UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE LIBRARY 6.9.91

PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF NORTHERN THAI CULTURE: RITUAL PRACTICE, BELIEF AND KINSHIP

by

Graham S. Fordham

Department of Anthropology
The University of Adelaide

Submitted for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

February 1991

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables v

List of Maps v

List of Graphs vi

List of Diagrams vi

Abstract vii

Author's Statement viii

Acknowledgements ix

Note on Orthography x

Table of Correspondences for the Romanisation of Thai xi

List of Abbreviations xii

1. THE RESEARCH PROBLEM AND ETHNOGRAPHIC SETTING
I. Introduction 1
II. Christianity in Thailand 4
III. Theoretical Approaches to Religious Conversion 13
IV. The Theoretical Background 22
V. The Concept of Transformation 28
VI. Research Methodology 33
VIII. Thesis Structure 38

2. THE VILLAGES OF *BAAN BOHIN* AND *BAAN CHIENGSEN*: CHRISTIAN SYMBOLS OF IDENTITY AND THE CHRISTIAN PERCEPTION OF DIFFERENCE
I. Introduction 46
II. The Villages of *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* 48
III. Christian Symbols of Religious Difference 51
IV. Population 52
V. Christian and Buddhist Religious Co-existence 56
VI. Buddhist and Christians: Material Distinctions 60
VII. Christianity and the Perception of Difference 79
VIII. Descent, Naming and Kin Relations 82
IX. Summary 104

3. THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY INTO NORTHERN THAILAND AND THE GENESIS OF *KHRISCHAG BOHIN*

I. Introduction 111
II. The Political Context of Mission 115
III. The Presbyterian Mission to Northern Thailand 121
IV. Administrative Transformation and Mission Success 128
V. Resistance to Missions: The Princes 133
VI. Resistance to Missions: Relatives 140
VII. The Conversion Process 144
VIII. An Image of the Convert 148
IX. The Introduction of Christianity into *Baan Bohin* 167
X. *Khriscag Sansai* (The *Sansai* Church) 172
XI. *Khriscag Sansai*: The Growth of Rural Christianity 175
XII. The National Context: Growth and Autonomy 180
XIII. The Domestic Context: Dissent and Schism 183
XIV. Summary 188

4. ON BEING CHRISTIAN *KRISTCHAG BOHIN*, ORGANISATION, RITUAL AND BELIEF

I. Introduction 197
II. The Organisation of *Khriscag Bohin* 201
III. The Organisation Of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* 204
IV. Ritual Practice and History: The Past in the Present 205
V. Ritual as a Mode of Performance and Transformation 209
VI. The Ritual Cycle of *Khriscag Bohin* 216
VII. Sources of Christian Ritual 217
VIII. Christian Ritual Symbolism 223
IX. Christian Calendrical Ritual: A Brief Description 226
X. Christian Life Cycle Ritual: A Brief Description 231
XI. The Weekly Ritual Cycle: A Brief Description 236
XII. The Ritual Context 237
XIII. Ritual Language: the Problem of Translation 239
XIV. Some Major Christian Cosmological Categories 243
XV. Summary 258

5. THE CHRISTIAN MORTUARY RITE: THE CHRISTIAN COSMOLOGY THROUGH AN ANALYSIS OF BELIEFS ABOUT LIFE AND DEATH

I. Introduction 262
II. Anthropological Approaches to Mortuary Rites 266
III. Development of the Christian Mortuary Rite 272
IV. The Christian Mortuary Rite: An Overview 280
V. The Mortuary Rite: Structure and Meaning 286
VI. *Ngaan Sob Mae Dii* 292
VII. Summary 338

6. HONOURING THE ANCESTORS: CHRISTIANITY, FAMILY AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF NORTHERN THAI MATRILINITY

I. Introduction 347
II. Ancestors and Ancestor Rituals 350
III. Christianity and Ancestor Ritual 352
IV. Ancestors and Northern Thai Belief 355
V. Christian Beliefs About Ancestors 359
VI. The Homage Ritual 361
VII. The Role of the Homage Ritual 375
VIII. Genesis of the Homage Ritual 382
IX. Summary 386

7. CONCLUSION 394

APPENDICES
I. General Statistics of the Church of Christ in Thailand 408
II. Church Growth in Northern Thailand 1884-1920 409
III Glossary 410

BIBLIOGRAPHY (ENGLISH) 419

BIBLIOGRAPHY (THAI) 447

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1: Population by Religion and Residence 54

TABLE 2: Age by Sex by Religion 54

TABLE 3: Farmers as a Percentage of Age Group 63

TABLE 4: Occupational Breakdown for *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* 65

TABLE 5: *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* Land Ownership 70

TABLE 6: Education: The Past Two Generations 78

TABLE 7: Growth of *Khriscag Sansai* 176

TABLE 8: *Khriscag Bohin*: The Weekly Ritual Cycle 218

TABLE 9: *Khriscag Bohin*: Calendrical And Life Cycle Ritual 218

TABLE 10: The Christian Mortuary Rite 287

LIST OF MAPS

MAP 1: Thailand 34

MAP 2: The *Sansai* District 35

MAP 3: *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* 49

MAP 4: Correlations Between Rebellion and Conversion 159

MAP 5: The *Baan Bohin* Cemetery 278

MAP 6: *Khriscag Bohin* and Compound 303

LIST OF GRAPHS

GRAPH 1: Conversion of In-Marrying Spouses 101

GRAPH 2: Protestant Church Growth 1880-1915 134

GRAPH 3: Christian Burials 1910-1986 275

LIST OF DIAGRAMS

DIAGRAM 1: The Genealogical Basis Of *Khriscag Bohin* 88

ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on Protestant Christianity in Northern Thailand. Taking a historical perspective, it examines the development of Christianity from the first converts in the 1880's, through to ritual practice and belief in the 1980's. With respect to the growth of Northern Thai Christianity in the nineteenth century, I argue against the predominant "rice bowl Christian" model of conversion and, instead, examine conversion within the context of other contemporary social movements. I suggest that conversion to Christianity was of the nature of a messianic movement and, like other social movements of the time, a response to general political and economic disruption.

I argue that in this context, converts constituted a synthesis between Buddhist and Christian ideas and ritual practices. However, I argue against models of religious conversion that view such syntheses as diluted or lacking in coherence, or as being based primarily upon missionary imposed ideas. Rather, I suggest that in a creative response to the prevailing political and economic conditions, the first convert in this area utilised cultural patterns and religious legitimations derived from Western missionaries, in the organisation of kin relationships.

In my analysis of 1980's Christianity, I present demographic and other data to show that at the material level Christians are little differentiated from their Buddhist neighbours. I then argue that despite this, because they have shared religious beliefs and a distinctive life-style, a shared history, and the belief that they share descent links to the first Christian, Christians view themselves as being fundamentally distinct from non-Christians. I then examine Christian ritual practice, the fundamental arena for the constitution of these distinctions.

I briefly discuss the Christian ritual cycle and through a detailed analysis of Christian mortuary and ancestor ritual elicit the central Christian beliefs. I argue that these beliefs and rituals derive from a synthesis of Buddhist and Presbyterian Christian beliefs and ritual practices. As such they represent a fundamental transformation of both Northern Thai Buddhism and many of the formal teachings of the Thai Protestant Church. I argue that Christianity and Christian ritual have played a crucial role in the transformation of kinship relations amongst Christians and that ritual continues to be utilised in the organisation of kin relations.

AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously written or published by another person, except where due reference is made in the text.

I consent to this thesis being made available for photocopying and loan if accepted for the award of the degree.

Graham Stuart Fordham

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The research on which this thesis is based was supported by a University of Adelaide Postgraduate Research Scholarship. Writing-up was supported firstly by tutoring work in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Adelaide and later in the School of Social Sciences at Deakin University.

I owe a debt to Kingsley Garbett, John Gray and Lee Sackett, members of the Discipline of Anthropology at the University of Adelaide, who all played a part in the supervision of my field research and, to Kingsley Garbett, for his role in supervising the writing of this thesis. At Deakin University I have benefited immensely from the opportunity of working with Malcom Crick.

My thanks also to the many members and officers of the Church of Christ in Thailand, who assisted in the conduct of this research. A special debt is owed to the staff of the Manuscript Division of Payap Theological College. Their assistance in finding arcane fragments of archival data and in photocopying rendered my own task much easier.

Finally, and most importantly, my biggest debt is owed to the residents of the villages of *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiengsen*, to Mr. *Sarkon Rangsan* and his family and to the members of *Khriscag Bohin*. These people allowed me to participate in their lives and were patient and good humoured when confronted with incessant questioning over a protracted period of time.

UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE LIBRARY

Chapter 1

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM AND ETHNOGRAPHIC SETTING

I. Introduction

This thesis focuses on the beliefs and ritual practices of a Northern Thai Protestant Christian congregation. It seeks to make a contribution to the ethnography of Northern Thailand and, in particular, to the ethnography of lowland religious minority groups. It also seeks to make contributions to the anthropology of religious change, the anthropology of death and mortuary ritual, and to the anthropology of ancestor worship.

My primary analytical focus is an examination of contemporary Christian practice with a particular focus on mortuary and ancestor ritual, as a means of eliciting the central dimensions of the Northern Thai Protestant Christian cosmology.* However, my aim is not merely to examine Christian beliefs and ritual practice per se, I show that Christian beliefs and ritual practices are constituted from a synthesis between Buddhist and Christian ideas and ritual practices. I argue that these beliefs and practices constitute fundamental transformations of both the Northern Thai Buddhist cosmology and of many of the formal teachings of the Thai Protestant Church, *Saphaa Khriscag Naj Pratheed Thai* (the Church of Christ in

Thailand), and hypothesise regarding the mechanisms of transformation.

In this respect, I argue that the cosmology so constituted is not merely a syncretistic (and hence a diluted) mix of Buddhist and Christian practices and beliefs as Hughes (1982, 1983, 1984a, 1984b, 1985) suggests when he claims that Christianity has been assimilated to Thai cultural patterns. Nor is it the result of hegemonic western control over cultural meanings, as Comaroff (1985) and Comaroff et.al. (1986) claim occurred in the case of Christianity in Southern Africa. Rather, I suggest a focus on the constitution of meaning, both in a historical sense and at the level of daily practice. I show that the synthesis of Buddhist and Christian beliefs and practices, apparent in contemporary Northern Thai Christian practice, has been constituted through time in a creative response to the political and economic environments of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. I also suggest that the missionary project is much less organised and directed than it is frequently portrayed and, that in the cross cultural context, the relationship between missionaries and their converts is frequently one of mutual mis-understanding.

I argue that converts to Christianity were not merely the poor and dispossessed grasping at missionary provided resources and who, because of their own personal deficiencies, inadequately understood missionary teachings. Instead, I suggest that the ancestors of Christians in the research villages of *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen*, converted to Christianity for their own ends. I show how they consciously

utilised Christian ideas in the reorganisation of their households and of their kin and extra-familial relationships. Today, such reorganisations are inherent in the cultural practices and values by which Christians demarcate themselves as a distinct group. They are constituted through ritual, the arena which constitutes the focus of my analysis in the final three chapters of this thesis. Here, I examine the Christian ritual cycle as an integrated whole and conduct a detailed analysis of the two central Christian rituals, mortuary and ancestor rites.

Although my analysis of ritual is primarily directed to my central focus on Northern Thai Christian beliefs and ritual practice, it also aims at making a contribution to the anthropology of mortuary and ancestor ritual. In respect to mortuary ritual I take up the Hertzian (Hertz 1960) problem of the significance of the abandonment of secondary treatment in the mortuary rite. I suggest that in the case of Christian mortuary practice such changes reflect fundamental transformations in the Christian cosmology. I also focus on Christian pollution beliefs and, here too, argue that such changes reflect fundamental transformations in the Christian cosmology. In respect to ancestor worship, I examine the derivation of Christian ancestor beliefs and ritual practices in a synthesis of pre-existing ancestor beliefs and introduced Christianity. I examine the manner in which Christians utilise ancestor ritual in the constitution of kin relations in the present day, and compare Thai conceptions of ancestors with those found in the classical African models of ancestor worship.

Throughout my examination of Northern Thai Christianity and Christian ritual, I have a strong focus on the historical dimension. I am concerned to portray the uniqueness of the Christian experience in Northern Thailand and to demonstrate how the proselytising of Protestant Christianity in the political and economic contexts of the nineteenth century, has influenced the beliefs and ritual practices characteristic of Christianity in the 1980's. I also propose a new interpretation of the introduction of Christianity in Northern Thailand. This is one which is opposed to the "rice bowl Christian" (or opportunist) model of conversion, which is inherent in many anthropological, historical, as well as theological analyses of Christian conversion in Thailand (Hughes 1982, 1983, 1984a, 1985; Smith 1982; Swanson 1984; Tapp 1989). Instead, I portray conversion to Christianity as one of many social movements current in the late nineteenth century, and suggest it was a result of the same political and economic forces which inspired other contemporary forms of peasant activity.

II. Christianity in Thailand

Over the past three hundred years Thailand has been subject to three major waves of missionary activity. Christian missions to Thailand commenced in the sixteenth century with the arrival of Portuguese Dominicans. They were followed by the French mission society in the mid-seventeenth century. Later, in the nineteenth century, a variety of Protestant mission groups entered Thailand, the most significant of which was the American Presbyterians.

Christian missionary involvement in Thailand began with Portuguese Dominicans in 1555, when two Portuguese Dominicans came to Thailand from Malacca (Prakai 1984:13). At this time the Portuguese had already set up trading communities at *Ayudhya*, on the coast at *Mergui* and *Tenasserim* in the Bay of Bengal and, at *Patani* and *Nakon Sritammarat*, in the Gulf of Thailand (Hall 1985:270). More Dominicans and, later, Jesuits, followed (Hutchinson 1959:22). The Portuguese missionaries appear to have confined their activities primarily to their own trading community, their Siamese spouses and their children.

Later, in August 1662, the French Mission Society sent a mission to *Ayudhia*, at which time the Portuguese mission numbered ten Portuguese and one Spanish priest, ministering to a Christian community estimated at 2,000 persons (Hutchinson 1959:26)[1]. The French mission was well received by the then King *Nari* (1656-1688) and had influence in the Siamese court through a Greek, Constance Phaulkon, King *Nari*'s chief minister (Hutchinson 1959). They were given land and houses, and allowed to preach and to establish a school, seminary and later a hospital. Wood (1924:196-197) claims that the seminary had a substantial number of students and the French Bishop de Circe reported in 1704 that 1,200 babies were baptised each year (Hutchinson 1959:33). However, few adult Thais were converted (ibid.) and Renard (1984:3) describes the seventeenth century *Ayudhian* Christian community as one composed of foreign ethnic minorities, "Portuguese, Eurasians, Cochin-Chinese, and Indians from the Coromandel Coast" .

Moreover, following the death of King *Nari* in 1688, who at one stage the missionaries had hoped to convert to Christianity, a palace coup led to an outbreak of anti-French feeling. This inaugurated a period during which missionary activity was increasingly suppressed. The French garrison at Bangkok was besieged and forced to leave the country, missionaries were imprisoned, seminaries were closed and, Catholics persecuted. Restrictions on Christian proselytising were imposed in 1730 and, in 1731, flogging and possible capital punishment were set as a punishment for any Siamese or Mon who advocated belief in Christianity. Finally, following a series of refusals to participate in state ceremonies (Bowring 1857:359-360), Catholic missionaries were banished from the country in 1780.

Some Catholic missionaries returned during the reign of *Rama* 1 (1782-1809). However by this time the number of Catholic Christians had been reduced to some 1785 persons, all of whom were Chinese, Cambodian or Thai Portuguese (Jesuit Fathers 1967:11)[2]. As Bowring (1857:359-360) points out, foreigners were not hindered by the religious restrictions placed on Thai nationals. Significantly, he also notes that "converts seem to have been compelled to make many concessions" (1969:350), one of which was to be buried with Buddhist mortuary rites.

The first Protestant missionaries to Thailand Karl Gutzlaff (previously of the Netherlands Missionary Society) and Jacob Tomlin of the London Missionary Society, arrived in Bangkok in August 1828. They were given permission to live in Bangkok and work among the Chinese. Within only a few months they were asked to leave the country by the *Phraklang* (Foreign

minister), and a Royal edict banned the Thai from receiving Christian books. By 1831 both men had withdrawn voluntarily due to health problems, having made only one convert, a Chinese, *Boon Tee*, who lapsed from Christianity within a few years (McFarland 1912:28). Their work marks the end of British involvement in Thai mission activity. Following the British conquest of Burma, British missionary work on the South East Asian subcontinent was concentrated there.

American Protestant missions commenced work in Thailand in 1831 with the arrival of the Rev. David Abeel. He was sent by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), a group jointly supported by the Congregational and Presbyterian churches. Later the Presbyterians formed their own Board for Foreign Missions and, in 1840 they sent their first missionaries, the Rev. William Buell and his wife, to Bangkok. Due to poor health they only remained four years. Effective Presbyterian mission activity in Thailand began in 1847 with the arrival of the Rev. and Mrs. Stephen Mattoon and Dr. Samuel R. House. The mission charter as defined by the Presbyterian Board for Foreign Missions was three fold:

> the direct preaching of the gospel...the translating, printing and distributing of the bible and religious publications...[and] such an oversight of the course of education as is necessary for training up, with the blessing of God, a native ministry[3].

It further instructed the missionaries to use medical work as a vehicle for proselytising of the Thai community.

As educators, the Presbyterian missionaries aimed to teach literacy not only to provide for a native ministry, but in order that students had the ability to read the Word of God

themselves, and to inculcate the civilised values considered prerequisites for the Christian life (Swanson 1985). Missionary teaching, commenced in 1848 under Mrs. Mattoon, and students were paid five cents a day to attend (Wells 1958:25). By 1852 this had grown into a day school, which was later transformed into a boarding school for boys. However the Thai displayed little interest in missionary provided education, and the initial class comprised 27 Chinese students. Their response to missionaries in their medical role was much more enthusiastic. McFarland (1928:40) reports that in his first eighteen months work Dr. House prescribed for 3,117 patients.

However, like previous mission groups, the Presbyterian missionaries had little success at making converts among the Thai. The majority of those attending church services were paid mission employees. In a letter home in 1847, Mattoon writes:

> We cannot gather regular congregations except of those who are in some way employed by the missions [sic]. These number about 30 who are dayly [sic] attending family worship & a regular preaching service & Bible class on the Sabbath. (Mattoon, 29 January 1847, No. 9 in PMSL, Vol.2).

Ultimately, the Presbyterian missionaries worked in Central Thailand for nineteen years before they made their first convert in 1859 (Wells 1958:2).

Expansion of the mission commenced in the 1860's following the signing of the Bowring trade treaty. In 1861 a mission station was instituted at *Petchaburi* and, in 1872, a short lived mission station was opened at *Ayudhia*. Other centres followed in subsequent years. Geographical extension gave rise to an increase in the total number of converts, but the Thai still displayed little interest in Christianity[4]. Converts included a

high proportion of Chinese, many of whom became involved with missionaries in order to obtain protection papers for exemption from the poll tax[5]. In the case of the converts at *Petchaburi*, all were Lao war captives, not Thai nationals. Like other foreign minorities they were free to convert to Christianity as they were outside of the Thai social system, with its hierarchical structure of patron-client relationships.

It was not until 1867 when Dr. Daniel McGilvary commenced his mission to the Northern Thai, that the Presbyterians encountered any real success in the conversion of the indigenous population. Within twenty years of commencing mission work in *Chiangmai*, the Presbyterian missionaries had made in excess of one hundred conversions and conversions continued until the early twentieth century. Today, Northern Thailand is still the heartland of Thai Protestant Christianity. Two thirds of the approximately 37,000 members of the Church of Christ in Thailand, the descendant of the Presbyterian mission, are found in the North[6]. It is this Northern Thai context, where the response to Protestant missionary proselytising was remarkably different to that encountered in Central Thailand, with which this thesis is concerned.

As a mission context, Thailand is of particular interest due to the political context in which Christianity was introduced. In most of the non-western world, Christianity was introduced under the auspices of a colonising power. Christianity, western domination and the introduction of western values, concepts and technology went hand-in-hand. This had a

substantial influence on the development of indigenous Christianity in both the colonial and post-colonial periods.

Thailand is the only South East Asian state that did not come under direct colonial domination. In Thailand, missionaries were a function of the encroachment of the West. But unlike the African, South Asian or the other South East Asian states, they did not represent one arm of a colonial government. Apart from minor domestic policy matters, missionaries working in Thailand played little part in influencing the overall stance that their own countries took towards Thailand. Nor was conversion to Christianity in Thailand an avenue of bureaucratic advancement as it was in many African states (Comaroff 1985; Comaroff et.al. 1986), or Sri Lanka (Malalgoda 1973). Moreover, until comparatively recent times the bulk of mission activity in Thailand has been carried out by only one mission, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. This monopoly of the mission field is in stark contrast to the African (Beidelman 1974, 1982; Comaroff 1985; Comaroff et.al. 1986; Etherington 1977; Fischer 1973; Wyllie 1976) or South Asia mission contexts (de Silva 1977, 1981; Malalgoda 1973) where mission work was carried out in a highly competitive environment. Nor did Thailand have the kind of serial colonialism as did Sri Lanka, where successively, Portuguese, Dutch and then British missionaries proselytised their own interpretation of Christianity. Here again, there was no competition between competing Christian ideologies.

However, although there is a voluminous anthropological literature dealing with Thailand and both Northern and Central

Thai Buddhism, Christianity per se rates little mention. In the context of his survey of the development of Thai Buddhism Tambiah (1977b) discusses the impact of Christianity on 19th century Buddhist doctrinal reform. Judd (1977), himself a missionary development worker, devotes six pages of his study of a northern village to the description of a Christian hamlet in his research area. Reynard (1984) deals with Catholic Bible translations. Kirti (1984) discusses Christianity among the descendants of sixteenth century Portuguese Christians. Ishii (1986) pays some attention to the significance of the role of missionaries in nineteenth century Thailand, in his discussion of the development of Thai nationalism. Breazeale (1986) deals briefly with early nineteenth century mission history. Keyes (1987c), in his history of Thailand, makes some general points regarding the role of missionaries in the nineteenth century and Christian education in the contemporary period. In a later work (Keyes 1990), he comments perceptively regarding Thai attitudes to Christianity. In particular, he mentions its foreignness and the problem of Christian religious authority which claims to transcend that of the state. Zehner (1990) discusses Pentecostal Christianity in Bangkok. However, the only substantial anthropological works which specifically address Christianity in Thailand are Niwan (1979) and *Seri* (1982), both of whom deal with Thai Catholicism[7].

Theses and other works dealing with nineteenth century Northern Thai history such as Brailey (1968, 1973, 1974), Calavan (1975, 1980) and Ramsay (1971), also make some reference to the activities of Christian missionaries, within the wider historical context. More general historical works, Moffat

(1961), Terwiel (1983), Thompson (1967), Vella (1957, 1978), Wyatt (1984), also comment briefly on the introduction of Christianity within its historical context.

In contrast to the general neglect of lowland Christianity in Thailand, there are a number of works dealing with hill-tribe Christianity. This is possibly due to the relatively high profile of Christian mission groups in the highlands. Cooper (1984) disusses *Hmong* conversion to Christianity in situations of cultural stress. Tapp (1989) discusses mission work among the *Hmong* and the constitution of ethnic group identity through conversion to Christianity. Hinton (1979) examines *Karen* millenarianism in connection with conversion to Christianity, while Hayami (1990) examines *Karen* Christianity in the late 1980's. Kammerer (1990a, 1990b, 1990c) discusses *Akha* conversion to Christianity following a long period of resistance to Christian proselytising. Kundstadter (1983) gives a short description of *Lua* conversion to Christianity and of the likely ramifications for *Lua* culture. Walker (1979) gives a brief description of a *Lahu* Christian community[8].

The relatively minimal anthropological attention given to lowland Christians and the failure to examine Thai Protestant Christianity in its own right, can only be explained by subsuming it within what Keyes (1978:15) calls a general neglect of non-Buddhist Thai minorities. Perhaps it also reflects an anthropological ambivalence towards missionaries and the missionary project (Salamone 1986). By contrast, Christian missionaries have produced a large number of documentary and interpretive works regarding their activities. The geographic

area and chronological period with which this thesis is primarily concerned, Northern Thailand during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, are particularly well served. Works such as Chayan (1978), McGilvary (1912), McFarland (1928) and Wells (1958) (who draws extensively on McFarland), all provide excellent chronological accounts of the development of Thai Christianity. As McGilvary was the first missionary to work in Northern Thailand, his work constitutes a major source for this period. Works such as Fowler (1955), Prasit (1987) and Saad (1976) provide invaluable accounts of the growth of Thai Christianity during the twentieth century. Khun (1984) and Overseas Missionary Fellowship (1980) provide accounts of the growth of Christianity amongst the hill-tribes in the post-war period. More interpretative approaches are represented by Blanford (1980) in regard to Chinese Christians, Smith (1977) regarding Christianity in Central Thailand, Swanson (1984, 1985, 1988) and Hughes (1982, 1983, 1984a, 1984b, 1985) in regard to Northern Thai Christianity and, Gustafson (1970) and Smith (1982), two general analyses of Christianity in Thailand. Interpretative approaches also encompass studies of specific Northern and North Eastern Thai congregations by Chayan (1982), Franklin (1983), Swanson (1982) and Wakeman (1984).

III. Theoretical Approaches to Religious Conversion

Several distinct analytical models have been brought to bear on the relationship between missionary activity and religious conversion. They may take the form of more or less direct factual or chronological accounts of events, as is typical of accounts of Thai Christianity such as Chayan (1978) and McGilvary (1912). Others stress the philanthropic

(developmental) role of missions Swanson (1982, 1988), or conversely their role as agents of imperialism Ames (1983), Dachs (1972), Malalgoda (1973). These forms of analysis are, I suggest, relatively limited. By and large, their concept of culture is rudimentary and they rely on linear, positivistic models of historical change.

A further analytical model, to which I am strongly opposed, is typified by Tapp (1989) in regard to *Hmong* Christianity, as well as by many Christians who have written about the Thai lowland context such as Hughes (1982, 1983, 1984a, 1985), Smith (1982), Swanson (1984) and by Mason and Brown (1983) in respect to the conversion of Cambodian refugees. This is the "rice bowl Christian" or opportunist model which, portrays conversion to Christianity as being the result of either poverty or the desire to obtain access to economic resources or other goods such as education and health care.

While not denying that those in dire poverty may commence relations with Christian missionaries in order to alleviate their situation (cf. Kammerer 1990), I object to the functionalism implicit in the "rice bowl Christian" model of conversion. This model suffers from an absolute theoretical inadequacy, that of Crick's (1976:167) "anthropological monologue in which the only definitions of 'us' and 'them' have been given by us". To explain conversion by economic determinism explains nothing, but merely portrays its subjects as being in a normative situation of "bad faith" (Sartre 1966) and as acting in a particularly cynical manner.

This thesis is also directed against the Weberian approach to religious conversion, typified by works such as Guiart (1970), Long (1972), Miller (1970), Paul Turner (1984) and Willems (1967). This approach focuses upon other changes in the indigenous society as a result of external contact, modernisation, class structuration and the like. Here conversion is viewed as a response to these changes, whereby people adopt new, more rational, conceptual systems. Guiart (1970:132), for example, suggests that for the people of late nineteenth century New Caledonia, conversion to Christianity offered "a haven, a frame within which social cohesion could be reestablished". Miller argues that the role of missionaries is the promotion of rational western attitudes to the interpretation of human experience and claims "Christian missionaries serve to accelerate the breakdown of traditional animistic world views perhaps to a greater extent than any other agent of change" (1970:22). These analyses rest upon a particularly ordered and static conception of culture and social life and assume that individuals have full knowledge of their situation and can make rational choices. Moreover, the outcome of such choices is assumed to be predictable and, at the level of meaning, cultural translation is considered to be unproblematic[9]. As I point out this is by no means the case.

Comaroff (1985), Comaroff et.al. (1986) present a more sophisticated analysis of religious conversion. They focus on the cultural implications of missions and the relations between missions and domestic politics. They suggest that the effect of missionary activity extends beyond the merely religious sphere. In (Comaroff et.al. 1986:2) they claim that missionaries

function in both the political domain, the area of "concrete, institutionalised power relations", and in that area concerned with the manipulation of common-sense meanings and routine activities. As they put it:

> a critical part of the subjection of native peoples lay in the subtle colonization, by the missionary, of indigenous modes of perception and practice (ibid.).

By this they mean that the proselytising of aspects of western culture such as medicine, technology, literacy, bodily presentation, dress and other concepts of western civilisation constitutes a form of hidden agenda which, due to its invisibility, is as powerful as the overtly proselytised Christian religious ideology:

> conversation with the mission engendered conversion-not as an all-or nothing commitment to Protestant ideology, but as a subtle internalization of its categories and values (Comaroff et.al. 1986:15).

In reality Comaroff (1985) and Comaroff et.al. (1986) produce a sophisticated version of the "missionary as imperialist" thesis. They do not really get down to the level of meaning, to the analysis of the interaction between the two different cultural systems. Instead, they view one as being superimposed on and overwhelming the other, prior to being taken up as an ideology of resistance. My analysis is closest to this model of missionary activity. However, it differs in some critical dimensions. I strongly oppose the position that views missionaries solely as direct or indirect proselytisers of western culture which they hegemonically impose upon converts. As Horton (1975:221) points out, human groups are not a <u>tabula rasa</u>. Pre-existing conceptual patterns and socio-economic contexts are crucial influences bearing upon indigenous responses to proselytising religions. Fernandez (1982) also

points out the significance of pre-existing cultural patterns and dynamics in the analysis of the impact of mission Christianity. It is one thing for fundamentalist missionary organisations to "crack" (Shapiro 1981:147) a native people's cultural code, in the sense of understanding the cultural logic of the system. The casting of Christian practices in terms of that code and their subsequent implementation is much less straight forward. Discussing Akha conversion to Christianity, Kammerer (1990a:287) argues for a concept of conversion she calls replacement, whereby "Jesus customs substitute for traditional customs". I suggest that here too, in its implementation, Christianity must be fundamentally changed by the pre-existing ideas which converts hold about the nature of the world.

I argue that the situation when two classificatory systems meet is more complex and more fragile. The Christian practice of converts and their new Christian cosmological conceptions are a result of both their old and their new beliefs, and of their own particular historical circumstances. The mission context, particularly the colonial or semi-colonial mission context is as Wyllie (1976:202) points out, one where:

> both missionaries and potential converts find themselves as partners in a working misunderstanding which is marked by recurring, mutual misperceptions and oppositions of motives. The result of such a cultural encounter is a series of unintended consequences which tend, in the long run, to militate against the achievement of missionary ideals.

From time to time, missionaries seeking to understand their position come to similar assumptions. Thus, Hughes (1984a:333-334) notes the failure of missionaries in Northern Thailand to teach some of the fundamental tenets of Christianity and

comments "The missionaries and the Thai Christians have not fully understood each other".

I also differ from Comaroff (1985) and Comaroff et.al. (1986) in their suggestion that an unintended consequence of the hidden agenda proselytised by missionaries is the empowerment of converts through providing them with a discourse of resistance to the colonial context. This is very close to the Marxist model that views the conversion of ethnic minorities as providing a new form of supra-village political organisation for groups that were previously acephalous (cf. Tapp 1989:74). While this seems to have been the case in the African context and, may arguably be so in the case of some hill-tribe groups in Northern Thailand, it is certainly not applicable in the case of either the Siamese or the Northern Thai. In Thailand, as the indigenous administrative structure was not overwhelmed by the colonial powers, conversion to Christianity was not in any sense the road to attaining either political or cultural power mediated by missionaries. Colonisation by the West was restricted to an external economic colonisation, and missions only initially provided the mechanisms for technological modernisation and administrative reorganisation. At the same time they engaged the ruling strata into a largely successful opposition to Christian proselytising.

I come closest to the work of Comaroff (1985), Comaroff et.al. (1986) in my discussion of the reasons why Protestant Christianity was successful in Northern Thailand, while it has been spectacularly unsuccessful in Central Thailand. I argue that the late nineteenth century transformation of the Northern

Thai administrative system and its incorporation in the wider Thai polity, created the conditions under which conversion to Christianity took place. In this context, the old social order experienced a rapid transformation, resulting in a general cultural dislocation and a real economic crisis for the peasantry. Their response to this situation generated a range of social movements, ranging from Buddhistic rebellion, to witchcraft accusations and widespread messianic expectations. Some, a minority, converted to Christianity, possibly attracted by the congruency between its teachings and the promises of messianic Buddhism. In this context, to borrow Lanterneri's (1965) term, conversion to Christianity constituted a "movement of the oppressed".

Thus, in regard to the constitution of Northern Thai Christian culture, I argue that the meeting of two cultures, is one of Whyllie's (1976) normative misunderstanding, in which meaning and outcome is highly problematic. Moreover, I suggest that to adopt new ideas or practices is to force a fundamental re-evaluation of old ideas and practices, in such a way as to change their relationships and meaning. This thesis argues that the cultural patterns of Christians in the research area and Northern Thai Christians generally, have not, as Hughes (1984b:227) claims "taken on characteristics of Thai religious culture". Nor has Christianity, as he suggests elsewhere (Hughes 1984a, 1985:40), merely been assimilated into Thai culture. Rather, I argue that contemporary Christian beliefs and practices are the result of a synthesis (a term I borrow from Clark 1985, 1989), between the Christian and Buddhist

cosmologies. In this synthesis both Buddhist beliefs and practices and introduced Christianity have been transformed.

The concept of synthesis must be distinguished from notions of syncretism inherent in many analyses of religious conversion. Both indigenous religions and the Christianity of converts are frequently portrayed as neither pristine indigenous religion nor western, but syncretistic. Terms such as "mixed religion" (Fisher 1973:38), or "intermingled" religion (Luzbetak 1966:115), are used to depict a religion as either incomplete or impure. Such analyses take a static and dichotomous view of religion and culture and totally neglect the indigenous constitution of meaning. Moreover, in South East Asia they suggest, in a neo-colonial fashion, an opposition of indigenous (static) religion and (backward) culture, and real religion (Christianity) and culture (progressive western culture).

The theologian Gustafson (1970, 1971), who suggests that for over 90% of the Thai, their religion is basically animistic rather than Buddhist, is a prime example of such an analysis that ignores the complexity of culture. Stirrat (1981:197) notes that Catholic priests in Sri Lanka have a similar attitude toward Sri Lankan Catholicism, which they view as "contaminated". Tapp, too, when discussing conversion among the *Hmong*, also displays this dichotomous conception of religion when he claims:

> most Christian converts interviewed do not seem to have fully jettisoned all faith in such traditional aspects of their culture as the efficacy of shamanism in curing illness or the importance of funerals in disposing of the souls of the deceased and assuring the fortunes of their descendants (Tapp 1989:83).

I object strongly to the use of the concept of syncretism in this manner, where it is linked to notions of primordial religion and views religious change as resulting in diluted and inferior religious practice. The concept of synthesis which I use here is quite different. The syntheses of Buddhist and Christian ideas and practices which I discuss in this thesis are creative cultural responses to the political and economic environments of Northern Thailand during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is through such syntheses that cultures undergo fundamental transformations. The new religious beliefs and new cosmologies created here must, at an epistemological level, be assigned an equal priority with both indigenous Northern Thai Buddhism and with Protestant Christianity.

