks of Rama and his march against Longka; of his holy arrow subduing the demons. Allusions to Rama's absence from Ayuthaya during fourteen years belong to this same period. Phra Horathibodi speaks in his verses of Rama and the demon's daughter Benyakai who floated ashore in the shape of Nang Sida.<sup>4</sup> In the time of King Phra Borom Kot (1732-1758) Chao Fa Thammathibet speaks in a poem of the final restitution of Nang Sida. The subject of another poem is the destruction of the demons and Mayarap, the king of the world below, appears in a third. In this same century the lakhon of Nang Manora makes mention of two scenes of the legend: the hermit Chanok discovers Nang Sida in a lotus bud and adopts her; and Phra Ram chops off the hands and feet of the indecent Samanakha. In the lakhon play of Sang Thong—also 18th century—we meet Sida and Hanuman. In the novel *Khun Chang Khun Phen*—19th century—Sida is shown as an example of faithful love to the heroine Wan Thong.<sup>5</sup> During the Thonburi period (1768-1782) Phraya Mahanuphap mentions in one of his nirat poems a scene in which Rama kills the demon Marit, the golden deer. The early Ratanakosin era sees the amalgamation of all the various tales and episodes and the establishment of an encyclopedic written version of the legend.

### The Ramakien

When Ayuthaya was burned in 1767, almost all works of Thai literature were lost. This is the reason why we do not have any complete version of the story of Rama dating back to earlier times.<sup>6</sup> Short scenes only testify for an earlier version; e.g. greetings to the Gods (17th century), a fragment out of Rama's fight against Thotsakan (18th century), the teaching of Thotsarot and the instruction of Sukhrip by his dying brother Phali, both from the era of King Phra

4) Horathibodi *Chindamani* Bangkok 1914.

5) Bangkok 1917.

6) Phrabat Somdet Phra Mongkutklao *op. cit.* p. 178.

Narai Maharaj (17th century).<sup>7</sup> There are almost no complete scenes from very early times which have come down to us. The texts about the kidnapping of Nang Sida, about Rama's entry in Khutkhin (the monkey's city) about Hanuman's mission to Longka, the burning of the city, about the march against Longka, the transformation of Benyakai and the war against Mayarap—all these date from the 17th century. From the 18th century we have only a few fragments by unknown authors.<sup>8</sup> After Ayuthaya was demolished, King Taksin of Thonburi ordered the collection of ancient lakhon scenes connected with the legend of Rama but only King Phra Phuttha Yotfa, the first monarch of the Bangkok period, set about this systematically. By 1797 he had collected all available material from sources written and oral. This compilation amounts to not less than 52086 verses. Thus the work has been saved and handed down to us. The writers, under the orders of the king, used the Sanskrit version of the Ramayana of Valmiki, a version in Hindi, one in Tamil and one in Bengali. Also many stories were reproduced that do not belong to the Indian tradition. This is why the Ramakien is far greater in volume than its Indian sources. The Ramakien of Rama I is ancestor to all subsequent adaptations and editions. The Ramakien has since been printed several times;<sup>9</sup> here, quotations will follow the Khurusapha edition.

King Phra Phuttha Loetla, Rama II, in about 1815 transformed a number of scenes of the Ramakien and rearranged them for the lakhon stage. Similar work was done by King Monkhut, Rama IV, in about 1825, and King Wachirawut, Rama VI, in about 1910.<sup>10</sup> The last version of the Ramakien thus far seems to be the prose edition of Phikun Thongnoi.<sup>11</sup> About a quarter of the book consists of quotations in verse, *i.e.* the most important parts have been reproduced in their original form.

7) Schweisguth, Paul *Etude sur la littérature siamoise* Paris, Imprimerie Nationale 1951 list pp. 395-97 nos. 1,2,3,4,32,33.

8) *Ibid.* nos. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23.

9) Available in 4 volumes of 2976 pages, edited by Khurusapha, Bangkok.

10) Schweisguth *op. cit.* nos. 5, 12, 21, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31.

