

# CHINESE CHURCHES IN THAILAND

fay

Carl Edwin **Blanford**



**Suriyaban Publishers**

14 Pramuan Road

Bangkok, Thailand

this book, and recognize that for the Christian community to grow among the Chinese requires hard work, self-denial and much spiritual conflict.

Second, what are the convictions that this study seeks to establish? Central is the growing awareness that in our day God is reaching after the Chinese with His love and Gospel in a most remarkable way. One senses that no earlier generation has witnessed such a variety of efforts to win them. And yet, this study reveals that to participate with God in the winning of Chinese to faith in Christ involves diligent effort as well as triumphant faith. In Thailand only those Chinese churches grow that want to grow. And they only grow because their desire for growth has been translated into the radical rearrangement of the priorities of scores of lay Christians. This has involved the devotion of heart, of time and of financial resources to the task. It has demanded of them not only hours spent in seeking adequate preparation for the task but the sort of devotion to Jesus Christ that makes this sacrificial outreach possible.

All of us stand in debt to Carl Edwin Blanford for this lucid book. His long years of faithful service on behalf of the Chinese, his mastery of their language, his deep appreciation of their culture, and his commitment to their evangelization uniquely qualify him to be our mentor. He has reminded us of the potential for good and for God resident in this dominant and gifted segment of the human race. And in reviewing for us the labors of men and women of earlier generations, and of today, to reach this people with the Gospel, he has challenged us: "Do not admire their vision and achievements. Rather, imitate their faith, for Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:7, 8).

Arthur F. Glasser  
Dean  
School of World Mission  
Fuller Theological Seminary  
Pasadena, California

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	vii
Tables	x
Maps	xi
Graphs	xii
Preface	xiii
Chapter 1	Jews of the West and "Jews of the East".....1
Chapter 2	Immigration in Historical Perspective.....9
Chapter 3	Chinese Life in Thailand .....17
Chapter 4	Chinese Baptist Churches.....32
Chapter 5	Presbyterian Chinese Churches.....38
Chapter 6	Other Chinese Churches.....58
Chapter 7	Missions: First Neglect, Then Discouragement .....63
Chapter 8	Growth of Thai and Chinese Churches Compared 70
Chapter 9	Chinese Concern for Education.....81
Chapter 10	Indigenous Cultural Adaptations.....84
Chapter 11	Who Will Solve the Leadership Problem?.....95
Chapter 12	Strategy for Greater Growth.....101
Chapter 13	Preparation for Political Change.....113
Appendices	123
Bibliography	149

by the messages of the prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. But there is no record in the Old Testament of the widespread dispersion of the Jews that took place during that time.

However, we now have records showing that before the time of Christ, there were Jewish colonies in China, India, Ceylon, Arabia, Persia, Ethiopia, along the East Coast of Africa, and in all the countries around the Mediterranean Sea. Wherever they went, they maintained both their ethnic sense of being a separate people and their religious sense of belonging to Yahweh, the Creator of heaven and earth. Perhaps because they regarded God as the God of all the earth, they could feel at home anywhere.

Especially interesting is the existence of Jewish colonies in China. China was known to the Jews in the days of Isaiah, being mentioned in Isaiah 49:12 by the name of Sinim. Silk, which came only from China, is mentioned in Ezek. 16:10, 13. Perhaps it was in connection with the silk trade that the Jews first travelled to China. From the time of the Han dynasty (206 B.C.-221 A.D.), there are records of a Jewish colony at K'ai-feng, Honan. This colony continued in existence up until the first part of the nineteenth century (White 1966:32). The pattern of their synagogue there resembled more the pattern of Solomon's temple than the pattern of the synagogue structures found elsewhere (DeRidder 1971:61). They claimed themselves to be the descendants of Abraham, and perpetuated Jewish customs and religious worship, until the community ceased to exist because of gradual migration of its members to other places.

The widespread scattering of the Israelites had great significance in the development of the Jewish religion and in the rapid spread of Christianity as recorded in the book of Acts. The prophets interpreted the scattering as an inevitable punishment for their rebellion toward God and disobedience to his covenant (Lev. 26:33; Deut. 4:27, 28:64, 30:1-3; Jer. 9:12-16). Rabbi Eleazar had another interpretation when he said, "The Holy One, Blessed be He, dispersed Israel among the nations in order that proselytes should be added to them" (DeRidder 1971:75).

How did the Jews maintain their distinctive religious beliefs when they lived in scattered minority groups among pagan and idolatrous peoples? Their secret is found in (1) their home religious practices, and (2) the establishing of synagogues and Sabbath observance.

The Jews in dispersion protected their families from Gentile influence by their family prayers led by the father as the priestly head of the house, and by the weekly religious ceremonies where preparations were made by the mother. It was the high quality of Jewish homes that attracted many Gentiles to the Jewish faith in the Roman Empire.

The establishment of synagogues for community worship and to serve as religious schools also buttressed the Jewish community against influence by other religions. It was here also that the Gentiles who were interested heard the Jewish scriptures read and explained and learned what it meant to live according to God's law.

The early Christian missionaries first approached the synagogues of the dispersed Jews to present their message in new places. It was in the synagogue among the Gentile proselytes and "God-fearers" that they found receptive people open for the Gospel. Then through them they had further entrance into the wider Gentile communities.

The Apostle Paul borrowed the synagogue model of worship and organization for use in the establishment of Christian churches throughout the Roman Empire.

Another development of the faith of Israel resulting from the dispersion was that they still considered themselves as God's people, even though they were separated from Jerusalem, their spiritual capital. They learned that political loyalty was not the same as religious loyalty. They could become loyal citizens of the countries where they lived, and religiously still be faithful to God alone.

And finally, their living in the midst of the nations resulted in the translation of the Old Testament Scriptures into other languages.

#### A SPECIAL MESSAGE TO THE EXILES

The prophet Jeremiah had a special message from God to the Israelite exiles in Babylon (Jer. 29:1-14), and this message has much to say to migrant peoples of our day as well. Some of the important things to note are:

(1) It was God who sent them into exile (verse 4). God was working in their circumstances according to his plan (v. 11). This helps people to look beyond the seeming meaninglessness of their experiences, and find a wisdom greater than their own at work in their lives.

(2) They were to establish themselves in the foreign land by building houses, planting crops, and raising families (v 5-6). They were to increase their numbers and their wealth wherever they were. This implied God's blessing on their homes and their work.

(3) They were to seek the welfare of the countries in which they were scattered, and to pray for God's blessing of peace and prosperity upon the Gentiles around them (v. 7). The promise given to Abraham that God would bless all the families of the earth through him would be partially fulfilled through Abraham's descendants in the dispersion.

(4) God would hear their prayers wherever they prayed, if they turned to him in sincerity (v. 12-13). They would become aware of God's omnipresence in new ways, even in foreign lands.

(g) God promised to gather them from all the places of dispersion and to restore them to their original homeland (v. 10, 14). Thus they had hope for a wonderful future.

God's activity of scattering his people among the nations is not only found in the history of the Jews. In the past two hundred years, in the Protestant missionary movement, God has been moving his people to go out into every country of the world to proclaim the Gospel to all ethnic peoples, to persuade them to become Christ's followers, and to lead them to participation in Christ's church. In our day Christian believers from many nations are going to other nations, not only as sent missionaries, but in business, as government representatives, as United Nations officials, and in other capacities. Some Christians have to migrate from one place to another to escape war or famine, or to find a new place to make a living. God is planting his people in the midst of all nations, as a witness for his truth, to bring blessing to all people, and to gather all his people together into his glorious kingdom. The message of Jeremiah 29 has great relevance for all the dispersed and scattered Christians of our day.

#### THE CHINESE AMONG THE NATIONS

There is another people scattered among the nations today of whom Christians should become aware. These are the Chinese. There have been Chinese merchants and traders from south China in Southeast Asia for several hundred years, but their numbers have greatly increased in the past sixty years. Table 1 shows the estimated number of Chinese in the Southeast Asian countries.

TABLE 1

Cambodia	425,000
Thailand	2,548,000
Malaysia	2,402,300
Indonesia	2,600,000
Singapore	1,579,966
Philippines	400,000
Burma	400,000
Laos	45,000
South Vietnam	600,000

The Chinese home is the secret of Chinese strength in their dispersion, just as the Jewish home is so vital in the Jews' maintenance of their own religious and cultural distinctiveness in their dispersion among the nations. The strength of the Chinese home is found in their Confucian ethic of filial piety, veneration of ancestors, and family harmony under the leadership of the father.

Haines makes the following summary of similarities between the Chinese Diaspora and the Jews:

It is often said that the Chinese Diaspora has many great similarities to that of the Jewish nation, because the Chinese and the Jews have in common a great ability to adapt themselves to their environment, a keen business sense, a common classical language, and a tenacity for work which is equalled only by their patience. Some overseas Chinese, like Jews, who are scattered over the world, are haunted in the depth of their hearts by the desire to see their homeland once again, even though the realization of this desire is often put off indefinitely for political or economic reasons (Haines 1965:31).

R. Pierce Beaver said that "Churches and missions have a threefold responsibility toward the large immigrant minorities in the world today (Chinese, Indian, Batak, etc.):

- (1) to introduce Christ to them and bring them the gospel,
- (2) to champion them against the injustice so widely practiced against them,
- (3) and to help them integrate into the national community and its culture" (Beaver 1968:101).

## IMMIGRATION IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Chinese have been bound up with the life and trade of Thailand for at least 700 years (Purcell 1965:86). When the Portuguese first arrived in the Far East in 1518, they found Chinese shippers and traders in many places, including the countries now known as the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Thailand. These Chinese came by sea from the southern seacoast cities of Canton, Swatow, Amoy, Foochow, and Hainan Island.

In the seventeenth century Chinese were migrating to Thailand at the rate of 4,000-5,000 annually, and at the turn of the present century, the rate had increased to 19,000 annually (Moore 1974:39). Many stayed for only a short time to engage in trading, to build ships, and to return to China with their goods and profits.

Until the middle of the nineteenth century, the Emperor prohibited emigration from China and those who departed illegally were treated as outcasts (Coughlin 1960:15). One of the results of this policy was that those who stayed in Thailand for longer periods of time married Thai women, and established homes in Thailand as well as in China. The children of these Chinese-Siamese marriages usually remained in Thailand, and grew up fully assimilated into Thai society (Purcell 1965:115).

One of these was Taksin, whose father was a Teochiu tax-farmer named Hai Hong. He became an army leader and routed the Burmese who had invaded Siam and sacked the royal capital at Ayuthia in 1767. Then Taksin united the kingdom under his rule and set up his capital at Thonburi, now a part of Bangkok (Landon 1941:7). He was able to rule for only fifteen years, when a conspiracy was formed against him and he was put to death. His Chinese blood was one of the factors that his enemies used to rally support for his overthrow. However, his son-in-law, Chao Phya Chakri (1782-1809) was made king, and became founder of the Chakri dynasty, which is still reigning today. It is said that the Chakri family itself has an admixture of Chinese blood, and there were Chinese women in the harems of the later kings (Ibid 1941:8).

Following the Opium War with Britain in 1842, China was forced to grant Westerners the privilege of travel and residence in China. As a consequence Europeans began to recruit Chinese laborers for their rapidly expanding colonial possessions in Southeast Asia. The restrictive policies of the Chinese government toward emigration were officially abrogated in 1894 (Coughlin 1960:15). The commercial expansion of the European countries also benefited the Chinese shippers and merchants, who became middlemen between the the Western companies and the native populations of the various southeast Asian countries. In Thailand especially, the Thai lack of interest in anything but farming and government occupations allowed the Chinese to acquire prominent positions in trade, banking, and industrial enterprises (Moore 1974:6). They had a monopoly on rice milling and export in central Thailand and had large holdings of tin and rubber in south Thailand.

Beginning with King Taksin's reign and through the nineteenth century, Chinese who demonstrated marked ability or acquired localized power were ennobled and appointed to administrative posts. It seems that many Chinese of riches or influence were given noble rank, thus insuring their loyalty to the King. Their daughters were prized by Thai government officials because of their light complexion, and their sons had

opportunity to enter the government bureaucracy. In this way the government succeeded in gaining the support of the Chinese elite and their descendants (Skinner 1958:8).

Until the Chinese Revolution in 1911, the vast majority of Chinese immigrants were single males, who came, often with the encouragement of the Thai government, to take up occupations in which the Thai themselves showed little interest. After that, however, large numbers of Chinese women came to set up homes with their husbands in Thailand, and more distinctly Chinese communities sprang up in Bangkok and in all the major towns and cities of the country.

An idea of the increase of the number of Chinese living in Thailand can be gained from Table 2.

TABLE 2

## Chinese Community in Thailand

Year	No. Persons
1660	10,000
1825	230,000
1850	300,000
1910	800,000
1918	1,000,000
1931	1,500,000
1955	2,350,000

(Skinner 1957: tables 2, 5, 6, 8)

## PRESSURES TO EMIGRATE FROM CHINA

Professor Chen Ta made a study in 1934 of some villages in eastern Kwangtung and southern Fukien to determine the causes for emigration of families from that area to Nan Yang (South Seas). In a survey of 905 families, he found the following causes named:

TABLE 3

Cause	No. Families	Percent
1. Economic pressure	633	69.95%
2. Previous connection with Nan Yang	176	19.45
3. Losses from natural calamities	31	3.43
4. Plan to expand specific enterprise	26	2.87
5. Bad conduct	17	1.88
6. Local disturbance	7	.77
7. Family quarrel	7	.77
8. Other causes	8	.88

Out of the 905 families, 353 individuals were said to be without regular employment in their original areas (Chen 1940:61).

Economic pressures arose in that area because of an increasing population in a limited geographical area where expansion was limited by the mountains on one side and by the ocean on the other. At the same time people from those areas who had gone overseas sent back reports of the opportunities to improve their economic status in the new countries. The result was that some of the more adventurous left to seek employment overseas.

Geographic, linguistic, and clan factors are observable in the patterns of immigration. Those who went first opened the way for more relatives and friends from the same area to join them. For this reason, many of the earlier Chinese immigrants to the U.S. were from the Tai Shan area near Canton. Most of the Chinese in the Philippines were from Amoy, and most of those in Thailand were from the Swatow area.

#### WELCOME IN THAILAND

Thailand, for its part, welcomed Chinese immigrants until the early part of the twentieth century in order to meet the growing need for non-agricultural labor that was created by the country's expanding commerce. Thailand's main exports in the

past century have been rice, rubber, tin, and teak wood. The Chinese were deeply involved in developing all of these exports. Later, when the Thai saw the prosperity of the Chinese and realized that much of the country's economy was in their hands, they became alarmed, and enacted measures to restrict further immigration (Moore 1974:79).

Since 1910 the Chinese have made up about 10% of the total population of Thailand. This includes both China-born and Thai-born Chinese-speaking peoples.

The increasing size of the Chinese community was considered a threat to the government, and immigration restrictions, passed in 1937, began to be enforced in 1947. In 1947 and 1948 a quota of 10,000 Chinese immigrants was permitted. All other nations were limited to 200 each. In 1949 the Chinese quota was also reduced to 200, so that in the past 25 years the number of new Chinese immigrants has sharply declined.

It was estimated in 1955 that about one-third of the Chinese in Thailand were born in China. In 1975 the number is probably only about 10%. Children of aliens born in Thailand are all Thai citizens by birth. After the takeover of the Chinese mainland by the Communists in 1949, and the decline in value of the Chinese Nationalist passport as more and more countries gave diplomatic recognition to Red China, Thailand-born Chinese have been glad to be citizens of Thailand and to carry Thai passports for travel abroad.

Also, because of the Communist changes on the Mainland, many Chinese in Thailand have decreased the amount of money sent there, and invested it in their business ventures in Thailand instead. This has given a great boost to the economic development of Thailand in the past 25 years. Many of the older Chinese who used to think of returning to China with their families now regard Thailand as the place holding the most hope for their children and grandchildren.

Another factor contributing to Chinese adjustment to Thailand has been the government's policy of restricting schools in the

Chinese language. In 1948 all Chinese secondary schools were closed. In the primary schools (grades 1-4) ten hours a week in Chinese were **permitted**, while more than twenty hours a week in Thai were required. Education from the fifth grade up is entirely in **Thai**, with English taught as a foreign language. Chinese parents are thus faced with the alternatives of **educating** their children in the Thai language and Thai school **system**, or not educating them beyond the fourth grade (except for the few who are able to send them to Hongkong or Taiwan).