More sophisticated models of syncretism are found in the work of Peel (1968) and Comaroff (1985). Arguing against notions of acculturation, Peel posits a highly structured model of syncretism. Thus, in respect to Yoruba religious movements, he claims (1968:129) that:

> A syncretist is a man who sees some good, as many Yorubas have done, in his traditional religious practices and beliefs, identified [his emphasis] as such, and attempts to synthesise them with new beliefs in a harmonious religious system.

Comaroff (1985) also posits a highly structured notion of syncretism. She calls syncretistic religious movements "subversive *bricolages*" (ibid.:198) and suggests they are deliberate attempts to resist the dominant order.

Both of these works demonstrate an appreciation of the complexity of religious conversion. In later chapters I

demonstrate that Northern Thai Christian converts drew beliefs and practices from both Buddhism and Christianity. Also, the role of syncretistic religious movements in cultural transformation and in subverting the dominant political order in colonial contexts is admitted. However, as I have already indicated, I view the conversion context as being far more fragile, and such movements as being far less structured and goal directed than either of these authors suggests is the case. Moreover, I argue that when new and old religious beliefs and practices are brought together, their meanings are fundamentally transformed.

IV. The Theoretical Background

One of the major influences on this thesis is Marshall Sahlins' (1981, 1985) structural analysis of the eighteenth century encounter between Hawaiian culture and the western culture of Captain Cook. His analysis of the changes in Hawaiian society as a result of the impact of western society has much to offer in the analysis of both historical and contemporary Thai Christianity. In particular, it allows the analysis of contemporary Thai Christianity without the assumption that Thai Christian culture is merely the outcome of a particular phase of western imperialism.

His version of structuralism not only attempts to view the changes occurring in Hawaiian society as being logical transformations (I discuss in the following what I mean by transformation) of pre-existing cultural categories, it also places the analysis within a historical framework, thus turning an essentially synchronic analysis into a diachronic one. It

shows how the working out of cultural self-conceptions through practice in a specific historical context may cause a fundamental re-evaluation of cultural categories. At the same time, it allows an analysis of those categories in relation to the pre-existing structure. Finally, this model of cultural change also incorporates contingent events, events outside of the normal range of cultural practices and, their interpretations, as factors that are not only sedimented in culture, but which are active entities in its transformation. Thus, in the Hawaiian case, the encounter with Captain Cook and the timing of that encounter, were contingent events which then played active roles in the transformation of Hawaiian culture.

The model I develop on the basis of Sahlins' work allows an analysis of the missionary process and the growth of indigenous Thai Christianity within the context of an encroaching western capitalist system. However, it does not view the changes that take place in Thai society as being merely an adoption or reflection of western structural categories. Rather, I analyse the interplay between indigenous Thai Buddhist and introduced Protestant Christian structural categories (that is their fundamental cosmological classifications), within the changing historical context of the nineteenth century.

As a structuralist, Sahlins' basic premise is that meaning is inherent in signs and the set of relations between them. However, he argues against the use of a Saussurean model of structure as a set of oppositionally opposed symbolic categories. Instead, he argues the need for a diachronic structural analysis that incorporates history and contends that:

> In its global and most powerful representation, structure is processual: a dynamic development of the cultural categories and their relationships amounting to a world system of generation and regeneration (Sahlins 1985:77).

He considers that meaning is inherently problematical, in that in the context of practical action it is always at risk. This is because the meaning of signs is determined by their relationships to other signs, in the total sign system, whereas the use of signs by individuals only evokes a portion of their total meaning.

> Acting from different perspectives, and with different social powers of objectifying their respective interpretations, people come to different conclusions and societies work out different consensuses. Social communication is as much an empirical risk as worldly reference (Sahlins 1985:x).

The result is that sedimented meaning is reflexively revalued or, as he puts it in Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities:

> relationships generated in practical action, although motivated by the traditional self-conceptions of the actors, may in fact functionally revalue those conceptions. Nothing guarantees that the situations encountered in practice will stereotypically follow from the cultural categories by which the circumstances are interpreted and acted upon. Practice, rather, has its own dynamics-a "structure of the conjuncture"-which meaningfully defines the persons and the objects that are parties to it. And these contextual values, if unlike the definitions culturally presupposed, have the capacity then of working back on the conventional values (Sahlins 1983:35).

Thus, in Hawaii, the Hawaiian natives negotiated relationships with Europeans by acting in terms of Hawaiian cultural categories. Yet the combination of cohabitation, trade and commensality with the Europeans (who were believed to be "gods"), ultimately transformed those cultural categories and relationships. The nature of relationships between chiefs and commoners and, between men and women, were both transformed.

Sahlins' emphasis on the significance of the historical context and its role in the constitution of culture is particularly important. In the introduction to Islands of History (1985), he says:

> cultural schemes are historically ordered, since to a greater or lesser extent the meanings are revalued as they are practically enacted (Sahlins 1985:vii).

Thus, I take it that cultural meanings are generated though practice in specific social and historical contexts and that practice also acts to revalue pre-existing meanings. For this reason, my work on Christian ritual in Northern Thailand is founded upon an examination of the nineteenth century context. Contemporary Christian practice and cosmological conceptions among Northern Thai Christians are strongly influenced by the nineteenth century encounter between Christianity and Buddhism and an understanding of this context is crucial for the interpretation of present day events.

Sahlins' work has not been without its critics and there are areas of his work with which I disagree. Some are problematic in respect to Hawaii, while others clearly do not apply to Thailand. It is his method, rather than his model in its entirety, that I seek to apply to the Thai context.

A major area where I depart from Sahlins is with respect to his claim that in different cultures there are fundamentally different historicities. He claims that in societies where the king is the basis of cosmic order, he occupies a privileged position in respect to the creation and interpretation of meaning:

> The time of society is calculated in dynastic and historical genealogies, as collective history resides in

> royal traditions. In the state rituals and political councils of the elite, the cultural schemes are subject to manipulation and comment by specialists, such as priests and genealogists, attached to the ruling interests (Sahlins 1985:49).

He argues (1985:36) that the lives of the majority are "defined, by an hierarchical encompassment in the projects of kingship" and are ordered and reproduced from this position of privilege. By this he means that in societies structured according to the principles of divine, magical (or sacred) kingship the cultural order multiplies the actions of the king. In respect to Hawaii he claims that there is a "heroic", or "mythic" history that translates events into a repetition of cosmology, an acting out of origin myths in ever new contexts. Sahlins also claims that the capacity of Hawaiian and other similar societies to make rapid changes in the direction of culture is a function of the disproportionate effect of kingship in the society.

> I try to show why, for societies of a certain type, the stories of kings and battles are with good reason privileged historiographically. The reason is a structure that generalises the action of the king as the form and destiny of the society (Sahlins 1985:xi)

Given the structure of Thai kingship, Sahlins' argument is attractive in some respects, and a similar point might well be argued in respect to the dramatic changes that occurred in nineteenth century Thai culture. Even in those periods of the nineteenth century which were less receptive to the West, cultural changes may be viewed as having taken place not in spite of kingship but, rather, because of kingship. However, given the decentralised nature of the Thai political and administrative systems prior to the late nineteenth century I consider that this aspect of Sahlins' analysis is not applicable in the Thai social context.

Friedman (1985) makes a different kind of critique of Sahlins' analysis. He claims, that the transformations Sahlins deals with in eighteenth century Hawaiian society are not true structuralist transformations, as they do not arise from the transformation of earlier structures. Instead he argues, I suggest with some validity, that they are what he calls "integrative transformations" (Friedman 1985:193), that took place as a result of the incorporation of Hawaii in the modern world system. He claims that:

> the new order is a product of the substitution of new relations originating in the global system for the 'traditional' relations (ibid.),

and says that this is distinct from an endogenous transformation "even when the latter [endogenous transformation] is exogenously caused" (ibid.).

Missionaries commenced work in Thailand as a result of the expansion of western capitalism and the incorporation of Thailand within the western capitalist system. Thus, the cultural transformations precipitated by the encounter between Protestant missionaries and the Thai are, in Friedman's terms, integrative transformations. Yet Thailand was only integrated on the capitalist periphery and Thai cultural categories were not overwhelmed by the West. I argue that the introduction of Christianity in Northern Thailand, while exogenously motivated, precipitated a transformation of indigenous classificatory structures and not merely the substitution of alien western classifications.

The nineteenth century Thai context differs in one crucial aspect from Sahlins' Hawaiian context. Sahlins argues that when

the Hawaiians first encountered Europeans, they perceived them in terms of historically based mythical relationships. Viz, Captain Cook was thought to be the God Lono who, according to mythic tradition, visited the islands yearly. As a result Hawaiians interacted with Europeans in terms of traditional cultural categories and encompassed the encounter with the Europeans in the structure of that tradition. According to Sahlins this resulted in the radical transformation of Hawaiian culture because:

> in admitting the world to full membership in its categories, it admits the probability that the categories will be functionally revalued. The god Lono would no longer be the same concept once Captain Cook was referred to it; nor could the ideas of foreign lands, tabus, or the divine in general be sustained the way they were (Sahlins 1985:31).

In Thailand, at least in the nineteenth century, this was not the case. Missionaries and Europeans in general, were not subsumed in or given membership in native categories - rather they were excluded from those categories. The conflict between missionaries and Thai authorities which, I discuss in chapter three, was in part, about western appropriation of those categories. Or at least it concerned western hegemonic attempts at the revaluation of indigenous cultural categories, and the Thai response to prevent that action.

V. The Concept of Transformation

I want to stress at the outset, that the kinds of changes, in terms of cosmological patterns, ritual forms, and forms of relatedness between people, that I will claim Christianity has brought to its adherents are not mere differences in practices. Rather, they are fundamental changes that amount to nothing less

than complete transformations in structural relationships and, thus, in meaning.

The concept of transformation has been used in a variety of ways with widely divergent meanings. Three significant contemporary uses of this concept are found in the work of Levi-Strauss, in the work of Turner and in that of Tambiah. The concept of transformation is fundamental in the work of Levi-Strauss. However, for him, it is a highly abstract concept which he uses to examine the relationship between systems of signs, as he points out:

> the property of a system of signs is to be transformable, in other words *translatable* [his emphasis], into the language of another system with the help of substitutions (1979b:19).

In his study of mythology, for example, he is not interested in the meaning of myth, but in the organisation of myth as a sign system. He focuses on the way in which myths are transformed in their overt message, yet retain their fundamental structure. Thus, in regard to Bororo myth, he claims:

> the Bororo myth...is, as I shall try to show, simply a transformation, to a greater or a lesser extent, of other myths originating either in the same society or in neighboring or remote societies (Levi-Strauss 1975:2).

The major shortcoming of Levi-Strauss' work is, that in its focus on logic, it pays little attention to the meanings attributed by the actors themselves. In contrast, my analysis focuses not solely on the logic and structure, but on the meaning of Northern Thai Christianity and, relies heavily on indigenous exegesis. Accordingly, my usage of the concept of transformation is quite distinct from that of Levi-Strauss. I apply it to the analysis of real substantive change in the

everyday world, rather than to underlying organisation principles.

As opposed to its use in the work of Levi-Strauss, both Turner and Tambiah use the concept of transformation with reference to change in the everyday material world. As used by Turner the concept of transformation is a conservative, fairly static concept. It denotes changes which occur within a social structure, but the pre-existing structure of meanings are substantially unchanging. Thus, we find in Turner (1981) transformation is that which occurs when, through the agency of ritual, an individual in transferred from one condition or state to another. In his hands it is a concept that relates directly to effects in the everyday world, in as much as differing patterns of social relationships pertain to each state and each state is demarcated with specific concrete symbolism. Characteristic of this model of transformation is an absence of ambiguity regarding meaning, or any mechanism by which the social structure and its various conceptual categories come to acquire new meanings: therefore, it is essentially an ahistorical approach.

A rather more sophisticated model of transformation that attempts to use this concept as a means of dealing with change through time is found in the work of Tambiah (1977a, 1981). In discussing historical change in Thai Buddhism he uses the dual concepts of continuities and transformations. By the former he means the endurance of the structures and practices of the past into the present. By transformation he refers to changes in the relationships between practices:

> by transformations I mean *systemic changes* [his emphasis] in forms over time, both in the historical past and between a structure in the past and that currently observed in the village. ... a myth recorded in the village may have its classical literary version (continuity); but the same myth seen in conjunction with a contemporary ritual may show a new relation (transformation) not present in the classical form (Tambiah 1977a:4).

I suggest that there is a fundamental problem with this concept of transformation. Tambiah's extensive use of textual materials has led to a situation where he sees meaning as inherent in and preserved in the text, rather than being the outcome of an active relation between text and context. Keyes (1983b:9) makes a similar criticism when he notes the need for performance and interpretation before ritual texts acquire authority.

In comparison with these authors Sahlins (1983, 1985) uses the concept of transformation, itself derived from the work of Levi-Strauss (1979a, 1979b, 1986), as a dynamic means of cultural reproduction. His view of the social world is one that places the various elements of a given culture, its cosmological values, social rules and distinctions, and general life-world meanings, as standing in a particular structural relationship. The meaning of any specific cultural element derives in part from its juxtaposition with other elements. For him, transformation is not merely a change in meaning as a result of any element or individual occupying a different position in the social structure. Rather it is what he calls a structural transformation, a change in the relationship between cultural categories which results from a change in the meaning of any element and which, in turn, causes a re-evaluation of associated meanings and practices.

> An alteration in the relationship between given categories affects their possible relationships to other categories. The structure, as a set of relationships among relationships, is transformed (Sahlins 1983:37).

More than this, for Sahlins, structural transformation not only re-orders the relationships between cultural categories, it also re-orders relationships amongst people. It takes place not only as the result of intentional acts, or the working out of contradictions within the cultural matrix, but as the working out of disjunctions in intersubjective meanings and interests between people.

From this perspective Tambiah's concept of culture and cultural change with simultaneously existing transformations and continuities appears inappropriate. The one implies the other, or negates the other. Tambiah shows that relationships between structures are different, but he spends little time eliciting the micro-level mechanisms by which these changes take place. Moreover, at the level of meaning this concept appears to be fundamentally flawed, in as much as he postulates a differing relation between cultural elements, yet maintains that their meanings are, at least in part, retained. If meaning is, as I have claimed, inherent not only in the sign, but also in the structure of relations between signs, then this retention of meanings in their original sense is highly problematic.

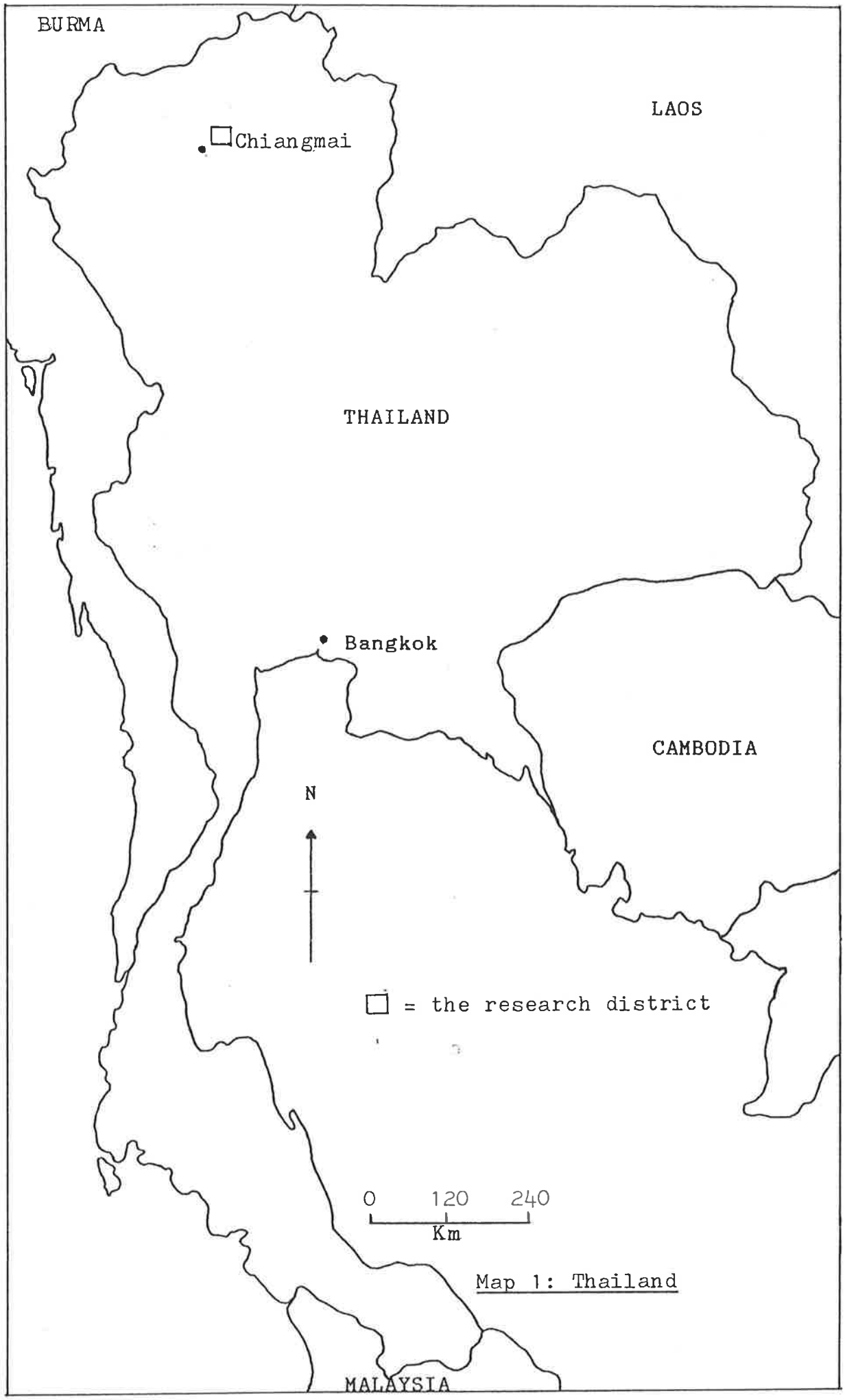
The model of transformation used here, then, is taken from Sahlins. By transformation I refer to a situation where the various elements of a classificatory system (or a cosmology) acquire different meanings and, where the meanings of other juxtaposed elements are revalued, due to their meanings arising, in part, from their position relative to each other element.

Critically, such transformations are not merely intellectual constructs, but are encoded in the life-world in the structure of cultural practice.

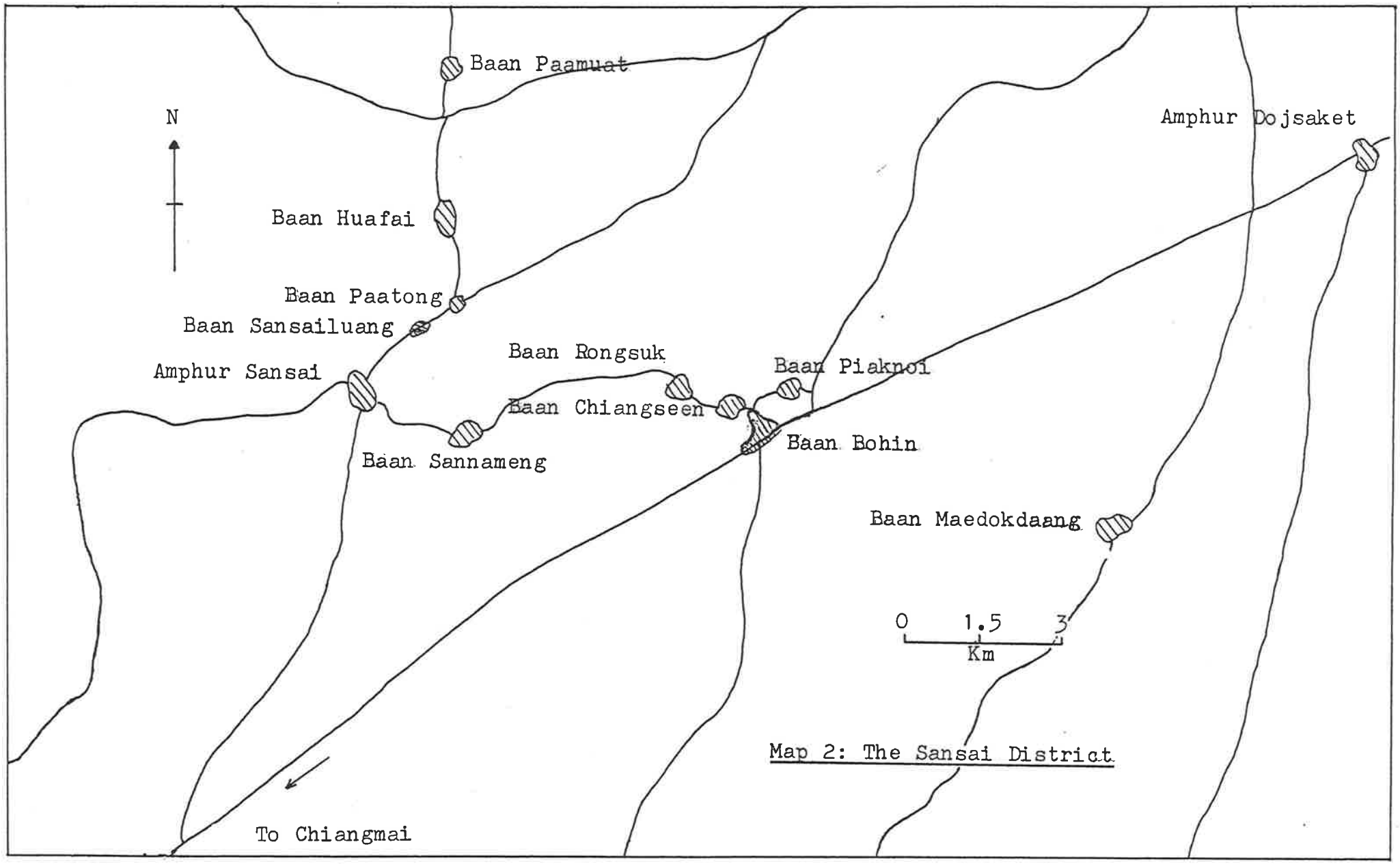
Most importantly, a large amount of cultural transformation takes place at a deep structural level which is not directly accessible, except through the window of human symbolic activity. Consequently, I focus on Northern Thai Christian ritual as a means of examining the transformation of Northern Thai culture among Christians. Ritual, as I argue at greater length in chapter four, is a privileged area for the study of the structural principles of social life. In ritual, there is a bracketing off from everyday social life to constitute an arena for the manipulation of ideas about the world (Kapferer 1983). It is here, that individuals attempt to reconcile the contradictions encountered in the practice of culture.

VI. Research Methodology

The research on which this thesis is based took place among two groups of Protestant Christians living in the contiguous villages of *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* 14 kilometres to the North East of *Chiangmai* city in Northern Thailand (Maps 1 and 2). Christians in these villages belong to one of two churches: an older church, *Khriscag Bohin* (literally the *Bohin* church) a member congregation of the Church of Christ in Thailand or, a more recently formed congregation, *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* (literally the Church of Christ)**. Fieldwork took place over a period of twenty one months from August 1985 until May 1987. It was conducted initially with the assistance of a



Map 1: Thailand



Map 2: The Sansai District

bilingual research assistant from *Chiangmai* city and, later, as my own language skills developed, with a local research assistant[10].

Although my research was village based, it was not any sense a village study in the classical sense. Research focused upon the Christian group within the context of the two villages where the congregation of *Khriscag Bohin* and *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* resided. One small area of *Baan Bohin*, comprising about 15 households, played little part in my research. This was a part of village adjacent to the *Baan Bohin* market which had been settled in comparatively recent times as traders moved in to set up shop. This area was separated from the majority of the village by a busy main highway, which divided it off into a different administrative district. For the majority of the research period only two Christian families (one each from *Khriscag Bohin* and *Khriscag Khongphrakrid*) were resident in this area of the village (a third family belonging to *Khriscag Bohin* also moved here in early 1987). Other residents in this area shared no kin relations with village Christians and, as they were shopkeepers and traders, engaged in no labour relations in either *Baan Bohin* or *Baan Chiangseen*.

While conducting research, I lived in the village of *Baan Bohin*, in the house of the Christian *tambon* headman (*khwaen*)[11]. This proved to be a good choice of residence as he was a good natured and patient informant. However, residence in this household was not an unmixed blessing, as I found that some degree of tension existed between the various religious groups. This was both between Buddhists and Christians and, within the

Christian group itself, some of whom had split off from *Khriscag Bohin* to form the smaller congregation of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid*. Everyone was keenly aware how much of my time was apportioned to their own religious group. Due to my choice of residence and more intensive focus on Christian activities, it was usually assumed, contrary to my protestations, that I was affiliated with the Christians. Some Buddhists seemed to resent this, while some Christians seemed to resent my spending what they considered large portions of time with Buddhists. Resentment was usually expressed in a fairly oblique manner. On my return from the temple (*wad*) or church (*bood*), or prior to going to the temple or church, if I was with a person of the opposing religion, it would be suggested that to go would be/had been a waste of time as "there's nothing on there", or "that's not interesting".

Methodologically my research combined both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. In respect to the latter, I collected a broad range of statistical data. On commencing fieldwork, I conducted a census and household survey, which of necessity was a 100% sample. In mid 1986 using a stratified sample weighted toward minority groups, I surveyed 34% of the research population in respect to marital history, employment history and demographic mobility.*** Later that year I conducted a 100% sample of the various forms of wage and exchange labour used in the planting of the rice crop. Finally, during the latter part of 1986 and early 1987 a small-scale random sample survey of potential marriage categories was carried out.

However, the statistical portrait of the research site presented here should be read carefully. It is a synchronic view, which due to the dynamic nature of the research context reflects only an ephemeral reality. *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen*, like most Thai villages, are in a constant flux of in and out migration as villagers move house in the search for work or new horizons and, of the fission and fusion of households, resulting in the construction of new houses and the reconstruction of old ones. By the time I left the field in May 1987, at least eight new houses had been built and another nine had undergone extensive renovations, ranging from adding a room to total dismantling and reconstruction. Family compositions had also changed markedly due to the normative exigencies of the human life-cycle: marriage, divorce, birth and death. In the case of my own household, a son returned home from the army, while a daughter moved to *Chiangmai* city to commence a teaching career. Such a dynamic social field makes quantitative survey work difficult. I decided that the best way to deal with this was to select one point, in this case my initial household census, and refer all my subsequent survey work to it. Thus, houses built after the end of 1985 and newcomers to the village after this date, are not included in my statistical picture of the village.

VIII. Thesis Structure

In chapter two I give a demographic portrait of the two villages that constitute the research field. I then discuss the Christian population in detail, the two Christian congregations and aspects of Christian identity. Following this I discuss occupational factors, land ownership, labour exchange and

education, to show that at the material level there are broad similarities between Buddhists and Christians. I then discuss the manner in which Christians conceptualise themselves as a group whose members, despite these material similarities, are different from non-Christians, as they are united by a shared pattern of Christian culture and by shared descent links from founding Christians.

Here, I discuss the specific areas in which Christians demarcate themselves from others: a distinctive pattern of naming, a specific pattern of post-marital residence and religious conversion, and shared descent from Christian ancestors. I argue that through this shared cultural pattern, Christians constitute themselves as a distinct group they call a family (*khrobkhrua*). In respect to the latter point I argue that Christians not only engage in significant manipulation of descent relationships, they also use ritual directed to deceased ancestors, in the interests of constituting kin relations amongst themselves in the present.

In chapter three I discuss the introduction of Christianity to Northern Thailand in the mid-nineteenth century. I point out that the missionary experience in Northern Thailand is distinctive, in that despite a significant degree of opposition from the northern princes (the *caws*), a comparatively large number of converts were made within twenty years of the commencement of mission work. I discuss the general pattern of conversion as well as specific instances of conversion and, discuss the reasons for this very different response to Christianity, in the face of 300 years of generally passive

opposition in Central Thailand. I point out that conversion to Christianity was only one of a number of social movements generated in the political and economic contexts of the North during the late nineteenth century. Thus, I argue against the "rice Christian" model of conversion and suggest, that like other contemporary social movements, conversion to Christianity was a response to general political and economic disruptions.

Finally, this chapter discusses the introduction of Christianity in the *Baan Bohin* area in the late nineteenth century, the foundation of *Khriscag Bohin* and aspects of its contemporary organisation. Here, as in later chapters, I am concerned to show that the contexts in which the first conversions took place have directly influenced the beliefs and practices of Christians in the 1980's. I argue that the context of the late nineteenth century encouraged the transformation of Presbyterian Christianity through a synthesis between its beliefs and practices and the pre-existing beliefs and practices of Northern Thai Buddhism.

In chapter four I discuss the formal ritual cycle of *Khriscag Bohin* and examine the major Christian cosmological categories. Here I am interested in ritual <u>per se</u>, and its role in the reproduction and transformation of Christian culture in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen*. I aim to elicit the major transformations that have taken place in the confrontation between the Christian and Thai Buddhist classificatory systems. I discuss the general organisation of *Baan Bohin's* two Christian congregations and then discuss the ritual cycle of *Khriscag Bohin* in detail. Through an examination of formal Christian

ritual practice and belief I discuss the transformation of the major classificatory categories of the Northern Thai Buddhist cosmology. The areas I focus on include God, heaven and hell, time, reality, the organisation of space and gender.

Chapter five deals with the mortuary rite, part of the formal ritual cycle of *Khriscag Bohin*. My interest here, is in the mortuary rite as a transformation of both Buddhist and Christian ideas about death and the after-life, and the person of the deceased. I discuss mortuary rites per se and then give a description and analysis of a particular Christian mortuary rite. My analysis follows substantially in the Hertzian tradition (Hertz 1960), a focus on the corpse and the soul during the liminal period of the mortuary rite. However, I concentrate on the relationship between the deceased and the living, rather than the healing of the breach in society caused by death. I also examine aspects of the rite such as concepts of pollution, commensality and the nature of the transition which the deceased undergoes through the performance of the rite. I argue that through the medium of the Christian mortuary rite the deceased are transformed from living beings to deceased ancestors. As ancestors, they are conceptualised as retaining a human form and as remaining interested in, and significant for, the world of the living. I suggest that such beliefs constitute not only a transformation of Buddhist beliefs, but also of the formal teachings of the Church of Christ in Thailand.

This chapter also addresses the issue of the meaning of fundamental transformations in the structure of the mortuary rite. The mortuary rites studied by Hertz mediated the

transition of the deceased via a two stage processing of the corpse. He considered that this was the normal state of affairs and claimed, that in cases where secondary treatment of the deceased had been abandoned, this was due to acculturation. Through my analysis of the *Khriscag Bohin* mortuary rite, a rite in which Buddhist secondary treatment of the corpse has been abandoned, I propose an alternative hypothesis. On the basis of the fundamental transformations elicited in the Northern Thai Christian cosmology, I suggest that such a change in mortuary practices is not merely the result of cultural diffusion, but rather, is a reflection of a complex transformation in a people's total cosmology.

Chapter six focuses on the Christian ancestor ritual (the *phithii buuchaa banphaburud*, or homage ritual), the domestic or unofficial aspect of *Baan Bohin* Christianity. I discuss African models of ancestor ritual and the effect of conversion to Christianity on African ancestor beliefs. I then examine Northern Thai beliefs and rituals relating to ancestors. Following this, I show how, through the performance of ritual directed to Christian ancestors, Northern Thai Christians demonstrate their descent relation from ancestral Christians and constitute relations amongst themselves as a united group sharing kin relations. I also compare Thai Christian conceptions of ancestors and the behaviour of ancestors, with those found in African ancestor rituals. I suggest that when discussing ancestor ritual in a cross-cultural context, regardless of the role which ancestors play in the world of the living, it is necessary to recognise that their behaviour is culturally specific.

I also discuss the genesis of the homage ritual. I argue that it is a transformation of the rites directed to the matrilineal spirits (the *phii buu njaa*), which, like the strategies *Gaaw* used to unify his domestic group in the late nineteenth century, is utilised in the interests of family unification. I point out that similar forms of kin organisation have been constituted in other ethnographic areas under similar social and political conditions. I also suggest that in the future, given the continuing transformation of rural Northern Thailand, the homage ritual will play an increasingly significant role in the unification of the family. In this regard I suggest that the failure of the smaller Christian congregation, *Khriscag Khongphrakrid*, to succeed as an autonomous congregation, is related to their lack of a distinct group of ancestors to supply them with an ideology of descent and group unity.

Finally, I return to the work of Hertz (1960) and his view that the two-stage mortuary rite is near universal, as it allows the living to adjust to the deceased in their new status as ancestors. I note that the members of the family pay homage to recently dead members regardless of the time interval which has lapsed since their death. I argue that this raises a further challenge to Hertz's position and, suggest that concepts concerning the time necessary to transform the deceased into ancestors vary, according to cultural context.

Chapter seven concludes this thesis by briefly summarising the major points developed in the previous chapters and by noting their implications for Thai studies, for the study of

religious change and for the anthropology of mortuary ritual and ancestor worship.

Endnotes

1. Hutchinson (ibid.) notes that the priestly group included four Jesuits, two Dominicans, two Franciscans and three ordinary priests. Later, in 1682, all Portuguese and Jesuit priests in Siam were placed under the control of the French Bishop (Hutchinson 1959:29).
2. In his diary of his 1822 trade mission, Crawford (1967:451) gives a similar figure of some eight hundred Christians at Bangkok with another seven hundred at *Ayudhia*. In contrast, Bowring writing in 1857, claims that the Catholic population numbered 7050 (1969:371). His figures are probably inflated, as they differ from other contemporary estimates by a wide margin.
3. Letter to outgoing missionaries in 1846 from Walter Lowrie of the Executive Committee of the Presbyterian Board for Foreign missions, in McFarland (1928:345-357).
4. Smith (1982:49-64) examines accessions to the Church, via the medium of missionary correspondence. His statistics, which are slightly higher than those given by either McFarland (1928) or Wells (1952), suggest that from one convert in 1859, the number of conversions rose to 38 in 1872, 108 in 1877, 190 in 1883, and 390 in 1890. The figure of 38 converts by 1872 includes 18 converts at Bangkok and 20 at *Petchaburi*, while the 1883 figure of 190 converts includes 74 converts at Bangkok, 111 at *Petchaburi*, and five at *Ayudhia*.
5. As foreigners, the Chinese were subject to a poll tax rather than the corvee to which the Thai were obligated.
6. Membership of the Catholic church, at approximately 190,000 members (Smith 1982:267-270; Sompon 1984:126), is both much higher that of the Protestant Churches and more evenly dispersed throughout the country. Approximately another 100,000 Christians belong to the smaller Protestant Churches, including a variety of rapidly growing Pentecostal Churches (Zehner 1990). Pradit (1985:70-78) lists 47 separate groups as belonging to the Evangelical Fellowship of Thailand and, thus, falling broadly within the Pentecostal/charasmatic tradition.
7. Niwan (1979) is a study of power in a rural Catholic community some 130 Kilometres to the East of Bangkok, while Saree (1982) is an examination of the development of Catholicism and its impact on Thai society.
8. A common theme of works dealing with hill-tribe Christianity is the role of Christianity in the constitution of minority group identity vis-a-vis the encroaching power of the state (Kammerer 1990a; Tapp 1989). However this is only one level of analysis, beyond this is the need to examine the constitution of Christian culture among these groups(cf. Kammerer 1990b,1990c).
9. Particular kinds of social change may render the use of such models more applicable. Thus Zehner (personal

communication) claims that in the Bangkok context of rapid urbanisation and social change, Pentecostal Christianity seems to provide rural immigrants with new social networks and new ways of conceptualising the self.