11) Bangkok 1954, 1260 pages.

Besides these versions there have also been a few in dialect; of which the best known is the Pha Lak Pha Lam of Laos<sup>12</sup> which might also have been known in the Lao part of Thailand.<sup>13</sup> Another version existed around Lopburi, where the tale of Kokakamak is remembered still, though it has not been completely accepted by the Ramakien.

A short English version of *The Ramakirti or the Thai version of the Ramayana* first appeared in Bangkok in 1940. The Swami Satya Nantaburi has retold the story of Rama following Indian sources and using the Indian forms of the proper names. Important scenes have been suppressed, others can hardly be identified. A few years ago there was published a German translation which relates the complete Ramakien in an abridged version aimed at being faithful to the original in spite of its restricted extent.<sup>14</sup>

There are only two detailed research papers on the Ramakien in its historic aspects written by Thai scholars: the มอเถกษแห่งรามเกียรติ์ by Rama VI and the อุปกรณรามเกียรติ์ by Sathien Koset.<sup>15</sup> Among western scholars only René Nicolas has published a long critical paper on the Ramakien.<sup>16</sup>

### Quotations from the Legend

A great number of current expressions of proverbial value in modern Thai can be traced back to the Ramakien. A selection is now noted: เหาะเกินตงกา 'to fly further than Longka' means to overdo something. วัดรอยเท้า 'to measure the hoofprints' means to be contemptuous of one's parents. The young buffalo Thoraphi measures his hoof in the hoofprint of his father because he wants to kill him as

12) Deydier, Henri *Le Ramayana Lao* unpublished thesis. Establishes a Lao tradition independent of the Thai legend.

13) พัดคถึงนางในปรารก พัดคถึงนางในส้วม a verse in lao-thai, understood in Bangkok as 'I think of my wife in the toilet.' But in the Northeast ส้วม means 'bedroom'.

14) Velder, Christian *Der Kampf der Götter und Dämonen* Schweinfurt, neues forum 1962, 326 pages.

15) *Op. cit.*

16) Nicolas, René 'Le Ramayana Siamois' *Extrême Asie* Saigon 1928 nos. 19-25.

soon as he is grown up. In the same sense *phumtī* is said of 'a child like Thoraphi' is one who does not obey his parents. *ongkhot* 'Ongkhot rolls his tail', is said of a boaster because Ongkhot used to roll up his tail and sit on it in order to be of equal height with the demon king. *shōnāngpān* 'to let the horse Upakan free', means to tempt somebody. The horse of the king of Ayuthaya may not be ridden or even touched by anyone who does not belong to the lineage of the king. The expression is also used in Mak Ruk-Thai chess. *ānānāng*, the name of the eighteen monkey commanders of the Ramakien, is used for a group of naughty boys. *phānān*, the nickname of king Thotsakan, is used for people who do not have good manners. *phānān* 'elephant with large tusks', is a rascal good-for-nothing. The king of the demons got this second name because Phra Isuan once rammed the tusks of his elephant into the chest of Thotsakan to punish the demon for attempting to kill his brother. These tusks stuck in the body of Thotsakan until his death. *phānān* 'beautiful as Sida', is a girl of especial attraction. If she has nicely drawn eyebrows, one says *phānān* 'her brows are drawn like the bow of Phra Ram'. The expression *khon* 'Khon is dead', means to finish, to end. It comes from the play with leather silhouettes (*Nang Yai*) about which we will speak later. The scene which ends with the death of Khon, the brother of Thotsakan, was so well liked that it was played again and again. At the end the expression 'finally Khon is dead' has been transferred to situations of daily life.