TABLE 4

## Chinese Schools in Thailand

Year	No. Schools	Enrollment	Section
1948	450	100,000	Primary, Secondary
1958	185	63,000	Primary
1966	167	40,000	Primary

(Moore 1974:258)

The Thai government has sought to restrict Chinese business activities by limiting them to certain occupations and reserving certain occupations for Thai nationals. Laws have been passed requiring a certain number of Thai workers in businesses and factories of a certain size and larger. Finally, in 1972 new laws were passed regulating alien occupations, and requiring work permits for all **aliens**.

It must be noted that in all these legal restrictions, the Chinese are not singled out, but all foreign immigration, education, and business activity are affected. However, because the Chinese are the largest foreign group in Thailand, they feel the laws were passed primarily to regulate them.

The Chinese do not complain that they are unable to marry Thai girls, or get jobs with the government, or enter the universities, or join Thai clubs—but rather that they are not permitted to run their own schools, businesses, and associations as they wish (Coughlin 1960:199).

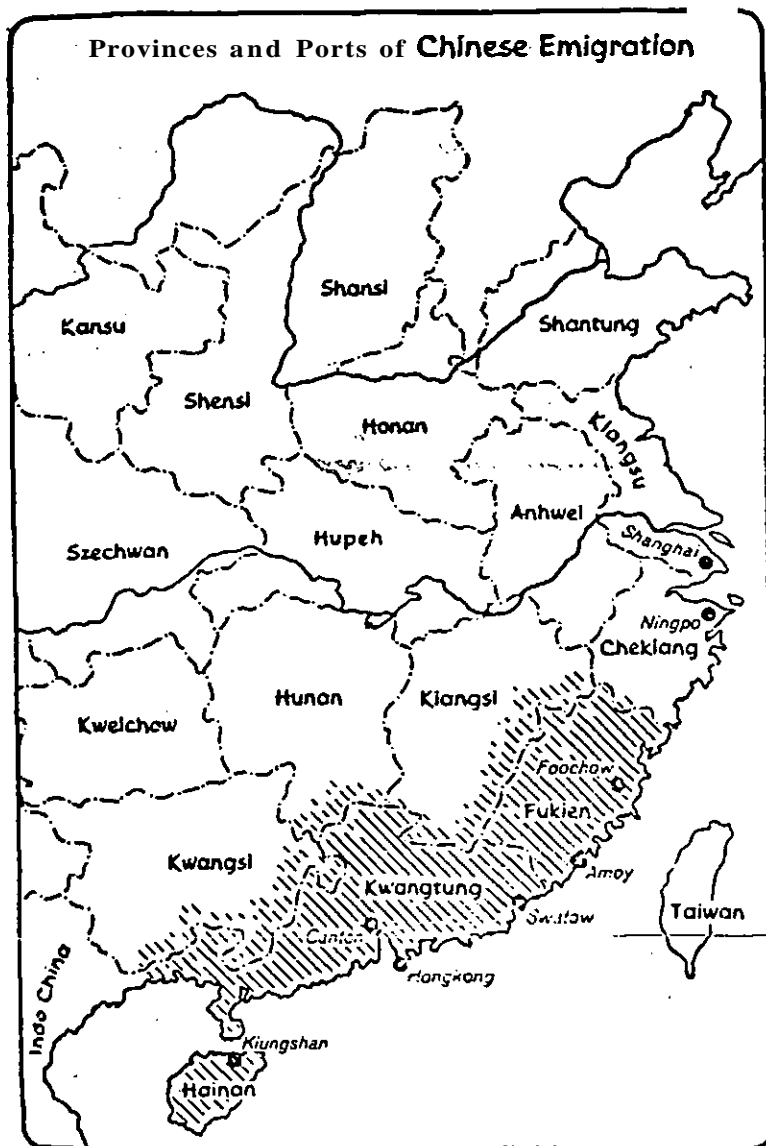
In assessing Chinese assimilation into Thai society and the relations between Thai and Chinese, Richard Coughlin makes these perceptive statements:

The outstanding fact about the Chinese in Thailand is not their stubborn retention of Chinese cultural forms, but their ability to participate successfully, without evidence of social or psychological disorganization or feelings of marginality, as dual members of their own community and of Thai society as well.

The Chinese in Thailand are not an oppressed group, and their only hope for a peaceful future is to seek a closer identification with the national interests of Thailand (1960: viii).



MAP 1



## CHINESE LIFE IN THAILAND

### LINGUISTIC DISTRIBUTION

The Chinese in Thailand are divided into five major speech groups: Teochiu, Hakka, Hainanese, Cantonese, and Hokkien. The Hokkiens (from southern Fukien) were the first to come in numbers, closely followed historically by the Cantonese in considerably fewer numbers. In the eighteenth century, especially during and after the reign of King Taksin, there was a large influx of Teochius. As a result, from the founding of the present Chakri dynasty with Bangkok as capital, there has been a large predominance of Teochius in both the capital city and the country as a whole (Skinner 1958:4).

Hainanese (from Hainan Island) began trading with Siam in the eighteenth century and settled in some numbers beginning in the early nineteenth century. The Hakkas (from interior parts of northern Kwangtung and southern Fukien) began coming about 1850.

In the two northern provinces of Chiangmai and Chiangrai there are several thousands of Yunnanese, called Haw, and remnants of the former Nationalist army who came overland from southwestern China by way of Burma.

The relative size of each speech group was given by Skinner in 1955 as shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5

Group	Size	% of Total
Teochiu	1,297,000	56
Hakka	370,000	16
Hainanese	278,000	12
Cantonese	162,000	7
Hokkien	162,000	7
Other	46,000	2
Total	2,315,000	100

The largest number of Chinese are found in the Bangkok area. In 1947 half of the residents of Bangkok were Chinese, but the proportion has decreased now because the flow of new immigrants from China has ceased since the Communists took control, and because many rural Thai have migrated to the city looking for work in the new industries. Out of the present 3,000,000 people in the greater Bangkok-Thonburi area, probably about one-fourth are Chinese.

A second major concentration of Chinese is on the Malay Peninsula in the southern section of the country. All of the five major dialect groups are to be found in its tin and rubber industries and in all the retail businesses.

Chinese will be found scattered throughout the whole country in all the cities and market towns.

#### ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

The Chinese were welcomed to Thailand originally to meet the need of the government for middlemen to expedite Thai exports of rice, rubber, tin and teak, and to distribute foreign imported goods brought by Western merchants. Traditionally, the Thai have been either peasant farmers or government officials, and not interested in commercial activities.

Chinese artisans and skilled workers were also relied on for the development of Bangkok as the capital of the Chakri dynasty.

This occupational separation between the Chinese and the Thai has resulted in the opportunity for the Chinese to acquire great economic power.

At the present time the division is not as sharp as a century ago, but the Chinese still dominate wholesale and retail trade, banking and insurance, rice-milling and export, the tin and rubber industries, and the many new light industries established in the past two decades. Many Hainanese are found in the hotel and restaurant business. Many Hakka are tailors and leather-workers. Cantonese are prominent in machine shops.

A 1952 survey (Skinner 1957:301-304) of the working population of Bangkok showed the predominance of Chinese in the categories listed in Table 6.

TABLE 6

	No. Workers	Chinese	Thai
1. Weavers and dyers	8,770	91%	3%
2. Shoemakers	1,960	96	4
3. Metal workers (base and precious)	7,540	87	13
4. Building trades	1,420	82	18
5. Hotel and Restaurant employees	4,110	88	12
6. Carpenters, furniture makers	8,480	86	14
7. Market sellers and hawkers	7,940	86	14
8. Barbers	1,350	75.5	24.5
9. Miscellaneous technicians	11,370	71.5	28.5
10. Business owners and managers	124,140	71	29
11. Business clerks	8,210	65.5	34.5
12. Tailors and dressmakers	6,600	60	40

The survey further showed Thai and Chinese about equally represented in the preparation and processing of foodstuffs and as market gardeners. The Thai were in the majority in high-status occupations as government officials and clerks, professional and semi-professionals, and administrative specialists; and in lower status jobs as hairdressers, taxi, bus, and truck drivers, domestic and service workers.

The social values and prestige goals of the Chinese in Thailand are not the same as those of the Thai. Compared to the Thai, the Chinese are materialistic and regard the acquisition of wealth as an end in itself or as a means to social position. Among the Chinese, social status is defined largely in terms of wealth and business leadership.

## SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

### Regional or Dialect Organizations

The Chinese have developed a large variety of voluntary organizations to meet the felt needs of their society. The most prominent of these are the various regional and dialect associations. Those coming from Swatow and speaking Teochiu have formed the Teochiu Association, which is subdivided into smaller groupings based on the different counties of the Swatow area. Other dialect associations include the Hakka Association, the Cantonese Association, the Hainan Association, the Hokkien Association, the Taiwan Association, and the Chiang-Che (Shanghai) Association.

The activities of these groups are varied, and include the founding of Chinese schools, the establishing of Chinese hospitals and clinics, the maintenance of cemeteries, the relief of suffering caused by fires and floods, mutual aid and support for those in special need, and some recreational facilities for ping-pong, badminton, and basketball.

Requirements for joining a regional association are not stringent, and include (1) being from that area of China or having parents from that area, (2) having two established members of the organization as sponsors, and (3) paying the

membership dues regularly. Very few women join these associations, although there are no regulations prohibiting their becoming members.

Meetings of the full membership are usually held once every two years. A board of directors is elected by secret ballot and given the responsibility of organizing and directing the activities of the association. The board of directors at their first meeting will elect the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, other officers and committees as needed. They will also engage the permanent staff which has the responsibility for doing most of the work of the organization. (Chinese churches in Thailand also follow this pattern of organization, regardless of whether they are Baptist or Presbyterian in origin.)

### Chinese Chamber of Commerce

The largest and most influential organization of Chinese in Thailand is the Chinese Chamber of Commerce. Its main functions are to promote Chinese business interests and to be the spokesman for the Chinese community to the Thai government. Membership is open to respectable business firms, individuals on recommendation, and other community associations.

### Surname Associations

Another type of association very common among Chinese in Thailand is the surname association. Membership in these may be classified according to three types: (1) those with the same surname from the same place in China; (2) those with the same surname, speaking the same dialect, but from different counties; and (3) those with the same surname, but coming from different areas and speaking different dialects. These function primarily as small welfare organizations, specializing in burials and ancestral ceremonies. Some of these have built very ornate temples to serve as ancestral halls for people of their surname in Thailand.

With the increasing use of Thai names by the second and third generations, the importance of these associations will decline.

## Benevolent and Charitable Organizations

Another kind of organization which receives strong support from the Chinese community is the benevolent association. The largest of these is the *Pao-Teh Shan Tang* (Repay-Virtue Benevolent Association), whose annual budget is about \$75,000. The most important activities of this association include emergency relief for victims of fires, floods, and other disasters, the operation of the Overseas Chinese Hospital, and funeral assistance for indigent Chinese in its own cemetery. The Chinese do not expect that the Thai government will provide welfare assistance for poor Chinese, and they have formed benevolent associations for this purpose themselves.

Charity and philanthropy are not well developed among the Thai. Giving to monks and Buddhist temples is an accepted practice, for it brings merit for the donor, but no particular value is attached to community charity or welfare programs (Coughlin 1960:60).

Every year there are a number of fires in Bangkok which may burn out a number of families who live in "row-houses." Before the firemen have extinguished the fire, the *Pao-Teh Shan Tang* people are there with food, money, clothing, and blankets to aid the victims of the fire. Because of this prompt emergency relief, this association has a good reputation and receives many unsolicited contributions from Chinese businessmen.

In addition to the Overseas Chinese Hospital, the Chinese community has established the *T'ien-Hwa Hospital*, which provides both Chinese and Western medical treatment on a charity basis. Contributions from the community have also provided the *Hsieh-ho Sanitarium* for tuberculosis patients and the *Chung-Hwa Clinic* for Chinese-medicine outpatient service.

Contributions from individuals or business firms for these charitable organizations are usually recognized by mention in the Chinese newspapers. Making large gifts for community

charity and relief is regarded as a way of gaining prestige in the Chinese community.

## Others

In addition to the above-mentioned community organizations, there are still many smaller formal and informal associations, including trade guilds, business associations, religious societies, social clubs, and mutual aid funeral societies.

## RELIGIOUS LIFE

Most Chinese consciously retain the beliefs and practices of the popular religious tradition in China, namely, Confucian social ethics, veneration of ancestors, Mahayana Buddhist doctrines, and Taoist super-naturalism. Some have adopted the Theravada Buddhist beliefs of the Thai, and many participate in the activities of the local temple. But to the Chinese community as a whole, neither organized religion nor theological speculation has a strong appeal. Generally a pragmatic attitude is held, and religious practices are important for appeasing the spirits, insuring good luck, health, and prosperity, and gaining help from the gods in times of sickness and adversity.

In 1950 there were seventeen Chinese monastery-temples with 55 Chinese monks in Thailand. Fifteen of the monasteries and 51 of the monks were in Bangkok. Virtually all Chinese monks were recruited directly from China, with almost no overseas Chinese entering the monastic order.

Chinese monks do not go about the streets early in the morning to get food from people as the Thai monks do. Instead, they receive their food from the temples to which they are attached. They are celibate, and remain in the monkhood for life. Their chief functions relate to divination, fortune-telling, exorcism of evil spirits, and funeral services.

Another religious practitioner found in many Chinese temples, especially in south Thailand, is the *tang-ki* (shaman)

or spirit-medium). When he is in a trance, he is possessed by the *shen* (spirit) of some dead person, and able to exorcise *kui* (demons, ghosts), divine the causes of illness and misfortunes, and suggest cures. They are also consulted often for winning lottery numbers and gambling advice.

Among overseas Chinese in Thailand, as in Singapore and Malaysia, the strongest surviving religious idea from China is that the fortunes of men are largely controlled by the working of *shen* (gods, spirits) and by a right propitiation of the more powerful among them. There are many *kui* (demons, ghosts) at work in the world causing disaster and misfortune. The only powers that can deal with these *kui* (demons) effectively are the *shen* (gods, spirits) (Elliott 1955:29).

This belief goes back to the Chinese idea of the two forces of *yin* and *yang* in the world. *Yang* is the positive principle, the masculine principle, the principle of light. *Yin* is the negative principle, the feminine principle, the principle of darkness. Within each human personality, both principles are at work. When a person dies, the *yin* force, called *p'u* ( 魄 ) becomes a *kui* ( 鬼 demon, ghost), that hovers around the grave of the corpse or in the places where the person was accustomed to be when alive. The *yang* force, called *ch'i* ( 氣 ) becomes a *shen* ( 神 god, spirit) in the world of shades or spirit world. After a certain period of suffering, and with the aid of the ritual sacrifices of the living, this *shen* may escape suffering in the world of shades and be promoted to a "Western heaven" of bliss and light.

These beliefs provide the basis for ancestor worship, by which it is hoped that the *kui* will not cause trouble and the *shen* will help to give good fortune. Stewart lists six suppositions that are connected with ancestor worship:

1. That after death the soul still lives on.
2. That these dead are dependent upon the living for all their needs, such as food, clothing, shelter, etc.

funds, honor, prosperity, protection, etc., which they enjoyed on earth.

3. That all these things can be transferred to them in some way, usually by burning paper imitations, but oftentimes by means many more times expensive and exacting.
4. That these dwellers in the shadow world can return good or evil to their posterity, and constantly do so, according to the treatment accorded them.
5. That the dead who are neglected by their descendants, together with those who are without posterity, are beggar spirits in the world of darkness, and are forced to eke out a wretched existence.
6. That many of the ills that flesh is heir to, such as sickness, business disaster, calamity, and death, are inflicted by these "orphan" spirits, who in attempting to avenge themselves, prey upon those in this world who are in any way responsible for their forlorn condition (1926:85).

In a study of a Teochiu village of north Malaysia, it was observed that the Teochius spent a lot of effort in trying to find out how to influence the gods (whoever they were), and in receiving necessary advice from them. Some of the differing views found were:

1. Some hold that the gods only reward the virtuous, those who live a good life.
2. Others believe it is only a matter of chance.
3. Others hold that it is only a matter of the sincere performance of family ceremonials, chief of which is the burying of one's parents piously.

4. All believe to a greater or lesser extent in the right atmosphere being created (Newell 1962:113).

In regard to their philosophy of salvation, Thai and Chinese have different ideas. The Thai have strong beliefs in reincarnation, and believe that the merit gained by feeding the Buddhist monks and by contributing to the building and maintenance of the temples will redound to one's credit in a future life on earth.

The Chinese believe that they will attain good fortune in this life and paradise after death by the intercession of the gods, and they make their offerings to these gods rather than to human beings on earth (Coughlin 1953:420).

In struggling with the question of whether or not to believe in supernatural powers, the general feeling of the Chinese is, "It is considered unwise not to believe." Doubts of the people are not about the existence of the gods, but over the methods of gaining the gods' assistance (Newell 1962:115).