10. I commenced research with no background in either Central Thai or Northern Thai, but with a strong background in language learning via Hebrew and Koine Greek. Accordingly, I was highly dependent on my research assistant during the initial months of research. However, my language skills developed to the point where I was able to work without a research assistant for the final six months of field work. During the course of my research I learned to read and write Central Thai and was able to access a broad range of Christian records and publications, as well as other relevant works, written in Central Thai (see my Thai language bibliography).

11. The *tambon* or commune, is the second administrative level in Thai local level administration, above that of the village (*muu Baan*) and below that of the *Amphoe*, the district administrative centre. Above this is the *Changwad*.

*. Apart from a short historical section in Chapter One, this thesis deals with the introduction of Protestant Christianity to Northern Thailand. Unless otherwise specified in the text, the term "Christian" should be understood as referring to Protestant Christianity.

**. My analysis in this thesis focuses primarily on the congregation of *Khriscag Bohin*. This is the major Christian congregation in the research district and, in respect to the development of Christian beliefs and ritual practices, has direct links with nineteenth century Christianity. As I discuss more fully in later chapters, the congregation of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* was formed when some of the members of *Khriscag Bohin* split off from that congregation. It is numerically very small, depends heavily on missionary assistance and has distinguished itself from *Khriscag Bohin* through a severe attenuation of almost all ritual practices.

***. The stratification of the research population into smaller "minority" groups was conducted as follows. Buddhists were divided into three groups according to their temple affiliation and Christians were divided into two groups according to their Church membership. Christians were further subdivided into groups depending on whether they had been born into a Christian family or whether they had converted to Christianity.

Chapter 2

THE VILLAGES OF *BAAN BOHIN* AND *BAAN CHIANGSEEN*: CHRISTIAN SYMBOLS OF IDENTITY AND THE CHRISTIAN PERCEPTION OF DIFFERENCE

I. Introduction

This chapter firstly gives a general description and demographic portrait of the research villages of *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen*. I describe the villages, their population demography and, their various religious groups and their interrelations, paying particular attention to the Christian population.

I then discuss the way in which *Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen* Christians are similar to the villages' Buddhist population and, at the same time, are different from that population. I examine the areas of economics (land ownership, labour relations and business ownership), occupation and education, in order to demonstrate that at the material level, in all areas excepting ownership of local land, there is a broad similarity between Buddhists and Christians. All are subject to the forces of modernisation and change that are currently found in most northern rural villages.

My argument that at the material level there is little distinction between Buddhists and Christians is significant, in that, implicitly, I am arguing against Weberian models of

conversion that portray Christianity as providing a superior rationality for dealing with a changing world (cf. Guiart 1970; Long 1968; Miller 1970; Paul Turner 1984; Willems 1967). It is also directed against contemporary versions of the "rice Christian" thesis such as Hughes (1982, 1983, 1984a, 1985), Swanson (1984) and Tapp (1989). I show here that the material advantages accruing to Christians by virtue of their religion are minimal. Christianity offers few perquisites that are not available to non-Christians from other sources and, as I discuss in chapter three, this has been the case since the late nineteenth century. Moreover, in both the past and the present, Christians living in *Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen* have been middle peasants rather than poverty stricken, landless labourers.

Having discussed the similarities between the lives of Buddhists and Christians, I discuss the manner in which Christians consider that they, both individually and as a group, are different from their Buddhist neighbours. I firstly discuss how, due to a shared history, shared religious beliefs and a distinctive shared pattern of culture, Christians consider that they are a distinct and united group. I then examine the cultural patterns which Christians claim characterise them as a unique group: patterns of post-marital residence, patterns of religious conversion, naming patterns and the conception of shared descent from ancestors.

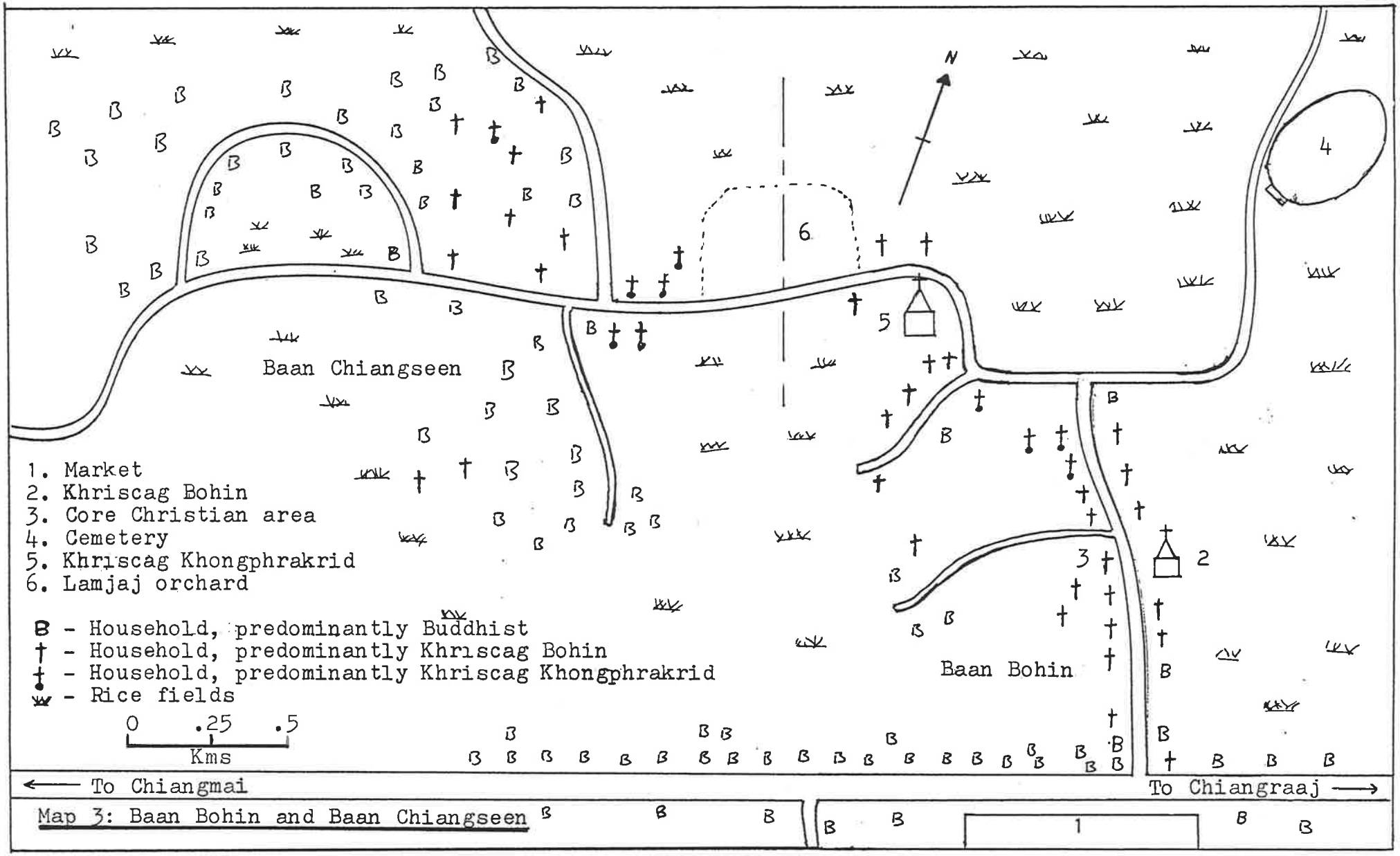
I pay particular attention to the latter point. More important than the material or other advantages that potentially accrue to Christians, are the possibilities that Christian religious ideology offers for domestic group organisation. I

argue in later chapters that this is the crucial factor in respect to religious affiliation, in both the nineteenth century and in the present day. Contemporary *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* Christians consider they are a unique group not only due to particular cultural markers, but also because they share descent links to founding Christian ancestors. Through the manipulation of descent links and a distinctive use of Northern Thai kin terminology, they constitute themselves as a united group, as they put it, a "*khrobkhrua*" (family).

II. The Villages of *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen*

The research area constitutes two semi-contiguous villages, *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen*, joined by a one half kilometre of sealed road (Map 3). On one side of the road they are divided by a small area of paddy field and, on the other side, by a longan (*lamjaj*) orchard. They are located on the *Chiangmai* plain, 14 kilometres to the North East of *Chiangmai* city, on the main highway between *Chiangmai* and the northern city of *Chiangraaj*. Although it is possible to enter *Baan Chiangseen* without passing through *Baan Bohin* this route is a narrow and dusty track. Villagers returning home from the city or elsewhere, usually travel via *Baan Bohin*. This road also provides efficient access to other dormitory villages and both *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* encounter a good deal of through traffic in the mornings and evenings as villagers travel to and from work.

Where it passes through *Baan Bohin* the main highway is lined with various shops and small businesses: small restaurants and eating houses, grocery stores, motor mechanics, motorcycle sales, tailors, seamstresses and building suppliers. The



Map 3: Baan Bohin and Baan Chiangseen

latter cater for both the villagers refurbishing of old houses and the building of new ones. They are also an indication of the transition of *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* to dormitory village status, with a high proportion of villagers employed in non-farming occupations in the city and, in some cases, possessing a substantial disposable income. Such a transition is also due to city people and those from more remote areas, moving to villages like *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen*, that are situated within commuting distance of the city.

The road to *Chiangraaj* is a recent, post-war construction. It effectively divides off the newer Southern part of the village from the older and more densely settled Northern section inhabited primarily by Christians. It also acts as an *Amphoe* boundary between *Amphoe Sansai* and *Amphoe Dojsaket* and, thus, constitutes a political and administrative division between the older and newer sections of *Baan Bohin*. While *Baan Chiangseen* and the majority of *Baan Bohin* are in *Amphoe Sansai*, under one village headman (*pauluang*) and *tambon* headman (*khwaen*), a small area of *Baan Bohin* (ten percent of all households) is in *Amphoe Dojsaket* under the leadership of an alternative set of officials.

On the Southern side of the road, the *Dojsaket* side, is a major fresh food market that operates twice a day: in the morning from 3 a.m. until 9 a.m. and again in the evening from approximately 4 p.m. until 6 p.m. This is a major outlet for the domestic production of *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* households, as well as for households from other surrounding villages. Many people have been killed crossing the road on the way to the market and it poses somewhat of a barrier for the old or infirm.

The *Baan Bohin* temple (*wad*), *Wad Bohin*, lies on this Southern side of the road on a small side road that leads to another group of villages to the South. It is attended by *Baan Bohin* Buddhists most of whom live along the main highway in the more recently settled part of the village.

Baan Chiangseen has no temple. Village Buddhists attend *Wad Rorngsag* about three kilometres to the West and two villages distant. One family of *Baan Bohin* Buddhists also attends *Wad Phayaagnoi* in the village of *Baan Phayagnoi* two kilometres to the North. For village Buddhists, attendance at a particular temple is not a matter of doctrinal division, but is primarily decided in terms of day-to-day practicality, which one is closest. By contrast, for Christians, membership of one of the two Christian churches in *Baan Bohin* is a matter of real doctrinal diversity and, for some, personal animosity.

III. Christian Symbols of Religious Difference

Both *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen*, therefore, appear similar to most other Northern Thai villages. However, both are clearly demarcated as villages possessing a significant Christian population. In *Baan Bohin* the major physical markers are its two churches (*Khriscag*) and its cemetery (*paachaa*). As one enters *Baan Bohin* from the main highway, one firstly encounters *Khriscag Bohin*, on the right hand side of the road, some half a kilometre into the village and in the centre of the Christian residential area. On the North Western edge of the village, on the left hand side of the road to *Baan Chiangseen*, is the church of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid*. The cemetery is located to the North East of *Baan Bohin*, on the road to the village of *Baan Phayagnoi*. It is

distinctive as it possesses both Christian crosses demarcating burial sites and a Chinese tomb (*huang soui*), in addition to the usual Buddhist cemetery apparatus of an open brick crematorium (*meen sob*) and a brick structure (*thii laang naa sob*) for the ritual washing of Buddhist corpses prior to cremation. With no church building or cemetery, *Baan Chiangseen's* Christian population is less obvious than that of *Baan Bohin's*. However, as in *Baan Bohin*, individual Christian compounds are distinguishable from Buddhist compounds as they possess no spirit house (*saanphraphuum*) where offerings are made to the guardian spirits of the compound.*

Thus, through their churches and individual compounds, Christians distinguish themselves from non-Christians, and declare the distinctiveness of their ideas about the material and non-material world. I explore these ideas more fully in chapter four, when I discuss the ideas Christians hold in areas such as geographical space, reality and time. Then, through a detailed analysis of the ritual complexes dealing with death and the deceased, I explore the more deeply embedded Christian cosmological conceptions about the nature of the world and social life.

IV. Population

At the time my household census was conducted in late 1985, the total population of the research area was 544 persons from 143 households. Of these, 252 persons from 68 households lived in *Baan Bohin*, and 292 persons from 75 households lived in *Baan Chiangseen* (Table 1). The age distribution of the population

(Table 2) shows no significant distinction between the distributions for Buddhists and Christians.

The spatial layout of houses followed the normal Northern Thai pattern described by Potter (1976). Houses were clustered in compounds containing between one and four houses. These comprised a stem (or original) house and other newer dwellings belonging to married daughters and their families. As the stem house is normally inherited by the youngest daughter, its composition ranges from a three generation extended family to a nuclear family, depending on the stage of the domestic cycle. Other households within the compound usually comprise nuclear family units. Each house within the compound constitutes a separate hearth group (although cooked food is frequently exchanged between compound households). United by close kin ties, the members of compounds share close social links and ties of economic co-operation. In chapter four I take up the issue of the organisation of space within Christian households. I point out that while structurally similar to the houses of their Buddhist neighbours, Christian households are significantly different in terms of the meanings attributed to various portions of the house.

Within the two villages there were 156 Christians distributed amongst 41 households. *Baan Bohin* had 26 Christian households, and *Baan Chiangseen* had 15. These were divided between the two Christian Churches mentioned above, *Khriscag Bohin* and *Khriscag Khongphrakrid*. *Khriscag Bohin* had 124 members from 31 households, while *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* had 32 members from ten households.

Population by Religion and Residence
(Survey date Dec: 1985)

Religion	*Baan Bohin* H/H	*Baan Bohin* Persons	*Baan Chiangseen* H/H	*Baan Chiangseen* Persons	*Baan Chiangseen* Total
Buddhist	42	150	60	230	380
Khriscag Bohin	22	87	9	37	124
Khriscag Khongphrakrid	4	11	6	21	32
No Religion		4		4	8
Total =	68	252	75	292	544

*H/H = Household (Note: Households are listed according to the religion of the head of household and most members)

Table 1

Age by Sex by Religion
(Survey date: Dec 1985)

AGE	TOTAL 544	Male (270) BUD	Male (270) CHR	Female (274) BUD	Female (274) CHR
0-4:	41	22	6	9	4
5-9:	42	17	5	15	5
10-14:	35	09	4	15	7
15-19:	37	12	4	14	7
20-24:	43	17	6	16	4
25-29:	78	26	9	33	10
30-34:	61	26	6	16	13
35-39:	46	14	7	18	7
40-44:	23	9	7	5	2
45-49:	20	7	2	10	1
50-54:	41	10	7	14	10
55-59:	19	5	2	8	4
60-64:	19	7	3	8	1
65-69:	13	7	2	2	2
70 + :	15	3	3	3	6

Table 2

As I noted in chapter one, both congregations had one member family living remote from the central Christian area. In the case of *Khriscag Bohin* this involved two members, and in the case of *Khriscag Khongphrakhrid* this involved four members. *Khriscag Bohin* also has two families from other villages who, although not formal members of the congregation, attend church services on an irregular basis. In both congregations a number of constituent households have members who are Buddhist, or who profess no religious belief[1]. Both congregations have a high percentage of households in which one (or more) members have converted to Christianity - usually following marriage to a Christian spouse.

The statistics given above in regard to religious affiliation rely on self-designations, confirmed by observation of behaviour. However, they present a synchronic and therefore only a partial perspective on what is sometimes a dynamic situation. While some people have been Christian since birth or conversion and unambiguously label themselves (or are labelled by others) as such, a minority have a "career path of faith". A typical example of such a path is a man born in a Buddhist family who was a practicing Buddhist until he converted to Christianity following marriage to a Christian woman. However, following her death he left the church to re-commence attendance at the temple. Another form of ambiguity is posed by those who rarely or never attend either of the churches or temples, or who, in the case of those married to a partner of a different religion, attend both one of the Christian churches and one of the temples[2].

In general, Christians distinguish three signifiers of an individual's religion: the religion of the person's parents and, in particular, the father, the individual's own practice and the receipt of baptism. For all informants, the most unambiguous evidence that any person is a Christian is their receipt of baptism at any time in the past. When engaged in the collection of genealogies one of my routine questions was in regard to religious affiliation of ancestors. My informants mostly made an initial assessment on the basis of baptism. In response to later probing they would then indicate whether the person in question was born into a Christian family, or had converted to (or from) Christianity at some latter stage.

In contrast to these fine grained distinctions, the Buddhist inhabitants of *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* consider that everyone is a Buddhist, unless they are actively affiliated with a Christian church. That I spent more time with Christians than I did with Buddhists was taken, despite my protestations to the contrary, as an indication that I was by inclination a Christian.

V. Christian and Buddhist Religious Co-existence

In his attack on the "loose structure" model of Thai society, Potter (1976:149) distinguishes eleven groupings or "structural elements" found in northern rural communities. These are: the extended-stem family cycle, the bilateral kindred, neighbourliness (together with formal neighbourhoods), cooperative labour-exchange groups, the junior-senior relationship, class and status divisions, entourages, political factions, administrative hamlets, the village community and the

temple. Other groups, such as age groups (*run*) and various interest groups such as agricultural co-operatives could be added to this list. Beyond the previously described material differences in the village and individual compounds, there are few surface distinctions between Christians and Buddhists, or among Christians. The Christian population of *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen*, could be conceptualised as merely two additional groups (Christians from *Khriscag Bohin* and from *Khriscag Khongphrakrid*) added to these village level factional groups.

Groups that collect under houses in the cool of the evening are determined not by religion but, primarily, by age group or location. Men and women visit between houses, women sell together in the market and both men and women engage in the various forms of reciprocal labour exchange discussed in the later part of this chapter. Thus, informal groups, regardless of the activity, are usually mixed and the predominance of any religious group is usually an artifact of location, rather than of design. Although both villages have some degree of housing cluster along religious lines, this is primarily a consequence of inheritance patterns (I discuss these later in this chapter). Thus, in general, day-to-day relations between villagers cross religious boundaries due to kin links and due to the need for co-operation in agricultural and other co-operative village activities, such as the yearly cleaning of irrigation canals.

In general, despite religious differences, co-existence between Christians and Buddhists is normally peaceful due to the exercise of tolerance and due to a distinction made between the communal and individual spheres of behaviour. Most distinguish

between the practical, this worldly (moral teachings) and the eschatological aspects of religion - the former pertain to the community, while the latter pertain to the individual. Thus, for example, while a family may not approve of a child marrying a spouse of a different religion, they will usually not prevent the marriage. However, they point out the practical problems with religious practice, with in-laws and relatives and with the raising of children, that such a marriage will produce.

As systems of moral teachings, Buddhists draw comparisons between Buddhism and Christianity. When discussing the conversion to Christianity of relatives who had married into a Christian family informants frequently said "its up to them, all religions teach people to do good". The Christian response regarding Buddhism is very similar. As a religious system they consider it inferior to Christianity but, as an ethical system, they admit that it teaches one to do good. Indeed, Hughes (1985:34) claims that Thai Christians commonly view Christianity as merely "a set of teachings about how one can do good".

However, regardless of these perceived similarities, day-to-day cooperation, and patterns of socialising, members of the three religious groups draw clear distinctions between their religious beliefs. Buddhists draw a strong distinction between Christianity as a set of moral rules and as a set of ultimate truths. When discussing the truth of Christianity, almost all Buddhist informants rejected it as not true (*bacing*). Many claimed that as an ethical system Christianity was unfair, as through reliance upon Jesus, Christians claimed to be able to escape the consequences of their actions. Buddhists draw little

distinction between the two Christian groups and one informant claimed the existence of the two groups was merely the result of "family quarrel" with no relation to doctrine. Indeed, a complete understanding of the theological basis of this doctrinal diversity demands a degree of theological knowledge possessed by few Christians and by no village level Buddhists.

In contrast the members of *Khriscag Bohin* and *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* draw significant doctrinal and social distinctions between themselves. While the members of *Khriscag Bohin* believe the doctrine of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* to be erroneous and their ritual practices be common (*majsuung*), they in turn claim that the practices of *Khriscag Bohin* are mere human trappings that distort the meaning of the rites. However, all Christians recognise a closer similarity and relationship between themselves as Christians and as members of the same family (*khrobkhrua*), than they do with the non-Christians.

The awareness of religious differences between Christians and Buddhists also incorporates an undercurrent, albeit it subtle, of mistrust and latent hostility. While this is usually not apparent, it may breakout at times of social stress. Christians constitute an ever present thorn in the normative Buddhist social fabric. They do things differently and constitute a group whose affiliations crosscut culturally significant alignments, such as family and age group and are always ready to point out their superiority. As I note in chapter five, during the Christian mortuary rite, Christian preaching points out the distinctiveness of Christianity and the fact that it alone is the true religion. Moreover, as I note

later in this chapter, there is an economic disparity between most Buddhists and most Christians, in favour of Christians.

Such undercurrents of hostility become visible at times of village conflict. As an addition to the groupings normally found in Thai villages, Christianity vs Buddhism constitutes the maximum level of local political affiliation, and cuts across all other potential paths of alignment. In 1986, conflict between *Baan Bohin's* Christian *Tambon* headman and his Buddhist assistant, precipitated a *Tambon* level election. In this, the religious affiliation of the candidates played a significant part in campaign tactics and rhetoric and, later, as an explanation for the failure of the Christian candidate to achieve re-election.

VI. Buddhist and Christians: Material Distinctions

I now move to examine the occupational and educational profiles of the population of the research area, the patterns of land ownership and labour relations. My aim here is both a fine-grained synchronic delineation of the village and to make a detailed synchronic comparison in these areas, between Christian and Buddhist households[3]. As previously noted, my aim here is to show that there are no direct material advantages accruing to Christians due to their religious affiliation and to argue against the Weberian proposition that Christianity provides a superior rationality for dealing with the modern world. I do this by showing that Buddhists and Christians are equally involved in the processes of modernisation that are affecting most Northern Thai villages and, that their responses, are substantially the same.

In this section I also pay particular attention to land ownership, strategies used for working the land and changes in these areas. In the present day Christians own a larger amount of local land than Buddhists and their generally superior economic position contributes to the undercurrent of hostility which many Buddhists feel towards them . Today, and even more so in the past, Christians are not only a religiously distinct group, as owners of a high percentage of local land, they are employers of (often Buddhist) labour. Even though farming is declining in significance as an employment category, the perception remains amongst many Buddhists, that they are economically handicapped (*siapriab*) in comparison with Christians.

Inequality in the distribution of land ownership is largely a result of the historical circumstances which I discuss in the following chapters. I will later argue that the major significance of Christianity in the past was its role as an ideology of domestic group organisation. At a time of social instability and labour shortage, through the contravention of the normal cultural rules about family organisation, Christians were able to build a strong family group and were able to clear and work comparatively large amounts of new rice land.

A. Occupation and Domestic Economy

In the past generation the occupational profile and village economies of *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* have been changed dramatically, as they have been linked even more closely with the wider capitalist economy (Turton 1976). This is due both to the proximity of *Chiangmai*, which has turned such villages into

dormitory centres (Gray 1987) and, also, to changes in wider Thai society (in areas such as transport, electrification, education and media penetration) that have transformed Thai village life (Moerman 1987).

For both Christians and Buddhists, farming as an occupational category is of steadily decreasing importance as the major source of household income. There is a growing diversification of income sources as children enter new urban based occupations, many of which are dependant on rising educational levels. For many families, new job categories and various forms of wage labour, now constitute a supplement to, or replacement for, income previously derived from farming. A high percentage of villagers no longer work locally but are employed in *Chiangmai* or other urban centres to which they travel daily[4]. Concomitantly, there is a growing alienation of local land as rural land holders sell out to urban-based land lords, in order to invest in what they view as more profitable enterprises[5]. Consolidation of land and, for some, investment in commercial enterprises, suggest nascent class structuration and a greater disparity between the rich and poor.

These changes are similar to those that Moerman (1987) finds have occurred over the past twenty years in *the* northern rural village of *Baan Ping* and they have affected the whole population, both Buddhist and Christian. However, while of the same order as those found by Moerman, they are of a quite different magnitude to those in *Baan Ping*. The proximity of *Chiangmai*, the largest urban centre in Northern Thailand and, the fact that one third of the area's population are Christian, some

of whom are employed in Christian institutions in *Chiangmai*, has given this area its own unique developmental profile.

The decreasing significance of farming as the major occupational category in *Baan Bohin and Baan Chiangseen* is apparent in Table 3. In 1985, 45.5% of people in the 50 to 60 year age bracket gave farming as their primary occupation. However, for the younger age groups the percentage of people involved in farming progressively decreased. This decrease is constant for both males and females. In the 40 - 50 year age group only 16% of people were farmers, while in the 20 - 30 year age bracket only 12.4 % of the population were farmers. In those under 20 years of age who were in the work force in 1985, only one man had become a full time farmer[6].

Farmers as a Percentage of Age Group
(Survey date Dec: 1985)

Age	Number in Age Category According to Religion		Farmers as % of Population
	Buddhist	Christian	
60 and over	22	11	50.0%
50 - 60	55	25	45.5%
40 - 50	49	8	16.0%
30 - 40	93	9	9.7%
20 - 30	137	17	12.4%

(Note: data includes both sexes, but excludes retirees)

Table 3

As an occupational category, at the overall level, only 19% of villagers were full-time farmers. Table 4 lists farming in relation to the other major occupational categories found in the research area. Many of these are relatively new avenues of work, a result of the expansion of secondary and post-secondary education and of the growth of *Chiangmai* as a commercial centre

over the past twenty five years. Occupational categories such as teaching, clerical work, government official and much of the cleaning, blue collar and construction work, are a result of the expansion of *Chiangmai* and depend on the ability of workers to commute daily from their dormitory villages. Miscellaneous (misc) blue collar includes occupations such as night watchman, and office and general assistants; shop (general) includes hardware, electrical goods and motor cycle sales, while traders are traders in the local market. Those listed as unemployed are mainly seasonal, or casual unskilled workers.

Most occupational categories exhibit few distinctions between Buddhist and Christian patterns of employment. However, some distinctions are found in the contexts in which people work and the methods by which employment is gained. In 1985 only a minority of Christian households had a member employed at one of many institutions in *Chiangmai* that belong to the Church of Christ in Thailand. However this constituted the Church of Christ in Thailand as the largest single employer of village labour. Seven households (nine people) out of *Khriscag Bohin's* thirty one Christian households (22.6%) had members employed in various Christian institutions[7]. These are the schools of Prince Royal College, *Dara* Academy and *Chiangmai* Christian School, *Payap* University and McCormick Hospital.

Villagers employed in these institutions were located primarily in unskilled positions such as cleaning, laundry work, and security guards, although a small number of persons were employed as school teachers. The occupations themselves are not

Occupational Breakdown for *Baan Chiangseen* and *Baan Bohin*
(Survey date Dec: 1985)

Occupational Category	Buddhist No	Buddhist %	Christian No	Christian %	Total Category No	Total Category %
Army	12	4.5%	3	2.7%	15	4.0%
Bartender	1	0.4%	0	0	1	0.3%
Cleaner	1	0.4%	2	1.8%	3	0.8%
Clerk/Accounts	18	7.0%	10	9.0%	28	7.5%
Construction	5	2.0%	1	.9%	6	1.6%
Dress Making	13	5.0%	4	3.6%	17	4.5%
Electrician	4	1.5%	1	.9%	5	1.3%
Factory Worker	2	.8%	0	0	2	0.5%
Farmer	45	17.0%	26	23.0%	71	19.0%
Gov't Official	7	2.7%	2	1.8%	9	2.4%
Hair Dresser	1	.4%	1	.9%	2	0.5%
Home Prod'n	8	.3%	1	.9%	9	2.4%
House Wife	32	12.0%	6	5.4%	38	10.0%
Minister of Rel'n	0	0	1	.9%	1	0.3%
Misc Blue Collar	35	13.3%	16	14.0%	51	13.6%
Motor Mechanic	5	2.0%	2	1.8%	7	1.9%
Nurse	1	.4%	0	0	1	0.3%
Potter	0	0	2	1.8%	2	0.5%
Restaurant Owner	16	6.0%	3	2.7.%	19	5.0%
Secretary	1	.4%	1	.9%	2	0.5%
Shopowner (gen)	3	1.2%	0	0	3	0.8%
Teacher (infant)	2	.8%	3	2.7%	5	1.3%
Teacher (other)	12	4.6%	5	4.5%	17	4.5%
Trader (food)	21	8.0%	19	17.o%	40	10.7%
Unemployed	12	4.6%	3	2.7%	15	4.0%
Wood Carver (home)	2	.8%	0	0	2	0.5%
Wood Carver (emp)	3	1.1%	0	0	3	0.8%
Total	262		112		374	100%

Table 4

unique and similar occupations are found at many large businesses and institutions in *Chiangmai*.**

What is significant about the employment of Christians in these various church institutions is that it illustrates the belief of many Christians, that the Church has an obligation to provide them with employment. One informant expressed this belief particularly clearly when, after suggesting that the church had a responsibility to provide for its members, she added "what use is it belonging to the Church if you cannot get a job?". As Hughes (1984b:223) points out, "the idea that material well-being is a result of religious piety", is relatively common in Thailand.

In this and similar statements, informants in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* and other northern Christian villages portrayed the relationship between the Church and its followers in clear patron-client terms. The relationship is conceptualised as a relationship between the institutional Church and specific client households, rather than one between the Church and the individual. In chapter four I suggest that relationships with God are also conceived in similar, if more individualised, patron-client terms. Thus, in this arena, the employment relations of Christians are constituted in the normative Thai cultural categories of a hierarchical relationship between seniors and juniors. Some, such as Hughes (1982, 1983, 1984a, 1985) and Swanson (1984), have claimed that such patronage has been a major reason for conversion to Christianity, Tapp's (1989) "rice Christian" model. However, as I point out in the following chapter, it is important to distinguish between the patronage

role of the Church as a cause of conversion and such patronage as the assumption of a culturally constituted role[8].

As in other parts of the North, employment in church institutions (and in other areas) is usually gained through the use of *sen*, a recommendation by a patron. This ranges from a mere verbal recommendation to a verbal recommendation plus various forms of financial incentive. *Sen* may come from a person who recommends a friend for a position when it becomes vacant, from a family authority figure such as a grandparent, or from some unrelated *phuujaj* (literally a big person, a person of high status) who has a position of respect and authority. *Sen* tends to perpetuate the appointment of family and friends in any employment context and, accordingly, the employees of many Christian institutions share relations of kinship. e

Alongside the move of people into wage labour is a growth in entrepreneurial activities in areas such as retail selling, small factories producing concrete and clay goods, and hair dressing and tailoring shops. The scale of commercial operation covered here ranges from small restaurants selling noodles, to a new 3 story restaurant and, from plumbing and building suppliers holding a large amount of stock, to large and small tailors.

The wide variety of establishments that this category covers may be divided into two groups. Those that require a substantial holding of stock, utilise a substantial portion of the domestic premises or a special premises for their operation, and have several employees or require the labour of both partners for their operation. Opposed to this group are enterprises of a

much smaller scale, small noodle shops, motorcycle repair shops, domestic equipment repair shops and businesses such as tailoring and hairdressing, where one person works at home utilising only a small portion of the house. This group shades off into the category I have classed as home production. This includes such occupations as weaving cloth, sewing at home, producing noodles, and producing paper bags (for the sale of food). The former large scale enterprises require a substantial capital investment, and produce a correspondingly high return, while the latter smaller scale enterprises require little in the way of investment, and produce merely a living wage. In most cases the varieties of work conducted at home do not provide this, and only supplement the household budget.

Although there is little distinction between Christians and Buddhists in the general range of occupations, there are some distinctions in the area of entrepreneurial activities. The large capital intensive businesses are primarily owned by Buddhists. These owners are locally born people, as well as those who have come to the village as in-marrying spouses. More importantly, as I discuss more fully in the next section, a number of the Buddhist families who have large commercial investments in the village, are also major land owners in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* as well as in remote villages.

In 1985, six Christian households and 15 Buddhist households, engaged in some commercial enterprise[9]. Of these, four of the Buddhist families were major land owners, with 21 *raj* of local land and 41 *raj* of land owned in other villages[10]. In the case of the Christian households, only one also owned land,

three *raj*, in *Baan Bohin*. As an overall percentage, 14% of Buddhist families owned or operated some form of commercial enterprise, as opposed to 15% of Christian families. However, the major distinction here is in the scale of business, rather than the distribution of ownership. The larger ones in each category: hairdressing, tailoring, dry goods, food provision, and construction, were owned by Buddhists. All establishments solely owned by Christians were small scale; the smaller general stores, noodle stands and home hairdressing. Also, those Buddhist households which owned both commercial establishments and land, owned a significant amount of land. By contrast, the amount of land owned by Christian entrepreneurs is only minimal.

VIII. Land Ownership

At the time of my household survey, people living in the *Baan Bohin and Baan Chiangseen* area owned a total of 701 *raj* of land (see Table 5). This may be classified into two categories. Firstly, land owned in the village, in most cases by people who have lived in the village for a long time and who have either inherited land, or purchased it. In the latter case, land already owned through inheritance, may have been augmented through the purchase of additional fields. The second form of land ownership is land owned in remote villages. This concerns those who have come to the village as spouses or, who have selected the village to live due to its proximity to *Chiangmai*. Such land is usually too far away for the owner to work him or herself and, if so, is worked by means of a share farming agreement. Two thirds of Buddhist land-holdings - 300 *raj* owned by 11 families - falls into this category. Only 20 *raj* of Christian land, belonging to two families, was owned in other

centres. Two families (one Buddhist and one Christian) who owned land in remote centres, also owned small parcels of land in the village.

Land constitutes both a source of wealth and a means of creating various kinds of social relations with others. These relations range from employer or employee, to patron, or exchange partner. In this case large land holdings in other villages indicate the economic position of their owners and may be significant in terms of class formation, but that land is not involved in social relations in the *Baan Bohin and Baan Chiangseen* district. Thus, in the following comparison of land ownership (Table 5), I suggest that the most significant statistics relate to locally owned land.

Baan Bohin and *Baan Chiangseen* Land Ownership
(Survey date Dec: 1985, statistics in *raj*)

Location	Buddhist Owners			Christian Owners		
	Amount	LOH[+]	*raj*/LOH	Amount	LOH	*raj*/LOH
Local	158	18	8	133	14	9.5
Remote	300	11	27.3	20	2	10.0
Total	458	28[*]	16.4	243	15[*]	9.5

([+]LOH = land owning household; [*] figures do not tally as one Buddhist and one Christian family own land at a remote centre, and in the local area

Table 5

In *Baan Bohin and Baan Chiangseen*, the overwhelming reality is that in proportion to their representation in the total population, Christians own more land than Buddhists. In 1985 land holdings in the research area totalled 291 *raj*. The aggregate of Christian land holdings was 133 *raj*, owned by 14

households[11]. This constitutes an average of 9.5 *raj* per Christian land owning household. In the case of Buddhists, Buddhist land holdings totalled 158 *raj*, owned by 18 households, an average of 8.8 *raj* per land owning household[12].