The stories of Rama also play a certain role in the superstitions of the people. The books of the fortune-tellers are filled with hints to the legend. The magic incantations of the source are often the model for more recent magic. One special incantation may be cited: *phānān* 'the magic of Hanuman's heart'. In fact, the entire Ramakien once served magic purposes; for whoever was able to read the complete epic in seven days and seven nights could make the heavens rain for three days and nights.<sup>17</sup>

17) MRW Sumonchart *op. cit.*

### Names and expressions

Since the Sukhothai period many important kings of Thailand carry names of heroes of the legend of Rama. Khun Ramkhamhaeng, the creator of the Sukhothai alphabet was named after Phra Ram. In the Ayuthaya period there is Phra Ramesuan, a name derived by combining Phra Ram and Phra Isuan—the highest god of the Ramakien. Then there are Phra Ramarat, Rama the king; Phra Ramathibodi, Rama the leader; Phra Eka Thotsarot, the unique Thotsarot, the wise father of the Rama of the legend. The Bangkok period was initiated by Chao Phya Chakri who was crowned under the name of Rama Thibodi and who made history under the name of Rama I. The Chakri dynasty, called after the discus of Phra Narai, reigns today. The kings of this dynasty are all called Rama and might be considered incarnations of the hero. King Chulalongkorn, Rama V, was still so much identified with the Rama of the legend that on his return from Europe in 1897 the court presented a masked play on the royal plaza: Phra Ram returns to Ayuthaya<sup>18</sup>.

Names of simple citizens sometime also come from the legend of Rama, as shown by the registers of students in Bangkok schools. The main reservoir of expressions from the legend, though, is in military nomenclature. Several ships of the Royal Navy carry names from the Ramakien: พลัดร้างทวีป '*Phali* governs the world' and สุครีพครองเมือง '*Sukhrip* reigns over the city'. Big guns are named after the six monkey-generals of Rama's army: นิลนนท์แทงเขน '*Nin Non* pierces the shield', สุรแสนแสนหาญ '*the hundred-thousandfold gallant Surasen*', สุรการแสนกล้า '*the hundred-thousand times brave Surakan*', ชมพูพานแผดฤทธิ์ '*Chomphuphan* shows his power', สุครีพหักฉัตร '*Sukhrip* breaks the royal umbrella' and หนุมานตัดเศียรไมยราพณ์ '*Hanuman* cuts the head of *Mayarap*'.

Even names of demons are cited: พญาชรถอนรัง '*Khon* destroys all', อินทวิชิตศาสตร '*the bow of Inthorachit*' and อสุรผัดฆ่าพล '*Asurapha* kills the soldiers'. The Royal Colours show Hanuman attacking the enemy. In boxing also are certain expressions from the story of Rama. During the danced presentation or dedication the boxer

18) Sathien Koset *op. cit.* p. 180.

assumes certain poses like *วาทิตามาน* 'Hanuman hands over the ring', *รามาเมฆา* 'Rama shoots his arrow' and *กุมภกาน* 'Kum-phakan awakens his spear'.

It would be interesting to study signets and seals currently used in Thailand. Official stamps, coats of arms of companies and simple sealrings in remote silvershops carry many heraldic symbols of the mythological world of the Ramakien. In fact, silversmiths almost never take motifs from Buddhist tradition but rather most frequently from the legend of Rama: the monkey *Hanuman*, the goddess of lightning *Mani Mekhala* and the god of thunder *Ramasun*, *Nang Sida* and *Phra Ram*, the demon *Nonthok* with his diamond finger and many more heroes and gods.

Even plants and fruits are sometimes called by names from the Ramakien: *กระช่า* 'Krachao Sida' is the fruit which Sida ate during her stay in the woods, *กล้วย* 'Chaipha Sida' is a wild banana, which is also called *กล้วยนาง* 'Sabai Nang Sida' because it is said to look like the rolled neckcloth Sida left to Phra Ram when she was carried away to Longka. Another plant is called *บุรี* 'buri Phra Ram'—the cigar of Rama, *ส้ม* 'samo Phiphek' is a fruit like *ลำต* 'lamut Sida'. A palm tree is called *ต้นใจ* 'the tree of the heart of Mayarap', because the heart of the demon once lived a bee's life in a palm tree.

Finally, a certain tinted semi-precious stone is called *หิน* 'the canine-tooth of Hanuman'.