Both Thai and Chinese retain many of the animistic beliefs and practices they had before Buddhism became their formal religion. These are chiefly concerned with supernatural spirits in natural objects, such as the ground, trees, rocks, ant-hills, etc. Rituals and sacrifices must be made when breaking ground for the construction of a new building to apologize to and appease the disturbed spirits. Most Thai homes will have a "spirit house" placed in the corner of the property, and offerings are made to keep the spirits of the ground contented.

## HOUSEHOLD RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

Nearly every Chinese house has a household shrine where various spirits are worshipped. Ordinarily these include a God of the Earth, a God of the House, a God of the Kitchen, a God of the Sky, and in case of merchants, a God of Wealth. There is also an ancestor shelf, but not ancestor tablets, located prominently in the home for the veneration of ancestors.

Worship practices vary, and include the burning of incense, burning of candles, bowing, and presenting of food and drink offerings. In most families, it is the responsibility of the wife to carry out these rituals. They are usually performed on the first and fifteenth day of each lunar month, and on special Chinese festivals such as New Year, Ch'ing-Ming (April), Chung-yuan (seventh lunar month), Mid-Autumn (eighth lunar month), and the Winter Festival (eleventh month).

Traditional Chinese festivals are declining in importance in Thailand, except for Chinese New Year, which is the first day of the lunar calendar. Every family makes extensive preparation for this festival, giving the house a thorough cleaning, replacing all the old god papers with new ones, preparing special foods, providing new clothes for all the family, paying up old debts, and preparing packets of money for distribution to children.

Shops are closed for 3-5 days, and the opportunity is taken to visit friends and relatives, to go to the movies, to go on outings at the beach, or just take a rest from the busy activities of the year. Many of the happiest memories of Chinese childhood are connected with New Year festivities.

## HOME AND FAMILY LIFE

The Confucian ethical teachings with strong emphasis on the home and the relationships of people within the family have given a distinguishing characteristic to Chinese family life wherever Chinese have gone in their dispersion. "Morals stem from the family, not from the gods" (Newell 1962:117). Respect of children for their elders, cooperation between brothers and sisters, and the unity of the family have stood up remarkably well in spite of the disintegrating influences of industrialization and Western individualistic education. Because of the transition of overseas Chinese from rural life in China to urban life in other countries, the extended family ideal (five generations under one roof) has been modified and the nuclear family style of living is now the rule.

Differences between Thai families and Chinese families are noticeable. The Chinese regard the family as the very keystone of **society**, and see it extending back into time for innumerable generations. The Thai have little sense of lineage, no feeling for **ancestry**, and little interest in or knowledge of kin beyond **immediate living relatives** (Coughlin 1960:78).

One of the foremost characteristics of Chinese family life is that it is patriarchal. The husband is definitely the head of the family in most homes. He is the representative of the family in kinship groupings and in general society. He is the one who participates in community organizations and social activities.

The wife usually remains in the home and her principal purpose in life is marriage and the raising of a family. She often helps in the family business in addition to her household duties. She does the daily marketing for food, and attends to the family religious rituals.

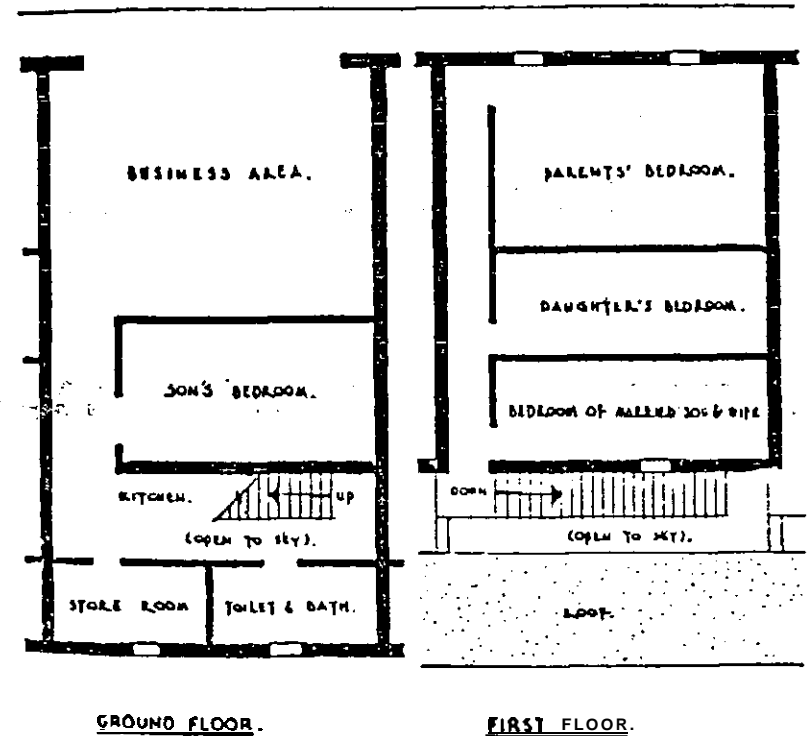
Children are taught filial piety and respect for one's elders. They are expected to submit to their parents' wishes in the matters of their education, vocation, and marriage. Parents work hard to provide the best education possible for their children and put pressure on them to excel in their studies. Children are expected to be grateful to their parents for this sacrifice, and also expected to care for their parents in their old age, providing them with both physical and emotional security.

The typical Chinese store-front house in Thailand is a two or three-storey "row-house" built of wood or bricks and concrete. The front door, usually a folding door the width of the house, opens right onto the side-walk. The downstairs is used for business. Kitchen and bathroom facilities are in the back. Bedrooms are on the second and third floors.

This combining of business and residence in the same building makes it easy for the wife and children to assist in business activities, waiting on customers, wrapping packages, running errands, etc. By this constant exposure to business trans-

actions, Chinese children grow up learning to be businessmen almost by nature.

S T R U C T U R E



#### IMPORTANT FAMILY CEREMONIES

"Chinese say explicitly that marriage and death are the two major ritual points in the cycle of individual life" (Freedman 1957:189). Two other less important occasions in some families are the first-month celebration for a baby and the sixty-first birthday of the father and mother.

#### Marriage

The arrangement of marriage by parents is generally accepted among the Chinese in Thailand, but the parents usually

ask the son or **daughter's** acquiescence before concluding the arrangements. In cases where young people themselves have carried on a **courtship**, the final engagement and marriage arrangements are made by the parents of the two families involved. Wedding expenses include a dowry **to the bride's family**, **numerous** gifts, and usually a feast or reception. These are usually borne by the **groom's** family.

Weddings constitute a major event in the life of a Chinese family and become the occasion for strengthening **family** and kin solidarity, for raising the family's prestige in society, for enhancing the family's business connections, and for repaying social obligations.

The newly-married couple usually live with the **groom's** family, at least for a few years. The daughter-in-law is expected to give special service to her husband's parents and to perform **many of the** menial **tasks of the** household. Her situation improves greatly with the birth of her first baby, and especially so if it is a boy. Divorce is very uncommon in Chinese society.

## Funerals

Among overseas Chinese funeral customs show less change from China than marriage customs do. As noted in religious beliefs above, the living and **the dead** are interdependent and can affect each other's welfare. This makes it mandatory for a proper funeral to be held for one's parents or grandparents. The funeral services may last from three to seven days, and are held either at the home or at a Buddhist temple where there are facilities for such ceremonies. Not all temples have the **facilities**.

The first requirement of a Chinese funeral is a crowd, a large body of people to follow the hearse. Practically all of the regional and surname associations have their own cemeteries and operate mutual aid "death benefits" of some sort. **Assistance** given to the bereaved family includes:

(1) Payment of a sum of money from the organization to help the family cover funeral **expenses**.

(2) Visits by association members to the dead person's house to pay their respects and make individual cash gifts to the family.

(3) Participation by the association members in the funeral ceremonies.

The bereaved family will issue funeral notices to relatives, neighbors, friends, and business associates. The ceremonies are held in the evenings and are **followed** by refreshments. The burial service usually takes place **in** the forenoon or **early** afternoon of the last day of the ceremonies. The bereaved **family** provides lunch for all who attend the burial **ceremony**. The Thai disposal of **the corpse** is **by cremation** at the **Buddhist** temple, but the **Chinese** almost universally insist on burial. There is a tendency among the wealthy overseas Chinese to spend large sums of money for very ornate **tombs**.

**In** the traditional Chinese funeral ceremony, replicas of houses, **furniture**, paper money, **clothing** etc., are burned to provide the dead with these things to use in the nether world. There are women mediums in every Chinese community who profess to be able **to contact the spirits of** the dead, and they are consulted by the bereaved **family** to see if the departed ghost is content with the things sent **him**.



## CHINESE BAPTIST CHURCHES

The first Protestant missionaries to reach Siam were the Rev. Carl Augustus Friedrich Gutzlaff, M.D., a German, at first sent out by the Netherlands Missionary Society, but later working on his own, and the Rev. Jacob Tomlin, an Englishman, of the London Missionary Society. They arrived in Bangkok on August 28, 1828. Dr. Gutzlaff left for China in 1831, and Mr. Tomlin left in January 1832. Their only convert to Christ during these three years was a Chinese, named Boon Tee.

In 1832 Boon Tee assisted the first Congregational missionary to Thailand, the Rev. David Abeel, M.D., and in 1833 also helped the first American Baptist missionary, the Rev. John Taylor Jones. In 1836 Boon Tee fell victim to opium and gave up his Christian profession (Wells 1958:7).

The first American missionary to work in Siam was the Rev. David Abeel, who reached Bangkok in 1831. He was sent out by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM). Assisted by Boon Tee, he conducted services on Sundays for small groups of Chinese. In 1834 two more ABCFM families arrived, the Rev. and Mrs. Charles Robinson and the Rev. and Mrs. Stephen Johnson. Mr. Robinson worked among the Thai and Mr. Johnson among the Hokkien Chinese.

In 1838 Mr. Johnson baptized a very capable Chinese teacher, Qua Ki-Eng. He was a Hokkien from Amoy and had married a Cambodian wife (Wells 1958:9). He was the grandfather of the Rev. Boon Tuan Boon Irt, who was educated in the United States by Dr. Samuel House, a Presbyterian missionary. He graduated from Williams College and Auburn Theological Seminary, and was ordained in 1892. He acquired U.S. citizenship the same year, and returned to Siam in 1893, where he had ten years of service for Christ before he died of cholera in 1903.

Mr. Johnson was transferred to China in 1846, and in 1849 the work of the ABCFM was discontinued. Their eighteen years of work had resulted in the conversion of one Chinese and not a single Thai.

In 1829 Dr. Gutzlaff sent a letter to the churches in America urging them to send missionaries to Siam. As a result, the American Baptist Mission transferred the Rev. and Mrs. John Taylor Jones from Moulmein in Burma in 1833. He found the Chinese more responsive to the Gospel than the Thai, and in December 1833, he baptized four Chinese. Two of them had been instructed in the faith along with Boon Tee by Dr. Gutzlaff and Dr. Abeel.

In 1835 the Rev. William Dean, American Baptist Mission, arrived in Bangkok and took up the study of the Teochiu language. In 1837 he organized the first Asian Protestant Church in the Far East with eleven members, eight Westerners and three Chinese. Soon three more Chinese were converted. In 1840 the church had nine Chinese members, and in 1841 seven more Chinese were added.

After the signing of the Anglo-Chinese treaty concluding the "Opium War" in 1842, the Rev. and Mrs. Dean moved to Hongkong. In 1843 they organized the first Chinese church in Hongkong with two Teochiu believers from Bangkok and the first two Chinese Christians to be baptized in Hongkong. These two Teochiu, Chek Sun and Chek Ee, were the first Christians to preach the Gospel in Swatow. For this they were beaten and imprisoned (Hervey 1892:468).

The American Baptist Mission began work in Swatow in 1861 and this work developed into the strongest Baptist mission in China. By 1897 the Baptist churches in that area had 1,037 members, and by 1950 they had 9709.

Dr. William Dean moved back to Bangkok from China in 1864 and spent another twenty years evangelizing the Chinese. The 1883 statistics for Baptist Chinese work in Siam report five churches and six chapels, with a total of 500 members. However in 1884, the year Dean returned to America, the report shows only 100 members. The decline is attributed to the power of mobocracy in Bangkok and the return of the Chinese to Hongkong and China. The Baptist Mission did not assign any more missionaries to Thailand until 1952.

## THE MAITRICHIT CHURCH AND THE TWELFTH DISTRICT

The Swatow Baptist Church started by Dean declined to 13 members in the years 1889-1895. Then there was an upswing in membership until it reached 138 in 1907. This was largely due to the migration of Christians from Baptist churches in the Swatow area. In 1935 the congregation built a large three story church building, with an auditorium that will seat 400.

Dr. John Sung, famed Chinese evangelist, visited there during the years 1937-39 and held two series of revival meetings. He was a charismatic preacher of great spiritual power, and attendance at his meetings reached 1500 in the closing days. Healings were reported after his prayers for the sick, and many were converted to Christ, weeping as they confessed their sins. Rev. Graham Fuller, a Presbyterian missionary in Bangkok, told the writer that he experienced the new birth himself during Dr. Sung's meetings. Members of the three Chinese churches in Bangkok at that time organized witness teams and sought opportunities to preach Christ in homes and on the streets. Spiritual renewal resulting from Dr. Sung's ministry strengthened the Chinese Christians for the years of suffering under Japanese domination 1941-45.

Since the end of World War II, this Swatow Baptist Church, now called the Maitrichit Chinese Baptist Church, has grown steadily from 178 members in 1948 to 750 members in 1974. This church operates a primary school with more than 1200 students in downtown Bangkok and a secondary boarding school with 150 students at Bangsaen Beach, 70 miles southeast of Bangkok.

The members of the Maitrichit Church, with the cooperation of the American Baptist missionaries who were transferred to Thailand after the takeover of China by the Communists, have established several new churches both in Bangkok and in some rural areas. These are now grouped together in the Twelfth District of the Church of Christ in Thailand.

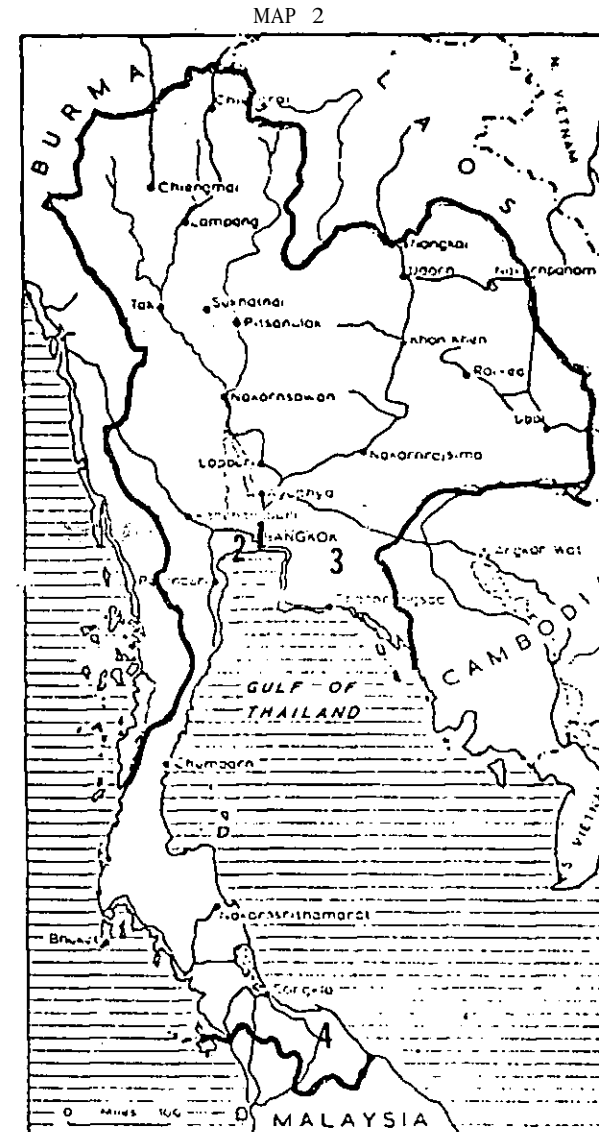
TABLE 7

### Chinese Baptist Churches, Twelfth District CCT

Church	Year of Founding	Language	1972 Members
1. Maitrichit, Bangkok	1837	Teochiu	739
2. Hua Kun Chae	1953	Teochiu	44
3. Bethel, Bangkok	1956	Teochiu	24
4. Mahachai	1956	Teochiu	14
5. Yala	1961	Teochiu, Thai	29
6. Ruamchit, Bangkok	1963	Hakka	41
7. Community, Bangkok	1966	Thai	32
8. Sacred Light, Thonburi	1967	Teochiu	50
9. Lak Tao, Bangkok	1968	Teochiu	25
Total			998

The Rev. Lim Pue Ngi, pastor of the Maitrichit Church from 1948 to 1960, opened the Bethel Bible School in 1958 to train pastors and evangelists for work among Chinese. This school has received some subsidy from Dr. Andrew Gih and the Evangelize China Fellowship. Several graduates are now pastors of

churches and several more are doing pioneer evangelism among the former Nationalist army remnants still living in Chiangrai province in the far north of Thailand. Bethel Bible School enrolled nine students in 1974, with Thai now being the main language of instruction.