The distinctions here are more clear cut when all households are considered. Considering only those households where the head and majority of members were Christian (31 households), 45.2% of Christian households owned land in the immediate district, an average of 0.85 *raj* per Christian. In the case of Buddhist households (again considering only those (104) households that were unambiguously Buddhist), only 17.4% of Buddhist households owned local land, an average of only 0.4 *raj* per person. This is less than half that owned by Christians .

If land-holdings in remote centres are considered, 48.4% of Christian households owned land, compared with 27% of Buddhist households. At an individual level, this gives an average land ownership of 0.9 *raj* of land for both Christians and Buddhists. However, this figure distorts the realities of land distribution, as of the 300 *raj* of remote land owned by Buddhists, 179 *raj* was owned by only two households.

Considering all land-holdings, Buddhists and Christians have a similar pattern of a concentration of the bulk of land holdings. In total, 53% of all Buddhist land-holdings are concentrated in five households and, in the case of Christians, five households own 63% of all Christian land holdings.

The result is that some Buddhists, due to their land holdings or economic enterprises, are in a better economic situation than most Christians, none of whom own large amounts of land. However, in an overall sense, due to their ownership of a larger average amount of local land, most Christians are in a better economic situation than most Buddhists. This is apparent in a walk through the villages. Although some Buddhists live in particularly expensive houses, a sizeable proportion of Buddhists live in modest or overcrowded accommodation. In contrast, the majority of Christians live in substantial dwellings and only a minority live in particularly modest circumstances.

B. Labour Relations

Even after the construction of a comprehensive irrigation system in the post World War II period, the plain to the East of *Chiangmai* only supports one rice crop per year - in the wet season. In the dry winter, seasonal vegetable crops that need less water, such as chilli (*phrig*), soya beans (*thuadin*) and green beans (*thuafagjaaw*) are grown. Due to depressed rice prices (1985 - 1987), it is this "off season" crop which provides the bulk of farm income. While only part of the rice crop is sold, with the rest being kept for domestic consumption, almost all of the dry season crop is sold.

Farmers have access to land through direct ownership, or through renting land from land owners in exchange for 50% of the crop (*baengkhryng*). A variant of the latter is the case of children who, although they have set up their own household, work land still formally owned by a parent and who pay a similar percentage of the crop to support the parental household.

The context of farm labour relations, as indicated, is one where a higher proportion of Christian families own local land and, furthermore, they own a larger average amount of local land. Farming is also an occupational category in which a decreasing number of the younger generation are employed and there is an increasing reliance on non-family labour. In the case of Christians, their higher land/population ratio, renders them more dependant upon extra-familial labour than are Buddhists[13].

While it is possible for land-holders to perform parts of the agricultural cycle on their own (jobs such as ploughing), final preparation of the land prior to planting, planting and reaping, require a substantial number of hands. There are two primary forms of labour organisation. The more "traditional" method is the exchange of labour between land-owning or land-renting families (*phadkan*), in return for the repayment of an equal (or approximately equal) number of days labour. A second, and increasingly common means of obtaining labour is the use of hired wage labourers. These are drawn from local landless families employed by the day and visiting groups who contract to do the complete task of ploughing, planting, or reaping. This group fills the labour gap left as many of the younger people move into new, easier, and financially more lucrative, occupations. Most farmers work their land (owned or rented) using a combination of exchange and wage labour.

In the case of share-farming, in 1986, four Christian farmers rented out local land in five share-farming agreements. Three of these were made with local Christians, and two with Buddhists in another village (one of whom was a relative). One

land-owning Christian also share-farmed land owned by a Buddhist in another village. By contrast, seven Buddhist farmers rented out local land in share-farming agreements with eight local Buddhists. In the case of wage labour, out of twelve Christian families who worked their own or rented land, ten employed local day labourers. They employed Christians for 19 man days and Buddhists for 70 man days (23 of whom were people from outside of the village). Eleven Buddhist employers of local day labourers employed Christians for 14 man days and Buddhists for 75 man days (15 of whom were people from outside of the village).

With respect to labour exchange, recruitment tends to be conducted on a generational basis, with younger men exchanging labour with other younger men, while the older men exchange labour with those of their own generation. However, there is no pattern of religious preference. Christian labour exchange is divided evenly between Christians and Buddhists. As exchange labour tends to be conducted with kin, I suggest this pattern is the result of inter-marriage between Buddhists and Christians over the past five generations.

The overall pattern of farm labour relations is that, with the exception of exchange labour, Christians farmers display a preference for engaging in agricultural labour transactions with other Christians rather than with local Buddhists. The majority of labour transactions made outside of this group are made with Buddhist relatives in other villages, or with visiting groups of Buddhist labourers, rather than with local Buddhists. Conversely, the majority of Buddhist farmers have a distinct

preference for engaging in labour transactions with other Buddhists.

C. Education

Linked with the rise of new occupational categories and the decline in the significance of farming is an increase in the number of children progressing to secondary and post-secondary education. A major factor that leads parents to steer at least some children into non-farming occupations, is the increasing alienation of village land and the fragmentation of those portions that still remain in local hands. Keyes (1987c:145) claims that few parents in rural villages see the relevance of secondary or tertiary education for agricultural occupations. However, in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen*, as a decreasing percentage of the population are employed in agricultural activities, secondary and post-secondary education is an increasingly desirable goal. As one (Christian) man put it, when speaking of his children's entry into higher education "[I] have no land to give them, we must find money to allow them to go and get an education". He echoed an increasingly common village perception of education when he said of the educated:

> they can do anything, if you have knowledge you can do anything - but working the land, once you have sold the crop its gone. But knowledge is never empty.

However, idealistic perceptions of the potential of education, are balanced with a realistic appreciation of the financial and social costs. Many, in a pattern similar to that found by Moerman (1987), have sold portions of their land in order to finance their children's education. The same informant later pointed out the dilemma facing many rural dwellers:

> If you send your children to get an education, after that they are not interested in working the land. Their father will be in difficulties, there is no one to work the land. Give your children an education and they will go [away] and work, and you must throw your land away for someone else to work.

Baan Bohin and *Baan Chiangseen* residents have several alternative styles of education available. Children may attend a local government primary school (*Prathom*) and a secondary school (*Madthajom*) at *Amphoe Dojsaket* only a few kilometres to the East, or they may attend both primary and secondary school in *Chiangmai* city. Villagers make a strong differentiation between the quality of education gained at rural and city schools. Both the teaching and facilities at rural schools are held to be inferior. If they can afford it, many attempt to have their children study in the city - at least for their secondary education. Here they also have the option of various forms of technical, or commercial training, or higher education at *Mahaawidthajaalaj Chiangmai*, the government university in *Chiangmai*.

An alternative to study at government schools is to attend a private school or college run by one of the various Christian organisations active in this field. The Church of Christ in Thailand (*Saphaa Khriscag Naj Pratheed Thai*) has the four institutions previously mentioned, and there are also schools run by other Christians groups: Catholic, Seventh Day Adventist and Baptist Christians, as well as by the larger Pentecostal churches. In 1985 only a small number of Christian children in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* attended schools belonging to the Church of Christ in Thailand and, of these, two did so as they were in receipt of educational scholarships (*thun*) from the institutions concerned. Most villagers claim that education at a

government school in the city is of equal quality and is preferable to paying fees at a private school.

Table 6 details the educational level of the adult population of *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen*. The statistics are given according to generation and sex, and refer to religion of birth. There are few differences between Christians and Buddhists, either in terms of the levels of education acquired, between vocational or academic training, or male/female differentiation. The statistics indicate that for at least the latter half of this century both Christians and non-Christians have had an increasing level of education. In the younger age group, at the lower end of the educational spectrum, part of this rise is due to an increase in 1977 of the minimum educational level from fourth to sixth year primary school. However at the time of my household survey in 1985, the trend towards increasingly high levels of education, was continuing in the generation then attending school.

As they show little distinction between Christians and non-Christians, these educational statistics also suggest that education available from Christian institutions has not been a factor in influencing conversion during the twentieth century. In chapter three, utilising data from Smith (1982:127), I will show that this was also the case in the nineteenth century. In the 1980's, education at government schools is readily available to all and Christian schools accept both Christian and non-Christian students. Thus, there is no need to convert to Christianity to obtain access to education.

Education: The Past Two Generations
(Survey date: Dec 1985)

Highest Grade	Age 46-70 Budd	Age 46-70 Chr	Age 21-45 Budd	Age 21-45 Chr
No education	13	6	0	0
Prathom 1	1	0	0	0
" 2	1	0	1	0
" 3	5	1	3	1
" 4	47	18	96	32
" 4	0	0	0	0
" 6	2	0	6	0
Madthajom 1	1	0	14	5
" 2	0	1	0	0
" 3	1	1	21	4
" 4	1	0	11	5
" 5	0	0	1	2
" 6	2	1	5	5
Vocational College V1	0	0	0	0
V2	0	0	2	1
V3	0	0	3	4
V4	0	0	6	2
V5	0	0	1	0
Technical College T1	0	0	0	0
T2	0	0	0	2
T3	0	0	1	0
T4	1	0	3	1
T5	0	0	0	1
T6	0	0	1	0
B.A.	0	0	2	5
Total =	75	28	177	70

Table 6

In *Baan Bohin and Baan Chiangseen*, as in other rural Northern Thai villages, educational assistance by foreign mission groups constitutes part of a fairly aggressive rural out-reach policy. Most active is World Vision which provides educational assistance to rural students up to grade *Madthajom* 6 (final year secondary school)[14]. At the time of field work, three Christian children (children of members of *Khriscag Bohin*) and 11 Buddhist children were receiving assistance. Of the latter group, all except one lived in villages other than *Baan Bohin* or *Baan Chiangseen*. Thus, as in the case of labour organisation, transactions with Buddhists are carried out with Buddhists in other villages rather than with local Buddhists.

VII. Christianity and the Perception of Difference

My aim so far, has been to show that at the material level and in terms of orientation to the material aspects of the world, Christians are not sharply distinguished from their Buddhist neighbours. I have shown that in areas such as occupation and education, both Buddhists and Christian are subject to the same general trends, typical of other areas of Northern Thailand. In terms of land ownership and entrepreneurial activity, I have shown that the richest people are Buddhist but that, on average, Christians have easier access to land than do Buddhists, due to a higher percentage of Christian families owning some agricultural land. The generally stronger economic position of Christians vis-a-vis Buddhists in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* contrasts with the economically subordinate position which Niwan (1979) claims Catholic Christians occupy in the Central Thai village of *Khoogwad*.

I now move to examine the ways in which Christians, despite the portrait I have drawn, view themselves as being fundamentally different from non-Christians. I will argue that there are two closely connected facets to village Christianity, membership of *Khriscag Bohin,* and Christianity as an ideology of local group organisation. The first pertains solely membership in the wider body of the Church of Christ in Thailand, while the second pertains to a specific life-style and mode of kin organisation amongst *Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen* Christians.

Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen Christians feel very strongly about their group identity. They consider they are linked by ties of descent and by a common historical heritage from the first Christian. They talk about the village as one that possesses special qualities due to its status as a Christian village. Informants frequently made statements such as: "this is a Christian village" , or "there are no Buddhists in *Baan Bohin*", which patently conflicted with the empirical reality of Buddhist families living in the village. On another occasion my informant, who was talking about the benefits of living in *Baan Bohin,* said that there was no violence in "our village" (*Baan haw*). When I pointed out that a recent shooting contradicted this, she retorted that any violence committed in the village had been committed by outsiders who were not really of *Baan haw*.

Even more importantly, in a distinctive use of Northern Thai kinship terminology, Christians describe themselves as all belonging to the one family (*khrobkhrua*). They claim that they share relations which are characteristic of the ideal family: religiously and socially united, peaceful, and a body of people

who help each other due to their shared links of kinship and religion. In some circumstances (usually depending upon length of residence) members of families who have moved to live in quite remote centres such as Bangkok, *Faang*, *Chiangraaj* or *Maehongson*, may be regarded as members of the *khrobkhrua and Baan haw*. A 1986 census of village Christians by the Christian minister, *Aacaan Tongkham*, found many more Christians than did my household survey, as people counted normally absent household members to be members of the congregation regardless of residence[15].

The concept that the majority of Christians hold about themselves as a family, is constituted primarily with reference to a specific pattern of Christian culture comprising patterns of post-marital residence, a pattern of religious conversion, and naming patterns. Crucially, this conception of group identity is also related to a unique Christian history notions of shared descent from Christian ancestors, and a yearly ritual directed to ancestral Christians. This ritual, the *phithii buuchaa banphaburud* (literally, "the ritual to pay homage to the ancestors", hereafter, "the homage ritual"), relates only to Christians living in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* and is not connected with the ritual cycle of the Church of Christ in Thailand.

Thus, in a sense, village Christianity has a dual focus. On the one hand, it is concerned with what might be called official religion, the religious practices of *Khriscag Bohin*, which pertain to the Church of Christ in Thailand. On the other, it is concerned with indigenous religious beliefs and practices, manifest most strongly in the homage ritual (the *phithii buuchaa*

banphaburud) which is performed each Easter. It might be argued that these two aspects of Christian practice merely form part of the wider Christian ritual field. However, Christians make a distinction between some aspects of their religious practice (the homage rite) which they claim pertain to the Christian family (*khrobkhrua*) and which incur the opposition of representatives of official religion and, those which belong to, and are supported by the institutional Church. I take this point up at greater length in later chapters, particularly in chapter six, where I discuss the homage ritual and Christian relations with ancestors.

VIII. Descent, Naming and Kin Relations

The model of descent and kin relations found amongst *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* Christians, which I call *khrobkhrua* centred (family centred), conforms neither to the genealogical version of the past, nor to the normal mode of reckoning descent and kin relations in Northern Thailand. As a model of kin organisation, it comprises a complex of diacritical markers by which Christians demarcate themselves as a group distinct from non-Christians. Christians demarcate themselves: linguistically, by a "moral" or behavioural dimension, by a specific pattern of marriage and post-marital residence and by a specific way of tracing descent from deceased Christian ancestors. In respect to ritual, they are demarcated as a distinct group through their yearly performance of the homage ritual. Here, offerings are made to deceased Christian ancestors and relationships constituted between the living and ancestral Christians are used to constitute and legitimate relationships amongst the living.

I now discuss normal Northern Thai notions of descent and kinship and, then, compare this with the model of descent and kin relations held by Christians in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen*. Mindful of Schneider's (1984) warning of the violence done to indigenous cultural categories when they are forced into anthropological procrustean beds, I concentrate on a portrayal of the Christian family (*khrobkhrua*) in terms of its member's own perceptions of its meaning and functioning.

The Northern Thai trace descent bilaterally and recognise two significant categories of kin. The most fundamental category is that of the household unit, called family (*khrobkhrua*). Depending on the stage of the household cycle this ranges in size from the nuclear family to the three generation extended family occupying one or more dwellings in a compound (Potter 1976:121-123)[16]. Above the level of the household is the kindred. This is an ego focused category of kin which comprises the descendants of ego's maternal and paternal grandparents. Thus it includes all ego's uncles and aunts and their children through both parents. Members of a kindred refer to themselves as *luug phii luug norng* (literally senior and junior cousins) and distinguish themselves from others in terms of special reciprocal rights and obligations which exist between them. As Freeman (1961:209) notes, "It is usual for kindred to admit a special obligation toward one another: an obligation to give help and support in culturally determined ways." Potter (1976:136) sums up the relationships and responsibilities amongst the members of a Northern Thai kindred when he says:

> the members of one's bilateral kindred are the people to whom one owes the greatest respect, affection, and mutual support and cooperation. These are the closest

relatives one has: and they are much closer than unrelated neighbours or fellow villagers in general.

At times of celebration or crisis, or in the performance of ritual, when manpower is required above that which the household can provide, members of one's kindred constitute the primary source of assistance. While individual families (*khrobkhrua*) bear the major responsibility for the organisation of their central life-cycle rituals, members of the kindred have an obligation above that of other villagers to ensure the successful performance of these rites. They have a shared responsibility for the planning and physical organisation of rituals and in the case of the mortuary rite (*ngaan sob*), may also share some responsibility for expenses[17].

People outside of these two categories of kin, but with whom genealogical relations can still be traced, such as the descendants of ego's great-grandparents, are usually referred to by the term *jaad* or *khryajaad* (relatives). While maximum support and co-operation is expected from members of one's kindred, less is expected from relatives. This is readily apparent in the performance of ritual, where relatives are only expected to render that assistance due from unrelated villagers (*phyanbaan*). Similarly, in the case of expensive rituals such as the mortuary rite, they are not expected to make financial contributions above the level of the *nugn thawaaj* (offering money) given by all funeral guests.

Amongst *Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen* Christians, kin relations have undergone a transformation. For them the kindred, an ego focused category of kin based on descent criteria, is no

longer the most fundamental kin category above the level of the family. Its place has been taken by a group called *khrobkhrua* (the same word normally used to refer to the domestic family). All Christians view themselves as a group bound together by links of religious affiliation and shared ritual obligations, by a shared life-style, and by shared genealogical descendant from *Gaaw Rangsan*, the first Christian. They say that by virtue of this shared descent relationship they are "the one family" (*khrobkhrua diawkan*) and, that this means relations with fellow Christians are like those of a family, closer and more important than those with non-Christians. Christians use five related terms to describe their relationship: "family" (*khrobkhrua*), "our family" (*khrobkhrua haw*), "[the] one family/[the] same family" (*khrobkhrua diawkan*), "[the] *Rangsan* family" (*khrobkhrua Rangsan*) and "[the] one/[the] same blood line" (*saajlyad diawkan*). The former two are the most common and, during fieldwork, seemed to enter into most discussions regardless of topic.

Christians still refer to the domestic unit as a family (*khrobkhrua*). However, above the level of the domestic unit they use it in this new sense, where it refers to the group of all Christians[18]. This group is ancestor centred, in as much as its membership is constituted through the tracing of descent from *Gaaw* the first Christian, in either the male or female lines, through any combination of descent or affinal links.

This use of the term family must be clearly distinguished from Kaufman's (1977:21) fictional family, constituted by the remote affinal or consaguineal ties that informants claim with other village members. For its members, the family constitutes a

very real group. Its members share a specific life-style and come together yearly in the performance of the homage ritual, to fulfil ritual obligations to ancestral Christians. It is important to note that the term family is not applied to the members of other congregations. These are referred to as "Christians" or as "members of the Church" (*samaachig Khriscag*).

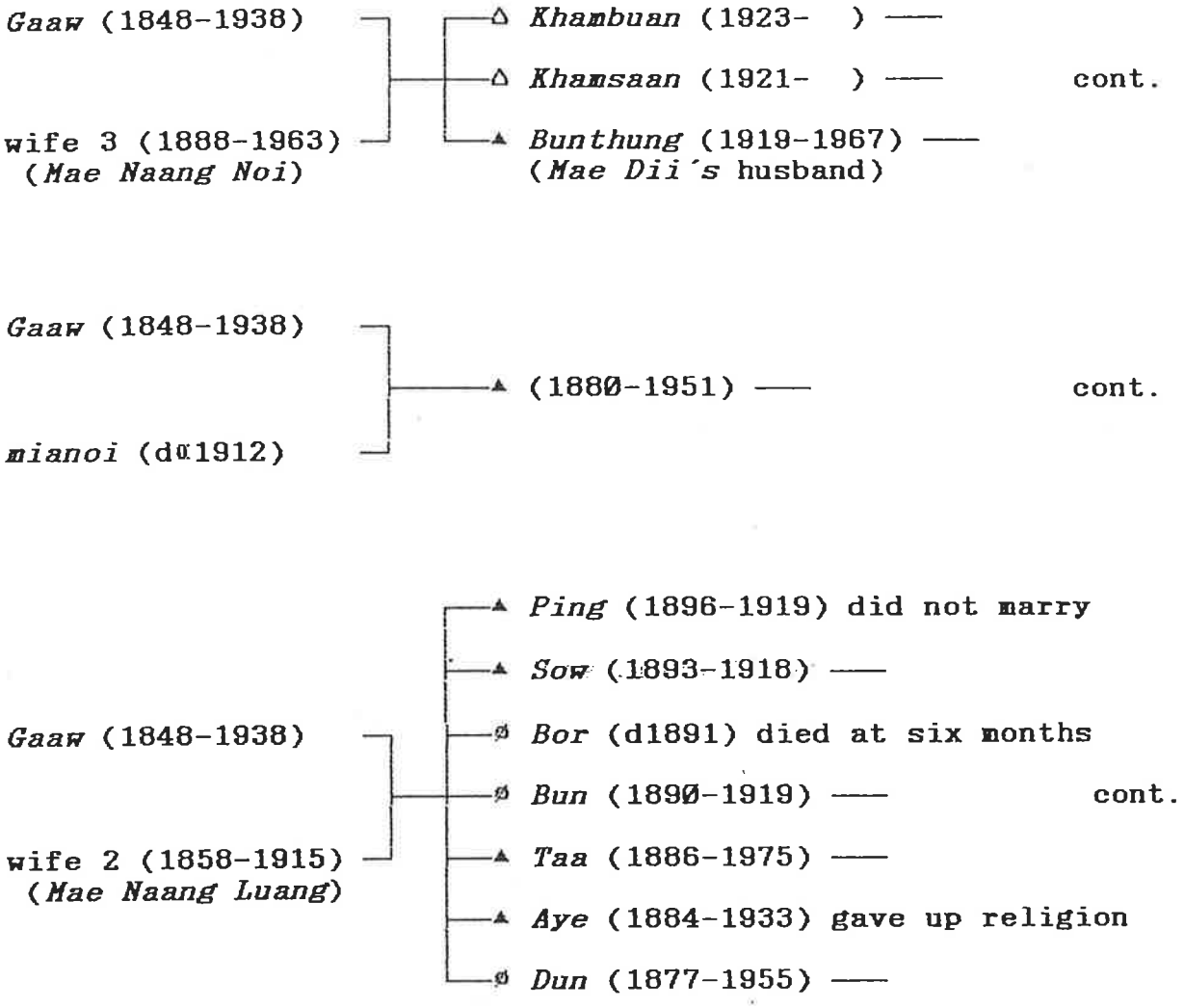
Christians also use the term *jaad* (relative) differently, but in a manner that conforms to the logic of the above classification. For them, relatives are those outside the boundaries of the family and, thus, this is a term used for non-Christian kin who do not acknowledge a relationship to ancestral Christians. The classification of people who are genealogically connected to ego as family or relative, is less dependant on the distance of the genealogical connection than on the other's religion and participation in the homage ritual. If the other is a Christian or a participant in the homage ritual he/she will be classified as family, but if a Buddhist or non-participant in the homage ritual, he/she (unless a very close relative such as a brother or sister) will be classified as a relative.

The usage of the family model of kin organisation is exemplified by a Christian informant whose maternal grandparents are Christian, but whose paternal grandparents are Buddhist. When talking about her relatives on her mother's side she used the terms family (*khrobkhrua*), or the same blood line (*saajlyad diawkan*) if talking in the context of descent. Here the boundary of those referred to by this term includes the majority of the congregation, the descendants of her great grandparents.

However, when talking about her relatives on her father's side, or her deceased husband's Buddhist family, she always used the term relative (*jaad*), thus removing them to the position of more distant kin.

In reality, almost all *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* Christians can be traced back to a core group of *Gaaw* and three women who bore him children at *Baan Bohin* between 1877 and 1923 (see diag 1). In total, *Gaaw* married four times. He first married from his father's house at *Sansai* and his first wife and their only child died in childbirth prior to his moving to *Baan Bohin*. His first marriage in *Baan Bohin* took place in approximately 1876 to *Mae Naang Luang* and produced a total of seven children. For a short time, in the late 1870's, *Gaaw* took a minor wife (*mianoi*)[19]. She bore him one child, who was subsequently raised in his own household. In 1916, following the death of *Mae Naang Luang* in 1915, he remarried a widow (again named *Naang, Mae Naang Noi*) who had two children from a previous marriage[20]. She bore him three more children.

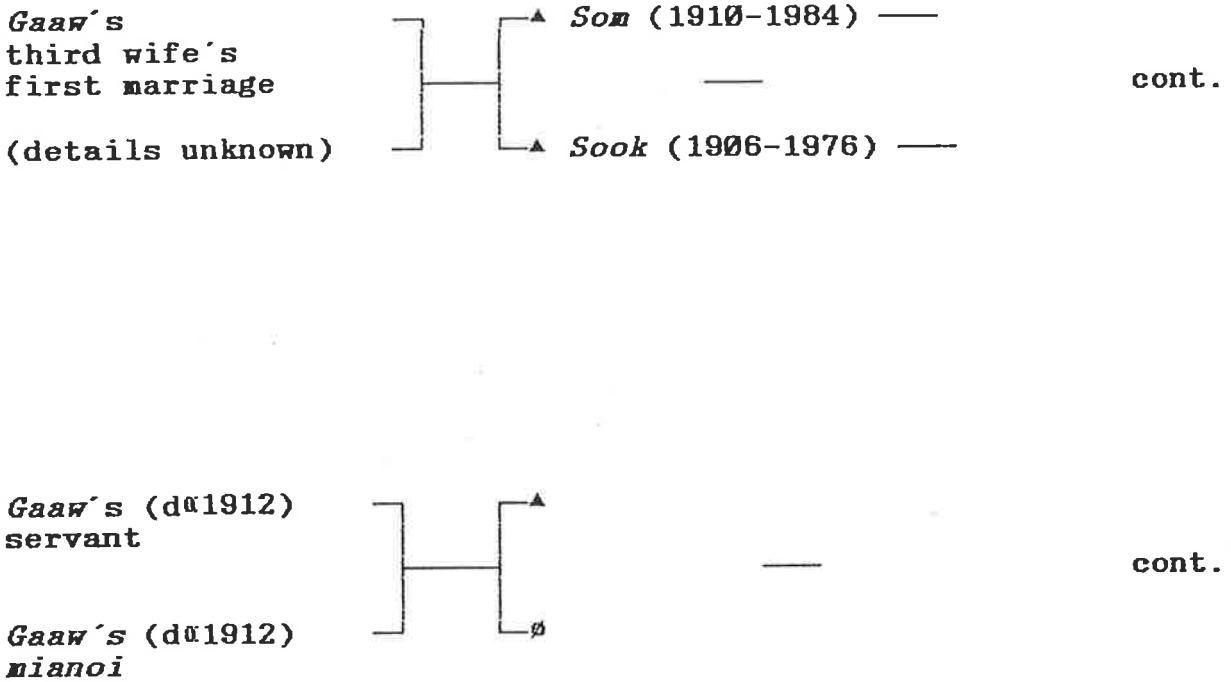
Today, the majority of Christians in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* are the descendants of the children of *Gaaw* and his second and third wives. A second, smaller group are descendants of the children of his third wife by her first marriage, who subsequently took his surname. *Gaaw's* minor wife married his servant during the early 1880's and they produced two male children[21]. Their descendants constitute another group of *Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen* Christians.



△ = living male
▲ = deceased male
o = living female
ø = deceased famale
? = deceased (sex unknown)

Note: genealogy shows all births

Diagram 1: The Genealogical Basis of *Khriscag Bohin*



Δ = living male
▲ = deceased male
o = living female
ø = deceased famale
? = deceased (sex unknown)

Note: genealogy shows all births

Diagram 1: Cont.

The descendants of these groups, who trace their descent from *Gaaw* by any combination of lineal and affinal links, now constitute the bulk of both the congregation of *Khriscag Bohin* and *Khriscag Khongphrakrid*. However, apart from this group there are a number of families (both Christian and Buddhist in origin) who trace their descent from *Gaaw* by much more tenuous links. These are the descendants of families who have become linked with the Christian group through the provision of in-marrying spouses or, who were linked to providers of spouses. In each generation both in-marrying spouses and some members of these associated groups, moved to the village and converted to Christianity.

This process is still taking place and over the past generation three families have joined the congregation of *Khriscag Bohin* in this manner. A current guardian (*phuupogkhrong*) of the congregation, together with his daughter and her husband and child, moved to *Baan Bohin* in 1984 following the death of his wife. Like others who join the congregation in this manner, he had close pre-existing links with the congregation via a deceased elder sister who had been married to a prominent *Baan Bohin* Christian.

The model of Christian descent portrayed here is arcane knowledge confined to a few second and third generation Christian elders. When collecting genealogies I initially found that these older informants were selective in their provision of genealogical data and that their data was highly inconsistent (cf. Evans-Pritchard 1974:199). As I later discuss, this "structural amnesia" (Barnard and Good 1987:24) is related to the management of reputation and kin relations. Younger informants

were less selective in their provision of genealogical data, but few knew the exact pattern of Christian descent. When working amongst the younger members of the village, I encountered genuine bewilderment when systematic genealogical collection pointed out inconsistencies in their models of relationships.

One reason for such bewilderment is that a large number of Christians bear the surname *Rangsan*, the same as that taken by *Gaaw Rangsan*, the first Christian. As the surname is normally transmitted in the male line, this suggests that those bearing the surname *Rangsan* share direct patrilineal links with the founding Christian. Buddhists frequently commented about Christians that "they are all *Rangsans*" and Christians themselves claimed that as they shared the same surname they were closer (*klajkwaa*) than they were to outsiders. However, in reality, as I have pointed out, Christians share a wide variety of kinship and descent relations. Possession of the surname *Rangsan* is not the result of descent from *Gaaw*, but is an artifice of the mode of adoption of surnames in the years following their institution in March 1913.

The regulations governing the introduction of surnames were introduced under a set of regulations called *Prarachabunut Kanarm Narmsakun* (Prarachgitjarbaksar 1913:1-4), the rules for designating surnames, promulgated March 22, 1913. These provided for the adoption of a surname (*naamsakun*) that would pass in the male line from father to children (clause 5) and which was not to be changed unless special permission were given (clause 8). Surnames were to be chosen by the head of the family, defined as the oldest person in the family (clause 10), within five months

of the promulgation of the law (clause 9). Women were to take the surname of their husband or that of their father, as they desired (clause 6). If the father were dead the children were to take the surname of their mother (clause 7). In the case of an unmarried women with no living relatives in the ascending generation, she was to take the surname of the nearest close male relative (clause 18). Critically, the surname was to pass in the male line (clause 17). A list of names was provided and people could choose their own names or, if necessary, they could be allocated a name.

Gaaw gave the surname *Rangsan* to all his children by his three wives. However, he also gave it to a number of other people who were not genealogically connected to him and who, according to the legislation, were not entitled to the name. In the second generation, both of *Gaaw's* daughters gave their surname to in-marrying husbands. At the same time *Gaaw* gave the surname *Rangsan* to his servant's family and to the children of his final wife's (*Mae Naang Noi's*) first marriage.

The first case is that of *Gaaw's* daughters, *Dun* and *Bun*, whose husbands took the surname *Rangsan*, instead of their taking his surname. In the case of *Dun* there is little data, except the information that following her second marriage her husband and an adopted child took the name *Rangsan*. In the case of *Bun*, who married within a year of the introduction of surnames, her Buddhist husband took the surname *Rangsan* and converted to Christianity. In both cases, the children of the marriages took the surname *Rangsan*.

The second case is that of *Gaaw's* servant (*khon chai*), who in the 1880's married the woman who had been his (*Gaaw's*) minor wife. They had two children and at the time of the introduction of surnames their grandchildren were in early childhood. All of their descendants took the surname *Rangsan*.

The third anomalous case concerns *Gaaw's* final marriage in 1918. Both of his wife's children from her previous marriage (*Sook* and *Som*) took the surname *Rangsan*. Although it is true that children of a second marriage sometimes take the name of their new father, by 1918 these children should have possessed their own surname. Due to their being well past infancy, (eight and twelve respectively), informants claimed they would normally have kept their own name (unless the new husband were particularly rich).

In effect, the surname *Rangsan* was used to link a large group of unrelated people together. Informants explained these acts as attempts to prevent the fragmentation of property inheritances. However, as all those who took the surname *Rangsan* were (or later became) Christians, I suggest that *Gaaw* also utilised this naming strategy together with Christian religious ideology, as a means of unifying a quite disparate group of people. It is significant that the above three cases are not only contrary to the law, they are contrary to normal practice in the area at this time. All other surnames in the *Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen* area can be traced to a single first user and transmission since that time has been patrilineal in accord with the law.

Wijeyewardene (1977:23) claims that lack of evidence regarding the acquisition of surnames along matrilineal lines is proof for the relative insignificance of the Northern Thai matrilineal spirit cult (the *phii buu njaa* cult). However, this data demonstrates that in the interests of the constitution of the family (*khrobkhrua*), surnames were inherited through female links on numerous occasions. Moreover, this pattern strongly resembles the normal practice in the matrilineal cult, where, as Turton (1972:222) points out, if necessary (if there is no daughter in one generation) "descent may be reckoned through a male, the descent principle jumping a gap so to speak" (see also Turton 1975:218). Present day Christians claim that a husband's taking of his wife's surname is wrong, as it constitutes his leaving of his family of birth. However, such qualms may be only ex post facto interpretations. In the context of a strong matrilineal cult, such practices may have been considered culturally appropriate actions.

Genealogically speaking then, although they may share the surname *Rangsan, Khriscag Bohin* Christians are a diverse group and many share only tenuous descent links with Christian founders. Moreover, according to the normal Northern Thai mode of tracing kin relations, many of the congregation share only tenuous kinship links with other Christians. Some direct patrilineal descendants of Gaaw distinguish between their position as real *Rangsans* (*Rangsan de de*), and the position of those who have inherited it, via *Gaaw's* servant, or via their wives. However, such distinctions are made in private and never in public.

A. The Moral Dimension of the *Khrobkhrua*

When Christians from *Khriscag Bohin* claim that they are of the one family, they commonly refer to the moral aspects of the relationships they share. One of the reasons why the distinction between the Christianity of the Church of Christ in Thailand and Christianity as an ideology of organisation for the family is rarely apparent, is that the moral imperatives of the two are very similar. The relationships and behaviours that denote the good family member, at the same time denote the fulfilment of Christian moral teachings.

Christians say that as members of the same family they share closer relationships than normal people. They also say that because they are the same family they agree about things and that they help each other. The type of help they describe is what Sahlins' (1974) calls "generalised reciprocity", which exists within groups sharing close family relations. This is apparent in my analysis of labour exchange, where Christians displayed a preference for engaging in labour transactions with other Christians. In cases of political conflict, Christians are expected to support other Christians, not because they are fellow Christians, but because they are "of the same family" (*khrobkhrua diawkan*). This generalised reciprocity between members of the family is perhaps most prominent in the performance of ritual, such as, for example, the mortuary rite discussed in chapter five. The death of a Christian obliges all other Christians to assist in the work of the mortuary rite, not because they are Christians, but because of the closeness of the family relationship they share[22]. A significantly lower amount of assistance is offered to those classified as relatives.