### Dramatic art

Traditional Thai dramatic art has in all times taken its material and subjects from the legend of Rama.

Today the most important play on stage is the *lakhon*, a kind of opera-like ballet. There are a number of special lakhon plays adapted from the legend that suit the taste of rural as well as urban folk because the scenes can be modeled and adjusted to the audience. The same theme can be represented in a coarse and rough or in a solemn and refined manner. The Ramakien offers a wide range of



subjects to the lakhon writers and actors and this is the reason why they prefer to play scenes from the legend of Rama—these being presented more often than any other.

Since olden days the play with leather silhouettes stood side-by-side with the lakhon. The play of the *Nang Yai*, the 'large hides' uses excised figures ornamentally drawn before on cowskin and is performed in front of a screen lit from behind. Better known is the shadow-play where the same kind of figure is projected onto the screen from behind. The figures, stretched between bamboo sticks, are held above the heads of the players. Originally one to two meters high, the figures have been replaced by shorter ones, the *Nang Talung*, which have movable arms and legs and which can be manoeuvred more easily. The *Nang Talung* have a tradition different from the *Nang Yai* as they seem to have come to Bangkok through southern Thailand, most likely from Indonesia. One still can find a few shadow-play groups in Bangkok, but they all refuse to use *Nang Yai*.

The play with leather-figures is known since the Sukhothai period (13th to 15th centuries).<sup>19</sup> It shows scenes only from the legend of Rama. The introduction first invokes the non-Buddhist gods of the legend, Phra Isuan, Phra Phrom and Phra Narai; then are produced the adversaries Phra Ram and Thotsakan and the wise hermit Rūsi shows his knowledge in vedic charms and mystery; and, finally, the symbolic fight between the black and the white monkey, impersonated in the Ramakien by Nin Non and Hanuman. This introduction is the same, whatever the actual play.

The Masked Play, third branch of traditional dramatic art, might have originated from the *Nang Yai*.<sup>20</sup> Its subjects are all taken from the story of Rama. The masked heroes dance their parts following the traditional music and the declamation of the verses of the epic by special singers and speakers in the background. Originally the players of the *Nang Yai* figures might have been masked to suit their parts, but these figures were put aside and, since, the masks

19) Nicolas, René 'Le théâtre d'ombres' *Journal of the Siam Society* no 21, 1927.

20) HH Prince Dhani Nivat 'The Shadow-play as a possible origin of the masked play' *Journal of the Siam Society* no 37, 1949.

are exact copies of the figures on hides.<sup>21</sup> One who knows the iconography of the Nang Yai recognizes immediately all the different characters of the Masked Play which today is often performed in the theatre and for certain ceremonies.

### Fine arts

The oral and written tradition of the popular legend was supported by the fine arts. The heroes and scenes from the stories around Rama played and still play an important part in the decoration of Buddhist temples. In this respect the temples of the Thai are related directly to the Khmer temples of which Wat Mahathat in Phnom Penh displays 193 murals of the Phrea Ream legend. The oldest Thai murals, from the Ayuthaya period, are to be seen in the cave of Yala. The visitor recognizes on the right wall the goddess Mani Mekhala and the demon Ramasun, the deities of lightning and thunder from the preface of the Ramakien.

There are a few other paintings belonging to the legend of Rama that date back to the Ayuthaya period. The lacquer pavilion of HH Princess Chumphot of Nakhon Sawan, built in Ayuthaya under King Phra Narai Maharaj, now stands in Bangkok. Inside are painted frescoes. On the upper part the story of the Buddha has been retold in pictures; but below is the story of Phra Ram, starting with the return of Rama to Ayuthaya and running through almost all of the war of Rama's brothers Phra Phrot and Phra Sathrut against the rebellious demons—a part of the legend very rarely seen. On the southern wall of a pavilion of the temple Buddhajai Sawan in Ayuthaya there were visible previously some illustrations to the story of Rama of the 18th century. A few remains and copies of the pictures of Thotsakan and Phra Lak have been preserved.