Location of Chinese Churches in Twelfth District, Church of Christ in Thailand

## PRESBYTERIAN CHINESE CHURCHES

American Presbyterian work in Siam began in 1840 and has continued until the present time. Because the Baptists had already started a church among the Chinese in Bangkok, the Presbyterians decided to concentrate on work among the Thai. About 1850, when the King of Siam was urged to take action against the missionaries, he replied, "Let them alone; no one will give heed to them except the Chinese" (Feltus 1924:77).

The Presbyterians worked for nineteen years before they saw their first ethnic Thai convert. He was Nai Chune, baptized in 1859. The following year the first Siamese woman Christian, Esther Pradipasena, was baptized at the age of sixteen. She died in 1929 at the age of 85, survived by over a hundred grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

The Rev. and Mrs. Stephen Mattoon arrived in 1847 and started a day school in Bangkok in 1852. In 1853 it was changed into a boarding school, with instruction in Chinese for the 27 students who attended. Qua Ki-Eng was made head teacher, and did remarkable work until his death in 1859. His successor was Thai, and so the medium of instruction was changed from Chinese to Thai. This school, but with a different name, was the beginning of the present Bangkok Christian College (Wells 1958:25).

The first ordained minister in the Siamese church was a Chinese from Hainan Island, Ooan Si Teng, who went to Thailand in 1845. He was baptized in Bangkok in 1851 at the age of 24, and ordained to the ministry in 1872. He was able to preach in both Thai and Chinese (Feltus 1924:98).

Another Hainanese, Nai Tien Hee, was baptized in 1866. He obtained a degree in medicine at New York University in 1871, returned to Siam, and in 1880 became superintendent of a sixty-bed army hospital, the first government hospital to be run on modern lines. He became quite wealthy and gave land on Silom Road for a Christian cemetery. He also contributed a large sum for the construction of Subsampanawongs (Fourth) Church, named for his eldest son. Another son, Nai Pote Sarasin, became premier of Thailand in 1957 (Wells 1958:41).

From these and other accounts it is evident that the Presbyterian Mission had more success in converting Chinese than Thai in its beginning stages, even though their work was done in the Thai language and not the Chinese language.

In 1872, at the same time that Rev. William Dean was having some success in his Chinese church work, a Presbyterian missionary, J.N. Culbertson, requested permission from Board headquarters to study Chinese so that he could work among these more responsive people in their own language. But New York refused to grant permission, saying, "We prefer you to be a good Siamese preacher" (Presbyterian Foreign Board Microfilm, Vol. 49, Reel 229). Culbertson criticized the missionary operations on two points: (1) less time should be spent in teaching English to the Siamese; and (2) the missionary tries to do all the work himself, not trusting the native Christians who sit idly by observing the foreigners.

In 1896 the first Chinese church associated with the Presbyterian mission was organized with five Christians who had migrated from Swatow, China, and two Chinese converted in Thailand. These immigrant Christians were members of the churches founded by the English Presbyterian Mission which began work in Swatow and Chaochau (Teochiu) in 1860. By 1900 they had a church of 2,750 members, and by 1950 there were 11,000 members. Many of the Teochiu and Hakka Christian

The total construction cost came to \$150,000, of which \$40,000 was given by the Presbyterian Mission. The rest was contributed by the members of the church.

Enrollment at Chiao Kwang school increased rapidly as the figures in Table 9 show.

In 1958, additional classrooms and church staff living quarters were constructed at a cost of \$50,000, half of which was provided by the United Presbyterian Mission. In 1972 a three-story addition was made on the front side of the church property, increasing facilities for both the church and school programs. This building cost \$80,000 and was financed by the members of the church in Bangkok.

About 20% of the students enrolling in the school are from Christian families. The rest consider themselves Buddhists. A half hour of instruction in the Christian faith is given daily, with all students required to attend. The officers and members of the church regard this as the best evangelistic opportunity the church has. This is a private school where parents send their children by their own choice. The attraction of the school is that it offers ten hours a week in Chinese, as well as twenty hours a week in Thai, from kindergarten through the fourth grade. Income from tuition and fees is adequate to pay all the expenses of the school.

TABLE 9

## Enrollment at Chiao Kwang Primary School

Year	Students	Year	Students
1953	393	1964	1329
1954	335	1965	1328
1955	582	1966	1378
1956	553	1967	1527
1957	867	1968	1562
1958	1170	1969	1619
1959	1415	1969	1619
1959	1415	1970	1659
1960	1408	1971	1703
1961	1454	1972	1766
1962	1528	1973	1774
1963	1423	1974	1780

In 1961 the church bought nine rai (about 3.5 acres) of land on Klong Tan Road on the edge of Bangkok seven miles from the church location. In 1967 they opened a secondary school on this property, with a total investment of \$250,000, 90% of which was raised in Thailand. This school has grades five through ten. Instruction is all in Thai, with English taught as a foreign language. Table 10 shows the enrollment figures for the Thai Christian School (Chiao Kwang Middle School).

One of the problems of both these schools is the difficulty of securing qualified teachers who are Christian. In the Primary School about half of the 80 teachers are members of a church, and in the Secondary School less than 20% are Christian. The young people from church families do not show much interest in the teaching profession, probably because of the low pay. Salary scales in the church schools are above the levels set by the government for teachers in government schools, but they are still low in comparison to what most Chinese can earn in business. The lack of Christian teachers hinders the Christian education program of both schools.

TABLE 10

## Enrollment at Chiao Kwang Middle School

Year	Students
1967	83
1968	167
1969	230
1970	280
1971	325
1972	397
1973	409
1974	350

The evangelistic opportunity provided the church by these schools is the relationship that can be established with the

families of the students. As the teachers of the school and the pastoral staff of the church, along with the elders and deacons of the church who are on the school board, cooperate with the homes in the education of their children, it is possible to approach the parents and ask them to consider becoming Christians. Parents are appreciative of the efforts made by the church to help their children, and welcome visits by the teachers and officers of the church.

Another aspect of the day school to be considered is its relation to the church's program of Christian education for the children from church families. Parents rely so much on the school to teach the Bible to their children that they often neglect parental responsibility for family worship and instruction. The church also has failed to develop an effective Sunday School program or other method of Christian instruction. This is disastrous for those children who must attend non-Christian schools where Buddhist indoctrination takes place.

A very noticeable trend among the young people of the church since 1970 is their increasing use of the Thai language both in individual contacts and in their group meetings, with a corresponding decrease in the use of Chinese. The session of the church was aware of this, and beginning in July 1972 made arrangements for a Thai-language worship service to be held in addition to the traditional Chinese services. Response on the part of the young people was very positive, and approximately 200 are attending this worship service weekly. It should be noted that attendance at the Chinese worship service held at the same hour has not decreased appreciably. The average weekly attendance is between 350 and 400 at the Chinese service.

In 1973 half of the adult baptisms at the Sapan Luang Church were new converts from the workers of a metal factory owned by one of the deacons of the church. Beginning at Christmas 1972, he invited the pastor and young people to hold weekly meetings at the factory. By March 1974, 44 of the 100 workers

at the factory had been baptized. Then the owner built a church building and pastor's residence on his land near the factory, and proceeded to provide nurture for the new Christians as well as to continue to evangelize the remaining workers. In December 1974 steps were being taken to organize them into a new church. It should be noted that the owner is Chinese and most of the workers are Thai, and is a case where there has been an effective cross-cultural communication of the Christian faith.

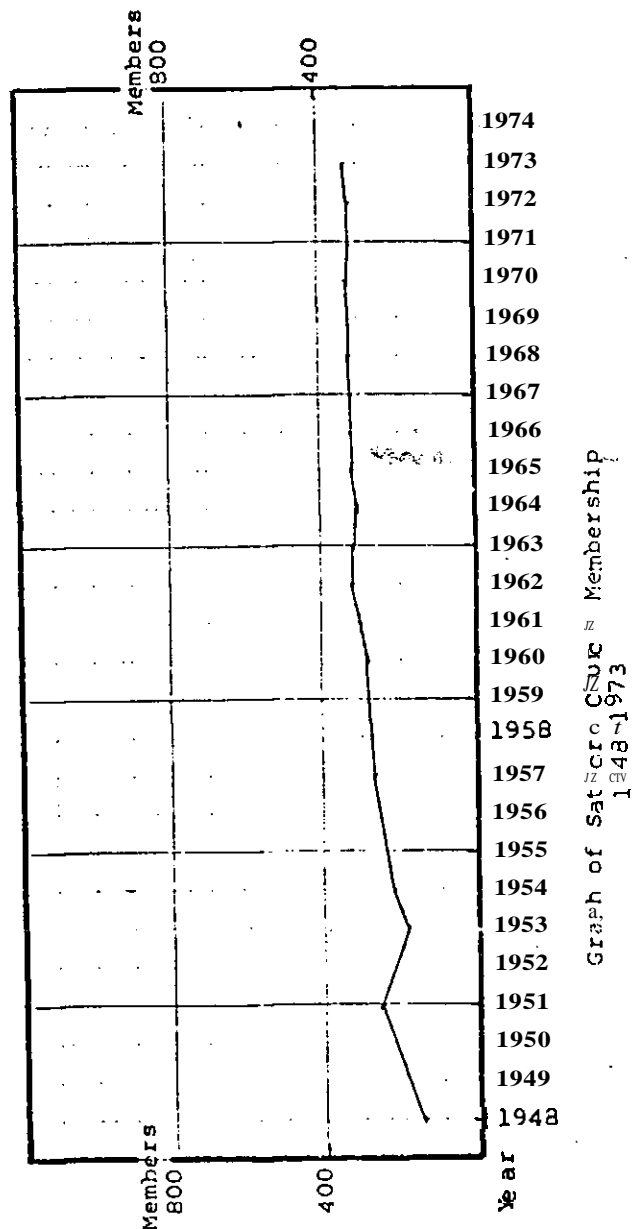
### THE SATHORN CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The Sathorn Church considers the arrival of the Rev. and Mrs. Albert Seigle in 1919 as their beginning as a church, even though services were held in Cantonese previous to that time. The nucleus for the starting of this church were Chinese Christians from Canton and Hongkong. When the Cantonese-speaking group separated from the Teochiu-speaking group in 1923, attendance was 70-80 at the Sunday services. Mr. Seigle was an ardent evangelist, and led groups of people from the church in home visitation and open-air preaching in the Chinese sections of Bangkok.

Mr. Seigle felt that it was necessary to have a Chinese pastor in order to do an adequate job of nurturing the believers and of winning the non-Christians. So, beginning in 1922, he engaged Cantonese preachers from Canton and Hongkong to assist in this work. Until 1956, all of the pastors were China-born and China-educated. One of them, the Rev. Lau Tin Wah, was led to Christ by Mr. Seigle and then sent to China for theological training. He returned in 1932 and served the church very effectively until 1940. His mother, who opposed his conversion to Christianity when he was a schoolboy in the mission school and who opposed his studying for the ministry, was baptized in December 1935.

A new sanctuary seating 250 was constructed in 1935. It was remodelled in 1969, at a cost of \$20,000, which was raised entirely in Thailand.

GRAPH 2



The membership of the church has gone up and down, showing the influence of both a mobile, migrant population, and a split in the church. Since 1961, the membership has remained about the 300 level.

The Rev. Hsu Sung Kwang, who was pastor of the church from 1951-53, got into a misunderstanding with Mr. Seigle and some of the officers of the church, and pulled out 90 members to form an independent church, named Zion Christian Church. This church later became a member of the Sixth District of the Church of Christ in Thailand, and now has about 60 members. If the average annual growth rate is figured for the 25 years from 1948 to 1973, it is 1.5% per year. However, if figured from 1960, the year that the Seigles retired and returned to the United States, the average annual growth rate is only 0.7%. The Presbyterian Mission sent an American-born Chinese, the Rev. Ed Sue, to work there from 1961-63. He was followed by another American-Chinese, the Rev. Vincent Mok, from 1963-72.

TABLE 11

Year	Members	Year	Members
1913	107	1963	314
1930	104	1964	302
1932	117	1965	316
1941	146	1966	322
1948	155	1967	317
1951	260	1968	320
1953	192	1969	324
1954	220	1970	328
1957	274	1971	320
1960	280	1972	318
1961	300	1973	326
1962	317		

The church has an active youth program, but quite a number of the best young people after seeking education abroad, fail

In the spring of 1919 a Chinese school for girls, the Loyal School, was opened on the ground floor of the Fuller residence. Mrs. Hoh Seung was the Chinese principal from 1919 to 1926. Mrs. Fuller, Mrs. Seigle, and Miss Alice H. Schaefer were Presbyterian missionaries helping the school. It was closed from 1926 to 1929 because of anti-foreign demonstrations.

When Loyal School was reopened in 1929, it faced further difficulties in the form of restrictions on the number of hours that could be taught in Chinese. Miss Schaefer was principal until 1932, and Mrs. Seigle was principal from 1932 until 1941, when the school was closed because of Japanese occupation. It was reopened again in 1946 as a co-educational school and changed its name to the Loyal Primary School. It is completely under the control of the session of the church, and presently enrolls about 400 students in grades one through four.

In 1955 Loyal Middle School was started by the church and now has 280 students in grades five to ten. Daily Bible teaching is given in both schools. The Sathorn Church has raised a scholarship fund of \$30,000 and uses the interest from this fund to support worthy students from poor homes.

The American Presbyterian Mission provided \$25,000 from its Restoration Fund in 1946 to replace the main classroom building which had been hit by an incendiary bomb during the Japanese War. However, with the approval of the Mission, the church used the money to buy additional land on Sathorn Road. In 1950 a new classroom building was finished, costing Tcs. 285,000, of which Tcs. 80,000 (\$4,000) was provided by the Presbyterian Mission. When the Loyal Middle School was started, the Mission gave \$25,000 for a classroom building. In 1962, the Loyal Primary School had to erect a new building because the municipality took some land from the school to widen Sathorn Road. The total cost was \$65,000, of which \$10,000 was given by the Presbyterian Mission.

## SEVENTH DISTRICT (CHINESE)

### CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THAILAND

Until 1932, all of the churches founded by Presbyterian missionaries were organized into the North Siam and South Siam Presbyteries of the Synod of New York. After numerous consultations, the Church of Christ in Thailand was organized in 1934, and included churches founded by the British Churches of Christ and the American Baptist Mission, in addition to the Presbyterian churches. At the time of organization, the whole church was divided into seven geographical and linguistic districts (presbyteries) called *phak* in Thai. Phaks One to Five were in northern Thailand and composed of northern Thai who spoke Lao. Phak Six included Thai-speaking congregations in Bangkok and Phitsanuloke. Phak Seven was to include all the Chinese congregations throughout the whole country. There was strong opposition to the idea of a Chinese District on the part of many missionaries and Thai church leaders, but the Chinese felt strongly that they had a necessity of being together as a homogeneous unit in order to avoid being swallowed up by the majority group. Later Phaks Eight and Nine were organized with some Thai congregations and some Chinese congregations who didn't want to join the Seventh District. These were both in the southern peninsula of Thailand.

Phak Ten, added in 1948, is composed of Karen churches, related to the Karen Baptists of Burma. Phak Eleven was formed in 1955 of Chinese and Thai churches in the Nakorn Pathom area, related to the British Churches of Christ Mission and the United Christian Missionary Society. Phak Twelve was organized in 1959 of Chinese Baptist Churches. Phak Thirteen was just organized in December 1974, and is composed of one Chinese and several Thai churches around Udorn in northeast Thailand. These churches were originally affiliated with the Christian and Missionary Alliance.

When the Seventh District was organized in 1934, seven congregations were included:



1. Maitrichit Chinese Baptist Church. This church withdrew from the District in 1953 over arguments with some Sapan Luang people over the mode of baptism. In 1959 it joined with some other Baptist churches to form the Twelfth District.

2. The Sapan Luang Church.

3. The Sathorn Church.

4. The Nakorn Pathom Chinese Church. This church withdrew from the Seventh District in 1955 to join with two Thai churches in the same area to form the Eleventh District.