The moral dimension of family also includes the management of its reputation, both internally and externally, on the part of family elders. I have pointed out that my initial fieldwork period was marked by highly inconsistent genealogical data. These inconsistencies were generated as various elders, acting autonomously to manage the moral reputation of the family, produced a version of the past suitable for an outsider[23]. More importantly, over the past twenty years second and third generations Christian elders have been engaged in the production of Christian histories of the past (*prawad Khristian*). These take the form of written histories of ancestral Christians and *Khriscag Bohin*. They trace descent from *Gaaw*, but present a "sanitised" version of the past, in that events connected with sexual or other improprieties, details which are considered a bad history (*prawad sia*), are omitted. Even *Gaaw's* fecundity, although admired, presents problems as it does not conform to current Christian moral values. I take up these Christian histories again in chapters five and six when I discuss the manipulation of Christian burial patterns and the role of the homage ritual in the manipulation of patterns of descent. I suggest that personal and congregational histories constitute mythic charters which legitimate this process.

B. Marriage and Post-Marital Residence

Both Christian members of the family (*khrobkhrua*) and Buddhists, claimed that for the Northern Thai the normal form of post-marital residence was uxorilocal. This expressed ideal has been the case from at least the mid-nineteenth century. One of the earliest western reports of 19th century Northern Thai

marriage customs is McGilvary (1912), who says regarding post-marital residence:

> After marriage, the almost universal custom of the country has been that the husband lives with the wife's family (1912:78.

Hallett (1890) also mentions Northern Thai post-marital uxorilocality, as does Dodd (1923:307) who claims that custom of initial post-marital uxorilocality is general among *Tai* peoples. Widmer (1915) too, reports post-marital uxorilocality in regard to the Lao of *Song-Khone*.

This is generally still the case in the 1980's, although the literature of the past twenty years suggests a wide variation in its application. In regard to the North, Wijeyewardene (1967:69) suggests there is merely a tendency toward uxorilocality. McMorran (1984) notes that in *Lampaang* there is "a general pattern of initial uxorilocal residence". Kingshill (1976:61) claims that the village of *Ku Daeng* has a "definite tendency toward matrilocal residence". Others such as Potter (1976:118-119) consider initial uxorilocality to be the norm, a "universally expressed ideal ... observed in most marriages". Turton (1975:286) claims that "Ideally a son-in-law remains with his wife's parents until his wife's next sister marries". Writing in respect to *Nan*, Davis (1973:55, 1984:52) states that an initial period of uxorilocality "lasting up to a year" is mandatory. Regarding post-marital residence in the North East, Tambiah (1977a:15) claims that of his marital sample, 86% took up uxorilocal residence following marriage. Whilst in the South, Kaufman (1977:29) claims post-marital residence is generally "matrilocal [uxorilocal] for the first year or more" following which a rationalisation takes place. The period of residence

also has a wide variation, and in some cases, depending upon family size and economic context it may constitute merely a nominally applied token period.

However, members of the family emphasised that in contrast to this normative Northern Thai pattern, they possessed a different and exclusive pattern of post-marital residence. This is a pattern whereby on marriage, both male and female members of the family have their spouses move to live in *Baan Bohin* (or *Baan Chiangseen*), rather than follow the normative pattern of uxorilocality. As many informants put it, "we live with our family [*khrobkhrua haw*] because our family has more power". The word used for power in this context is always *amnaad*, suggesting direct, legitimate power. I call this a family centred (*khrobkhrua* centred) pattern of post-marital residence.

In the 1980's a period of uxorilocal post-marital residence is the norm for both Buddhists and Christians living in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen*. However, for Christians this period of uxorilocal post-marital residence is usually only a temporary period ranging from a week to several years. This accords with their expressed preference for living with the family. In contrast, Buddhists are more likely to remain living uxorilocally and, in the case of temporary uxorilocality, the period is much longer than that practiced by Christians. In the case of Buddhist marriages over the past two generations, 71% involved continuous uxorilocal post-marital residence. In contrast, for Christian marriages the figure is only 29%[24]. Where uxorilocal post-marital residence is a transient period, Buddhists on average spend twice as long as Christians - an average of 129

weeks as against 60 weeks[25]. And in cases where the female spouse does not come from a nearby village (less than ten kilometres) the period of uxorilocal post-marital residence is shortened. For Christians this decreases to an average of only seven weeks.

Davis claims (1984:53) that the distinctive aspect of the Northern Thai pattern of post-marital residence is "the *rule* [his emphasis] of initial uxorilocality". In the case of the family, I suggest, however, that the token period of post-marital uxorilocality is less significant than the emphasis Christians place on final long-term residence with other members of the family. For Christians, this token period of uxorilocal post-marital residence is an attempt to reconcile the demands of custom with the accepted practices of the family.

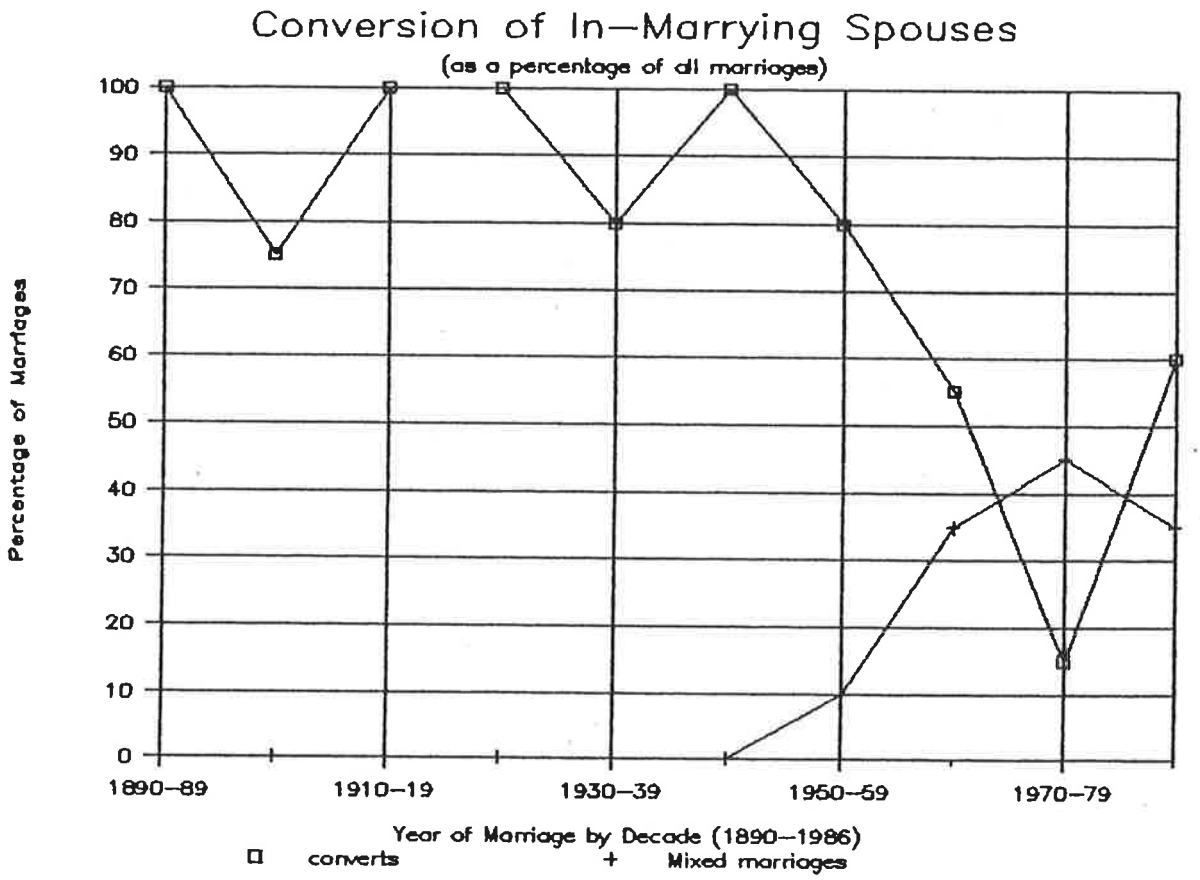
The family centred pattern of post-marital residence found amongst the members of the Christian family (*khrobkhrua*) is then, a significant departure from the general Northern Thai pattern of uxorilocal post-marital residence. However, it is not a recent innovation, but has been the pattern from the first generation of Christians. *Gaaw* had an extremely long reproductive span, from 1875 to 1923. Over this period he fathered seven male and two female children who went on to marry and have offspring (one child of unknown sex and one female child died soon after birth and one male child did not marry). With the exception of his second son (by his second wife, *Mae Naang Luang*), in each case, post-marital residence was family centred[26]. Both sons and daughters brought their spouses to live in *Baan Bohin* where they

converted to Christianity. Here they worked and later inherited land from *Gaaw*[27].

Although informant's details were vague, they claimed that in the first generation of Christians, in-marrying female spouses brought no inheritance with them. Gaaw's superior economic position would seem to have made marriage into his family an attractive option. However it may be that Gaaw's middle peasant Christian sons were able to find spouses willing to convert to Christianity and abide by Christian cultural patterns, only by marrying the daughters of poor peasants with little land. Alternatively, if they married women from similar backgrounds, the lack of female inheritance suggests that these women were able to convert to Christianity and contravene normal marriage rules, only at the price of losing their inheritance. In subsequent generations, in-marrying spouses have brought some land inheritance to the marriage.

A second unique aspect of marriage patterns amongst the members of the family, is that from the first generations Christians have followed a pattern of marriage to Buddhist spouses, a high percentage of whom (both male and female) have converted to Christianity following marriage. Of 123 marriages concerning Christians in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* during the period 1880 to 1985, only 15 marriages (12%) have been with other Christians, and only a minority of these have been with other members of the family[28]. Graph 1 summarises marriage into the Christian group since the time of *Gaaw's* conversion.***

UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE LIBRARY



Graph 1

Of these 123 Christian marriages over the past five generations, in-marrying Buddhist spouses have converted to Christianity in 42% of marriages (52 marriages), while over the same period, the Christian spouse has converted to Buddhism in only 13% of marriages (16 marriages)[29]. Informants explained the conversion of spouses to Christianity, as acts carried out to "fit in with the family". They uniformly claimed that outsiders constituted their preferred marriage partners and said that although it was theoretically possible to marry within the Christian group, in reality they were too close. Thus their perception of the genealogical relationship amongst Christians is of a close relationship, although as my genealogical data has demonstrated, this relationship is not particularly close.

The result of this marriage pattern is that at a statistical level, the family constitutes a largely exogamous group, which recruits through marriage. Over the past five generations, the in-marriage of spouses has been a more important factor in the growth of the Christian group than has the conversion of unconnected families. Almost all growth in the congregation over this period stems from a combination of natural fertility and the conversion of in-marrying spouses and their relatives.

In some cases, the willingness of a potential spouse to convert to Christianity may be used as a test of his/her true feelings. As one informant put it in regard to her husband's conversion to Christianity "if he had not agreed to become a Christian he would have shown that he did not love me". Willingness to convert to Christianity constitutes a

demonstration of commitment to both the individual and to the family and, as I discuss in chapter six, is reaffirmed yearly through paying homage to Christian ancestors through participation in the homage ritual.

In most cases conversion does not automatically follow marriage, but is closely related to post-marital residence. Thus, in the case of an in-marrying Buddhist female spouse and a period of uxorilocal post-marital residence, conversion would most likely place following the termination of post-marital residence, when the family has relocated in *Baan Bohin* or *Baan Chiangseen*. Conversely, if, in the same situation, the male partner converted to Buddhism, conversion would most likely be accompanied by permanent uxorilocal post-marital residence.

A phenomenon of the post-war period and, in particular, of the past twenty five years, is the rise of marriages where the in-marrying Buddhist spouse maintains his or her religion, even though post-marital residence is family centred. In such marriages, the children are usually incorporated in the ritual life of the church via their Christian parent and are considered to be Christians. Although no informants explicitly made this point, I suggest that these failures to convert to Christianity are related to an increasing fragmentation of inheritance among the members of the family. There is a strong correlation between those couples who will inherit little or no land and families where in-marrying spouses remain Buddhist. As I discuss in chapter three, this is also a period during which major changes have occurred in Thailand and in the congregation. There may also be a relationship between this conversion pattern and a

diminished authority on the part of family elders during this period.

Buddhist spouses who do not convert to Christianity frequently reduce their overt practice of Buddhism. They may continue to visit the temple in their village of birth, but rarely visit the local temple. All participate to varying degrees in the more important Christian rituals of Christmas and Easter and, most importantly, the yearly homage ritual. Thus, although they retain their own religion, through participation in ritual they demonstrate their affiliation to the family. However, such demonstrations of loyalty are not unambiguous and if such people later convert to Christianity they are considered to have become more closely aligned with the family.

IX. Summary

My aim in this chapter has been two-fold. Firstly I have aimed to delineate the village context where the cosmological and social transformations that I discuss in this thesis take place and to give a sense of the general relationships between the various religious groups. Secondly, I have given a detailed statistical comparison of the lives of Christians and Buddhists in the areas of occupation, land ownership, labour organisation and education. In these material areas which are not directly concerned with religion, I have shown that there is little material distinction between Christians and their Buddhist neighbours. In the present day, all are subject to similar economic and cultural forces, imposed by the wider capitalist system. Both Buddhists and Christians alike are aware that this is the case and that, in these areas, there are few distinctions

between them. While some distinctions are apparent in relation to land ownership, most of these are historically based and are not directly the result of religious affiliation in the present day.

Having examined the areas in which Christians are very similar to Buddhists, I then examined those areas in which Christians consider that they are fundamentally different from non-Christians. I have shown that Christians view themselves as belonging to a group they call a family (*khrobkhrua*). Regardless of genealogical realities, its members trace descent from founding Christians, and use terms of reference in such a way as to suggest that they all constitute a large family. They consider they are distinct from non-members in the relationships they share and in aspects of their life-style: the moral dimension of relationships, post-marital residence, patterns of conversion of in-marrying spouses to Christianity and, in their payment of homage to Christian ancestors, through participation in the homage ritual.

Given that the family comes together for the corporate performance of ritual, it is tempting to claim that it constitutes a corporate group which incorporates new members through marriage. However, while it is true that growth in the family has taken place through the incorporation of affines, the family fails to comply with even the most minimal definitions of corporateness. Fortes' (1969) provides a minimal definition of a corporateness, where corporate possessions may be as incorporeal as names or shared moral privileges. In the case of the family, its material possessions are not corporately owned, there is no

sense of the "juristic person" (Fortes ibid.:303) whereby each member represents the group as a whole, nor is there any sense of a set authority structure. Even the management of the moral identity of the family takes place on an ad hoc basis.

There is no clear evidence why *Gaaw* initiated the patterns of marriage and post-marital residence that are characteristic of *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* Christians in the 1980's. Missionary notions of a patri-centred monogamous family may have been influential. Certainly missionaries were concerned about situations which encouraged backsliding, such as isolated Christian families and converts who married Buddhists. They encouraged Christian families to live close together and preferred that Christians marry Christian partners. In *Gaaw's* first marriage, prior to his conversion to Christianity, post-marital residence was uxorilocal and, following his wife's death, he moved home to his father's house. However, in marriages subsequent to his conversion to Christianity the pattern of post-marital residence for both *Gaaw* and his adult children was family centred. This suggests that Christianity had an influence on his post-conversion, post-marital residence.

However, I suggest that equally important in the political and economic environments of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, was the constitution of a strong domestic group by means of the family model of domestic organisation. As I discuss more fully in the following chapter, the family centred pattern of post-marital residence and a naming pattern whereby in-marrying male spouses took their wife's surname which, allowed the affiliation of non-relatives, had a number of advantages in

the context of the late nineteenth century. Specifically, it provided a large pool of labour at a time when there was little free labour, and it involved no fragmentation of first generation land or family allegiance. Even in the present day, people talk about the family, in terms of its power and its ability to get things done. Its power and influence is the justification that in-marrying spouses use for conversion to Christianity and for living in *Baan Bohin*. Conversely, their conversion symbolised and continues to symbolise, their commitment to the family.

In later chapters, through the medium of ritual, I focus on the Northern Thai Christian cosmology as a transformation of both the Presbyterian Christian and Buddhist cosmologies and address the distinctiveness of the family from an alternative perspective. Through a focus on nineteenth century conversion and the genesis and performance of contemporary ritual I examine the central meanings of Christianity. It is only at this level, when the lives of the living are viewed in relation to the entire Christian cosmology and, in particular, in relation to the Christian conception of ancestors, that the full significance of the family becomes apparent. As I demonstrate in chapters five and six, it is through the participation in ritual directed to deceased ancestors, that Christians constitute the membership of the family. Just as *Gaaw* manipulated conceptions of genealogical relations through the manipulation of naming patterns, Christians in the present day continue to manipulate patterns of descent and relatedness through the manipulation of burial patterns and oral and written genealogies.

Endnotes

1. In two cases this concerned mixed marriages with young children. The parents claimed the children belonged to no religion, but would make up their own mind (*tadsincaj*) when they were old enough.
2 Some Christian informants suggested that it is better for non-Christian spouses to attend church occasionally, than not to attend at all. I later take up this the situation of these people, when I suggest that their sometimes attendance at church and, in particular, participation in the homage ritual, is not concerned with religious or ritual matters, but is concerned with the validation of their membership in the family (*khrobkhrua*) of Christians. For a small minority such church attendance leads to a stronger affiliation with the Christian group and to their eventual baptism and membership of the congregation.
3. Due to the recent nature of the Christian schism, the small number of people involved, and its personal rather than doctrinal nature I pay little attention to distinctions between the two Christian congregations.
4. Some, as government employees have found it necessary to move to more distant centres to work, *Chiangraaj, Faang,* or Bangkok, and these people return home less frequently.
5. At least two local men had sold land to purchase a pick-up (*rod siilor*) in order to work transporting people about the city or from rural areas into the city and home again.
6. Given a high rate of occupational mobility, in some years others in this age group may work as casual farm workers during the rice planting or harvesting seasons.
7. Unlike the Church of Christ in Thailand, *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* has no major Church institutions beyond its Bible College and, thus, employs a much smaller amount of labour: one person from its *Baan Bohin and Baan Chiangseen* congregation (in their kindergarten). One member of the congregation of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* is employed in a secretarial capacity at the Seventh Day Adventist Church in *Chiangmai*.
8. Amongst non-Christians, I heard numerous stories of people who converted to Christianity for the various material benefits it provided. However, at least in the rural areas, I did not find any. Interestingly, Kammerer (1990a:287) claims that this form of conversion is rare among the *Akha*. I suggest that it is necessary to distinguish the type of long-term conversion found in the *Baan Chiangseen* and *Baan Chiangseen* districts, from the short-term instrumental conversion which Zehner (personal communication) has found amongst rural-urban migrants in a Bangkok Pentecostal congregation.
9. Three of the Christian families, and one Buddhist family, contain members who are non-Christian and non-Buddhist respectively.
10. One *raj* is equal to 1600 square metres.
11. While both Christian and Buddhist land in this area has been sold to absentee landlords, this amount of land represents a slight increase over the 120 *raj* owned by *Gaaw* (the first Christian) in the early part of this century. The increase results both from land purchase by a few astute Christian farmers, as well as from small parcels of land brought in by spouses on marriage.
12. In the case of both Buddhist and Christian land ownership, these statistics are unambiguous. The owner of the land, head of

household and more than 90% of the household members are Buddhist or Christian respectively.
13. Alongside the desire of the new generation to enter non-agricultural occupations, the success of family planning programs during the past generation are partially responsible for this situation. Unless they are planning on commencing a family, almost all couples (both Buddhist and Christian) in the reproductive age group utilise some form of contraception (usually birth control pills). Sterilisation is the most popular means of limiting family size once the desired number of children has been reached.
14. These programs have been scaled down in the mid-1980's due to the realisation that although such educational assistance aids the poor, it is not very effect as a mode of proselytising. At present educational assistance is available to both Christians and Buddhists, however World Vision officials claim that future policies will be primarily oriented toward Christians - in a policy of helping themselves first.
15. In practice people who belong to *barn haw*, or as it is frequently called *khrobkhrua haw*, (our family) may live in *Baan Bohin*, in *Baan Chiangseen*, in one of the many villages to the North that people have travelled to in search of cheap land during the post-war period (*Maetaeng, Faang*), or Bangkok to the South. Here their period of residence may be temporary as in the case of students or migrant workers, or it may be semi-permanent.
16. Compounds typically include from one to four houses belonging to married daughters who have moved from the stem house. They are demarcated from adjacent compounds by rudimentary fencing.
17. In practice the bulk of the financial responsibility usually devolves on the children of the deceased.
18. The term *khrobkhrua* is not used in a metaphorical sense and although it might be an obvious conclusion, I doubt that it is derived from Christian preaching. Preaching normally uses the concepts of members (*samaachig*), organs (*awajjawa*), or brethren (*phii norng*, literally seniors and juniors) when referring to the members of the church as a body. Where English translations of the Bible use the term organs to refer to the members of the church this is also followed by Thai translations who use the equivalent term (*awajjawa*). Hymns referring to Christians as the family of God are not commonly sung. Even more importantly the *khrobkhrua* in both its structure and functions bears no direct correspondence to either the family or the kindred.
19. Two types of wives are recognised in Northern Thailand. A major wife (*mialuang*) is the first wife taken and is usually the wife with whom one lives. A minor wife (*mianoi*) is a second wife taken concomitantly with the first.
20. The first wife is referred to as *Mae Naang Luang* to distinguish her from the *Mae Naang Noi*, the second wife.
21. Informants used the term *khon chaj* to refer to *Gaaw's* servant. However, although they never used the term *tat* (slave), their accounts suggest *Gaaw's* servant was in reality a debt slave.
22. As in the case of the normal Northern Thai kindred, the bulk of the financial responsibility usually devolves upon the children of the deceased.
23. I later found that similarly selective versions of the past had been produced for a Thai researcher working on local history.
24. Data on post-marital residence are based on a 34% (stratified sample) of all households.

25. Younger daughter inheritance of the parental house remains the normative practice amongst Buddhists, but Christians are usually less concerned about marriage order than are Buddhists. Consequently while the last married child usually inherits the house, this may not be the youngest child.
26. Informants claimed this son (*Aye*) refused to follow his father's example. He was a *nag leeng* (literally a force expert) and squandered the inheritance of land he received on marriage. When he was thirty, *Gaaw* expelled him from the family and he settled in his wife's village.
27. Inheritance followed the normal Northern Thai pattern of equal inheritance for both males and female offspring. The only anomaly here, is that although *Gaaw* raised his son by his minor wife in his own household, he recognised the child's secondary status by giving him an inheritance of rice land which was only half that received by his other children. Similarly, although informants claimed *Gaaw's* servant was like a member of the family, his real status was symbolised by the fact that he received no inheritance at all.
28. These statistics relate to a total of 123 marriages that took place in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* between 1880 and 1985 and which involved Christians. In the case of couples who later moved to remote villages in any given generation, marriages of their descendants are not included.
29. The figure of 13% conversions to Buddhism commenced with *Gaaw's* second son in 1905, but in percentage terms has decreased in each generation.

*. Northern Thai Buddhist compounds did not traditionally have spirit houses. However, they have been introduced as part of Central Thai influence and, in present day *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen*, almost all Buddhist compounds possess a spirit house.
**. The move from rice farming towards urban based occupations is shown in the occupational breakdown in Table 4, which gives the total number of Christians and Buddhists in each of the major occupational categories. The nine members of the congregation of *Khriscag Bohin* employed in Christian institutions are employed as follows: one secondary school teacher and one primary school teacher, listed in Table 4 in the category Teacher (other); one cleaner, three night/day watchmen and three nursing assistants, listed in Table 4 in the category Misc Blue Collar.
***. Graph 1 shows the pattern of conversion of Christian spouses in all marriages up until the 1950's and, since that time, the rise of marriages in which in-marrying Buddhist spouses have retained their religion.

Chapter 3

THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY INTO NORTHERN THAILAND AND THE FOUNDATION OF *KHRISCAG BOHIN*

I. Introduction

This chapter examines the introduction of Christianity to Northern Thailand and to the specific *Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen* area. I firstly examine the nineteenth century political context in which Christianity was introduced to the North, the activities of early missionaries and the response of the northern princes (the *caws*) to those activities. I then examine the conversion process and the sorts of people who became converts. Finally, I discuss conversion in the research area and give a brief history of the foundation and subsequent functioning of the congregation of *Khriscag Bohin*.

The response to missionaries in nineteenth century Northern Thailand is remarkable, in that while missionaries in Central Thailand made very few converts among the Thai, amongst the Lao in the North they were comparatively successful. Within twenty years of starting work in *Chiangmai* in 1867, Presbyterian missionaries had made more than one hundred conversions (signified by baptism) of adult Laos (Smith 1982:74). And, despite the opposition of the ruling princes, an exponential rate of conversions continued until the end of the century. The same pattern is evident today. More than two thirds of the Church of

Christ in Thailand's 37,468 members are found in Northern Thailand, with almost half of these, 15,266 persons, being found in the *Chiangmai* and *Chiangraaj* provinces alone (see Appendix 1)[1]. The success of missionary work in the North was in stark contrast to the experience of missionaries in Central Thailand over the previous three hundred years. Here, very few conversions were made, and the majority of these were made among foreign nationals, not among the Thai.

I begin with a general analysis of the nineteenth century Northern Thai mission context followed by a more fine grained analysis of the specific nineteenth century *Baan Bohin* context. I focus here on the political context of missionary proselytising and on the Northern Thai response to that activity. While there are (and were) many cultural similarities between the Central and Northern Thailand mission contexts, in the latter part of the nineteenth century the political context in the North was quite distinct from that prevailing in Central Thailand. Like the rulers in Central Thailand, the northern princes were under pressure from the British and French colonial powers. However, they were also subject to an internal colonisation by the Bangkok regime. Increasing western intervention in both Thailand and the neighbouring countries of Burma and Laos, caused the Bangkok regime to exercise a tighter control over its tributary states.

In the North, the result was a rapid transformation of the administrative system and of many aspects of Northern Thai culture. I argue that conversion in the North was not due to any lower degree of opposition encountered there, but was a result of general political and economic transformations, which resulted

from the transformation of the Bangkok-*Chiangmai* tributary relationship. The social environment engendered by these transformations generated a number of social movements: small rebellions legitimated by Buddhist supernaturalism, an outbreak of witchcraft accusations which lasted from the 1880's until the 1920's and widespread messianic Buddhist expectations. I suggest that it is productive to view conversion to Christianity as one more response to this context of general social disruption. In opposition to contemporary analyses of nineteenth century Christian conversion in Northern Thailand (Hughes 1982, 1983, 1984a, 1985; Smith 1982; Swanson 1984), I argue that while the relationship between missionaries and their converts was certainly carried out in the cultural idiom of patron-clientage, missionary supplied patronage goods were not a sufficient cause of conversion. Thus, my analysis rejects the "rice bowl Christian" model of conversion in favour of a model based on the political and economic contexts, and the late nineteenth century failure of traditional religious legitimations.

By showing that conversion to Christianity was only one form of social phenomena generated at a time of social stress, I am also arguing against the deterministic, "missionary as imperialist" model of religious conversion. This model typified in the work of Amas (1983), Dachs (1972) and Malalgoda (1973), and, to a lesser extent, in Comaroff (1985), Comaroff et.al. (1986), portrays conversion as a process that involves the imposition of an alien cosmology onto relatively passive subjects. I argue that conversion involves the active participation of its subjects, that missionaries no less then their converts were caught up in the historical process and, that

the response to the missionary message was highly dependant upon the specific political and economic contexts in the North generally and in those areas where converts were made. The specific political and economic contexts in which the first *Baan Bohin* conversion took place, influenced the types of people who converted to Christianity, their understanding of Christian teachings and the synthesis that they made between Christian and Buddhist beliefs and practices.

This section also examines opposition to missionary activity. It is important to examine this as it tells a great deal about how missionaries and their role were interpreted by the Northern Thai. As in Central Thailand, the power holders (the princes) who feared the loss of their commoner clients, offered the most opposition to missionary proselytising. However, as the Bangkok regime encroached further on Northern Thai autonomy, it frequently supported missionaries and Christian converts against the opposition of the indigenous rulers. More significantly, unlike the Central Thai context, female commoners frequently displayed considerable opposition to the conversion of their relatives. I suggest this is related to the role of the Northern Thai matrilineal spirit cult (*phii buu njaa*) and to the strength of the cult in those areas. Converts who no-longer participated in cult ritual posed a threat to the cult and its legitimating cosmology as a mechanism of social control.

A final aim of this chapter is to describe and analyse the growth of Christianity in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* within the wider Northern Thai political and economic contexts. I do this over the period from the conversion of the first Christian

in the early 1880's until the present and, include a description of the two Christian congregations in contemporary *Baan Bohin*. I show how the structure and practice of *Baan Bohin* Christianity has been influenced by the nineteenth century context in which it was founded and by changes in wider Thai society during the course of the present century. I discuss the foundation and growth of *Khriscag Bohin* and give a profile of its membership. This, as I have previously pointed out, is unique in that members trace descent to a single founding Christian and claim that their kin relations are those of a family (*khrobkhrua*). I also discuss the relationship between conversion to Christianity and the economic success of first and second generation Christians, paying particular attention to the development of the contemporary pattern of Christian land ownership (discussed in the previous chapter).

II. The Political Context of Mission

Members of the Siam mission in Bangkok had expressed an interest in the Lao from the early 1850's[2]. However the Presbyterian mission to the North did not commence until 1867, when missionary Daniel McGilvary together with his wife and two children travelled to *Chiangmai*. It was the first Christian mission to the North, although the Catholic missionaries Grandjean and Vachal had previously made an exploratory trip in 1844 (Brailey 1968:50), as had McGilvary himself in 1863[3]. McGilvary had proselytised at *Petachburi* amongst Lao war captives from the *Khorat* region and found them receptive to Christianity and hoped to find a similar attitude in the Lao heartland. A wish to secure Thailand as a mission field from the encroachments

of other religions, particularly the Baptists who were active in Burma, was probably a major motive leading to the move North.

The foundation of the Presbyterian mission in Northern Thailand occurred at a crucial time in Thai and Northern Thai history. It was a time of Northern Thai freedom from Burmese domination and of a relatively new tributary relation to the Siamese in Bangkok. At the same time, it was a period when that autonomy was about to be eroded in favour of the incorporation of the North in the wider Thai polity. Although the northern kingdom dated back to its foundation at *Chiangmai* in 1296 by King *Mangrai* (Coedes 1971:208), strong relations with the Bangkok regime dated from only 1774 (Wyatt 1984:45-49). At this time, after being under Burmese influence since the sixteenth century, *Lan Na* forces under *Phaya Chaban* and *Kawila* declared their independence from the Burmese by going over to the Siamese side and joining *Taksin* in the expulsion of the Burmese from the Central Thai cities.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Siamese territory was divided into three categories: the inner provinces, the outer provinces, and tributary states (Tej 1977:17)[4]. The tributary states in the North and North-East were *Luang Prabang*, and the principalities of *Chiangmai, Lampaang, Lamphuun, Phrae, Nan* and *Bassac*. In the South, the Sultanates of Trengganu, Kelantan, and Kedah, were tributary states. To the East, Cambodia was also a tributary state for the majority of the period between the end of the eighteenth century and 1867 (Brailey 1973:318).

Under the tributary system, the *Lan Na* state was required to pay both ceremonial and financial tributes to the Bangkok regime. While northern princes were elected locally, they were invested in Bangkok in a ceremony symbolising the tributary relationship. An additional ceremonial aspect of the tributary relationship, was the requirement that the cremation ritual of deceased senior princes could not proceed until the arrival of a representative of the Siamese Government. More significant in terms of their impact on the northern economy was the requirement of a regular tribute. Silver and gold money trees were to be paid three yearly and tributes of teak-wood were to be paid every "year or two" (Brailey 1973:315).

The relationship between Bangkok and its tributary states was politically "fragile" (Tej 1977:30) and, the strength of Bangkok intervention in their internal affairs varied, according to the tributary states' power. Brailey (1973) claims that the Bangkok-*Lan Na* relationship was one that allowed a substantial amount of autonomy to the northern state. He points out (1973:311) that although theoretically the Siamese kings possessed a power of veto, they never used this in the case of the *Lan Na* state. The northern state retained its own juridical and financial systems, a separate monastic system, and the right to make local trade agreements[5].

Like the Central Thai state, nineteenth century Northern Thailand was a *sagdinaa* society (Akin 1969, 1975). Under this system the population was divided into four relatively discrete strata, a ruling group comprising the *caw* (princes) and *khunnang* (nobles), *phraj* (free commoners) and *thaad* (slaves). At each

social level people were assigned a number of points which related to the amount of land and men under their control. They ranged from a *sagdinaa* rating of 5 for a slave, up to an infinitely high *sagdinaa* for the King. The northern social structure was slightly different to that in the South, as the ruling group was not stratified into *caws* and *khunnang* (Calavan 1975; Brailey 1968), thus there were only three major social strata[6]. The princes (*caw*) comprised the ruling group who manned the bureaucratic and administrative machinery of the North. Unlike the Siamese context they were not subject to a declining descent rule, which meant that there was both a degree of competition for positions (Calavan 1975:53) and some pressure to retain clients. Below this group, was a category of free commoners (*phraj*) and below them slaves (*thaad*), a broad category of unfree persons ranging from war captives to debt slaves (Turton 1980).

Administratively power was mediated from the ruling Prince, called the *Cawluang* (principal *Caw*) or *Cawchiwit* (lord of life) to lesser, but still powerful princes, possessing prestigious prebends, to those possessing much lower degrees of power and prestige, the minor princes (*cawnoi*). Distinctions among the members of the ruling strata were made through the assumption of particular administrative positions and associated titles, rather than titles based on birth (Calavan 1975:49). Although Calavan (1975:65) notes that in the case of Northern Thailand it is difficult to distinguish between "aristocratic estate sumptuary rights" and those which appertained to "an administrative rank that an aristocrat assumed", she does distinguish a number of specific status rights. These are similar to those possessed by

the ruling group in Central Thailand. Aristocrats and their children were exempted from government corvée, they had the right to be administrators when they could gain a position and they had the right to establish a court to settle the disputes of commoners under their control. They also had the right to own slaves and their right to the respectful behaviour of others was enshrined in law. Those occupying administrative positions had the right to insignia and were entitled to have a retinue of attendants, *samian thanai*, (retainers of the lord), the number of which depended upon their rank (Calavan 1975:69).

Due to the expansion of *kroms* (government departments) in central Thailand, by the mid-nineteenth century, commoners belonging to particular nobles, were geographically scattered and were not under their direct command (Akin 1969). However, in Northern Thailand most commoners lived under the direct control of resident prince administrators (Calavan 1975:72). Princely positions below that of the ruling Prince were administrative positions, remunerated by the right of *kinmyang* (literally to eat off the land), the right to corvée labour, rights of tax collection and the use of slaves. The minor princes had the responsibility for the maintenance of justice and order and for ensuring that commoners fulfilled their corvée obligations. They constituted the major patrons and providers of downward flowing goods for commoners. All commoners owed some form of service to the ruling prince, whether military, specialist, or corvée labour on royal land. Some also filled lower administrative positions (Calavan 1975:52), and local village level control was through commoner headmen, chosen by their local prince administrator.

In nineteenth century Northern Thailand, as in Central Thailand and the other Southeast Asian states, manpower was a scarce resource. Power was measured in control over manpower rather than land ownership. Land was freely available to those who could clear and work it, although, as Calavan (1975:138) notes, ownership of land was often restricted by the various obligations it incurred[7]. The plain to the North and Northeast of *Chiangmai* was only sparsely settled following depopulation in the final episodes of the Burmese wars. Following the defeat of the final Burmese attack on *Chiangmai* in 1796 "many recent settlers in the *Ping* valley were carried off by the retreating Burmese army" (Brailey 1968:22-23), thus, in the North, manpower was even more scarce than in Central Thailand.