In Phitsanulok the temple Rat Burana (dating from the mid-19th century) shows also murals from the legend. The subject is the concluding part of the war of Rama against Thotsakan, ending with the death of the ten-headed king. In Bangkok several temples are decorated with murals depicting the legend of Rama. Between the windows of the Wihan of Wat Suthat (dating from the mid-19th

21) HH Prince Dhani Nivat *The Nang* Bangkok 1956 p. 3.

century) are depicted heroes from the entourage of Rama. The arcades paralleling the outer walls of Wat Phra Si Ratana Satsadaram, the temple of the Royal Palace, are covered from top to bottom and in all their length with murals depicting the Ramakien. Originally dating from the time of king Rama III, the present form was created in 1927. The older version has disappeared and the present is continually under repair. The Ramakien is retold on the murals that begin to the right of the now closed entrance from the Royal Plaza: starting with the birth of Nang Sida and ending with the final restoration of peace. On the weekly holy days crowds of pilgrims move along the wall telling their children the story of Rama just as their illiterate fathers or grandfathers once told it to them.

In addition to the scenes of the legend on murals we know of at least one representation of the legend of Rama in relief. The temple Phra Chethuphon, situated behind the Royal Temple, displays 152 marble reliefs, 42.5 centimeters square. These are said to have been brought from Ayuthaya after the destruction of that city. Originally there must have been many more because the story is incomplete. Two slabs are still in Ayuthaya—now in the museum. The slabs relate the Ramakien from the kidnapping of Nang Sida to the killing of the ten-headed demon Sahatsadecha—not Thotsakan! Many temples show various of Rama's monkeys and the subdued and converted demons as guardians of doors, walks and stupas. The best examples are to be seen in the Royal Temple and in Wat Arun. The doors of the bot of Wat Phra Chethuphon show scenes from the Ramakien inlaid in mother-of-pearl.

It is a pity that Wat Phra Ram in Ayuthaya has been destroyed, for we would now be afforded an example of a temple dedicated to Rama.

It should be noted also that the Ramakien is depicted on murals in Luang Prabang and Vientiane in Laos. Wat Phrakhae at the foot of Phusi mountain is well known for door-pennants showing the diplomats of the van Wuthoff mission (17th century) but inside, displayed on the walls, is the Ramakien: from the birth of Phra Ram next to the entrance to the right hand, through the kidnapping of

Nang Sida behind the altar, to the conquest of Longka above the entrance. In Wat Upmung on the western outskirts of Vientiane the story of Rama is depicted in a more rustic manner. The story starts at the right of the entrance with the birth of the ten-headed Rapanasun, continues round the walls and ends with the victory procession in Ayuthaya after the fall of Longka. Thus Thailand and Laos must be considered a single cultural unit as regards the traditions of the legend of Rama.

### Thailand's geography and the Legend

Since olden days the inhabitants of Thailand have believed that the story of Rama is set on Thai soil<sup>22</sup> and settlements, mountains and rivers have been given names from the legend. When king U Thong founded his new city in 1347 he called it Ayuthaya after the center of the world in the legend, probably associating it with the Mon temple 'Ayothia', the ruins of which are near the modern town. The king's city in the Ramakien is sited in the middle of the Thawarawadi forest. Therefore, Ayuthaya bears the second name Thawarawadi. In the Ramakien, Ayuthaya is often called *Mahanakhon* 'big town' and *Krungthep* 'city of gods', 'the holy metropolis'. Officially the town was called Krungthep Thawarawadi Si Ayuthaya. After the destruction of Ayuthaya all these names were transferred to Bangkok.