5. The Cholburi Chinese Church. This church dates from 1921, and has had very slow growth. In 1974 it became self-supporting financially, and launched a campaign to raise \$20,000 to open a kindergarten under the auspices of the church. The membership was 51 in 1973.

6. The Petriu (Chachengsao) Church. In 1918 a chapel and school for Chinese was opened here with Mr. Lim Ngi Tsai as pastor-teacher. The school was later closed by the Thai government. The church split away from the Seventh District, and joined the Southern Baptist Mission in 1960 when the Baptists provided funds for them to build a new church building. Membership now is 60.

7. The Lunghuniam Church. This church was started by members of the Maitrichit Baptist Church about 1932, and was located about 80 miles southeast of Bangkok. In 1953 it was moved to Hua Kun Chae and is now part of the Twelfth District. Membership is about 60.

Since the end of the Japanese War, ten new churches have been added to the Seventh District. These all started with a nucleus of believers either from China or from one of the Bangkok churches. The largest of these is the church at Haadyai. A few Christian families had settled there from China and from central Thailand. The Chinese Presbyterian churches in

Singapore and Malaysia sent Mr. Lim Pue Ngi there in 1945 to organize a new church. They also provided most of the funds for the first building. When Mr. Lim accepted the pastorate of the Maitrichit Church in Bangkok, the Singapore churches were unable to send anyone to take his place. After mutual agreement, the church was transferred to the Seventh District, Church of Christ in Thailand, in 1948. At that time the church had 50 members. The writer was assigned to work there in 1951, after having spent three years in Chinese language study in China.

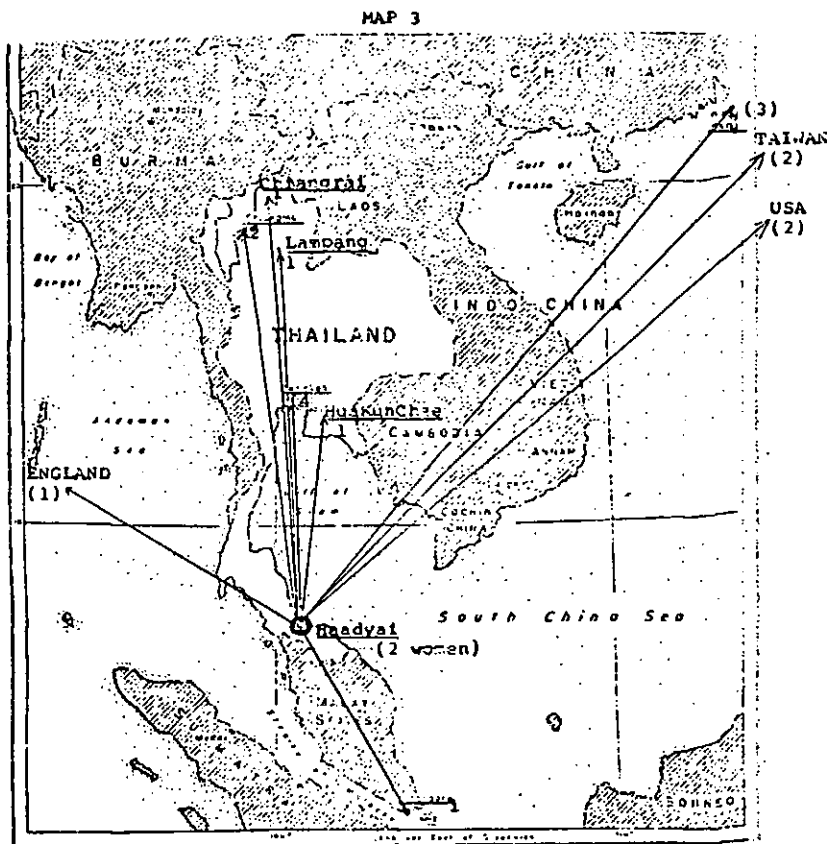
There was a Chinese community of about 50,000 in Haadyai, many of them new arrivals from other places. Business was good because of the high price of rubber during and after the Korean War. Many young people were open to the Gospel. Good Chinese evangelists from Penang, Singapore, and Hongkong were invited to hold special meetings. By 1964 membership had increased to 200, and 15 young people from the church were preparing for service in the church at Bible schools and seminaries in Bangkok, Hongkong, and Singapore. Map 3 shows the present location of these workers. The promise of Acts 1:8 has been fulfilled in the experience of the Haadyai church and in the witness of these young people who have now scattered to many places to tell people of the Christ they met in Haadyai.

In 1961 the church built a social hall and apartments for the church staff for a cost of \$13,000. In 1966 a new sanctuary and classroom building was constructed for a cost of \$40,000. Two thirds of these building expenses were contributed by the Chinese Christians of Thailand. The church is now operating a nursery school and kindergarten with 110 children enrolled.

TABLE T2

Seventh District Churches

Church	Year of Founding	Language	1973 Members
1. Sapan Luang, Bangkok	1896	Teochiu, Thai	1147
2. Sathorn, Bangkok	1919	Cantonese, Thai	326



"Beginning from Haadyai, to the Uttermost Parts of the Earth"  
 Young people converted in Haadyai, now in Christian Service:  
 Bangkok, 2 men, 2 women  
 Chiangmai, 2 men  
 Chiangrai, 1 woman  
 Lampang, 1 man  
 Singapore, 1 woman  
 Hongkong, 3 women  
 Taiwan, 2 women  
 England, 1 man  
 U.S.A., 2 men

3. Haadyai	1945	Teochiu, Hakka	111
4. Chiang mai	1951	Teochiu, Thai	68
5. Choburi	1921	Teochiu	51
6. Tepanin	1949	Teochiu, Thai	41
7. Tha Rua	1923	Hakka	12
8. Lampang	1954	Hakka	20
9. Phitsanuloke	1954	Hakka	20
10. Takli	1962	Teochiu	21
11. Suwan Galok	1965	Teochiu	29
12. Uttradit	1957	Teochiu	8
13. Chantaburi	1971	Teochiu	7
14. Bang Kaeo	1972	Hakka	22
Total			1883

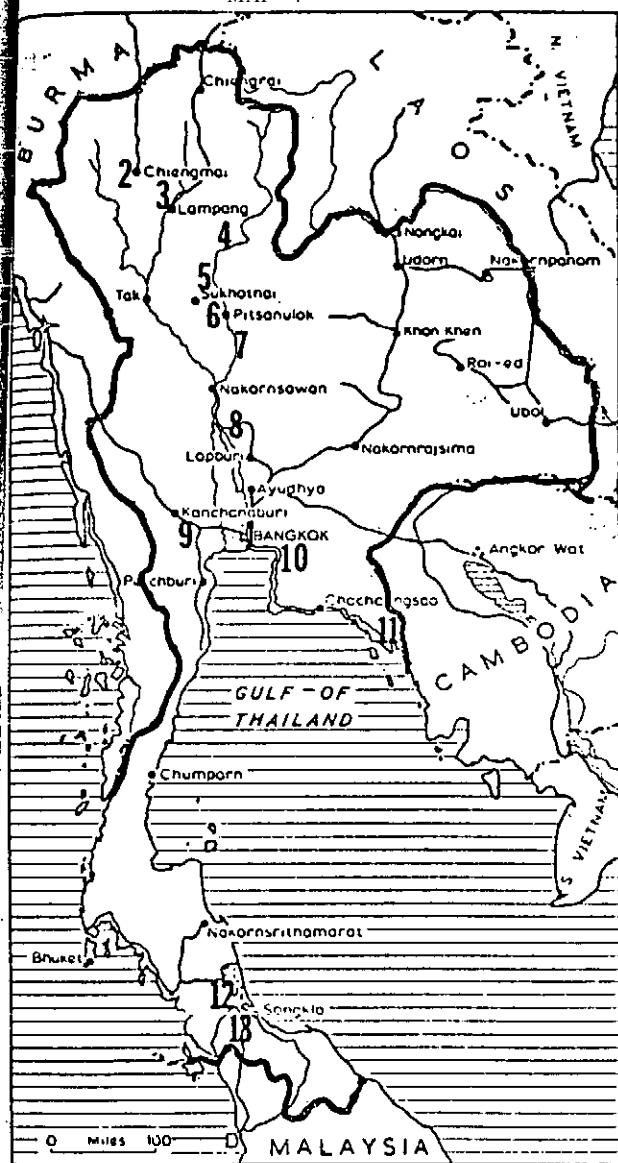
The Seventh District has established a "Pastor's Welfare Endowment Fund," and provisions are made for retirement, pension, for savings, for medical and hospital expenses, and for assistance in the education of children.

In 1941 Miss Chao Wei Chen came from China and during the years of the Japanese War conducted two training classes for church workers. A total of nine or ten men and women attended, of whom five are still active in the ministry of the church.

From 1946 to 1951 the Rev. Graham Fuller sponsored a Chinese Bible School on the ground floor of his residence. Classes were held for half a day. After the Rev. and Mrs. Clifford Chaffee arrived in 1951, the curriculum and staff of the school were expanded. Miss Mary Hsu, Miss Ruth Soong, and the Rev. Abraham Hsu were secured from Hongkong as the Chinese faculty for the school. Mr. Chaffee was the principal from 1951 to 1972. Mrs. Chaffee made a great contribution to the students and to all the churches through her music training.

In January 1960 the school was officially registered with the Thai government as a religious school, under the name "Bible Training Center." The three-year course of study included Bible, Christian Education, music, and evangelism. Classes

MAP 4



Location of Chinese Churches in Seventh District, Church of Christ in Thailand

were held in Chinese, Thai, and English. In July 1960 the school purchased a new site on Sawaddi Lane, Bangkok, and men's and women's dormitories, principal's apartment, and a library were constructed.

For many years entrance requirements included a seventh-grade education, with a knowledge of both Thai and Chinese. Now a tenth-grade diploma is required for entrance. Three-fourths of all the pastors and preachers in all the Chinese churches in Thailand are former students of this school.

In 1970 the name was changed to Bangkok Institute of Theology in an attempt to upgrade standards. It is an associate member of the Southeast Asian Association of Theological Schools.

The Board of Trustees of the Institute is elected by the Seventh District, and the Seventh District takes responsibility for the financing of the school. Since 1960 the American Presbyterians have made an annual grant of \$2,500 toward the operating expenses of the school. Previous to 1972, the District had succeeded in raising \$25,000 in endowment funds. Beginning in 1973, a new five-year drive for endowment funds was begun. The goal is to raise another \$35,000 by the end of 1977. If this campaign is successful, the school should be able to continue its vital work without subsidy from abroad.

## OTHER CHINESE CHURCHES

In the Eighth District of the CCT there are seven congregations, five of them Chinese. In 1973 the District reported a total membership of 503, of whom 350 are estimated to be Chinese. In this District, Chinese congregations are found in the towns of Ratburi, Petburi, Thepsakae, Chumporn, and Bandorn.

In the Ninth District, in the Trang area there were several Chinese churches before the Japanese War. In the city of Trang one-third of the church members were Chinese, and Sunday services were held in both Thai and Chinese. Since the war the Chinese service has been discontinued and the church is now completely Thai-speaking. However, the main leadership in the church still comes from Chinese families.

Former Chinese-speaking churches in Huey Yot and Kantang have also become Thai-speaking.

In 1906 the British Churches of Christ sent Dr. and Mrs. Percy Clark and Miss Halliday to Nakorn Pathom. Till 1942 they worked through village evangelism, schools, hospital, by river boat, by foot, by cart, to win men and women to Christ. They had about 900 baptisms, of whom the large majority were Chinese. During the Japanese War, the Clarks were interned, some of the Chinese congregations moved out of restricted areas, and many others were scattered to other places never to return to Nakorn Pathom to live (McGavran 1956:6).

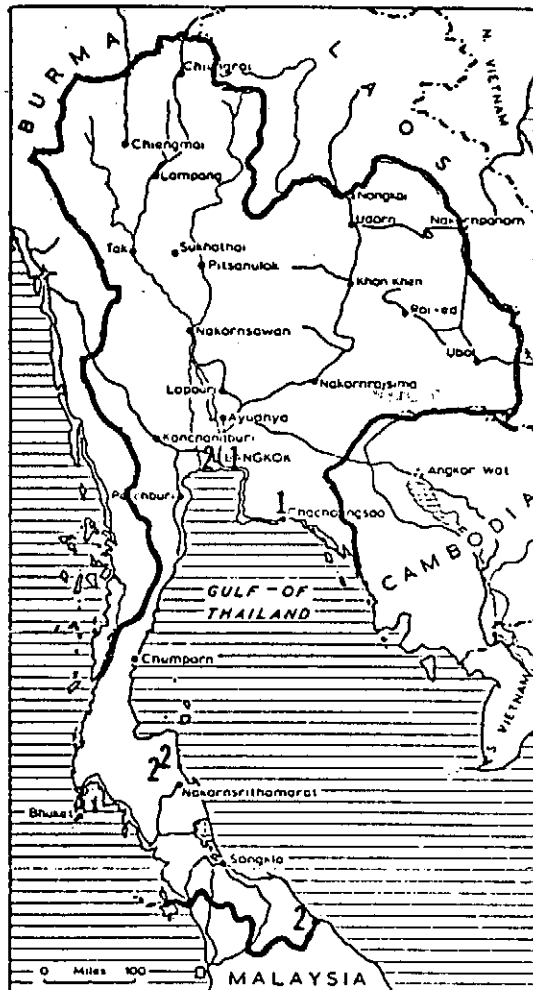
After the war the missionary work in that area was taken up by the United Christian Missionary Society from the United States. Dr. Donald McGavran made a study of the Thai and Chinese churches in Nakorn Pathom in 1956, and came to the conclusion that the Chinese showed the most promise for a growing church. He said, "The staunch faith of the Chinese church, the upstanding character of its members, their willingness to contribute, their self-respect, and recently the fervency of the prayer life of the younger group, all combine to make me believe that if there is any church which can be fanned into a spreading flame, it is the Chinese church" (McGavran 1956:12).

In 1973 the Chinese church in Nakorn Pathom numbered about 200 resident members.

### CHINESE CHURCHES OF OTHER MISSIONS

1. *The Christian Brethren Mission at Puket and Thungsong.* Christian Brethren from England began work on the island of Puket in 1882. In 1889 one of the Chinese believers gave his two-storey shophouse to the church for a meeting place. The church in Puket is still meeting there. A group of about 100 believers, nearly all men, was built up by 1929. Many of them had Thai wives who refused to become Christians. Later during the Japanese War, many of these men died or moved away and the church went down to less than thirty members. Through the dedicated work of several missionaries, some of whom know Mandarin, the church has been built back up to about 100 members again.

2. *The Seventh-Day Adventist Mission.* This mission opened a definite work for Chinese in 1918, when they sent the Rev. and Mrs. E. L. Longway to Bangkok. Their work did not begin to grow until after the Japanese War, when they established a large modern hospital in Bangkok, and clinics in Puket and Haadyai. They have developed Chinese Churches in Bangkok, Puket, and Haadyai, both from new converts through their hospital and school work and from the enticement of members of other churches. They are also operating a very successful English school in Bangkok.



Chinese Churches not affiliated with the Church of Christ in Thailand

1. Southern Baptist  
Bangkok (3)  
Cha choengsao
2. Christian Assembly  
Bangkok (2)  
Chandi  
Naborn  
Narathiwat
3. Brethren  
Phuket

## MISSIONS: FIRST NEGLECT, THEN DISCOURAGEMENT

### NEGLECT BY THE MISSIONS

The brief survey of **the** history of Christianity in Thailand has shown that at several times in the past one hundred and fifty years, Chinese have been thought to be more responsive to the Christian **message** than the Thai. At the same time the missions made only a very little effort to establish churches among the Chinese, and preferred to have most of their missionaries learn Thai and attempt to build up a Christian church among the Thai people. What poor strategy it is to neglect the responsive people and concentrate on the **resistant!** It is as if a farmer overlooked the ripened grain field and tried to harvest a field where the grain was only half grown.

How can this missionary strategy be explained?

(1) Missionary **strategists** were hoping to establish a permanent church in Thailand, and **they** thought that could only be done by concentrating on the Thai people. They **considered** the Chinese as living in Thailand temporarily and then returning to China. Therefore work among the Chinese would be wasted effort toward establishing a permanent church in Thailand. **If** a missionary had a concern for the Chinese, **he** usually went to China if possible.

However, the mobility of the Chinese should be seen as an asset for the wider spread of the Gospel. Earnest Chinese Christians, firmly grounded in Christian truth, with a vital experience of the living Christ, and instructed in methods of church planting, could themselves become the ones who would help in a more rapid spread of the Gospel to different areas.