Throughout most of the nineteenth century, both towns and the more outlying districts, were undergoing a process of resettlement. Also, following the expulsion of the Burmese and alignment of the *Lan Na* state with Bangkok, a number of new principalities were established. The principality of *Lamphuun* was established in 1814 and in 1841 *Chiangraaj* was established as a dependency of *Chiangmai*, and *Ngao* and *Phayao* as dependencies of *Lampaang*. Calavan (1975:60) claims it took from 1800 to 1870 for the major cities of *Chiangmai*, *Lampaang*, and *Lamphuun* and, their smaller vassal towns and surrounding districts, to be repopulated. Later in 1878, following French expansionism in Laos and Cambodia, an attempt was made to repopulate the city of *Chiangseen* in the far North (Calavan 1975:59). Each new resettlement involved the mass migration of large numbers of people. The resettlement of *Chiangseen* involved the forced

emigration of 2,500 people, 1,000 each from *Chiangmai* and *Lampaang* and 500 from *Lamphuun* (Le May 1926:214).

A concomitant of the movement of large numbers of people to re-open the country in the nineteenth century was a movement of princely administrators to the periphery. Calavan (1975:100) suggests that during the reign of *Caw Intanon* there was a policy of locating the lesser princes (frequently relatives of the ruling Prince) in the previously less accessible, underpopulated and poorly controlled areas of the kingdom. She claims that these *kinmyang* administrators were commissioned to maintain the peace, stabilize land claims and to develop wet rice agriculture. As a result there was a small scale movement of people to the then periphery, as areas being re-established attracted villagers in search of new land. Later in this chapter, I suggest that the family of the first Christian convert in *Baan Bohin*, migrated to the nearby *Sansai* district as part of this small scale resettlement.

III. The Presbyterian Mission to Northern Thailand

The Presbyterian mission to the North commenced with the permission of the ruling Prince, *Caw Carwilorot*. In 1866 when *Caw Carwilorot* was in Bangkok on his triennial tributary visit, the missionaries made a formal request through King *Mongkut* for permission to open a mission station in the North. According to McGilvary (1912:69), *Mongkut* said that he was unwilling to force a mission upon *Caw Carwilorot*, but that if the *Caw* gave permission, he would give his. Permission was subsequently gained from *Caw Carwilorot* who told the missionaries:

> that he could not sell us land but would give us as much as was necessary for our purposes and also timber with

> which to build. (McGilvary, 10 September 1866 No.33 in PMSL, Vol.3).

It was given without any apparent qualms on his part regarding the proselytising aims of the mission. Given his later opposition to the mission, in the beginning, he may have been unaware of the interventionist nature of the missionaries' program, or that it constituted a vanguard for further European and Central Thai encroachment on the autonomy of the North[8].

In *Chiangmai* McGilvary preached to people from his *saalaa* residence (a *saalaa* is a roofed but incompletely walled structure) and later from a church located in the Christian compound on the Eastern bank of the *Mae Bing* river. The weekly mission routine too, was similar to that of the Bangkok mission:

> A preaching service is held in one of the mission houses every Sabbath forenoon & an english service in the afternoon. Mrs McGilvary has a class of women whom she catechizes & instructs Sabbath evening. The missionary may have a daily opportunity of preaching Christ in public salas [sic] in & around the city (McGilvary, Annual Report, 30 October 1868, No.90 in PMSL, Vol.3)

Like the missionaries in Bangkok (Mattoon, 1 October 1848, No.21 in PMSL, Vol.2), he also preached at Buddhist temples. As in Central Thailand, soon after the establishment of the northern mission he moved out into the more remote areas of the North. In addition to one and two day tours to what he called "home villages", those villages within close proximity to *Chiangmai*, he made long two and three month tours throughout the whole of the North of Thailand and into Laos proper.

However, despite having given his permission for the founding of the mission, almost from its beginning *Caw Carwilorot* appears to have resented the missionary presence and to have

tried to hinder their activities. McGilvary reached *Chiangmai* in April of 1867 and by June was reporting home:

> an ominous hint had been made against anyone's [sic] receiving money from the foreigners (McGilvary, 9 July 1867, No.52 in PMSL, Vol.3).

While face to face relations with the Prince were cordial, from the beginning McGilvary encountered restrictions regarding the siting of a mission building and in the employment of carpenters and brick makers. *Caw Carwilorot* gave McGilvary permission to contract a carpenter, yet threatened the carpenter's life by telling him that if he did the work he would be no longer under his (the Prince's) protection (McGilvary, 20 November 1867, No.62 in PMSL, Vol.3). Later, after unsuccessfully attempting to employ brick makers (it having previously agreed that he could employ them), McGilvary was visited by a messenger from *Caw Carwilorot*, who told him:

> that if we looked we would see that there were no brick houses here except the temples and that he must say to us that we could not build of brick and that we could not build any where except some distance below these in no place that was even within the city wall. That if we would go down there we might build wooden buildings and even cover these with tiles (McGilvary, 20 November 1867, No.62 in PMSL, Vol.3).

The second year in the mission field was more settled than the first. The McGilvarys were joined by Missionary Wilson and his wife in early 1868 and built a temporary mission house. Later the same year, they were given a site for a permanent mission, commandeered from its native owners (McGilvary, 10 February 1868, No.68 in PMSL, Vol.3). During this period, labour problems seem to have disappeared and, in 1868 and 1869, a number of people were showing interest in Christianity. The first conversion in January 1869 (conversion being signified by baptism) was that of *Nan Intar*. He had been a Buddhist abbot

and, according to McGilvary, was a client of a highly placed prince (McGilvary, 1 January 1869, No. 91 in PMSL, Vol.3). Subsequent converts in the same period comprised a number of high status people, including a native doctor who "was the chief herdsman in charge of the Prince's cattle" (McGilvary 1912:99), an official of *sen* rank from *Lamphuun* and, another abbot, who gave up his position in the temple upon conversion (ibid.:100). Missionary letters from this period also mention several other high status persons who were contemplating conversion.

At this point, the northern princes gave their first indication that they were aware of the challenge Christianity posed to their authority. On the Sunday following his conversion, *Nan Intar* was called to perform corvée duty. This call to corvée duty following conversion and others like it, suggests that the princes were concerned about missionary intervention in their relationship with their commoner clients. A hint of this is apparent in missionary Wilson's report of the incident:

> Two Sabbaths ago a summons came for Nan Intar to take the oversight of workmen who were building his master a new house. His reply by the messenger was, 'excuse me today. It is the Lord's day, I will go early tomorrow morning'. He went according to promise & after stating his newly formed convictions found that his master was willing to yield the point of his working on the Sabbath (Wilson, 27 January 1869, No.93 in PMSL, Vol.3)

In mid 1869, *Caw Carwilorot* commenced a policy of open opposition to the mission, by petitioning Bangkok and asking for the missionaries removal. He claimed that they had offended the spirits of the country who had caused poor rains and subsequent crop failures (McGilvary 1912:103). The petition was rejected and, following this, he initiated a policy of reprisals on those

who had turned from Buddhism. He commenced with the execution of two of the first Christian converts in September 1869. Although he claimed that this was punishment for their failure to carry out corvée duties (ibid.:108), prior to being clubbed to death the two men were questioned regarding their conversion to Christianity (Wilson, 3 January 1870, No.109 in PMSL, Vol.3). Of the two executed, one was the abbot who had left the *Sangha* (the monastic order) on conversion to Christianity and the other was a herdsman of the Prince's cattle. Sawyers who had cut wood for the missionaries were also told that if they sawed for the mission in the future, they would receive 30 lashes and be put in chains for life (McGilvary, 1 November 1869, No.104 in PMSL, Vol.3). As a result, most of the mission's servants left and converts and those interested in Christianity either left the district or kept low. The next baptism did not take place until April 1872 (McGilvary, 10 April 1872, No.174 in PMSL, Vol.3). While later reports mention some high status converts, a "princess" who applied for baptism (McGilvary, 22 August 1870, No.132 in PMSL, Vol.3), or the receipt of "another 'Nan'" into the Church (McGilvary, 4 December 1872, No.200 in PMSL, Vol.3), the majority of subsequent conversions came from the peasantry.

Caw Carwilorot's actions in executing the two Christians and threatening the lives of the missionaries was protested in Bangkok by both American missionary and consular representatives. However, a Siamese Commissioner who was sent to *Chiangmai* (accompanied by two missionaries) to investigate the Prince's actions was unable to do more than order him not to harm the missionaries and to advise them to withdraw (McGilvary 1912:126). McDonald (one of the missionary representatives accompanying the

Siamese Commissioner) quotes *Caw Carwilorot* regarding his executing the native Christians and his attitude toward further missionary proselytising activity:

> 'yes', he said, he had killed them because they had embraced the Christian religion. And he would continue to kill every one who did the same. Leaving the religion of the country was rebellion against him, and he would so treat it. If the missionaries would remain to treat the sick, they might do so. But they must not make Christians; they must not teach the Christian religion. If they did he would expel them from the country (McGilvary 1912:125)[9].

The incident was temporarily closed with the missionaries' promise to leave within a year and *Caw Carwilorot's* departure for Bangkok in early 1870 to attend the funeral of King *Mongkut*. His death en route on his return to *Chiangmai* resolved the problem of the impending closing of the mission.

Missionary acts, such as the destruction of Buddha statues in their compound, the death of *Caw Carwilorot's* grandson whom McGilvary was treating and, the hostility of a Portuguese employee of the Prince, may all have contributed to this open opposition. Yet, above all, as Brailey (1968:159) points out, it was a reaction to the "shockwave" which the conversion of men of rank and education sent throughout the Northern Thai ruling class and, to the challenge Christian teachings regarding the Sabbath posed for the corvée relationship and ultimately the Northern Thai hierarchical authority structure (Swanson 1984:13).

Keyes (1990:5) claims that Christian missionaries "have failed to pose a serious challenge to the authority of Buddhism in Thailand". In general, this is certainly the case. However, I suggest that there is one exception to this statement. In Northern Thailand during the latter part of the nineteenth

century, Christianity posed a very real challenge to Buddhism in its role as an ideology legitimating political control. It was only averted by the quick and extreme reaction of *Caw Carwilorot*. In the North, manpower, both slaves and commoners, was the primary basis of wealth. The extreme shortage of manpower in the North was probably a major factor leading to the speed and violence of *Caw Carwilorot's* opposition toward missionary activity. As I have already noted, administrative policy at this time tended toward an extension of cultivated areas and an increasing degree of control over a slowly growing population, distributed over an expanding geographical area. Any intervention in the relationship between the princes and their commoners, or challenge to the Buddhist cosmological order by which the princes legitimated their position, represented an economic threat and a challenge to their absolute power.

Caw Carwilorot's successor *Caw Intanon* (1871-1897) and other lesser princes continued to oppose missionary activity, but less actively than *Caw Carwilorot*. McGilvary (1912:143-144) relates an incident typical of later years when an American Baptist Mission preacher, preaching to *Karen* in Lao territory, found that the *Cawuparat* (second in power) had issued orders that no-one was to become a Christian. The reign of *Caw Carwilorot* and the events that followed his death, marked a watershed in Bangkok-Northern Thailand relations and in the situation of missionaries working in *Chiangmai*. From this point onwards, the northern state was gradually incorporated in the administrative machinery of Bangkok.

This entailed the gradual transformation of the administrative structure of the North and the reduction of the power of the northern princes. In this context there were a number of occasions when it suited Bangkok interests to support the missionaries in situations of conflict with the princes. It was in part through the support of Bangkok that Christianity gradually gained a stronger foothold in the North. The following years were a period of slow growth of the mission - from two missionaries (plus their wives) in 1870, to 13 by 1887, to 21 by 1890. By 1900 there were 46 foreign mission staff and, as I now show, the number of converts grew much more rapidly.

IV. Administrative Transformation and Mission Success

Changes in the administration of the North were part of a wider series of administrative reforms in the administrative, judicial and financial areas that aimed at strengthening the tributary states and outer provinces against western encroachment. Threats were perceived in British expansionism in Burma to the West and, to the East, there were indications of expansionism by the French who had declared Cambodia a protectorate and were moving up the Mekhong valley. Also, both the United States and Britain put pressure on the Siamese Court for the protection of their nationals living in the North. The United States were concerned with the safety of their missionaries and the British were concerned with the protection of Burmese foresters working in Western Laos[10].

In Northern Thailand, significant administrative changes began in 1874 with the appointment of a resident Siamese Judge-Commissioner, *Phraya Thep*. This reduced the economic power

base of the princes, as he took 25% of the timber tax collected in the North and raised new taxes over a broad range of commodities: hides, ivory, tobacco, siri leaf, areca-palm, coconut palm and other cash crops.

Subsequent administrative transformations over the following twenty years further eroded the political and economic powers of the northern princes. The Anglo-Thai treaty of 1883 (Calavan 1975:81) established a British Consul and International Court at *Chiangmai*. It also gave foreign companies the right to obtain timber concessions and to set up permanent milling operations in the North. In 1884, a new system of Government (Tej 1977:65) via six ministers appointed by the Prince and, subservient to him and then the Commissioner, further reduced the economic power of the lesser princes, by collecting taxes through Chinese tax farmers, rather than the previous direct payment in kind to the princes[11].

The autonomy of the North was further reduced in 1892, in the Provincial Reorganization Act, which placed an official of the central government above the traditional government of the ruling Prince (the *Cawluang*). And following *Caw Intanon's* death in 1898 the legislative and judicial powers of the princes were restricted yet again, by requiring the consent of the High Commissioner before they could pass laws and ennoble (Tej 1977:147-149). At the same time, their prestige and financial powers were reduced by putting the appointment of the six ministers in the hands of the High Commissioner and through the substitution of a four *baht* per year commutation tax for corvée services (ibid.).

The final stages in the transformation of the administration of the North took place following the Shan uprising in 1902. This changed all officials (including the new ruling Prince, *Caw Intawaroot*) down to the *Amphoe* level into salaried officials and removed the system of *kinmyang* by which local officials supported themselves through setting their own tax levels. The northern princes at all levels forfeited the right to set and collect their own taxes and to hold their own courts. They also lost the power to appoint village officials, and from this point onward all village headmen (*pauluang*) and *tambon* headmen (*khwaen*) were to be elected by fellow villagers. The gradual abolition of slavery over this period also acted to reduce the financial power and status position of the northern princes (Tej 1977:57) whose slaves Turton (1980:275) estimates as totalling "many thousands"[12].

The overall trend in these administrative transformations in the North during this period, was the removal of political power from the hands of the traditional power holders and the creation of what Calavan calls "a single legal status" (Calavan 1975:193). While, as Calavan shows (ibid.), most princes moved quickly to acquire positions in the new order, their political and economic powers and, consequently, their social prestige were greatly reduced.

However, while the loss in the power and income of the princes was great, in relative terms losses accruing to the peasantry as a result of administrative and social change were much greater. Subject to a range of new taxes, paid in money to tax collectors rather than in kind to the princes, they had to

acquire a cash income. Concomitantly, they lost many of the rights and privileges allowed under the old administrative system. The princes no longer acted as a buffer between the peasantry and the central government and, as the princes' control over their resources was reduced, there were fewer village level princes to act as patrons (Calavan 1975:210). Slaves lost their security as members of their master's *khaam* (household) and commoners lost their right of access to royal fields, which were divided up and transferred to individual owners.

Overall, these changes acted to place the princes and commoners in quite different structural relationships. Their relationship of patron - client had been complementary. Commoners gained access to land with the assistance of princely patrons, in exchange for favours and assistance when required. Following the loss of the significant parts of their income (loss of forest leases, loss of access to royal land and, loss of corvée and taxation rights), the princes turned to land accumulation. As Anan (1984b:55) puts it:

> they turned to the appropriation of the ricelands of the peasants and of unclaimed land, turning it into *na caw*, their private property.

This, at a time of a growing commercial rice market, placed them in a position in opposition to commoners, as they engaged in various legal and illegal strategies to alienate peasant land holdings (Anan 1984a, 1984b; Calavan 1975) in order to take advantage of a growing commercial rice market.

It was in this context of administrative reform and consequent social transformation, that missionaries in the late 1870's once again started making converts. A small scale,

although geographically extensive, move to Christianity began following an Edict of Religious Toleration by the Siamese High Commissioner in 1878. The significance of this Edict of Religious Toleration was that it gave the Northern Thai the right to choose their religious affiliation and effectively legitimated relations with foreign patrons. It was the result of Bangkok's support for the mission on the occasion of the first formal Lao Christian marriage (McGilvary 1912:213)[13]. The head of the bride's family refused to sanction the marriage unless it was legalised in the normal manner by making a payment to her matrilineal spirits (the *phii buu njaa*). After both the Prince and the Siamese Commissioner refused to intervene, McGilvary took the case to King *Chulalongkorn* who gave the Commissioner the power to issue an Edict of Religious Toleration in the North.

The main provisions of the document, which was prepared according to the suggestions of McGilvary (McGilvary 1912:215), are:

(1) The granting of the right of religious freedom to all persons, with the provision that "religious and civic duties do not come into conflict".

(2) The exclusion of Christians from performing corvée labour on Sundays or other festival days.

(3) Specific provisions were made for the missionaries to be able to obtain native labour, the restriction of which, had been one of the mechanisms of passive obstruction used by the princes:

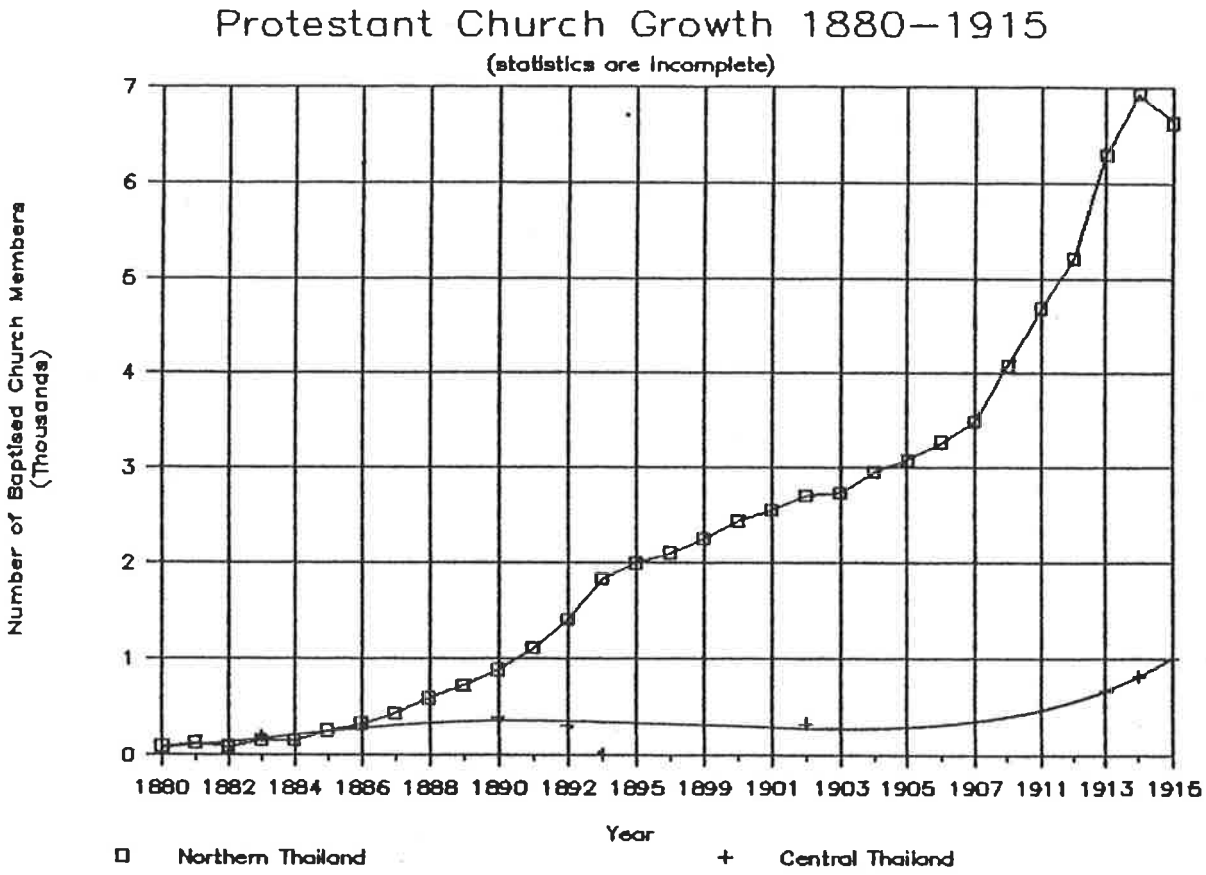
> No obstacle is to be thrown in the way of American citizens employing such persons as they may need, since such would be a breach of the treaty between the two countries (ibid.)[14].

Until the Edict of Religious Toleration, *Caw Carwilorot's* execution of two of the first four Christian converts effectively halted the spread of Christianity. From the time of the executions in 1869 until 1878 there were less than twenty converts (Smith 1982:70-73). Yet within one year membership had doubled and it continued to grow exponentially (ibid.:73). By September 1882, four churches had been set up (ibid.), with a combined membership of 136 communicant adults and 76 baptised children. A short term repeal of the Edict of Religious Toleration in 1882 not withstanding, the rate of accessions continued to grow throughout the final twenty years of the century (see graph 2).

I later suggest that this increasing rate of conversions during the late nineteenth century, constituted a sort of Christian messianic movement. As such it was largely a reaction to the manner in which the administrative transformation of the North impacted upon the peasantry: a general social dislocation and a decrease in living standards due to a steep increase in taxation over a short period of time. In part it was also due to the inability of the traditional patrons, the princes, to maintain their roles, and a general failure of the traditional cosmological structure to account for the changes taking place in society.

V. Resistance to Missions: The Princes

However, although the Edict of Religious Toleration legitimated conversion to Christianity it did not remove opposition. Even though the Siamese Commissioner(s) gave the missionaries a good deal of support in subsequent years


Protestant Church Growth 1880–1915
(statistics are incomplete)
Number of Baptised Church Members (Thousands)
0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
1880 1882 1884 1886 1888 1890 1892 1895 1899 1901 1903 1905 1907 1911 1913 1915
Year
Northern Thailand
Central Thailand

Graph 2

(McGilvary 1912:300), they still encountered considerable opposition both from the princes and from commoners. In this section I examine opposition to missionary activity during the final twenty years of the nineteenth century. An analysis of this context not only reveals a great deal about the manner in which the Northern princes and commoners viewed the foreign missionaries and those who converted to Christianity. It also reveals a great deal about the culture of nineteenth century Christianity, from the perspective of both the missionaries and their converts.

I have already noted that the first converts in the North were relatively high status people and that later converts came primarily from the peasantry. However, regardless of the rank of converts, all opposition to conversion centred on the mission's intervention in the prevailing structure of social relations in the North. The mission's relationship with its converts disrupted the economic aspect of corvée obligations to the princes, it undermined the political relationship which the corvée symbolised and, as I discuss below, it prevented converts from fulfilling ritual obligations within their village communities.

The basis for this opposition lay in the style of Presbyterian mission work, which was quite different from that of earlier Catholic missions in Central Thailand. These had aimed to convert, but not to substantially change, the life-style of their converts. In contrast, the Protestant mission was one which aimed to make substantial changes in the life-style of their converts. Protestant missionaries aimed to make converts

and to civilize through the proselytising of western culture. For them, one was inconceivable without the other, converts showed the sincerity of their conversion not only in practice, but in the manner in which they practiced. This distinction is symbolised in the missionaries' self identification. Catholic missionaries called themselves *Phra* (monks), a term used for Thai religious functionaries and focused primarily on the religious sphere. In contrast, the Protestant missionaries called themselves *khru* (teacher) or *mor* (doctor), terms which have secular rather than religious connotations and, as I pointed out in chapter one, focused heavily on medicine and education in addition to preaching religion[15].

Swanson (1985:13) claims that in addition to Protestant religious ideology, nineteenth century American revivalist movements were a strong influence towards this model of mission activity:

> missionary activity comprised the most important way in which evangelical Protestantism related to the world. And the whole logic of Protestant ideology required that the missionary enterprise engage in more than evangelism alone because religion and civilisation went hand-in-hand. Therefore, missionary Protestantism had to "preach" an integrated system of religious beliefs, cultural ideas, techniques, and technologies.

Through involvement in medical and educational activities in addition to their proselytising, the missionaries aimed to win Thai goodwill and to convince them of the superiority of western technology and ipso facto of religion. McGilvary (1912:96) illustrates this belief when he attributes the conversion of *Nan Intar* to the missionaries' ability to use astronomical tables to accurately predict a lunar eclipse:

> If the eclipse came off as I said, he would have to admit that his teaching was wrong on a point perfectly capable of being tested by the senses. There would then be a

> strong presumption that we were right in religion as well as in eclipses.

Thus, the Presbyterian missionaries sought not only to save souls, but to intervene in a society which they considered to be backward, superstitious and inherently antagonistic to Christianity. Burridge (1985:159) claims that missionaries in the field generally apprehend evil as being directly located in particular institutions rather than in individuals. This was certainly the case with the Presbyterian missionaries in Northern Thailand. They opposed Buddhism which they saw as animistic and other aspects of daily life such as traditional medicine which they considered superstitious. Most importantly, they opposed the patronage relationship between the princes and their commoners as both superstitious and unnatural.

Due to the manner in which the missionaries intervened in Northern Thai society, their converts viewed them as patron like figures ready to supplant the princes, and saw their relationship to them as one of clientage. Missionaries were asked for and, were ready to give, goods and services that would normally have been provided by princely patrons. Converts were given food, medicine and political protection, the classic hallmarks of the patronage role (cf. Pitt-Rivers' 1954:140 "lop-sided friendship"). The latter point is particularly significant. On numerous occasions the missionaries intervened in the affairs of the state on behalf of their converts and in doing so, directly constituted themselves as patrons, and as political rather than religious figures. For example, in 1889 in an attempt to lighten the burden of the new taxes imposed on the peasantry, McGilvary appealed to the Siamese Commissioner that Christian converts

could not be compelled to pay the betel tax. However, the Commissioner ruled that the tax was legal and that converts must pay (Wacker, July 9 1998, No.34 in PMSL. Vol.7).

Even the idioms with which the Northern Thai interacted with missionaries cast them in the role of patrons. Not only were missionaries in Thailand addressed as *mor*, in the North they were frequently addressed as *por liang* (literally foster father) (Briggs, 25 January 1892, No.22 in PMSL, Vol.9). Wijeyewardene (1971:323) claims this term primarily denotes a man of wealth, not a "politico-economic" role in a patronage relationship, however as he points out "the patron might well be **addressed as *pau liang***" (his emphasis).

The princes, in turn, viewed the missionaries as outsiders who were attempting to usurp their role as patrons, and who intervened in areas not concerned with the religious sphere. They considered that those who converted to Christianity were traitors who were attempting to escape legitimate obligations to the state. This is clearly displayed in relations between the members of these three groups during the latter years of the nineteenth century. In the years following the Edict of Religious Tolerance the princes' attitude towards Christian converts was one of continuing suspicion, regarding their willingness to fulfil corvée and other clientage obligations as required under the *kinmyang* system of administration. Almost uniformly throughout the North the princes opposed the conversion of their commoner clients and, if they converted to Christianity, subjected them to tests of loyalty.

A typical example of tests of loyalty given to new converts is found in conversions made in the *Saraphi* district. When converts were first made here in 1880 (the nucleus of the Bethlehem congregation), almost immediately following their baptism they were called upon to perform corvée labour for a period of three weeks. This echoed the response of *Nan Intar's* princely patron eleven years earlier. The missionary response was that such tests of loyalty were an illegitimate use of princely power. As missionary Wilson puts it in regard to the above case, it was:

> a case of illegal oppression. They were called to work with the chiefs...not one of all the villages in the province was called beside themselves (Wilson, 23 July 1880, No.80 in PMSL, Vol.4).

Following this call to corvée labour the converts concerned went to the missionaries to ask their advice and protection (ibid.). This again suggests that they saw the missionaries as patrons, who were opposed to their traditional princely patrons. Missionary Wilson's report on this incident reveals that the princes also saw the missionaries as fulfilling this role and that they considered conversion to Christianity merely an attempt to escape responsibility to the state:

> We have learned since, on good authority, that the accusations against these men assumed...they had become Christians to escape the king's [the Prince's] authority (ibid.:9).

A later incident from 1899, again demonstrates the princes' suspicions that the conversion of their commoner clients was a political rather than a religious act and the relationship between control of man power and opposition to proselytising. A native preacher, *Nan Sali*, preaching to a group of twelve

"interested families" in the *Chiangdaaw* area, was arrested and taken before the Siamese Commissioner *at Chiangmai* on the accusation of:

> treason and disloyalty to the Government in teaching that Christians were exempt from Government service (McGilvary, n.d. 1889, No. 8 in PMSL, Vol.7)[16]

Significantly, McGilvary's report reveals that this case of opposition was related to labour scarcity:

> Levies had been made on the governor for more service than he had furnished and .... he had said that a number of parties formerly at his disposal were now exempt, and mentioned the Christians as one (ibid.)

According to Brailey (1968:338), at this time demands were being made on the on the governor of *Chiangdaaw* (the prince concerned in this accusation) for conscripts to man border posts. Thus, in this particular context, both conversion and opposition to conversion were probably motivated by the same political context. The mission context was then one of Wyllie's (1976:202) "working misunderstanding", where the three parties concerned, the princes, the missionaries and their commoner converts, each viewed the other from a fundamentally different perspective.

VI. Resistance to Missions: Relatives

Opposition to conversion came not only from the northern princes, it also came from the relatives of converts. Frequently, this opposition was from women, who opposed the conversion of other women to Christianity. Missionary records list many instances where such objections are made to the conversion of females. Discussing the baptism of a male relative of one of the martyrs, McGilvary notes in an 1877 report:

> At one time he hoped to have his wife and children all baptized with himself at his own village before his own neighbours. But some of his wife's relatives opposed it so much that hers has been delayed for a time (McGilvary, 10 August 1877, No. 26 in PMSL, Vol.4).

A more detailed report is given regarding the Bethlehem congregation whose founding converts not only encountered the opposition of the prince (discussed above), but also encountered opposition from relatives who were concerned about female obligations to matrilineal spirits. Missionary Wilson writes in regard to the baptisms of those who later formed the core of the congregation:

> The wife of the youngest-Sow-baptised in April was threatened before her baptism-by her relatives with being delivered over to the authorities. They also said they would hold her responsible for any calamities that might come upon themselves by her offending the spirits of their clan in the act of renouncing them (Wilson, 23 July 23 1880, No.80 in PMSL, Vol.4).

In this incident the strength of local feeling was such that according to Wilson (ibid.), the missionaries did not go to the village until the "excitement" had subsided.

In a letter home, McGilvary also suggests that in general women were more resistant to conversion than their husbands, as they were more involved in religious activities than were men:

> As a rule it is to be expected that the wife is neither so intelligent nor broad-minded as her husband. She has moved in a narrower circle. Outside of her immediate family most of her social relations have been connected with idol feasts in consecrating priests, dedicating temples and idols. She is therefore more superstitious, perhaps I should say more religious than her husband (McGilvary 1905:14-15).

It is true that women have a greater involvement than men in formal religious activities, in that they play the most active role in daily merit making (Keyes 1984:233-234; Tambiah 1977a:144). However, I suggest that female resistance to conversion and the opposition female converts encountered from relatives, relates to the structure of the Northern Thai cosmology and, to the location of women within that cosmological structure, rather than to a specifically female attachment to

cultural beliefs. Specifically, as Wilson's report on the Bethlehem conversions suggests, opposition to female conversion was that women converts would no longer be able to fulfil their obligations to the matrilineal spirits (the *phii buu njaa*). Such obligations were probably the primary reason for female resistance to conversion.

The Northern Thai belong to matrilineal descent groups organised about a common relation to a group of tutelary spirits called the *phii buu njaa*. Group members refer to themselves as *phii diawkan* (of the same spirit), or *kog diawkan* (of the same group or clan) (Cohen n.d. 1984; Cohen and Wijeyewardene 1984; Davis 1973, 1984; Heins-Potter 1977; Potter 1976; Turton 1972, 1975; Wijeyewardene 1977, 1981, 1984, 1986). The *phii buu njaa* are generally considered to be a body of spirits propitiated by matrilineal ancestors, which function at the level of the domestic group, in regulating female sexuality and personal relations and, also, in influencing land usage and distribution through the regulation of marriage (Anan, 1984b). Turton (1972:218) cites a headman regarding the role of the matrilineal spirits in the past: "there were no officials, no law ... not even a village headman, no single leader, only the old men ... then *phii puu jaa* [sic]" (see also Turton 1975:214)[17] .

As Cohen and Wijeyewardene (1984:249) point out, there is some ambiguity regarding the nature of the matrilineal spirits. Turton (1972:237) has interpreted the *phii buu njaa* as a "category of jurally superior kinsmen" (see also Turton 1975:233) and the *phii buu njaa* cult as a form of ancestor worship. However, others, such as Cohen (n.d.), Cohen and Wijeyewardene

(1984), Davis (1973, 1984), Wijeyewardene (1977, 1981, 1984, 1986), claim they represent spirits associated with founding ancestresses. I incline toward this latter interpretation. Buddhist informants in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* claim that the matrilineal spirits (the *phii buu njaa*) are spirits which "belonged to" the ancestors and that they are not the spirits of the ancestors.

While both males and females inherit membership in their mother's matrilineal spirit group, the group's ritual activities primarily concern females[18]. The matrilineal spirits are ritually propitiated by female members of the descent group led by a group elder *khon kae* (or elder) at a shrine or set of shrines on several occasions each year. These are a propitiatory offering ritual (*liang phii*), performed at new year, in the ninth month, at the beginning and end of Lent, prior to marriage to give the male membership in his wife's descent group (*khwaj phii*) and, in the *siya phii* rite, performed to expiate sexual transgression (*phid phii*) with a woman belonging to the cult (Cohen and Wijeyewardene (1984:249). As Cohen (n.d.:5) points out, other events "such as the birth of a child, ordination, marriage and prolonged absence from the village" are also occasions for making offerings to the matrilineal spirits. Failure to carry out the appropriate rituals, risks retribution upon both the women concerned and other family members.

I suggest that objections to the conversion of females centred about the role of the matrilineal spirits and about control and authority in the domestic group. In the case of Christian converts who no longer respected (*thyy*) the matrilineal

spirits, the *phii buu njaa* could no longer perform their regulatory function in these areas of life. The position of power and authority of elders and the position of the *khon kae*, was publicly undermined, as was the power of women within the domestic group. Also, the non-performance of the propitiatory rites by converts to Christianity, exposed the members of the matrilineal spirit group to the wrath of the spirits and possible attack by the malevolent spirit, *phii ka*.

Conversion to Christianity also transformed the position of males within their households and, I suggest, objections to female conversion were also related to this. As missionary McGilvary suggests in the previous quotation, missionaries negotiated primarily with males for their conversion and for that of their family. Christian ideology portrayed the male as the ritual elder and ritual officiant for the household, not the female *khon kae*. In doing this it inverted the normal domestic power hierarchy and placed men in a much stronger position in their households than they normally occupied. Under the normal situation of exogamous (in respect to the matrilineal spirit grouping) uxorilocal marriages males are (and were) in a weak position vis-a-vis their wife's family and wider village circle (Potter 1976; Turton 1975). However, if, as is the case in Christian marital ideology, males are considered the lynch-pin of the domestic unit, this situation is transformed and the domestic group becomes a male rather than female centred group.