North of Ayuthaya is the old Khmer settlement called in Thai 'Lopburi'. Popular ethymology sees in Lopburi the monkey-city Nopburi of the Ramakien, associating it at the same time with Rama's son Lop. At the end of the war Phra Ram shot his arrow into the air and the city of king Hanuman was built where it fell. That is how Lopburi got the nickname 'city of Hanuman'. To prove the identity of Lopburi and the city of the famous monkeys, the authorities have founded a colony of monkeys on a rock near the center of town. Many local tales confirm the connection of Lopburi and the Ramakien. The heat from Rama's arrow once turned the ground around Lopburi white-hot and it has stayed white and fertile to the present. In fact, certain of the soil near

22) Sathien Koset *op. cit.* p. 181.

Lopburi contains chalk and appears brighter, and, in the opinion of the farmers, is also better than other soils. On Rama road is the sanctuary of the city, in the center of which once stood a pole of dark green stone, the *Son Phra Ram* 'Rama's arrow', bearing the kingly colour of Rama. Here is where the arrow Phra Ram shot into the air fell; the center of the town that has since been built around it. Though the pole is no longer visible—the faithful having taken it away bit by bit, the place where it once stood is now the abode of the spirit of the town. Nearby Wat Phrapun—the temple of the holy weapon—keeps the memory alive.

Near Lopburi is *Thale Chup Son* 'lake for blessing the arrows'. Rama is said to have immersed his arrow in this lake and, therefore, the water was considered holy and was used for all water-ceremonies of the court. At one time the people of Lopburi had to send water from this lake to the Khmer king at Angkor who regarded it as a sign of their allegiance. And in 1854, in the reign of Rama IV, the weapons of the king were sprinkled with the water of the lake and thereby strengthened with the power of Phra Ram.

One local tale is retold in the Ramakien in a different manner.<sup>23</sup> Kokakamak, the demon called Unarat in the Ramakien—an immortal giant, was hit by the arrow of Rama and was thrown into a cave of the moon's mountain near Lopburi. As the arrow gradually loosened out of the wound, Hanuman had to hammer it back into the demon's body and the sparks produced usually burst into a big fire. Lopburi must suffer from such a fire every third year at least. Kokakamak's daughter, Nang Phrachan, can turn the juice of the orange (Som Saichu) into a medicine which has the power to suck the arrow out of her father's chest. So, in former days, strange beautiful women could never buy oranges in the city and even today there are no Som Saichu in the market; everybody joins in the attempt to keep the demon dead! Should he recover he would eat the whole town.

Near Chainat, north of Lopburi, is a mountain called Khao Sanphaya. In the legend, Hanuman here found the shrubs Sangkhorani

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23) *Ibid.* p. 163.

and Trichawa, which are able to resuscitate the dead, and this is where they are said to grow secretly today. The level area atop the mountain was formed by Hanuman's tail in tossing it around like a lasso to catch the shrubs. The rocks that fell from the mountain at this time are still to be seen in the surrounding lowland; a lake near the mountain was used by Hanuman to quench his thirst.

Chai Badan, 'frontier of the world below', is the name of a little place near Lopburi where Hanuman used to slip into the world of darkness. Also in the province of Lopburi is the anchor mountain, Khao Samo Khon, on which Rama's disk fell after having hit Khao Chom Lom which has since been called 'the mountain with the hole'. Near Bang Wra in the same province, the stream of Sukhrip issues from a cave in which, following the legend, Phali killed the buffalo Thoraphi—this cave bears Phali's name.

Near Pak Thongchai in the province of Nakhon Ratchasima is mount Thoraphi, from which Phali threw the buffalo 200 kilometers through the air to Lopburi.

The village Khukhan near Sisaket is named after the hunter Khukhan, king of the country of Buriram. Buriram is the name of a town near Sisaket.

### Conclusion

The legend of Rama has a definite place in Thai tradition from the earliest contacts with the Khmers till today. In fine arts, theatre and literature as well as in the daily life of the people, the legend has played its part.

The tolerance and broad-mindedness of the Buddhist religion has permitted the non-Buddhist tales of Rama to survive in Thailand. In fact, the legend of Rama was supported by other religions, particularly the Hindu tradition. The very definite influence of the traditions on Thai culture has not been touched on here, but further research in this vein would be most rewarding.