(2) Most Protestant missionaries in Thailand were from the majority race in their own country and unconsciously identified with the majority people in Thailand—the Thai. They expected minority peoples eventually to be assimilated into the majority people's society, adopt their language and customs, and become like the majority group. There have been American missionaries who told the Chinese, "You must become Thai." What an effective way to squelch Chinese responsiveness to the Gospel! The largest mission group now in Thailand, when they began work in Thailand in 1951, made it their official policy to reach the Chinese through the Thai language. One wonders how many Chinese have become Christian in the 24 years of work under this policy?

Dr. Donald McGavran's statement that people do not like to become Christian if it requires their crossing racial, linguistic, or class barriers (1970:198), should be considered by all cross-cultural missionaries. The Chinese have self-respect. They are proud of their five thousand years of continuous culture. They like their own language, and have a special esteem and respect for any foreigner who is interested in them enough to learn their language.

(3) Most Americans are not proficient linguists. Having worked hard to learn Thai, they want to use it lest they lose it. The thought of having to learn Thai first (because they are living in Thailand), and then learn Chinese too (because they want to reach the Chinese), is too great a task for the average American missionary. Missionaries further excuse themselves from learning Chinese by saying that in another twenty years the Chinese will all be speaking Thai. It is true that many of the young people from Chinese families now speak more Thai

than Chinese. But it is not true to say that Chinese will cease to be spoken in Thailand in another 20 years, or even another 50 years. The Chinese are not about to give up their beloved language and culture that easily.

(4) Missionaries have not been prepared to deal with the diverse elements of the population in Thailand. In reality the population of the country is a mosaic made up of many different peoples: Thai, Chinese, Malay, Karen, Lisu, Meo, and others. Thai themselves may be divided according to central Thai using the Bangkok dialect, northern Thai speaking Lao, and southern Thai with their distinctive southern language. Then there is the distinction between ethnic Thai and Thai of mixed Thai-Chinese parentage. Then there are aliens who have become nationalized Thai citizens. There are also Vietnamese and Cambodians. The Chinese are sub-divided into at least eight linguistic groups, so even the Chinese cannot be approached as one homogeneous unit. The hill tribes of north Thailand also include almost 10 different tribes, with different languages and different customs.

This diversity makes the missionary task extremely difficult. But effective missionary strategy calls for the recognition of the different homogeneous units, for seeking to determine their degree of receptivity for the Gospel, and for the concentrating of efforts where it seems that God has prepared a ripened harvest. It is unrealistic and self-defeating to attempt to approach all these diverse groups through the medium of the Thai language. It is also a mistake to think that one approach will be effective for these different peoples.

From the standpoint of Biblical theology, Christians believe that God is the creator of all the peoples of the earth. God desires to be glorified in each and every one of the cultures of men. Just as every individual Christian can glorify God in his own particular way, even so every culture can give honor to God in a distinctive way. God does not make all individual Christians alike, nor does He require that all of the cultures of the world be changed into a uniform pattern.

The pluralism of peoples and cultures complicates the missionary task, but at the same time it provides an opportunity to see the amazing grace of God at work in many different ways.

This diversity of peoples can only be reached by the Gospel as more Christians of all races and cultures think about effective methods of cross-cultural communication. To insist that the receptors become like the communicator (be he American, Japanese, Chinese, Thai, or Karen) is to be certain of failure in communicating Christ.

understood that the Baptists would have the Chinese as their main sphere of evangelization. Even though there were no Baptist missionaries in Bangkok 1842-1864, and after 1884, the Presbyterians still did nothing until the migration of Chinese Christians from Presbyterian churches in China put pressure on them.

Those missions which were working in the various south China coastal areas in most cases did not have missions in the Southeast Asian countries to which the Chinese migrated. Those missions could have continued work among those same linguistic groups in Southeast Asia after the Communists took the mainland. But in most cases they did not do so.

There were two missions in the Swatow area—the English Presbyterians and the American Baptists. In 1952 the Baptists sent three or four of their Teochiu-speaking people to Thailand. They found a warm welcome on the part of the Chinese. Thailand had not been an area of work for the English Presbyterians, and so they sent none of their missionaries to evangelize the Teochiu in Thailand.

The American Presbyterians had a number of missionaries on Hainan Island, but the two families transferred to Thailand did not attempt to found churches among the 278,000 Hainanese there. None of the Presbyterian missionaries were sent to Singapore, Malaya, Vietnam, or Hongkong, where there were quite large numbers of Hainanese.

Missions among the Hakka people in China included the American Baptist, English Presbyterian, London Missionary Society, and Basel Mission. There are an estimated 400,000 to 500,000 Hakka Chinese in Thailand, but the only Hakka-speaking missionary to be transferred to Thailand was Miss Louise Giffin of the American Baptists. She could have had a great ministry among the Hakkas in Thailand, as the Hakkas love and respect her, but her mission assigned her to school work where she was kept tied down, and thus unable to carry out any church-planting work in the Hakka communities. However, she was instrumental in helping to establish one Hakka church in Bangkok, and could have established more if her mission had given her the opportunity.

#### DISCOURAGEMENT OF EX-CHINA MISSIONARIES

On the other hand, most of the ex-China missionaries who were transferred to Thailand after 1950 had learned Mandarin in China. In Thailand most of them found little opportunity to reach the Overseas Chinese through Mandarin, so they either learned Thai and worked with the Thai Christian community, or they became discouraged and sought other places to work.

The Christian and Missionary Alliance assigned the Rev. E. A. Truax to their field in northeast Thailand from 1952 to 1962, but he felt handicapped because so few Chinese he met could speak Mandarin and he could not speak Teochiu. He studied some but did not become fluent in it. He was further limited by the Mission policy which did not allow him to engage a Teochiu assistant. The only Chinese church in the CMA area is found in Udorn, and it was established by the Chinese themselves. A few Chinese Christian families living in Korat and Ubon were expected to join the Thai churches and they were spiritually starved as a result. The other ex-China CMA missionaries have all gone into Thai work.

The Southern Baptist Mission provides another example. Some of their first missionaries in Bangkok in 1949 and 1951 could speak Cantonese, and some could speak Mandarin. Thai-

# GROWTH OF THAI AND CHINESE CHURCHES COMPARED

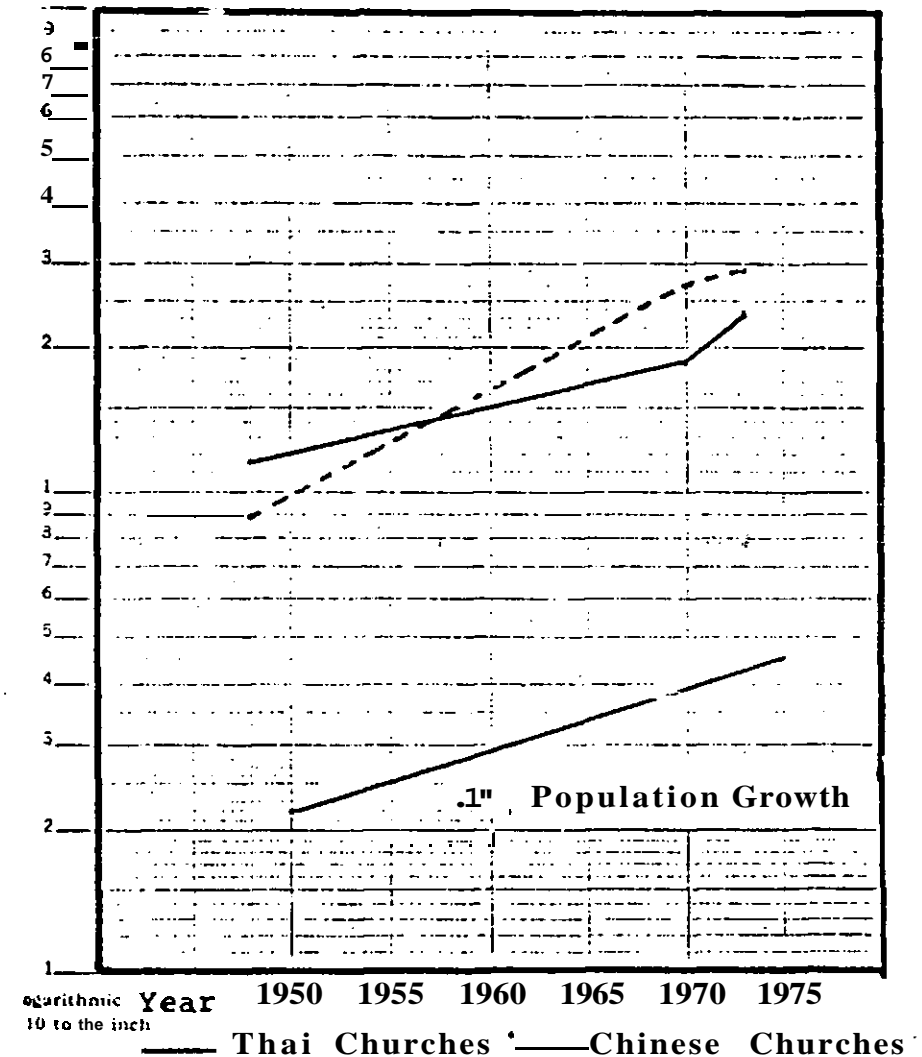
In order to gain a clearer understanding of the receptivity of the Chinese to the **Gospel**, let us compare the growth of the Thai and Chinese churches in the Church of Christ in Thailand, especially in the 25 years from 1948 to 1973.

First of all, consider the graph showing the total number of communicant members of the Church of Christ in Thailand from 1920 to 1973, based on figures provided by the office of the General Secretary of the CCT. In looking at this graph of **growth**, we can divide it into three periods, from 1920 to 1945, from 1945 to 1970, and from 1970 to 1973.

In the first 25-year period, membership increased from 8,000 to 10,000, for an average **annual** growth rate of only .9%. Thai Buddhists were very resistant to the Gospel as preached by the missionaries. The great Depression in the middle of this period and the Japanese War at the end also influenced mission work **greatly**.

The 25-year period following the Japanese War shows that the church grew from 10,000 members to 21,322 members, for an average annual growth rate of 3%. **Immediately** after the war, the evangelistic efforts of several Thai preachers resulted in a larger number of conversions than the Thai church had previously experienced. Enrollment at all the Christian

GRAPH 4

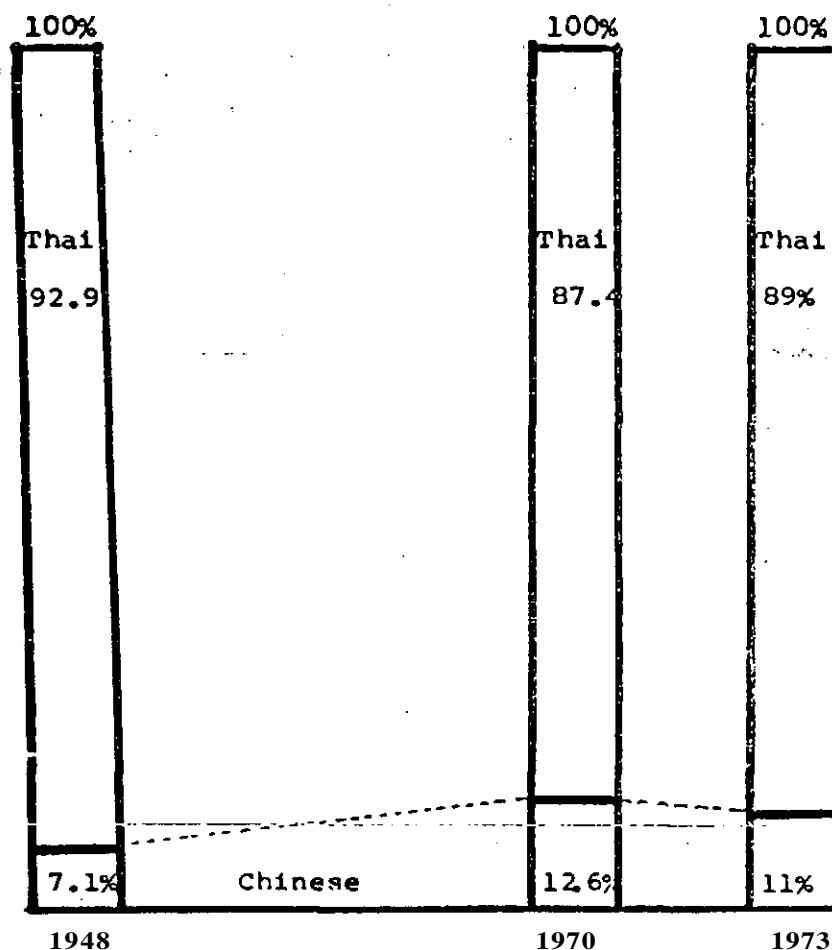


Growth Rate of Thai and Chinese Churches,  
Church of Christ in Thailand, Compared  
1948-1973

Population Growth - 3% per annum  
Chinese Churches - 5.196 per annum  
Thai Churches - until 1970, 2.1%  
after 1970, 8% per annum



GRAPH 5



Comparison of the Percentage of Thai and Chinese in the Church of Christ in Thailand

schools grew rapidly, and some students were won to Christ in the schools. The hospitals were expanded. There was a great influx of missionaries from the United States, Germany, Japan, Korea, India, and the Philippines. New efforts were initiated among university students. Rural improvement programs were launched, and a beginning was made in industrial evangelism.

If the Chinese churches in the Seventh and Twelfth Districts are compared with the rest of the church for the same period, we find that the Chinese churches had an annual growth rate of 5.1% as compared with a rate of 2.1% for the Thai churches. In 1948 the Chinese composed 7.1% of the national church membership, and by 1970 they had increased to 12.6% of the total. Does this growth of the Chinese churches suggest that there is a measure of receptivity on the part of the Chinese?

TABLE 13

Comparison of Thai and Chinese Membership

	1948	1970	AAGR
Thai Members	11,611	18,619	2.1%
% of total	92.9%	87.4%	
Chinese	889	2,703	5.1%
% of total	7.1%	12.6%	

The actual percentage of Chinese should be larger, as the figures used for comparison are only taken from the Seventh and Twelfth Districts. There are also Chinese congregations in Districts Two, Six, Eight, and Eleven which have been included in the Thai church figures, as the writer did not have access to the exact membership figures for them to determine increase or decrease over the period studied.

#### "DOUBLE THE CHURCH" MOVEMENT

In December 1970 the CCT General Assembly voted to set the goal of doubling its membership by the next General

Assembly meeting in December 1974. The original motion was presented by the Rev. Paul Manikam, a fraternal worker sent to Thailand by the Church of South India. His idea was that each Christian should lead one other person to Christ during this four-year period. He wanted all the Christians to become fruitful. Many of the pastors and church leaders had received a stimulus to plan and work for church growth through Dr. Donald McGavran's workshops on church growth in Bangkok and Chiangmai, and supported Mr. Manikam's proposal.

Figures for the first three years of the "Double the Membership" movement show that the total membership increased from 21,322 to 26,691, for an average annual growth rate of 7%. Below are the detailed figures by districts for the first three years of this special effort, as reported to the Seventh District by Elder Vibune Chowchuech, treasurer of the District.

TABLE 14

## "Double the Church" Figures by Districts

District	1970	1971	1972	1973	%	increase
1. Chiangmai	5426	6396	6662	7400		36%
2. Chiangrai	4748	4425	5500	6125		30
3. Lampang	1105	1277	1253	1325		20
4. Prae	1891	1288	1855	(1855)*		2
5. Nan	1590	1824	1934	(1934)*		22
6. Bangkok-Udon	1747	2193	2193	2554		46
7. Chinese	1779	1737	1693	1883		6
8. Petburi-Bandorn	422	459	479	506		20
9. Nakorn Sritamarat	208	242	247	304		46
10. Karen Tribes	950	874	987	1095		15
11. Nakorn Pathom	532	504	525	666		25
12. Chinese Baptist	924	981	998	1044		13

Totals 21322 22210 24526 26691 25%

\*No new report for 1973.

In this three-year period the Thai churches had an annual growth rate of 8%, while the Chinese churches in Districts Seven and Twelve combined only grew at a rate of 3%. Many of the churches in north Thailand made serious efforts to win new people to Christ, but the Chinese Christians made no comparable effort.

The growth or non-growth of the church depends not only on the responsiveness of people in the community, but also on the kind of efforts made by the Christian people for the conversion of others. If no one is being added to the church, it may be because Christians are doing nothing for the conversion of people.