VII. The Conversion Process

I have shown that although conversion to Christianity increased following the Edict of Religious Toleration, it was

strongly opposed by both the princes and by some commoners. What then did conversion entail, who were the converts, and why, given the degree of opposition to conversion, did they convert to Christianity?

From the missionaries point of view conversion demanded a major re-evaluation of converts' personal beliefs and cosmological conceptions and, as far as the missionaries were concerned, meant a rejection of both Buddhist and animist practices. This religious exclusiveness is, as Horton (1971) notes, a hallmark of mission Christianity, and in Thailand is quite distinct from the accommodating attitudes of previous religious movements. Neither Hinduism nor Buddhism, which in Thailand co-exist with earlier animist beliefs, demanded a radical rejection of previous beliefs (Keyes 1990:13). Indeed, as Reynolds (1976:207) points out, the ability of the Buddhist cosmography to incorporate pre-existing animist beliefs was one reason for its success in mainland Southeast Asian societies.

On the part of many converts, however, the break between their old and new religions was not so clear cut. There was a tendency to participate in both their old and new religions and to understand their new religion through the perspective of their old one. This phenomenon, which had significant implications for the development of Northern Thai Christianity, is a common feature of conversion situations. Malalgoda points out in regard to Christian proselytising in Ceylon, that:

> Buddhists were not inclined to compare - and contrast - Buddhism and Christianity in the same way as the missionaries did; they were not given to considering respect or allegiance given to one as a root and branch rejection of the other (1973:184)

He also points out (ibid.:185) that Sinhalese Buddhists saw both difference and harmony between the two religions. I suggest that in Northern Thailand, there was a tendency for converts and others proselytised by the missionaries to focus on the harmony between the two religions, while the proselytising missionaries focused on their difference. As I noted in chapter two, villagers in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* often pointed out the moral similarities between Buddhism and Christianity.

Speed of conversion and the signs denoting conversion are matters of some contention. Speaking in the context of African missions, Beidelman (1982:18) suggests that Catholics tend to view conversion as a gradual process, while the Protestant Church Missionary Society demanded a dramatic change in conduct and a "radical rejection of the habits and customs of one's past life" (Beidelman 1981:75). However, a dichotomous view of conversion is limited, as it over simplifies the conversion process. In the North, as in Central Thailand, the process of conversion to Christianity was conceptualised as a relatively long one. For the Presbyterian missionaries in Thailand, the signs of conversion were a dramatic and radical change in life-style. However, the complete process was conceptualised as one taking time, as having well defined stages, and as rarely being uni-directional. Suspension from membership of the Church and later reinstatement were normal events for many converts.

Conversion began with merely agreeing to listen to the missionaries' teaching. Following the learning of the basic tenets of Christianity (primarily those of sin and salvation), the willing convert was baptised. At a later date converts were

given an oral examination on the teachings of the Church and the Christian life-style. If successful in this, they were admitted into membership of the nearest Christian congregation and allowed to receive communion. As in Central Thailand, converts were expected to participate in Christian ritual activities, to keep to Christian moral teachings in respect to gambling, drinking and sexual mis-conduct and, to refrain from participating in Buddhist ritual.

Through the abandonment of merit making (*tham bun*) rituals at the temple, converts showed their understanding of the doctrine that salvation was through trust in the Christian God and not through personal merit. Through diligent performance in Christian ritual and keeping to Presbyterian teachings about morality, the would-be convert demonstrated knowledge about Christianity, a knowledge of the concept of personal responsibility and a moral steadfastness[19]. In respect to ritual practice, birth and conversion were signified by baptism, and death by a Christian funeral and disposal of the body through burial. Converts from "out villages" such as *Baan Bohin* met in *Chiangmai* for Sunday worship services. According to missionary Wilson:

> the custom for those who live far out on the plain is to come in on Saturday & [sic] be present at the preparatory meeting that evening. They then lodge for the night with some of the Christian people here (Wilson, 7 July 1881, No.124 in PMSL, Vol.4).

In the case of those villages where a congregation had been formed, converts met on a regular basis, about once a month, for Sunday services. These were led either by the missionaries, or by their Lao assistants. There is no data regarding the

frequency of attendance at the *Chiangmai* church during this early period. However, given the lack of roads, the imperatives of the agricultural cycle and the distances of 10 kilometres or more which were involved, I suspect attendance was relatively infrequent. Data presented later in this chapter regarding the congregation of *Khriscag Sansai*, suggests it was probably no more than once a month.

Conversion was frequently accompanied by moral or other lapses, and suspension and reinstatement to membership of the Church were common. A particularly frequent cause of suspension was the involvement of converts with spirits, as the missionaries viewed all spirit (or *phii*) related activities as both evil and irrational. Converts were expected to cease the propitiation of spirits and to refrain from consulting spirit doctors (*mor phii*) in times of illness. However, spirits and spirit related activities are highly significant in the Northern Thai cosmology. Outside of the previously noted matrilineal spirits, there are many categories of tutelary, agricultural and nature spirits, many of whom require some form of propitiatory activity (Davis 1984). This prohibition prevented converts from fulfilling their obligations to these tutelary spirits (Swanson 1984:22) and suspensions for transgressions of this rule were common (Hughes 1984a:325). The 1876 suspension of *Ma Noo* for "complicity with spirit worship" (McGilvary, Annual Mission Report 10 October 1876, No.338 in PMSL, Vol.3) is typical of punishments.

VIII. An Image of the Convert

In respect of who the converts were, mission records are fragmentary and many records merely record individuals who displayed an interest in Christianity and who sometimes proceeded

to baptism[20]. The typical conversion pattern however is clear and, excluding those situations where objections are encountered from matrilineal relatives, is one in which whole families, often several generations at once, converted to Christianity. Often, such a related group of converts, usually led by mature men, formed the nucleus of new congregations. The Bethlehem congregation in the *Saraphi* district is a good example of this pattern of conversion. The Annual Report for 1880 states:

> On Sabath 23rd of May twelve adults-this aged father & his wife among them & eight children-six of them his grandchildren & two his great grandchildren [sic], were baptised into the church ... on the 11th of July they were organized into a church which was called Bethlehem (Wilson, 30 September 1880, No.93 in PMSL, Vol.4).

In terms of socio-economic status, as I have pointed out, while members of the higher status groups showed interest in Christianity during the early stages of the mission, following *Caw Carwilorot's* execution of the two Christian converts, the bulk of converts were from the commoner category[21]. Even within this group they were likely to be poor, or marginalised in some way, either in respect to health or other personal predicament (Hughes 1982:19, 1984b:226). The poverty of many converts is apparent in missionary records. The annual report for 1895 notes of the new congregation of *Khriscag Sansai*: "many of the membership of *Sansai* church have no land, and little money" (Denman, December 1895, *Chiangmai* Station Annual Report, in PMSL, Vol.22).

The conversion of the poor and marginalised is a common phenomenon of mission contexts, yet it is important that the reasons for this are clearly understood. Hughes, for example, suggests that due to their marginality they are less committed to

"cultural patterns of beliefs and action" (1983:74). Here he is clearly wrong. While they may be more willing to adopt alternative life strategies, the poor and afflicted are no less committed to their culture and cosmology than the rich. Such analyses confuse the economic marginality of converts prior to conversion, with their cultural and social marginality which occurred as a consequence of conversion.

Nevertheless, most analyses of Christian conversion in Northern Thailand use the economic marginality of converts to produce a model of conversion similar to Tapp's (1989) "rice bowl Christian" theory of conversion. This model holds that the bulk of converts to Christianity in Northern Thailand were gained because of the perquisites it offered in terms of employment, health care provisions, or education and that the history of the Thai church has been one of patronage between the church and its converts. This is found both in recent works by theologians such as Hughes (1982, 1983, 1984a, 1985), Overseas Missionary Fellowship (1980), Smith (1982), Swanson (1984), and folk accounts of Christianity in Northern Thailand, gathered from non-Christian informants. Indeed, many claim that relationships between missionaries and the Thai are still conducted on a patron-client basis. As Collins (1982:35) puts it in regard to twentieth century missions:

> Missionaries continued to insist on coming to Thailand as 'pioneers', as innovators, as those with special expertise which they would teach to the 'backward' Thais.

As I have shown, both the princes and their commoner clients, understood the convert's relationship with the Presbyterian missionaries in terms of patronage. Relative

poverty and the availability of various patronage goods from missionaries, form the basis for the "rice bowl Christian" model of conversion. However while patronage was the model for missionary-convert relationships, I suggest that the limited amount of patronage goods available was not a sufficient cause for conversion. Most patronage goods were in short supply and were restricted to only a small percentage of converts. In the case of goods such as health care, where supply was less restricted, they were generally available without the need for conversion.

Converts were able to obtain access to a number of different forms of patronage goods and services from the missionaries: assistance in political disputes, health care, food in times of famine or flood, education and, for some, employment. I have already shown that although missionary intervention in political relations, specifically in the prince-commoner relationship, was relatively common, it met with limited success.

The degree to which health care can be considered a patronage good is debatable, as it was generally available to everyone, not solely to converts. However, times of disease epidemic or other medical crisis are usually reported in missionary records as having caused an influx of converts. Thus the Annual Report for the year 1912 reports that there had been many accessions that year due to malaria and smallpox epidemics (30 September 1912, No. 22-23 in NSM Reel 1). More recently, analysts such as Hughes (1984a, 1985), Smith (1982) and Swanson (1982) have made similar claims regarding the role of missionary medical work in promoting conversion to Christianity. Smith

(1982:138-142) has conducted an analysis of accessions to the northern Church at the time of the 1911 to 1914 malaria and smallpox epidemic. He claims, that during this period, the *Chiangmai* congregation alone increased by approximately 70%[22]. Anecdotal evidence from informants also suggests that missionary provided health care played a role in nineteenth century conversions. Even today, the derogatory term "white medicine Christian" (*Khristian jaa sii khow*) which derives from the colour of the anti-malarial drugs supplied by missionaries, is sometimes used to refer to Christians believed to be motivated by economic rather than spiritual considerations.

Education also, is sometimes viewed as a patronage good, a perquisite of conversion to Christianity. In the North as in Central Thailand, missionaries were active in the educational field with the founding of the *Chiangmai* Girls School in 1879 and the *Chiangmai* Boys School in 1888 (Swanson 1984:38-39). However, unlike Central Thailand, northern mission schools were primarily a means of providing education for the children of Christian parents. Smith (1982:95) characterises McGilvary's policy in the North as being one of "evangelize first and then educate", in contrast to a policy of educate first then evangelize, which was the practice in Central Thailand under the South Siam Mission. The result in the North was, as McGilvary puts it, that:

> One of the most encouraging features of these schools is that all the girls and nearly all the boys come from Christian families ... to receive a Christian education (McGilvary 1894:375).

However, the lure of mission provided education was not significant as an on-going patronage good, as it did not attract many church members. Smith (1982:127) presents data to show that

while the bulk of students in the North were the baptised children of church members, the majority of them did not go on to become church members themselves. Over the period 1896 to 1917, only 13.1% (559) of accessions to full church membership were from schools. Of the total student body, over the period 1913 to 1917, only 6.5% (475) became full members of the Church.

Employment has been frequently considered a patronage good and an important factor in the attraction of Northern Thai Christian converts, in both the nineteenth century and in the present day. Hughes (1982:25), Swanson (1984:65-66) and Wakeman (1984:4) claim that a significant proportion of Northern Thai converts were really mission employees who participated in the missionaries' religious activities as a part of their job. They argue that such patronage was a significant factor in conversion and in "maintaining the loyalty of the Christians" (Hughes ibid.). Swanson (ibid.) points out the case of one congregation where half of the men were employed in the mission. Graphic though such illustrations are, the missionaries only employed a proportion of their converts.

As a patronage good, in comparison with the total numbers of converts, employment has always been restricted to a relatively limited number of converts. In 1890, when the Northern Thai mission had 900 communicant members, it had only 22 native Lao nationals as employees. Five years later, when membership had grown to 2000 communicants, Smith (1982:98-100) notes that the number of converts employed had increased to only 62 persons. Taking the average household size at this time as being 8 persons (from my *Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen* genealogical

data), this is an average of one employed Christian for every five households in 1890 and every four households in 1895. I noted in the previous chapter, that while the members of *Khriscag Bohin* do see a relationship between religious affiliation and employment, in 1985 only seven out of *Khriscag Bohin's* thirty one households had members employed in Christian institutions. It is true that in some cases incomplete employment statistics may understate the real situation, as Hughes (1982:25) claims in regard to figures from the pre-World War II period. However, even given a laxness in employment statistics, which may not include employees such as gardeners, watchmen and part-time servants, only a small proportion of converts were ever employed by missionaries.

Moreover, not only did majority of converts receive no direct financial benefit from the missionaries, they were required to try make some financial contribution towards the cost of their medicine, to contribute to the payment of native evangelists and, in some cases, to make financial contributions toward the purchase of land and materials for the erection of church buildings[23]. Informants in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* report that prior to building a church at *Sansai* (*Khriscag Sansai*) in 1894, the congregation of 96 persons donated 35 rupees to purchase land for the church, the majority of this sum being donated by only two members of the congregation.

A. Conversion and Peasant Social Movements

Rather than viewing conversion in terms of the "rice bowl Christian" model of conversion, for which, as I have demonstrated, there is little substantive evidence, I suggest

that it is more fruitful to view it in the context of other contemporary social movements. Concomitant with administrative reformation and the "take off" in conversion to Christianity, the North experienced widely dispersed peasant revolts, similar to those encountered in other parts of Thailand and Southeast Asia over the past century. These were accompanied by widespread messianic Buddhist expectations and a sense of the declining legitimacy of the traditional system of rule. Also, at approximately the same time, a period of witchcraft accusations commenced, and these continued on into the early twentieth century.

These phenomena are significant in respect to missionary activity and Christian conversion, as a high proportion of conversions to Christianity in Northern Thailand were accompanied by one or the other. In the case of the research area, the *Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen* district in the late nineteenth century was characterised by the presence of a highly politicised Buddhistic revolutionary movement, one of many outbreaks in the North at that time, and the absence of witchcraft accusations. An investigation of these movements, is of value not only in explaining conversion to Christianity, but in understanding the general socio-political context in which Christianity developed and, how that in turn, structured the Christianity of the first generation of converts. Both, I suggest, are an indication of relative deprivation, and were a consequence of general social unrest in the areas where they occurred.

I have already described the sharp break with the past that resulted from the reformation of the Northern Thai administrative

system in the late nineteenth century. I have also described the deterioration in the living standards of the peasantry and the decline in the political and economic powers of the Northern princes. One major outcome of this general social disruption and fragmentation of power relations, was the *Chiangmai* rebellion of 1889 (Chusit 1982; Cohen 1987; Ishii 1975; Keyes 1977a; Murdock 1974; Ramsay 1979; Sarasawadee 1984; Tanabe 1984). This was only one of a number of small rebellions that took place in several areas of the North during the latter part of the nineteenth century, and the early years of the twentieth century[24].

Led by a petty official called *Phaya Phap*, the rebellion was sparked off by the collection of newly introduced taxes on areca, coconut palm and betel, and by the punishment of those peasants who could not pay the tax in cash (Chusit 1982:56; Sarasawadee 1984:135; Tanabe 1984:94). The movement was due to a general resentment among the populace at a relative decline in living standards due to increased taxation levied by the Siamese and Northern governments, as well as by "the increasing exclusion of the more junior Lao officials from government" (Brailey 1974:461)[25]. Thus it concerned two distinct groups who had been disadvantaged in different ways by the reformation of the Northern administrative system. The minor princes were experiencing a relative deprivation through a decline in their *kinmyang* income (Ramsay 1979:288). At the same time the peasantry experienced a level of deprivation that both threatened their subsistence and contravened their "moral economy" (Scott 1976).

Popular revolt broke out in several areas "*Hangdong, Maerim, Dojsaket, Sankamphaeng* and along both sides of the *Mae Bing River*" (Tanabe 1984:95), with *Baan Kok* (Tanabe ibid.) and other villages in the *Sansai* district (Chusit 1982:55; Sarasawadee 1984:130-131) being major centres of rebellion. Here, under the leadership of *Phaya Phap*, the peasants firstly liberated some of those arrested for non-payment of taxes and then prepared to march on *Chiangmai*. However, they were attacked, by Siamese troops and defeated.

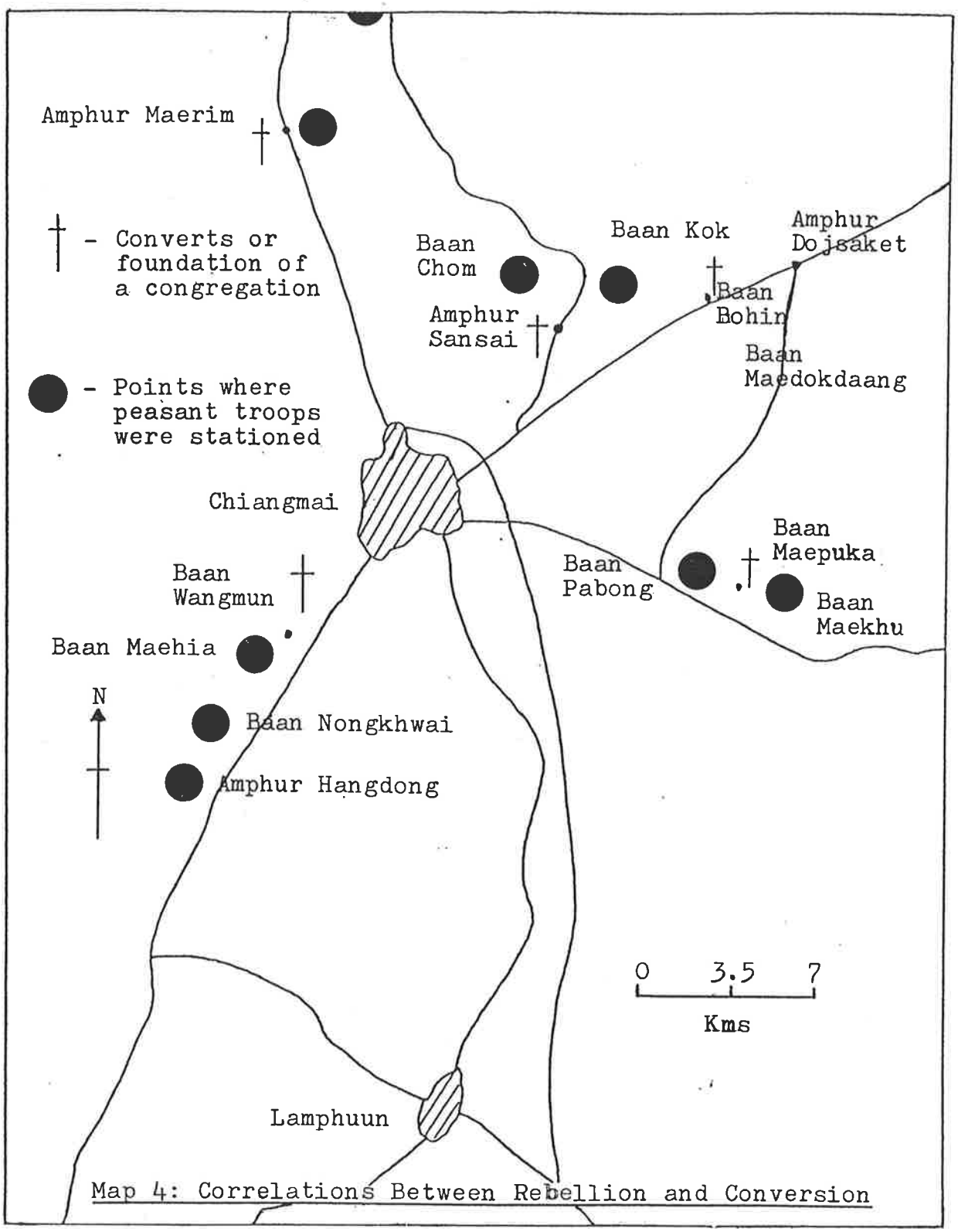
The rebellion was legitimated by Buddhist supernaturalism (Cohen 1987:158; Sarasawadee 1984:136; Tanabe 1984:96-97), the sprinkling and drinking of sacred water (*namon*), and sacred bathing (*ab nam jaa*) in order to confer invulnerability, rather than Buddhist messianic ideology as was the case in the 1900-1902 rebellions in the Northeast (Keyes 1977a, 1987c). Its character was that of a reactionary movement, as it aimed to reinstate the old order disrupted by the Siamese Government (Ramsay 1979:289-290), rather than to usher in a new age[26]. Thus it was focused on the residences of Siamese officials, Chinese traders and foreigners living on the banks of the *Mae Bing* river (Chusit 1982:57; Sarasawadee 1984:136; Tanabe 1984:98), rather than those of the princes.

The last two decades of the nineteenth century saw conversion to Christianity in many centres. Smith (1982:130) notes that by 1905 the *Chiangmai* church had 1,069 converts distributed over almost 100 villages. However, it is significant that many of the centres in which converts were made, or in which Christian churches were established, were centres of rebellion or

were in close proximity to these centres. Map 4, adapted from Tanabe (1984:100), details the points which required the stationing of native troops to quell rebellious activity in the 1889-1890 rebellions, in relation to villages where conversions were made. Converts were made near *Amphoe Maerim* (*Baan Nongaabchaang*), and congregations were established (date of establishment in brackets) at *Amphoe Sansai* (1894), *Baan Maedorgdaeng* (1880), *Baan Maepuka* (1894), *Baan Wangmun* (1895), (Chayan 1978; Swanson 1984). Although no such movement took place in the research villages of *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen*, *Baan Kok*, the centre of the rebellion, is only four kilometres distant and *Baan Sansai*, also a centre of rebellious activity, is only six kilometres distant. Thus in the late nineteenth century, when converts were made in this district, the general area was experiencing generalised peasant unrest.

B. Buddhist Messianism and Legitimacy

In addition to these peasant rebellions, in the North during the latter part of the nineteenth century there was a strong undercurrent of messianic Buddhist expectations. Nineteenth century missionaries sometimes had some difficulty distinguishing Christianity from Buddhism, as many of the Northern Thai understood Jesus to be the Buddha *Ariya Mettaya* the Buddha to be (Keyes 1977a). In a journal report of a late nineteenth century missionary "tour", missionary Dodd(1899:339) comments: "Most of our auditors looked upon Jesus as the next Buddha" and, he notes, that such beliefs were widespread throughout all of the North. Indeed, Cohen (1987:160) reports that messianic expectations were still current in the *Lamphuun*



Map 4: Correlations Between Rebellion and Conversion

and *Lampaang* districts in the early 1940's, where they were focused on small boys.

Such expectations arise in times of social and economic stress, when the legitimacy of the social structure is undermined. This was certainly the case in late nineteenth century Northern Thailand. Buddhism was established in Northern Thailand from the seventh or eighth century, when it was brought from *Lavapuri* (contemporary *Lopburi*) to *Haripunjaya* (*Lamphuun*) (Swearer and Sommai 1978:20). Thus from the time of its foundation by King *Mangrai* in 1296, the *Lan Na* state was under Buddhist influence. It sanctioned the hierarchical structure of the state and rulers were legitimated by attributing to them a semi-divine authority and the possession of an infinitely high degree of personal merit (*bun*). The ruling Prince (as a *Chakravartin*, the wheel turning monarch) was at the top of a hierarchy with the highest degree of merit. Further down were princes with large prebends, the minor princes and commoners. At the bottom of the hierarchy were slaves, with the lowest degree of merit.

Rulers were responsible for the welfare of those within their jurisdiction and for providing them with the conditions under which they could make merit. However, kingly rule had to be validated by continuing personal success in the mundane world. As Calavan (1975:111) puts it "A successful leader continually had to accumulate merit and accumulate magical power". Thus, the preamble to the *Mangrisat* (Kirsch 1984:255), justifies the rule and laws of King *Mangrai* by appeal to his descent and his "demonstrated prowess".

The reduction of the power of the northern princes (the *caws*) in the nineteenth century was then not only a political process, but was also one that signified the extinguishing of their merit and, their failure in their ritual role as protectors and mediators for their community at the ritual level. Moreover, as the power of princes declined, the power of the missionaries increased due to the support of the Bangkok regime. In Northern Thai cultural terms their ability to withstand the opposition of the princes was a convincing demonstration of their own merit and fitness to lead and of the efficacy of their religion (cf. Hanks 1962:1248). As Keyes (1990:17) puts it in relation to the missionaries' successful challenge to *Caw Carwilorot* and their success in obtaining the Edict of Religious Tolerance from King *Chulalongkorn*: "the missionaries acquired an aura of authority in Northern Thailand which they had nowhere else".

Although the *Chiangmai* rebellion was primarily about economic factors, it was also concerned with values outside of the purely economic sphere (Ramsay 1979:289). As I have pointed out, the decline in living standards and the transformation of social relationships in the North at this time, were indications of the declining efficacy of Buddhist religious values. I suggest that there is a relationship between the declining legitimacy of the old order and economic deprivation and dissatisfaction with the new order and, the general undercurrent of Buddhist messianic expectations and conversion to Christianity. It is clear that in some areas these factors motivated peasant rebellions. I suggest that these same factors were the motivating forces which led some of the peasantry to convert to Christianity.

I suggest that while some responded to social change by participation in various forms of peasant rebellion, others interpreted these conditions in an eschatological sense and converted to Christianity in a widespread form of Christian messianic movement. Such movements characteristically occur during times of social transition (Talmon 1966:184). Christianity, as Lanternari (1963:308) points out, is itself a messianic movement which arose out of a particular conjuncture of political and social tensions. The strength of this movement is evident in Graph 2 and, from the fact that the accessions to the Northern Thai church during the last two decades of the nineteenth century laid the basis for almost all subsequent growth. Since this time, as is shown in table 7 (in respect to *Khriscag Sansai*), there has been no equivalent period of rapid accessions and sustained growth.

For those who made an other worldly, rather than a this worldly response to the deprivations of the time, the missionaries were able to offer not merely an alternative (although limited) patronage relationship, but membership in a religious movement which directed their social disaffection into Christian messianic interpretations of their situation. Moreover, through their medical work and through their successful confrontation with *Chiangmai's* ruling Prince, the missionaries demonstrated considerable charismatic power, indicative in Northern Thai cultural terms, of their prowess as religious leaders.

C. Conversion, Spirit Possession and Witchcraft

Spirit possession and witchcraft accusations (witchcraft itself being the result of spirit possession), were also

phenomena which accompanied many conversions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Hughes 1982:14-17, 1984a:328-329, 1985:38-39; Prakai 1987:14-19; Swanson 1984:33). Spirit accusations usually involved the whole domestic unit, not just individuals, and were a major factor in the formation of many early congregations[27]. As Swanson puts it:

> numerous people fled to Christianity to escape the persecution suffered by those believed to be under the power of evil spirits (1984:33)

As mentioned briefly above, the Northern Thai cosmology includes several categories of spirits (*phii*), most of which are in origin Mon-khmer aboriginal spirits (Davis 1984:258). The broadest category comprises nature spirits which reside in forests, fields rivers, or which are attached to particular geographical locations and act as tutelary spirits for those sites (Tambiah 1977a:316-317). Some are potentially malevolent if not propitiated, or if encountered by travellers (Tambiah ibid.) and may cause death or sickness. Other categories of spirits comprise more dangerous *phii* such as the spirits of those who have died sudden or violent deaths (*phii taaj hoong*), or the spirit of those who die in childbirth (*phii phaay*). These spirits are always malevolent and cause severe illness and possibly death (Anuman 1986; Davis 1984). A further category of yet more malevolent spirits, the *phii borp sing* and the *phii ka*, possess the potential to cause death to their victims. These spirits are primarily associated with spirit possession and witchcraft.

Concurrent with the commencement of successful proselytising, was an apparent increase in the frequency of

accusations of witchcraft activity[28]. Both missionaries and travellers such as Bock (1884:334-335), Dodd (1923:335), Freeman (1910:50-51), Hallett (1890:110), McGilvary (1912:204-206) and McFarland (1928:123) attest to the widespread nature of nineteenth century witchcraft accusations and the many converts that resulted from them. Both the *phii borp sing* and the *phii ka* were involved in various forms of witchcraft accusation or claims of spirit possession during this period. A "witch" may be possessed by spirits, such as the *phii borp sing*, or the more common *phii ka*, both of which display similar symptoms, and for which the treatment is similar (Anuman 1986:110-112).

The *phii ka* is a transformation of the matrilineal spirit, the *phii buu njaa*, whose rites have been neglected (Davis 1984:58-59; Turton 1972:233) and, which has become embodied in a host person, either through inheritance or random attack. It is a voracious and very dangerous spirit which periodically leaves its host to feed on the entrails of its victims, to whom it causes pain and eventually death. People who were accused of harbouring a *phii ka* were driven from their villages and forced to relinquish their houses and land. They frequently sought the help of the missionaries, who sometimes bought their property and prevented their expulsion from their villages. Alternatively the missionaries offered them accommodation and later sought to re-integrate them into their village. Many conversions during the last two decades of the nineteenth century resulted from such spirit accusations. According to Hallett (1890:110) at the time of his visit in 1884 the missionaries had sixteen families, who had been accused of witchcraft, sheltering in their compound. He notes (ibid.) that "some ... had been converted to Christianity".

The missionaries classified all instances of spirit possession as witchcraft and attributed the accusations to greed or jealousy on the part of the accused's neighbours (McGilvary 1912:204). However, in an examination of Northern Thai witchcraft in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Anan (1984a, 1984b) attributes its proliferation to changes in the northern political and economic structures. He claims (1984b:58-59) that in the late nineteenth century this was the means used by the northern princes to force reluctant peasants to move to resettle the towns of *Chiangseen* and *Faang*. Through the idiom of a witchcraft accusation the minor princes were able to deny their patronage obligation to their commoner clients and force them from their land, to encourage them to migrate to the settlement areas. As Heald (1986:65) points out, witchcraft accusations may be used as an idiom for placing people outside of "customary law and familial obligations".

Anan also draws a direct correlation (1984a:327-328) between the development of a market economy and nascent social stratification of the peasantry, and a later outbreak of witchcraft accusations in the early twentieth century. He claims (1984a:326) that as land acquired a commodity value, the minor princes who had made unsuccessful attempts to purchase rice land from rich peasants, would resort to the bribery of exorcists as a means of securing witchcraft accusations. He suggests that these accusations were successful due to a general peasant antagonism towards the social differentiation which rich peasants represented.

Anan is no doubt correct in his interpretation of witchcraft (*phii ka*) accusations as a means of forcing resettlement and as a reflection of underlying conflict between landowning and landless groups. However, an issue he does not address is why the person of the witch was conceptualised in the way just described, as an internal enemy rather than an outsider. A focus on this aspect of witchcraft accusations sheds light both upon the phenomenon per se and upon witchcraft in relation to conversion to Christianity.

Anan's (1984a, 1984b) analyses suggests that rich peasants were likely to attract the envy of both other commoners and the minor princes. Yet in *Baan Bohin*, even though *Gaaw* (the first Christian) accumulated a large amount of land, such accusations did not eventuate. *Gaaw's* conversion to Christianity was not related to an accusation of witchcraft and, his subsequent accumulation of land, did not lead to any form of witchcraft accusation. The absence of witchcraft accusations in the *Baan Bohin* area suggests either a lack of power on the part of the prince administrator, or that the land was not particularly desirable as agricultural land. Both factors are probably significant. As I discuss in the following, *Gaaw* maintained relations with his princely patron subsequent to his conversion to Christianity, suggesting that the prince was relatively weak. Also, *Baan Bohin* is very dry and, even following post-World War II construction of dams and a new irrigation system, the area supports only one rice crop per year. In the nineteenth century land in this area may not have been desirable enough to cause witchcraft accusations. The *Sanpaatong* area where Anan encountered a long history of witchcraft accusations is

particularly fertile land with a good water supply which allows double cropping.

IX. The Introduction of Christianity into *Baan Bohin*

Christianity in *Baan Bohin* dates from the conversion of the first convert *Gaaw*, in the early 1880's. As it sits close by a major route to the North East it is likely that the village, at that time merely a small hamlet, was known to the missionaries from the early mission period[29]. However although it is less than ten kilometres away from *Baan Maedorgdaeng*, where Christian converts were made from the 1870's, there is no identifiable reference in mission records prior to 1881. The earliest probable reference to missionary activity in *Baan Bohin* is a 1881 letter from missionary Wilson to the Board Secretary in New York. He notes only that communion was held at "*Hin*" on May 29 and that one person was baptised into the church (Wilson, 2 June 1881. No.122 in PMSL, Vol.4).

The context in which *Gaaw* became a Christian was, as I have shown, one in which the district was experiencing rapid social change and some economic deprivation. I suggest that his conversion was directly related to these general social conditions and to the undercurrent of Buddhist messianic expectations among the peasantry at that time. Although it is unclear as to what extent this represents a post hoc interpretation of his conversion, *Gaaw's* descendants claim that he viewed Christianity as the promised successor to Buddhism and that Jesus was the expected *Ariya Mettaya* Buddha[30].

Subsequent to *Gaaw's* conversion, *Baan Bohin*, as I pointed out in the above, was at the centre of a movement of peasant protest at social conditions. Significantly, contemporary Christians claim that *Gaaw*, as a Christian, was not involved in these protest movements. I suggest that in the social conditions of the later nineteenth century, while some channelled their discontent into social activism, others, like *Gaaw*, converted to Christianity. This not only offered a new religious ideology, it also offered an alternative mode of domestic group organisation. And while I do not suggest it was the cause of his conversion, I point out below, that these alternative modes of domestic group organisation may have proven better suited to the prevailing political and economic conditions.

Gaaw the first Christian, and ancestor of present day Christians, converted to Christianity some time between 1879 and 1881, following the 1878 Edict of Religious Toleration. He met missionary McGilvary on a trip from the village to sell produce in the *Chiangmai* market, when he listened to his preaching at the Eastern gate of the city. Although he is not named in missionary records, his descendants report that he visited and talked with McGilvary over a two year period. Then he and a friend from another village to the East of *Chiangmai* became Christians, *hup satsanar* (literally received religion) by being baptised (the usual terms are either *hup siin*, or *hup baptisma*). This was most probably in 1880 or early 1881, shortly after the Edict of Religious Tolerance and prior to the communion held at *Hin*. Informants claim he was baptised in *Chiangmai*. However, this cannot be verified as sessional records for this period are incomplete.

At the time of his conversion *Gaaw* had only recently moved to *Baan Bohin* from *Baan Sansai* (about 12 kilometres to the North East of *Chiangmai* and six kilometres to the West of *Baan Bohin*). He was born here after his parents were sent here from the *Saraphi* district, by their patron in the 1840's. Informant's details about this are sketchy, but this appears to have been part of the broader move to repopulate the rural areas, which Calavan (1975:100) and Anan (1984b:44-45) identify as taking place during the seventh reign (1870-1898). In this case it was not the movement of a minor prince, or slave, but was that of a free man involved in a clientage relationship.