TABLE 15

## Comparison of Thai and Chinese Membership

	1970	1973	AAGR
Thai Members	18,619	23,764	8%
% of total	87.4%	89%	
Chinese	2,703	2,927	3%
% of total	12.6%	11%	

## GROWTH AND NON-GROWTH IN THE SEVENTH DISTRICT

In the preceding chapter on the historical development of the Chinese churches in Thailand, mention was made of all the congregations making up the Seventh District. When the membership figures are examined over a period of years, it will be seen that the Yellow Bridge Church shows some growth, while most of the other churches remained quite static, and some even declined in membership. This is a situation that needs further analysis.

From 1948 to 1974 the Seventh District had an increase from 889 to 1982 members (123% increase), or an average annual

or three years with what seems to them a hopeless situation, the young preachers request a change to another place, and often the pattern of defeat is repeated again.

- The additions to the Yellow Bridge Church were in three categories:

- (1) Adult baptisms (conversion growth), 54% of the total,
- (2) Confirmations (biological growth), 29% of the total,
- (3) Transfers from other churches, 17% of the total.

The yearly figures for each category are given in Appendix C.

This church has had some good pastors, many capable and dedicated laymen, many strong families, lots of enthusiastic young people, two Christian day schools, and a visitation program. Every year there are two or three series of special preaching services conducted by outstanding Chinese preachers from Hongkong, Taiwan, Singapore, or Indonesia. The members of the Church have given at least \$50,000 a year for Christian work every year since 1967.

The growth and resources of the Sapan Luang Church, as contrasted with the static small-town churches, indicate that Bangkok offers the best opportunity for planting new churches in the immediate future.

## HOMOGENEOUS UNITS IN THE THAI CHURCH

There is another study that should be undertaken if clear thinking and wise strategy are to be used in planning for the growth of the Thai churches. This is the study of what homogeneous units are represented in the membership of the church. This type of study is outside the scope of this paper, but it needs to be done especially for the Thai-speaking churches in Bangkok and central Thailand.

Some of the questions for which answers need to be found are:

How many of the members are ethnic Thai?

How many are mixed Thai-Chinese? (How many generations back was the father Chinese?)

Are all the members of the family believing Christians?

In Bangkok, does the congregation cater to Christians who have come from north Thailand? from south Thailand? from the schools and universities? from the working class?

Such studies must be done in order to find different homogeneous units of people that may be receptive to the Gospel. If there are such receptive groups of people, ways must be found to provide them with the opportunity to hear the Gospel and draw them into churches where they will feel at home.

For instance, I believe that a large percentage of the members of the Thai churches in Bangkok are either ethnic Chinese or mixed Thai-Chinese who are Thai-speaking. There are very few ethnic Thai who have become Christian. I am not able to prove this by research, and I have not had opportunity to observe these congregations carefully, but I believe this to be so. I know that many of the pastors of the Thai congregations and the officers of the national church organization are of mixed Thai-Chinese parentage. This is a significant fact, and indicates the kind of people that the Thai church might approach with good results.

In this connection, a survey of the students in the Christian schools is also important. How many students are from Chinese homes? How many are ethnic Thai? If the school chaplain or the Christian teachers were to visit in the homes of the students, what languages would they need to know in order to communicate with the parents? Can these families be invited to any of the existing churches and find "their own kind of people" there?

## INDICATORS OF RECEPTIVITY

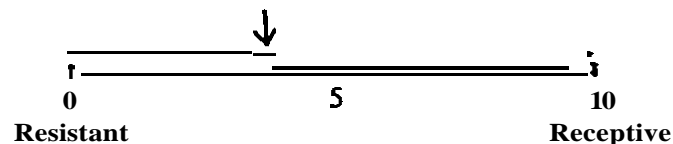
Edward Pentecost in *Reaching the Unreached* (1974: 91ff) proposes the following eight indicators to help in discerning whether or not a people is likely to be responsive to the Christian message.

1. Culture change
2. Political change
3. Economic change
4. Migratory patterns
5. Linguistic change
6. Religious change
7. Prototype image of what they would like to be
8. Degree of influence of Christianity

The changes experienced by the overseas Chinese in most of these areas would indicate that they should be quite receptive to the Gospel, if it is communicated to them in the right manner.

What is the answer to the question, how responsive are the Chinese? There are indications of both resistance and receptivity. Chinese churches in Hongkong, the Philippines, Singapore, and Indonesia have all seen much greater growth than the Chinese churches in Thailand. Chinese in those countries have been responsive to the Gospel. Why not in Thailand? There is a need to keep on studying, keep on seeking, and keep on praying until the way is found to win them to the Lord Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, where should the Chinese in Thailand be placed on the resistance-receptivity axis?



## CHINESE CONCERN FOR EDUCATION

The three largest Chinese congregations in Bangkok are all operating their own Christian day schools on both the primary and secondary levels. Some smaller congregations in the provincial towns have also started kindergartens and look forward to the development of primary schools. The initiative for these schools has come from the church members themselves, and the financing of them has been accomplished without very much foreign mission subsidy.

Some of the reasons that Chinese Christians give for placing a high priority on Christian schools are presented below.

(1) The first reason given is that their children may receive their education under Christian auspices. Buddhism is the state religion of Thailand, and taught in all the government (public) schools. The regulations covering private schools allow Christian schools to teach Christian beliefs and morals instead of Buddhism. Because Christian parents do not like to have their children indoctrinated with Buddhism in the schools, they give strong support for their own church-sponsored schools.

(2) A second reason is that they hope this will give their children an opportunity to learn more Chinese. Chinese Christians, along with the Chinese community in general, place high value on the transmission of Chinese language and culture to

their children and grandchildren, and see the school as an important place to accomplish this. Western missionaries have not often supported the Chinese in meeting this felt need. Some have seen the Chinese church schools as competitive to the mission-established schools. They also fear the Chinese schools will retard the assimilation of Chinese into Thai society. (Missionaries themselves, however, also establish their own schools for the education of their children in English, and would never allow the assimilation of their children into Thai society.) Chinese schools as operated under the present government regulations enable the students to live within both Chinese and Thai societies.

The general community regards the church's work in schools as "education for education's sake," and different from some other individually-owned private schools whose purpose seems to be financial profit. So 70-80% of the students in the Christian schools come from non-Christian families, who choose to send their children to these schools because they regard the training given as superior to that of other private or government schools.

(3) The Chinese Christians regard this willingness of non-Christians to enroll their children in the church schools as their God-given evangelistic opportunity. Great importance is placed on the daily chapel service and the teaching of Christian truth. All the students are taught to pray and to memorize Scripture. They are encouraged to attend Sunday School and youth activities at the church.

The Chinese have traditionally had a high regard for teachers. Although the position of teachers in overseas Chinese society is lower than in China, still parents are appreciative of the efforts that teachers make to educate their children. The relationship established between the school and the home provides the church with a great opportunity to approach the family and speak of the benefits of the Christian faith. In fact, wherever Christians are engaged in school work, whether as individuals or as a church organization, they should regard the bridge it

gives them to the family of the student as their greatest evangelistic opportunity.

(4) After classroom facilities are constructed, these schools are self-supporting financially, and in some cases provide resources for additional expansion of church work. Chinese businessmen are very skillful in handling the finances of the school so that it does not become a burden to the church.

The major problem facing the churches in regard to their schools is that of finding capable Christian teachers. The Chinese churches are able to raise money for school buildings, get government permission to open a school and attract large numbers of students. But the churches are not producing Christian teachers. Except for the top administrators, they must rely on non-Christians to staff the schools.

Attempts to solve this problem are being made by providing scholarship aid for those who want to major in education and by encouraging Christian young people to enter the teaching profession. However, response from the church families has been very weak.

## INDIGENOUS CULTURAL ADAPTATIONS

Christianity has been introduced into Thailand by Westerners and is generally regarded as a "foreign religion." Its institutions are foreign. The architecture of its buildings is foreign. Its music is foreign. Its emphasis on individual conversion and the separation of its members from their original social relationships also cause people to regard it as foreign. This foreignness of Christianity as introduced and practiced in Thailand constitutes a difficult barrier for the present-day missionary to overcome.

Presbyterian mission administrators have attempted to solve this problem in the following ways:

(1) By elevating Thai Christians to all places of leadership, and restricting missionaries from holding administrative positions in the church.

(2) By transfer of the ownership of mission property to the Foundation of the Church of Christ in Thailand, and by transferring authority for all educational and medical institutions to Thai Christians.

(3) By engaging a Thai lawyer to be the mission treasurer.

(4) By dissolution of the mission organization in Thailand and by placing Presbyterian personnel under the jurisdiction of the Thai church as fraternal workers.

(5) By encouraging other Asian missionaries to come and work in Thailand, in order to present an international image of Christianity.

These steps are all necessary steps if the Christian church in Thailand is to acquire a sense of selfhood, but they do not directly solve the question of foreignness and indigeneity. These steps are important for the improvement of relationships between national Christians and Western missionaries. The writer's experience as a "fraternal worker" has been a happy one, as he has been accepted as a brother in Christ by Chinese Christians and has been given opportunities to use his spiritual gifts for ministry to the church and for evangelism. He feels further that the missionary must identify himself with the Christian community as a prerequisite for evangelism which has the goal of incorporating new believers into that community. If a missionary does not have the respect and acceptance of the Christian community, how can he expect to gain the respect of the non-Christians?

But this does not solve the problem of foreignness or indigeneity of Christianity in Thailand. With Thai leaders in control of the church and the church institutions, they may choose to move in the direction of indigenous cultural forms, or they may retain the Western forms as they have received them. Furthermore, some of the indigenous adaptations made by the Chinese Christians would not be suitable for Thai Christians, and vice versa, because they represent two different cultures.

### SPECIAL OBSERVANCE OF CHINESE FESTIVALS

(1) Chinese New Year is the most important holiday observance for the whole Chinese community. Christians, like non-Christians, observe New Year's Day by cleaning the house.

If the person died at home, and if the home is large enough, the coffin will be placed downstairs in the front room for 3-7 days of funeral services. The length of the ceremonies depends on the age and position of the deceased and the convenience of the family. If the home is not large, the coffin will be taken to the church for the funeral ceremonies.

Friends and relatives are notified of the death and the funeral arrangements, by word of mouth, by printed notices, or by paid announcement in the newspapers.

If the person died at the hospital, the coffin is taken to the church, where nightly services are held. Members of the bereaved family wear mourning clothes of burlap, white cotton, or black cloth, depending on their relationship to the deceased. Friends and relatives attending the funeral are expected to wear black, dark blue, or white clothes to show their sorrow and sympathy for the family.

Friends and relatives express their sympathy by sending floral wreaths, large cloth banners with appropriate expressions in Chinese WUJs sewed onto the banner, or gifts of money to help the family with funeral expenses.

The ceremony held each night is about an hour long, and includes the following elements:

1. Statement about the deceased
2. A short Bible reading as a call to worship
3. Hymn
4. Prayer
5. Scripture reading
6. Hymn or Special Music
7. Sermon
8. Prayer
9. Hymn
10. Benediction
11. Announcement about burial time and arrangements

12. Invitation for all to **stay** for refreshments provided by the family.

Themes for the sermon **fall** into several categories:

1. Appreciation for the life and contribution of the **deceased**, emphasizing his example for the living to emulate.
2. The bliss of those who have died in the Lord.
3. Rewards for faithfulness in the Kingdom of Heaven.
4. Words of comfort for the sorrowing family.
5. **God's** promises for both the present life and the hereafter.
6. The Christian doctrine of filial piety and respect for parents.

When there are from three to seven services for each funeral, all of these themes may be touched on.

The burial is held on the third, fifth, or seventh day after death. Before the coffin is removed from the home or church to be taken to the cemetery, a short ceremony is held. It consists of a hymn, a Scripture reading, and a prayer. Most of the Chinese churches in Thailand have their own cemeteries. After the funeral procession has reached the cemetery, a final ceremony is held at the chapel there. The coffin is put into the grave with a committal ceremony. **Then** each person attending is presented with a handkerchief by the bereaved family, and refreshments are served.

In this description of the Chinese Christian funeral, it will be seen that some pre-Christian Chinese forms have been retained, and are used to express Christian meanings. The

pastor and members of the church have the opportunity to meet a large number of relatives and acquaintances at these ceremonies. These contacts can be followed up in hopes of furthering a "web-movement" of extended family and relatives to Christ.

A very important aspect of the funeral for the pastor is that all, who attend, both Christian and non-Christian, are in the frame of mind to give close attention to the Gospel message of redemption and victory over death.

## CEREMONIES FOR NEW HOMES, STORES, AND FACTORIES

Christian ceremonies for new homes, stores, and factories are performed on two occasions. The first is for groundbreaking and the beginning of construction. Non-Christians have a ritual for appeasing the spirits of the land who may be disturbed by the work of construction. There is a fear that the spirits may cause accidents or sickness if they are not appeased by sacrificial offerings and prayer.

Does the Christian still fear the adverse effects of antagonized spirits? Perhaps. But for the pastor, this is an opportunity to affirm that heaven and earth are created by God. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. God hears our prayers and protects his own. The ceremony includes:

1. A hymn, "This is My Father's World"
2. A Scripture reading.
3. A brief statement about God's power and protection
4. A prayer for God's blessing.

Often non-Christians are engaged in the construction project, and a ceremony such as this may become a Christian witness which enables them to see the protection of God and His control over the spiritual forces seeking to harm men.

The second ceremony occurs when the building is completed and ready to be used. A large number of relatives, friends,

and business associates are invited to be present for the occasion. The ceremony for the new home is as follows:

1. Brief statement about the family and the occasion of their moving to a new home.
2. Call to Worship and Invocation Prayer
3. Hymn
4. Reading of Psalm 127 and 128
5. Ten-minute sermon on how to enjoy God's blessing on family life.
6. Prayer for God's blessing on the family and their concerns.
7. Hymn
8. Benediction

The family then provides refreshments and invites the guests to tour the house.

The ceremony for the opening of a store or factory is shorter, but the purpose is the same, namely, to pray for God's blessing on the enterprise. This may sound strange to Westerners who compartmentalize their religious activities and their secular occupations. But even non-Christian

Chinese common people have always felt that, even with the utmost exertion, human abilities and efforts alone were not sufficient to guarantee physical well-being, economic success, or family harmony. There was always the profound feeling that success or failure in these respects was not entirely within human control, but needed the blessing of spiritual forces (Yang 1960:28).



Christians have the all-important words of Jesus:

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing (John 15:4-5 RSV).

Those present gather on the sidewalk in front of the store. The pastor states the occasion, reads a passage from the Bible, and prays for God's blessing on this enterprise and all who are connected with it. Then he pulls a string to draw a cloth covering from the sign board, saying the words, "In the name of Jesus Christ, I now open this store. May God grant blessing and success. Amen." Then the host invites the guests to tour the premises and provides them with refreshments.

Among such ceremonies that the writer has performed are those for a corrugated-box factory, a gas station, a cosmetics factory, a used car company, a small department store, a dental clinic, a doctor's office, a clothing factory, a plastic shoe factory, a detergent factory, a stationery store, a jewelry store, a photography studio, a marble quarry, a shopping center, a legal office, a furniture store, a goldsmith shop, a printing company, a private hospital, a dress-making shop, a restaurant, and many others.

After the ceremony for the opening of a new home or store, the family makes a special thank-offering to the church, and gives the officiating pastor a small gift to express their gratitude to him.

## WHO WILL SOLVE THE LEADERSHIP PROBLEM?

The leadership problem of the Chinese churches has two aspects: (1) personnel for the administration of the church and the nurture of Christians, and (2) personnel for the evangelization of Chinese outside the church.

### FOR THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

There are two missionary families serving as fraternal workers with the Seventh District, CCT. One is the Rev. and Mrs. David Luo, of the United Christian Missionary Society, who is serving as principal of the Bangkok Institute of Theology. His training and abilities make him a suitable person for his present position. He has six years until he reaches retirement age.

The second family is the writer's family, of the United Presbyterian Church. He is a District pastor and serves as advisor to all the churches of the District. He will help the District to acquire "church growth eyes" and take steps for the establishment of new churches. He has twelve years until retirement.

The American Baptists have assigned Miss Louise Giffen and the Rev. and Mrs. Keith Tennis to help in Samruk Chris-

Christian community of about 9,000 people. But what about the tremendous unfinished task of evangelizing the 3,000,000 Chinese in Thailand?

The people sent by the mission societies of America are not doing it.

The present Chinese pastors are doing it only in a limited way.

The church has not seen the necessity of organizing special groups which will dedicate themselves to concentrate on this task until it is finished.

The church members are doing some near-neighbor and kinship witnessing as individuals.

But who will take up the responsibility for the effective evangelization of these millions while there is still opportunity?

1 2

## STRATEGY FOR GREATER GROWTH

From the foregoing analysis of Chinese churches, the following points stand out:

(1) Chinese churches have grown at a faster rate than Thai churches, even though the financial resources and personnel of the missions were concentrated almost entirely upon services related to the Thai churches.

(2) The two large Teochiu churches, Sapan Luang and Mai-trichit, have grown more rapidly than the other Chinese churches of the country.

The conclusion to be drawn from these two facts is that the greatest possibility for future growth is in the Chinese churches of Bangkok. Strategy for greater growth should begin here. The suggestions that I have to make are what seem to me to be reasonable and productive, but the decision as to whether or not these suggestions will be adopted or used is one that only the Chinese church leaders can make. The Chinese Christians themselves must desire the conversion of Chinese to Christ and the multiplication of Chinese churches. As Or. Andrew Gih says so often, "If the Chinese are not interested in saving Chinese, who will be interested?" If the Chinese churches are motivated for growth, have faith that they can grow, set bold

goals for growth, and work to achieve these goals, then we can expect to ~~see~~ Cod at work in a new and exciting way among the Chinese of Thailand.

# I. HOLD CHURCH GROWTH SEMINARS AT THE CONGREGATIONAL LEVEL

It is the local congregations that must grow bigger, as well as establish daughter churches. They must also produce the people and contribute the money that will result in overall church growth. Therefore, the local congregation must be motivated for growth. This can be done through the holding of a church growth seminar for all the officers and members of the congregation.

I suggest that the first church growth seminar be held at the Sapan Luang Church. It is a growing church. It has many potential leaders of great capability. It has a large group of enthusiastic young people. It has the financial resources to accomplish any work in which the people are united. But it has been called a "sleeping giant," both by outsiders and by some members of the church, who feel that the Church is not fulfilling its potential for the cause of Christ.

In preparation for the seminar, each of the 500 families in the church shall be asked to fill out a survey questionnaire (see Appendix E). It consists of three major sections: (1) concerning individual conversion and spiritual life; (2) concerning the family; and (3) concerning the church. This should be finished at least a month before the seminar begins in order to have adequate time to tabulate and analyze the data gained from the survey. The seminar can then use the information from the survey to focus attention on the following questions:

- (1) Is it God's will for the Chinese Church in Thailand to grow?
- (2) How do churches grow?

- (3) How has the church grown in Thailand?
- (4) How do Chinese become Christians?
- (5) What are the present strengths and weaknesses of the Sapan Luang Church?
- (6) What opportunities do we have in Bangkok?
- (7) What goals should be set for growth?  
(See Appendix F).

A map of the city should be obtained and the residence of each family plotted on the map. If possible, areas of major concentrations of Chinese should also be plotted on the map. Slum areas, industrial areas, business centers, new housing developments, and suburban residential areas should all be marked. Main bus lines and transportation routes should be indicated too, as this influences the decision as to where a church meeting center should be located. J

Information regarding the past history of the church, with graphs showing the increase of membership and the rate of growth should be drawn. Graphs showing comparative growth of Thai and Chinese churches, and of city and country churches, should be prepared.

These diagnostic tools—survey questionnaire, map, and graphs of growth—will all help people to see both where they are and where they should go. Hopefully, at the close of the seminar, the officers and members of the church will be motivated to make definite plans for church growth by expansion (increasing the membership of the central church) and by extension (establishing branch congregations in different sections of the city).

(Note: The involvement of different people in doing the surveys, making the map, and drawing the graphs will do a great deal to create interest in the seminar and contribute to its success.)

The second seminar, along the same **lines** and with the same preparation, should be held at the Maitrichit Baptist Church.

Later seminars could be held in some of the larger churches in the provincial **centers—Chiangmai, Haadyai, Yala, Choburi,** etc.

## II. ORGANIZE A CHURCH-PLANTING TEAM FOR BANGKOK

### To Plant New Churches

The Seventh District should appoint a committee with **specific** responsibility for making a survey as to the areas of Bangkok where new churches should be established. This survey would include the number of Christian families in a given area, their church affiliation, their home language, and **whether** or not they could be brought together into a harmonious new fellowship **as** a nucleus for a new church in that area. The survey should also include the total number of Chinese in the area, their economic and social **characteristics**, and their degree of receptivity to the Christian message.

If it is desirable to plant a new church in the area, two possibilities should be considered: (1) a house church, or (2) the establishment of facilities for public **worship, Christian education, youth activities, Christian fellowship, and service** to the people of the community in the name of Christ. This might be by renting a building, or it might be by purchase of land and construction of **facilities** according to a good plan.

In the past, several attempts have **been** made to do evangelistic work through the use of store-front buildings, but they have not **produced** good results. The emphasis was on preaching with the **hope** of attracting people walking by, causing them to stop and listen. Often the Christians who came to **participate** were from other areas and did not know anyone in the area where the mission was located. When they came to help in

evangelism, their part was to distribute tracts to people passing by, to help with music, or to **preach**. If there were Christians in the area, they felt **quite** conspicuous meeting in the room where the whole front door opened onto the **side-walk**. They did not feel that there was adequate spiritual nurture either for themselves or for the members of their family, and preferred to attend a church that had a more adequate program. In addition, noise from the street traffic made it difficult for both speaker and listeners to communicate. In short, this approach in these facilities, was not effective for either the Christians who should have been the nucleus to start a new church, nor for non-Christians who were to be reached with the Gospel.

In urban society there are other factors to consider than just geographical location. People are drawn together more by mutual interests and friendships, than by proximity. So house churches might also be established for different **linguistic** groups (Hokkien, Hakka, Mandarin, Hainanese), for people from the same rural area who have moved to Bangkok, and for other homogeneous units of the population, such as **extended families and factory workers.**

Special attention should be given to coordinating the efforts of the central church and the many house churches related to it. Perhaps something can be learned from the **Brazil** for Christ Church in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Their big meetings are on Thursday and Saturday when 5,000 crowd into the central cathedral. On Sunday the attendance drops to something like one hundred because so many members are in **their** growing daughter churches scattered throughout the city (Wagner 1971:188). In Bangkok where Christians are such a small minority **of the** population, meetings of larger numbers at a central church give a spiritual and **psychological** boost to people. At the same time Christians need to be at work in smaller groups for the winning of non-Christians to Christ.

### To Develop Techniques for Family Evangelism.

A. L. Tuggy has provided a good definition of family evangelism. He says, "Family evangelism is that strategy of

evangelization which specifically aims at **winning** whole families to Christ and his Church as they respond to the Gospel through mutually interdependent **decisions**" (1974:17).

The Bible shows us that the family is established by **God**, and is the focal point of His redemptive activity. Noah and his family were saved from the flood (Gen. **7:13**). The passover was celebrated by families (Exod. 12:3-4, 21-23). Joshua, as representative head of his family, pledged allegiance to God, saying, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Josh. 24:15).

In the New Testament we have accounts of the conversion and baptism of people by families and households, including **Cornelius** (Acts **10:7**, 24), Lydia (Acts **16:15**), the **Philippian** jailer (Acts 16:31-34), Crispus (Acts 18:8), and Stephanus (I Cor. 1:16). The New Testament church was not built up of so many individual Christians but of basic social units, of organic wholes, which were the fundamental **cells** of **society**, namely families. We must note **that** this conversion of larger and smaller groups in Acts, in which the family stands out prominently, was wholly carried on by the Holy Spirit (Boer 1961: 166).

The history of God's chosen people, first the Jews and later the Christian believers, shows how important the unity of the family is for the **stability** of society, for the transmission of the truth from one generation to another, and for the attracting of other people to God.

This approach is also culturally relevant in **winning** Chinese to Christ. Where the issue of religion is concerned, it is the family that decides. In Chinese society it is the family **relationships** **that** bind the family together. It is regarded as a great sin for parents to neglect their children, **for** children to be disrespectful toward parents, **for** husbands and wives to get a divorce, or for brothers and sisters not to be harmonious and mutually supportive. A Chinese will more likely have a lender conscience and a sense of guilt for failures in these areas than for other acts of wrong-doing.

A **young** person who becomes a Christian against **the** wishes of his parents is regarded as a traitor to the family and as doing a great wrong in breaking the **family** unity. In this situation, Christianity is seen as a great **evil**. But where the gospel can preserve and strengthen family units, it will be seen as a great good.

Chua Wee Hian, a prominent evangelical student leader in Southeast Asia, found that evangelism among Chinese students could not be separated from the **home**. He said, "In a Chinese church where I was the associate pastor, **we** discovered that most of the **conversions** (about 80 to 100 per year) took place in the home" (Chua 1971:29).

The Rev. Martin Hsu, founder of the Tunghwa Church, **Keelung, Taiwan**, lists some of the methods he has used in establishing five new congregations:

(1) Seek out families in need, **trouble**, or illness. Counsel with them and pray for **them**.

(2) Seek out the oldest, most **authoritative** figure in the family and first preach the Gospel to **him**.

(3) Seek out the most superstitious people, as their religious zeal is a good indication of their devotion. They make the best Christians. Those who believe nothing before becoming Christians usually make lukewarm Christians afterwards.

(4) Do not emphasize youth work. Youth rarely manage to lead their parents to the Lord. Their conversions often result in rejection or persecution by their parents, thereby closing the door to future contacts **with** the parents.

(5) Thoroughly instruct each adult on his or her responsibility to lead the children to the Lord (and not **the** other way around). If they feel unqualified to witness to their children, have them bring the children to the church for the pastor to instruct.

(6) Let the decision to follow Christ be a family decision. Do not deliberately obstruct the function of family connections, "the bridges of God," by ignoring the possibility of the majority to trust in the Lord.

(7) No household can receive baptism without first, in their own home, publicly destroying all household idols (Swanson 1971: 13-14).

Visitation teams should be formed and trained for family evangelism. New homes to visit may be relatives of church members, parents of children enrolled in the church schools, parents of young people in English classes, contacts made with patients in the hospital, neighbors and friends of church members, etc.

Bible study materials should be prepared for families to use in studying Christianity first hand in order to make an intelligent decision regarding acceptance or rejection.

Opportunities should be sought in the homes to present the Gospel to the family as a whole. The head of the family, especially, should be present. The Christian worker can prepare a series of Bible studies to present to a family that has shown an interest in the Gospel. In some cases, it might be possible to start a house church with a few families in one neighborhood who hear the Gospel and turn to Christ at the same time.

#### To Promote Factory Evangelism

The success of the Lim family in winning their factory workers to Christ and establishing a new church among them points to another possibility for effective work. Several other members of the Sapan Luang Church also own factories that employ from 40 to 200 workers. The church-planting team should convene these factory owners to look for further opportunities along this line. Some of the newly-converted laborers could be part of the team, to share their spiritual experiences with Christ with other non-Christian factory workers. Young

people from the church, as well as a fulltime specialist in this field, could also be part of the team.

Some of the workers have migrated to Bangkok from rural areas. The team should seek opportunities to join with the worker in witnessing to his relatives and friends in his original home. With God's blessing, this could result in the formation of some new rural churches too.

#### To Devise Training Programs

In order for these various aspects of urban evangelization to be carried out, it will be necessary for the team to devise training opportunities for the leaders of the house churches, for the members of the family visitation teams, and for the people who plan to participate in factory evangelism. The faculty of the Bangkok Institute of Theology and the pastors of the churches should plan for evening adult classes that will help people to develop skills in the type of work they volunteer to do. As the work develops in each area, it may be necessary to engage staff workers to assist the lay leaders.

### III. ESTABLISH "THE PIONEER MISSION"

#### FOR CROSS-CULTURAL EVANGELISM

In view of the many different peoples and cultures in Thailand, it is extremely important that the Chinese churches establish a para-church mission to participate in the task of evangelization.

Some of the peoples that might be considered as fields of work include the 5,000 Yunnanese in north Thailand, the 200,000 Karens in northwest Thailand, and the northern Thai in Chiangmai and Chiangrai provinces.

The Mandarin-speaking Yunnanese live in scattered communities in north Thailand. They have fled to Thailand because of the Communists, and have been moved from place to place by the Thai government. Initial contacts by Chinese pastors show them to be fairly receptive to the Gospel.

There is a rapidly **growing** church among the Karens. There has been a great people movement among the Karens of Burma, and there is no reason that there should not be the same type of conversion of the Karens in Thailand.

The northern Thai, or **ao**, are basically **animists**, with a thin veneer of Buddhism. Their Buddhism has not helped them to overcome fear of the spirits around them. Sixty percent of all the Christians in Thailand are found in these two provinces. **In** the past three years, there has been a 35% increase in the number of Christians among these people, showing that they too are responsive to the Gospel now.

Another group of people that should be considered are the refugees that have recently fled to Thailand to escape from the Communist take-over of Vietnam and Cambodia. They have experienced suffering, collapse of previously-held value systems, and are uncertain of the future. They are trying to begin a new life **in** a strange country. They are in **need** of friends in Thailand who will give them loving assistance in finding a place to **live** and work to support their families. Above **all**, they need the inner spiritual renewal that can **only** come from knowing Jesus Christ.

#### Procedure for Founding the Mission

The proposal to found **"The Pioneer Mission"** should be presented to the Seventh District by three highly respected Chinese laymen. Their proposal will include the nomination of seven people to form a Mission Board. Before their names are presented, they must understand the purpose of the Mission and express their willingness to serve as Board members. Their first term ~~of service will run for three years. One of the~~ responsibilities of the Board will be the formation of **"Pioneer Mission Societies"** in each of the churches. **These** societies will be made up of church members who voluntarily dedicate themselves to participation in the work of the Mission. After the **Board's** first term of three years, the subsequent Board members will be chosen by the members of the "Pioneer Mission Societies."

The Mission Board, at its first meeting, will elect officers from among their seven members. These officers would include a **president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and vice-treasurer.**

The Board should appoint a survey team of two or three (not necessarily members of the Board) to make a survey **of** the different areas where the Mission might begin **work.**

The Board should also appoint a committee to promote the organization of the "Pioneer Mission Societies" in each church. The purpose of these societies is to **carry** out missionary education in the church, encourage prayer support for the Mission's **work**, and raise money for the work of the Mission. Each local society should have its own officers and committees to carry out its work. **The opportunities, the need** for personnel, and the need for funds would be presented to these societies for prayer and for action.

As the **need** arises, the Board should engage staff people to take responsibility for the **planning** and prosecution of various aspects of the work.

#### Financing the Mission

To get the Mission started at the **beginning**, the Seventh District should **grant 20,000 Baht (\$1,000)** from its fund for new work.

Following the founding **of the** Mission, financial support will come from the voluntary contributions of individuals and from funds raised by the different societies. Reports concerning finances will be made **annually** to all the societies, to the District, to the local **churches**, and to the **contributing** individuals.

Consideration should be given to the holding of missionary conventions in each church, praying that **God** will motivate people to give themselves and their resources for the evangelization of all peoples.

### Various Policy Matters

If there are already churches in the area of work, the Mission should **plan** its work in consultation with them, in order to avoid misunderstanding and conflict, to gain their backing for new church planting, and to relate the new churches established to the existing church organization.

All missionaries engaged by the Mission would be entitled to participation in the Seventh District's pension plan, provident fund, hospital and medical insurance, and children's education benefits, on the same basis as other Seventh District pastors and their families.

The Mission and missionary personnel should give special attention to the problems and methods of cross-cultural communication.

Consideration should be given to the possibilities of sending teams of missionaries, not just an individual, to begin new work (following the example of the apostolic teams in the New Testament).

Structures and policies should be kept flexible so as to be able to meet changing conditions and new opportunities.

1 3

## PREPARATION FOR POLITICAL CHANGE

### POLITICAL CHANGE IN THAILAND

This was written in the spring of 1975, just at the time when great political **changes** were taking place in Thailand's nearest neighbors of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. The **Kmer Rouge army**, with the help of North Vietnam and Red China, overthrew the Lon Nol government in Cambodia. The **Viet Cong**, also with the help of North Vietnam, Red China, and Russia, gained a military victory over all of South Vietnam, and established a Communist government there.

Thailand is now faced with a new political situation, with Communist-controlled countries right on her borders. Thailand has often been described politically as being like a **bamboo** swaying with the wind. For the past 30 years the governments of Thailand have been strongly anti-Communist and **pro-United States**. Thai people **felt** threatened by the economic **power** of the Chinese within their country, and by the size and **power** of the **People's Republic of China** to the north of them. They fear a kind of Chinese imperialism that will destroy their autonomy and freedom.

Thailand sent troops to South Vietnam (at American expense) to fight against the North Vietnamese. They also provided air bases from which the United States bombed North Vietnam. Now there is the possibility that Hanoi will try to take revenge