Informants claim that *Gaaw* moved to *Baan Bohin* from *Baan Sansai* due to the availability of land. This took place in 1876, when he was 28 years old, not long after the death of his first wife and child. He remarried shortly after his move to *Baan Bohin* and his second child (*Dun*), was born there in 1877. At this time there were only four other families living in the hamlet, then called *Baan Paa* (the forest village) by the villagers, as it was almost completely forested. Much of this was later cleared by *Gaaw* (and his descendants) and turned into rice land. His role in this was recognised when surnames were introduced in 1913. The surname given him by the *Naaj Amphoe* (*Amphoe* level administrator) at *Amphoe Sansai* was *Rangsan*, which means founder.

At *Baan Bohin Gaaw* entered into a relationship of clientage with a local minor prince (*Caw Chaisongkram*) at *Baan Chiangseen* and, at a later date, was appointed village headman. According to informants, *Gaaw* maintained this relation of clientage

subsequent to his conversion to Christianity. *Gaaw* was also a native doctor (*mor myang*), using skills he had learned during nine years as a monk in the temple at *Amphoe Sansai*. As a consequence of his healing his princely patron's son from an illness, he was granted the right to buy a small amount of developed rice land (about 5-6 *rai* cheaply from the prince. He farmed this, and throughout his life cleared more forest land for animal production and the growing of rice and other crops which he sold in *Chiangmai*.

Although at this time only a small amount of rice was exported from the North (Ingram 1971), by the latter part of the nineteenth century there was a significant commercial rice market in *Chiangmai*, orientated to supplying rice to forestry workers (Anan 1984a:50-51; Bowie 1981). *Gaaw* was particularly successful as an agricultural entrepreneur and during his lifetime (1848 - 1938) built up a total land-holding of some 120 *raj*. With the exceptions noted in the previous chapter, he divided his land equally between his children and, today, it forms a significant economic asset for his descendants[31].

The amount of land accumulated by *Gaaw* is significant as it is highly disproportionate to that owned or accumulated by other families. Average peasant land holdings in this district during the nineteenth century were between 5 and 10 *raj* and no other family was able to accumulate land in this way. It might be thought that Christian teachings regarding the benefits of industry, Weber's (1976) Protestant work ethic, was a factor in determining *Gaaw's* agricultural success. However, I suggest this was not the case. The work ethic was not a prominent motif in

nineteenth century Presbyterian preaching and, at the time of fieldwork, this was still the case. Moreover, there is no sense in which Christians value work, either as an end in itself, or as a validator of religious salvation.

It is more likely that apart from conferring the benefit of a strong domestic group in a period of social unrest, the family (*khrobkhrua*) model of domestic group organisation offered benefits in terms of agricultural productivity at a time of a nascent commercial rice market. Informants report that *Gaaw* cleared his land and worked it using the labour of his own family. Genealogical and cadastral data in respect to other families in the area suggest that this was generally the case. As would be expected, given the low population and plentiful land, there was little free labour reserve in the form of landless families. I suggest, that with the retention of sons following their marriage and, through the incorporation of the various other groups of non-kin, *Gaaw* was able to amass a much larger labour pool for agricultural activity. As his present day descendants point out, the family was stronger and had more power than other families.

Keyes (1987a:3-4) claims that the successful proselytiser of Christianity in Southeast Asia might be considered a "man of prowess", a term borrowed from Wolters (1982). This is certainly so in the case of many of the first generation *Chiangmai* missionaries. However, I suggest that similar qualities are also attributed to the first generation of Christian converts who recognised the message and who founded the first congregations.

In *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen*, as the first Christian and apical member of the family, *Gaaw* is accorded a number of special attributes. Christians believe that *Gaaw* abstained from alcohol, smoking, the eating of blood and *miang* (fermented tea)[32]. Although few contemporary Christians follow these precepts, most attest to their wisdom and they constitute moral touchstones, symbols of a first generation of pure Christianity. *Gaaw* is also remembered as having possessed qualities such as superior wisdom, insight, patience, a high moral standing combined with outstanding sexual prowess and the ability to relate to people at all status levels. These are all human qualities, but ones which he is believed to have possessed to a greater degree than the average man. It is qualities such as these which his descendants claim allowed him to convert to Christianity yet maintain a relationship of clientage with his princely patron, described by informants as being like a "father with [his] son".

X. Khriscag Sansai (The *Sansai* Church)

Following his conversion *Gaaw* proselytised amongst members of his family who still lived at *Baan Sansai*. Following missionary activity in the *Sansai* district during the late 1880's, in 1894 he was one of the founding members of the church of *Khriscag Sansai*, at *Baan Sansai*. In 1895 a bamboo church was built and over the following fifty years this was reconstructed three times in accord with changes in the congregation (Chayan 1982). The congregation comprised Christians drawn from *Baan Sansai* as well as from several other local villages (*Baan Bohin, Baan Sansailuang, Baan Paamyad* and *Baan Huafai*), all of which were within a radius of approximately ten kilometres.

I have already discussed conversion, which the Presbyterians conceptualised as a relatively long process and one which demanded a radical reorientation of the individual. But for those living in "out-villages" such as *Baan Bohin*, conversion, at least initially, made little difference to their daily lives. They were expected to take part in the life-cycle rituals of Baptism and Communion and, if practicable, to participate in the Sunday service of worship on a regular basis. However prior to 1880 when a number of rural congregations were formed at *Lampaang*, *Saraphi* and *Baan Maedorgdaeng*, regular Sunday services were held only in *Chiangmai*. As I have already noted, converts in the nearer "out-villages" attended these. However, in the more remote areas, Sunday services were held only when the missionaries or their preaching assistants visited.

At *Khriscag Sansai* records for the period 1895-1911 show that on average a Sunday service was held only once a month (Chayan 1982:10). Although records are fragmentary and anecdotal, they also suggest that missionary visitation of Christian converts and, thus, direct supervision of domestic practice, was minimal. Records for the period 1900-1902 (ibid.) show families as having received one visit per year in 1900, six visits per year in 1901 and two visits per year in 1902. While data are not available for other years it is unlikely that visitation was more frequent than this. This general period was one in which missionary resources were over-reached, due to a rapid increase in the number of churches founded. Swanson (1984:169) details five churches as having been established in the period 1867 to 1890, but fourteen churches between 1891 and

1910. He notes regarding the over-reaching of missionary resources:

> By constantly emphasizing [sic] territorial expansion, the Laos Mission created a widely scattered set of small church groups only loosely attached to organized [sic] congregations. These groups were generally separated from each other by great distances and were left in social isolation (1984:55).

Thus, while baptisms and the accession of converts to church membership figure prominently in missionary letters and reports, the amount of teaching given to individuals and the supervision of Christian practice was minimal. As in the South, the northern mission relied heavily on tract distribution (written in Central Thai until the late nineteenth century acquisition of a Northern Thai type font) to bring Christian doctrines to the masses. As Terwiel (1989:16) points out in relation to the Presbyterian mission in Central Thailand:

> In accordance with Protestant beliefs, it was assumed that the pamphlets, when read with humility, would inevitably set in train a process of conversion.

Through direct contact with the Word, converts were believed to be under the direct influence and guidance of God.

The result was that convert's ritual practices were unsupervised and at least initially, were probably little changed by conversion to Christianity. For the majority of converts, marital and death rites were conducted in the traditional fashion. At *Baan Bohin*, Christian marriages involved no payment to the matrilineal spirits. However, in other respects, they were made in substantially the traditional fashion until well past the middle of this century. Agreement was made between the elders of the families concerned and, following the tying of their wrists (*madmyy*), the couple commenced living together (cf.

Tambiah 1971a:231-234; Turton 1975:257-283). In respect to mortuary ritual, the first verifiable Christian mortuary rite, using burial and a marked grave, was conducted in 1915[33].

XI. Khriscag Sansai: The Growth of Rural Christianity

Missionary records for the nineteenth century are fragmentary but reveal that following a period of intensive proselytising in the early 1890's (Chayan 1982:1-2), *Khriscag Sansai* was founded at *Baan Sansai* in 1894 with a membership of 69 persons. Membership increased to 111 in 1899 (ibid.:5-6) and, after this initial rapid rise, slow growth continued until the late 1920's (Table 7). A similar pattern of growth is found in the overall membership of the northern Church during this period (see Appendix 2). In the case of *Khriscag Sansai,* following its initial foundation, most subsequent growth came from the conversion of relatives and their families, rather than from unconnected persons (ibid.:12, 16). Chayan (ibid.:5-6) lists 76 child baptisms, yet only 9 adult baptisms, for the years between the congregation's foundation in 1894 and 1920.

Throughout this period of slow growth the congregation was in receipt of regular preaching from Presbyterian missionaries and from their Thai preaching assistants (Chayan 1982:7). Members living in the congregation's component villages were also subject to regular, if infrequent visitation.

Hyper-nationalism during the late 1930's and the early years of the war under the Government of Field Marshal *Luang Phibunsongkram* (1938-1944) led to a general decline in church membership in Thailand. The same is true of *Khriscag Sansai*

where the congregation was halved. It was a time of increasing Government propaganda against Christianity and a period in which Christians were increasingly suspected of disloyalty to their country (Smith 1982:201). Government employees were threatened with dismissal and students with examination failure, unless they reverted to Buddhism (Bateson 1974). In some areas Christian leaders were jailed (Smith 1982:202-203; Wells 1958:161).

Growth of *Khriscag Sansai*
(Statistics based on Chayan 1982)

Year	Members	Year	Members
1894	69	1921	141
1895	96	1922	145
1899	111	1924	125
1906	108	1926	144
1909	131	1927	151
1914	144	1928	116
1917	121	1929	111
1918	125	1930	72
1919	142	1934	156
1920	138	1950	528

Table 7

From the time Japanese troops entered Thailand in December 1941, congregations were left to operate autonomously as missionaries living in *Chiangmai* crossed into Burma in front of the advancing Japanese (Wells 1946). Missionaries living in Bangkok were interned, although the majority of them were repatriated in 1942[34]. During this period churches and church institutions were closed. In *Chiangmai*, Christian schools and the main city church were closed and taken over by the Japanese.

Khriscag Sansai was closed and services were held only with special permission from the *Amphoe* office (Chayan 1982:16). At *Baan Bohin* prayer meetings, directed by *Gaaw's* son *Taa*, were held

in member's houses under cover of night. Elders unanimously remember this period as a time when church membership declined, when some family members (merchants and government employees) who reverted to Buddhism left to make their homes in the North of the province[35]. Relating this story, one informant summed up the effect of the war on the congregation by saying "look at us now, we are all farmers".

Following the end of the war the Presbyterian missionaries returned to Thailand and they, together with Thai personnel, re-established church institutions and local congregations. *Khriscag Sansai* again became the focus of *Baan Bohin* institutional Christianity. As Table 7 shows, this was a period of rapid church growth. Most growth was the result of the conversion of Buddhists to Christianity and only a minority of accessions were Christians who lapsed as a result of wartime anti-Christian Government policies. Hughes (1982:39) lists 207 accessions to the *Khriscag Sansai* congregation in 1946 and a total of 509 converts in the general *Sansai* area. A similar increase in membership in the post-war period is typical of other Northern Thai congregations during this period.

In 1951 the need for *Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen* church members to walk the five kilometres to *Khriscag Sansai* for the Sunday service was removed, when the congregation was dissolved. In its place separate congregations were set up in each of its major component villages *Baan Bohin, Baan Paamyad*, *Baan Sahagon* and *Baan Huafai*. Initially congregations established in individual villages were of *muad* status, lower than a *Khriscag*, without a full complement of administrative officers (Chayan

1982:19). Growth of the congregation and the increasing opportunity for administrative dissension was a major factor in its fission. Older *Khriscag Bohin* members also cited difficulties encountered by the old or incapacitated who had to walk the twelve kilometres round trip and the vagaries of the weather as another reason for the fission. They claimed that it took place at this time as the post-war growth in membership had made separate churches a practical proposition. This certainly seems to be the case. Chayan (1982:19) cites 1951 membership figures (which include all family members) as 44 members from *Baan Sansai*, 114 from *Baan Bohin*, 95 from *Baan Paamyad*, 86 from *Baan Sahagorn* and 85 from *Baan Huaafai*. Nine other villages from which members were drawn, also had up to thirty members each.

On its separation from *Khriscag Sansai*, the *Baan Bohin* congregation comprised 114 persons belonging to 24 households. Over the next two years they constructed their own church (*Khriscag Silarchai*) in the centre of the *Baan Bohin* Christian residential area, on land donated by *Gaaw's* son *Taa*. By 1955 it had been raised to full *Khriscag* status and its name changed to *Khriscag Bohin*. It had a full complement of locally resident church administrative officers (elders, teachers and lay preachers), elected under the control of church officials from *Chiangmai*.

In the 1980's the constitution of the *Khriscag Bohin* congregation is unique in comparison with the majority of northern congregations. I have already noted the typical nineteenth century conversion pattern whereby several generations of one family would convert to Christianity at the same time.

Thus, the core of most congregations during this period, comprised a number of family groups who shared kin links. Even though a composite congregation drawing members from over a wide area, *Khriscag Sansai* to some extent possessed a similar structure. However, accretions to church membership over the past century have led to a substantial growth in most Northern Thai congregations[36]. This has led to a diversification in their membership base, to the point where a number of divergent lines of descent may be traced among their members. Congregations at *Baan Maedorgdaang* (to the East), *Maerim* (to the North West) and Bethlehem (to the South) are of this composition[37].

However, *Khriscag Bohin* did not share in any of this growth and diversification in its membership base. In *Baan Bohin*, only *Gaaw* and his family converted to Christianity. The only subsequent growth in the size of the *Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen* group of Christians has been through childbirth or through the conversion of in-marrying spouses. As I pointed out in the previous chapter, in those cases where unconnected persons have converted to Christianity, they have firstly been incorporated in the family through the manipulation of patterns of naming and descent. Thus, while most congregations trace their origin to several founding members, *Khriscag Bohin* is unique in that it has only one founding member. As previously pointed out, the members of *Khriscag Bohin* claim that they share close kin linkages as they are able to trace descent from *Gaaw* and, on this basis, claim that they are members of the same family (*khrobkhrua*).

XII. The National Context: Growth and Autonomy

The growth and move towards autonomy of *Khriscag Bohin*, reflects a similar growth and move towards autonomy experienced at the national level of the Thai Presbyterian Church.

Although it had Northern Thai members since its founding in 1885, up until the 1920's, the Northern Lao Presbytery was tightly controlled by the Presbyterian missionaries and the Northern Thai members were allowed little decision making power. Missionary control of the Presbytery tended to increase rather than decrease following a revolt against pay and work conditions by "native" pastors in 1895. According to Swanson (1984:123) in this period, the Presbytery acted as "a rubber stamp for mission decisions".

However, King *Chulalongkorn* died in 1910 and the following sixth (1910-1925) and seventh (1925-1935) reigns provided quite different political climates for the development of Thai Christianity. The death of King *Chulalongkorn*, as Siffin (1966:137) puts it, marked "the end of the *Chakkri* Reformation". By the end of the fifth reign, most of the fundamental changes in the Thai administrative system made necessary by increasing contact with the west, had taken place. It was a time of growing nationalism (Wyatt 1984:229) which led to the opposition to Christianity in the pre-war years to which I have referred. With respect to the Protestant mission, nationalist sentiments on the part of members and native ministers precipitated a move for an autonomous national church.

In 1929, a National Christian Council was formed to establish a National Thai Church (Prasit 1987:64)[38]. The first assembly of the national church, the (then) Church of Christ in Siam (*Saphaa Khriscag Naj Siam*), met in 1934 (Hughes 1982:29; Prasit 1987:65). In reality this body was a powerless local adjunct to the Presbyterian Mission as it was not recognised by the Government as having the right to own property and was staffed primarily by foreign missionaries. Its lack of power was evidenced when, following the end of the war, church property under Government control had to be formally handed over to the missionaries, rather than to Thai church members. However, from this point onward, a change took place in the basis on which mission work was conducted and all foreign missionary work was in joint co-operation with Thai Christians. On 16 August 1957, the American Presbyterian Mission was dissolved as an independent mission and workers were put under the charge of the Church of Christ in Thailand (*Saphaa Khriscag Naj Pratheed Thai*).

Christianity in the North began as a messianic movement in response to nineteenth century political and economic conditions. However, while converts were incorporated in congregations under the control of the Church at a fairly early stage, as I have shown, only minimal control was exercised over day-to-day Christian practice. In the post-war period the growing autonomy of the Northern Church from foreign missionary control, was balanced by a closer supervision of the practices of individual congregations. Improvements in road transport and communications in the post-war period, were important here as they allowed the formation of closer links with the centralised Church. In the 1980's, in comparison with the past, there is more supervision of

isolated congregations and more accountability for congregational activities. There is also a greater uniformity of ritual practice and more emphasis on training of teachers and lay preachers.

The growth of an indigenous church also led to a greater emphasis on the training of larger numbers of Thai ministers and other church workers, so that many smaller rural congregations such as *Khriscag Bohin* were able to have their own minister. For *Khriscag Bohin*, this occurred in 1983 when the congregation acquired the services of a full-time professional minister[39]. Trained at the (then) Thailand Theological College in *Chiangmai* and now on his third posting, he commenced work at *Khriscag Bohin* in 1983 on a two year contract, which the congregation later extended for a further two years.

At the national level, the Church of Christ in Thailand has its head office in Bangkok. Thailand is divided into 15 administrative districts (*phaag*) and *Khriscag Bohin* is situated in the *Chiangmai-Lamphuun Phaag Thii nyng* district, the number one district. Districts are subdivided into smaller areas (*Kheed*), of several congregations each. At this level, ministers and congregational representatives meet on a regular basis to plan activities and discuss policy. A meeting of the whole church and election of officers takes place every four years, while the various divisions meet each two years. These meetings, attended by ministers and representatives of all congregations, are the major public venues of policy making within the Church.

Outside of Bangkok, *Chiangmai* has the highest concentration of Church institutions, with McCormick Hospital, Prince Royal College, Dara Academy and *Payap* University (which includes the McGilvary Faculty of Theology, formerly the Thailand Theological College). It is not uncommon for Church officials and officers of these institutions to visit *Khriscag Bohin* for Sunday services. During my field-work period officials from these institutions and both the president of the Church and the president of the *Chiangmai-Lamphuun* division visited the congregation a number of times. Such visiting constitutes both informal visits to renew friendship links with congregational members, a form of informal supervision and a forum for semi-official discussion of matters of concern. Congregations in more remote areas have less of this semi-informal contact with church administrators, although it is church policy for all congregations to receive yearly visits by church officials.

XIII. The Domestic Context: Dissent and Schism

Just as post-war changes within the Thai Church have been felt strongly among the congregation of *Khriscag Bohin*, so concomitant changes in wider Thai society have influenced the current conformation of the congregation. The end of the war initiated a period of expansion of mission activity in Thailand and a variety of Christian organisations commenced missionary work. Between 1947 and 1960 at least 22 Christian groups, the majority of them American based, commenced mission work in Thailand. This move was motivated partly by an increased consciousness of South East Asia as a mission field and partly by the closure of China to missionary groups in the wake of the 1949 revolution. Groups who had been active in China, such as the

Overseas Missionary Fellowship, Southern Baptists and the Swedish Free Mission (Smith 1982:222), moved the focus of their missionary work to Thailand. Their activities ranged from post-war reconstruction, to theological training, medical work and education (Fowler 1979).

Over the following twenty years, the number of Christian missions working in Thailand doubled again. Some of the more prominent mission groups which commenced work in this period are: the Church of Christ, Worldwide Evangelistic Crusade, Finnish Free Foreign Mission, Overseas Missionary Fellowship, New Tribes Mission and the American Baptist Mission. Today there are many others (Goddard 1967; Pradit 1985; Smith 1982; Wilson and Siewert 1986) both large and small[40].

In the *Chiangmai* district, new Christian groups proselytised heavily amongst Christians in areas such as *Sansai* and *Dojsaket*. In the 1950's, Christians living in the *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* area were firstly proselytised by Seventh Day Adventists and later by missionaries from the Church of Christ (*Khriscag Khongphrakrid*), an offshoot of the American Disciples of Christ[41]. Following successful proselytising by the latter group, in 1960, thirteen of the congregation's twenty four families split off (*jaeg paj*) from *Khriscag Bohin* to form a member congregation of the Church of Christ (also called *Khriscag Khongphrakrid*). Similar proselytising activity by Church of Christ missionaries in other Christian villages, to the North and East, as well as at *Amphoe Sansai* also led to congregational schisms in these centres[42].

Informants among the members of the *Baan Bohin* congregation of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* claimed that doctrinal issues were at the heart of the schism. However, members of *Khriscag Bohin* contend that economic issues were more significant and that doctrinal issues merely obfuscate the real issues. Regardless of their significance, all Christians agreed regarding the doctrinal points at stake. *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* distinguished itself from *Khriscag Bohin* (and the Church of Christ in Thailand) at the doctrinal level by its teaching that communion should be weekly (rather than approximately tri-yearly) and by teaching that baptism should be by full immersion in water (rather than by sprinkling).

Disregarding its legitimations, the schism was probably precipitated by suspicions of sexual impropriety within the congregation of *Khriscag Bohin*, suspected mismanagement of congregational finances and a general disagreement regarding the relationship of the congregation to the wider Church. The missionaries who founded *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* claimed that offering money collected locally should be used for local needs (rather than then being used to support the wider Church) and promised their members assistance in health care and in gaining employment. In this respect, they clearly adopted the role of the Church as patron, willing to supply scarce goods to its client members. By contrast, *Khriscag Bohin* remits part of its offering money to the Church of Christ in Thailand and, at that time, members received little in the way of either health care or employment assistance.

In the years following the schism some families returned to *Khriscag Bohin* and, at the time of fieldwork, only ten of the original 13 families remained members of the congregation of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid*. Informants claimed that members who returned to *Khriscag Bohin* did so as the promised benefits failed to materialise and in response to a promise of employment in one of the many Church institutions in *Chiangmai*. This claim supports my thesis that the patronage role of the church was a major issue in initiating the schism in the congregation. Although I have argued that patronage was not a sufficient cause of conversion and that patronage goods were scarce in relation to the total number of Christians, I suggest that Christians did (and still do) require the institutional Church to provide some patronage goods in a symbolic portrayal of a patronage role.

Members of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* claimed that their doctrine and practices were the legitimate descendant of the pure (messianic) form of Christianity practiced by *Gaaw* in the first generation. They contrasted it with the impure (man made) practices of *Khriscag Bohin*. So at this level, the schism was also protest at the routinisation of charismatic authority (Weber 1964:363-373) and a call for a return to the charismatic leadership style of the nineteenth century. It also represents not only a rejection of what the members of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* claim are "man made" ritual forms, but a protest at further incorporation and control by the Church of Christ in Thailand (cf. Comaroff 1985:16-17; Comaroff et.al. 1986:11)).

The schism took place in the third generation of Christians and it is significant that in most cases the lines of the

ultimate cleavage followed descent lines which were in some respects problematic. Almost all of the group who have remained in the congregation of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid*, although considered members of the family (*khrobkhrua*), were not fully legitimate descendants from *Gaaw*. Rather they were the descendants of his minor wife and the descendants of the children of his third wife's first marriage (see my genealogical diagram in the previous chapter). Although informants did not put it in these terms, this suggests that an additional aspect of the schism was in regard to the legitimacy of various members of the family.

The group that split off from *Khriscag Bohin* held house meetings for five years prior to building their own church in 1965. The church was built on land sold to the congregation by *Gaaw's* second last son, *Khamsaan*, who was a founding member. It is situated on the Western side of the village and, unlike *Khriscag Bohin* which stands in the centre of the Christian residential area, stands remote from the residences of many of its members. In contradistinction to *Khriscag Bohin* which is decorated with a cross, photographs of Christ and illustrations of Christian motifs such as the lamb and the shepherd, the interior of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* is austere, adorned with no photographs or religious decorations of any kind. This symbolic austerity extends to its compound. Unlike the *Khriscag Bohin* compound, which is crowded with the minister's house, a kindergarten, an equipment store and a *saalaa* for sheltering guests on ritual occasions, the compound of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* contains only a small room used for Sunday school teaching and storing equipment.

XIV. Summary

This chapter has examined the context in which missionary activity was carried out in nineteenth century Northern Thailand and the foundation and growth of the congregation of *Khriscag Bohin*. It has aimed at eliciting the reasons for the success of the Northern Thai mission and the effect of the conversion context upon the subsequent structure and practice of Northern Thai Christianity.

I have shown that the late nineteenth century transformation of the Northern Thai administrative structure led to economic deprivation for some social groups. Those most affected were the peasantry whose discontent was manifest in widespread messianic expectations, in their participation in Buddhistic revolutionary movements and in the outbreak of a protracted period of witchcraft accusations. I have argued that the widespread conversions to Christianity during this period must be understood within the context of these movements. Furthermore, I have suggested that conversion to Christianity was of the nature of a Christian messianic movement, like other social movements of this period, a response to the prevailing political and economic conditions.

This was certainly the case in the research area. As I have shown, peasant unrest and messianic Buddhist expectations were ubiquitous in this district during the late nineteenth century. Moreover, *Gaaw*, the first *Baan Bohin* convert to Christianity, viewed Jesus as the fulfilment of Buddhist messianic prophecies. His failure to participate in local peasant movements following his conversion, also suggests that

his discontent with economic conditions was channelled in an other worldly, rather than a this worldly direction.

Many have claimed that the root cause of conversion in Northern Thailand was the patronage relationship between missionaries and their converts. I have argued that in Northern Thailand the mission context was one of a "working misunderstanding" (Wyllie 1976:5) between missionaries and their converts. Although the missionaries saw themselves as primarily religious figures, both commoner converts and their princely patrons viewed the relationship between missionaries and converts as one of patron to client. However, I have examined the various patronage goods provided by missionaries, and concluded that the amount of patronage goods available were limited in relation to the overall number of converts. While relations between missionaries and their converts were certainly conducted in the idiom of patron-clientage, patronage per se was not a sufficient cause of conversion.

The success of Christianity in Northern Thailand was, then, less a function of missionary political and economic powers, or the triumph of Christian religious ideology, than it was a fortuitous event. It was the outcome of an interplay between Northern Thai cosmological beliefs and the wider social and political circumstances into which Christian missionaries stumbled. It is in such contexts that Sahlins (1985) claims meaning is at risk and outcomes are uncertain. Missionaries preached religion, while displaying the symbols of political activism at a time of political change. While proselytising religion, they engaged in activities and relations that were

understood as inherently political. Neither the "rice bowl Christian" model nor the "missionary as imperialist" model, are adequate to the analysis of conversion in this context. The former disregards pre-existing conceptual systems and denies the integrity of its subjects. The latter regards its subjects as acted upon rather than acting, a tabula rasa onto which Christianity and western culture may be inscribed.

I argue then, that as a result of the wider context in which it was proselytised, Presbyterian mission Christianity was transformed in its implementation. Sahlins (1981, 1985) shows how Captain Cook, a British seaman, was interpreted as the Hawaiian God Lono and how, through interacting with him and his crew as gods, indigenous Hawaiian cultural categories were transformed. In Northern Thailand missionaries acted as religious virtuosos, dispensing western know-how in the form of medicine and education, in order to demonstrate their Christian charity. Yet they were understood as politically motivated figures ready to supplant the role of traditional leaders. While they made converts to Christianity, as I demonstrate in the following chapters, the ideology they proselytised both transformed indigenous cultural categories and was itself transformed. In the process of becoming Christian, Northern Thai converts transformed not only their Buddhist beliefs, they also transformed the religion they adopted. I explore these transformations in my focus on Christian ritual and cosmology and ideas about ancestors and the family in the following chapters.

This chapter also discussed the growth of Christianity in the research district and its relation to the growth of the

Church of Christ in Thailand. The messianic nature of Christian conversion and the demographic and political context of nineteenth century missionary proselytising have had profound implications for the development of Christianity in the *Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen* district and for Northern Thai Christianity in general.

The Buddhist/Christian messianic nature of conversion in the 1880's meant that converts saw no radical disjunction between Buddhist beliefs and practices and their new Christian beliefs and practices. Thus, they were encouraged to constitute a synthesis between Buddhist and Christian practices. The nineteenth century demographic context was one in which converts were thinly spread over a vast distance and where the ratio of missionaries to converts was very low. As a result, supervision of the practice of converts in rural areas was limited and they were substantially free to make their own synthesis between Buddhist and Christian beliefs and practices.

The messianic nature of Christian conversion in the North, has also had a determinative effect on the structure of the membership of the northern Church. I have pointed out that Christian social historians have elicited several periods in the history of the northern Church when the number of members increased dramatically. However, accessions due to revival movements in the pre-war periods and during post-war reconstruction were generally only short-term accessions. The bulk of the growth in membership has derived from natural increase through birth, through the conversion of in-marrying spouses and, in the case of *Khriscag Bohin*, through the

manipulation of normative cultural rules in order to incorporate small groups of outsiders. The basis for almost all subsequent growth in the Northern Thai church was laid down in the conversions which took place during the last twenty years of the nineteenth century. Since this period of messianic type peasant conversions, over the past ninety years there has been no equivalent period of rapid accessions and sustained growth.

Endnotes

1. These statistics, which refer to communicant members, derive from the statistical report presented to the 19th meeting of the Church of Christ in Thailand, *Payap* University, *Chiangmai*, 20-25 October 1986.
2. Dr House had expressed an interest in a mission in the North as early as 1854 (House, 6 October 1854, No.102 in PMSL, Vol.2).
3. Western visitors to *Chiangmai* date from the late sixteenth century. Ralf Finch (an English merchant) provides an account of a visit in approximately 1587 (Finch 1927:306-308) and Thomas Samuel (also an English merchant) visited in *Chiangmai* in 1615 (Hallett 1890:Vll).
4. Tej (ibid.) defines an inner province as those which formed the "core" of the kingdom since the fifteenth century onwards and an outer province as those that "lay between the inner provinces and the Laotian tributary states."
5. The Northern Thai princes were heavily involved in trade with both Yunnan and Burma throughout the nineteenth century (Anan 1984b:43). In the mid-nineteenth century the Siamese also recognised Lao rights to make agreements with the British Burmese authorities regarding border demarcation and trade (Brailey 1973:315).
6. Brailey (1968:26) claims that there were four social groups in Northern Thai society, as he includes monastic order (*Sangha*). However as the *Sangha* is not part of the hierarchical order of civil society, I do not include it as a part of the normal social order.
7. In respect to her work in the *Saraphi* district Calavan (ibid.) points out that under the princes, commoners were obligated to contribute to maintenance of the local irrigation system (*kar kan*), in proportion to the amount of land they owned. She says some preferred to own no land in order to minimise their obligation beyond their normal corvée obligations.
8. In view of the manner in which the mission presence in the North was used to augment Bangkok power at the expense of the princes, some, Brailey (1968:156) for example, have suggested that King *Mongkut* supported the establishment of the mission for this reason. While this seems to be the case in the 1870's, there is little in the way of evidence to support this assertion for the earlier period.

9. Wilson quotes part of this directly from the Prince: "Siam is one Government. *Chiangmai* is another. The King at Bangkok may permit his subjects to become Christians. I will kill every one of mine who forsakes Buddhism for the religion of Jesus" (Wilson, 24 January 1870, No. 113 in PMSL, Vol.3).
10. Britain had annexed the Tenasserim and Arakan regions of Burma in 1826 and, in 1852, took control of the Lower Burma region up to Toungoo. From this time onward British logging interests on the Burmese-*Lan Na* border as well as inside of the *Lan Na* state were a source of friction for the ruling Prince. Problems arose regarding the terms of forest concessions negotiated by the various princes and regarding the terms by which protection would be provided for British nationals (and other foreigners) working in the teak companies. Multiple leasing of the one tract of teak was a common problem and, at the time of his death, *Caw Carwilorot* had double leased a number of forest concessions to foresters from British Burma and had a case pending against him in the Bangkok courts.
11. The co-operation of the ruling Prince was secured by giving him the exclusive right to raise taxes on liquor-brewing and pig-slaughtering.
12. In 1867 *Rama* IV limited the sale of family members to consenting individuals. By 1905 the children of slaves were no longer considered as slaves and in 1911 the slave status was abolished entirely (Calavan 1975:87).
13. McGilvary had previously performed a marriage between two unbaptised "Christians" in 1871 (McGilvary, 11 March 1871, No.141 in PMSL, Vol.3).
14. The 1856 Siamese-American treaty, modelled on the Bowring treaty, provided for a number of rights for foreign nationals (such as freedom of movement and the right to buy land) and the Edict of Religious Toleration claimed these rights for the missionaries.
15. See *Damrong Rachanuphap, Kromphraya, Ruang Phrachomklaw (On King Phrachomklaw)*. Cremation Volume. Bangkok, 1957. In Yoneo Ishii, Sangha, State, and Society: Thai Buddhism in History. 1986, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, p. 157. Regardless of this self distinction, the Thai response towards them was much the same.
16. *Nan Sali* spent over eight months in Jail and was finally released through the intervention of the United States consul in Bangkok and Siamese representatives in the North (McGilvary 1912:303).
17. Wijeyewardene (Cohen and Wijeyewardene 1984; Wijeyewardene 1977, 1981, 1984, 1986), generally views the role of the matrilineal cult as being more circumscribed in its functions. He argues that beliefs regarding matrilineal spirits (the *phii buu njaa*) must be viewed within the wider context of Northern Thai spirit beliefs and that the cults may be appropriated by men for political purposes. While not denying the broader context in which the cult functions, I suggest that it is important to keep in mind its geographical specificity and the real power that informants in some areas attribute to the matrilineal spirits in matters concerning the domestic group.
18. Data from Buddhists in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* is not conclusive regarding male membership in their wives' matrilineal group. Most informants suggested that dual membership is the norm. However, for many this represented a hypothetical situation, as they claimed that activities regarding the matrilineal spirits concerned only women.

19. Teachings about moral purity in relation to sex, alcohol, smoking, eating of blood and fermented tea (*miang*), formed a central part of early Thai Presbyterianism. The Christian Temperance Union was founded in *Chiangmai* in 1924 (Hughes 1982:30) and was influential in rural villages such as *Baan Bohin*.
20. The paucity of records is demonstrated by the fact that while Smith (1982:74) lists 119 adults baptised in Northern Thailand between October 1877 and September 1882, he was only able to distinguish 58 (49%) as belonging to specific age and sex categories.
21. Swanson (1984:25) claims that the execution of the two converts was substantially responsible for alienating the ruling class from Christianity and says "the church in the North never actually recovered from the hammer blow dealt to it in 1869". He is substantially correct in this assessment, however I suggest that the subsequent administrative reformation in the North, was also significant in the alienation of the ruling class from Christianity. Christian teachings regarding social egalitarianism rather than hierarchy were unlikely to be received by a ruling strata striving to maximise its declining economic and social stocks.
22. Claims regarding the medical value of missionary health work are borne out by my research. Although based on a statistically small population, genealogical data for *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* show both a lower mortality rate and a lower infant mortality rate amongst Christians in the disease epidemics at the turn of the century.
23. Mission policy was to try to sell the more expensive medicines in order to subsidise the cheaper ones given out freely. Wilson reports "Mr McGilvary sells the Hyd. [sic] Potash for its weight in silver" (Wilson, 1 October 1870, No.136a in PMSL, Vol.3).
24. These movements follow in a long tradition of South East Asian messianic Buddhist rebellions. As Tambiah (1984: 122) points out, Buddhist doctrines and mythology regarding the coming of the *Ariya Mettaya* Buddha "provide a justification and a rationalisation for rebellion in times construed as immoral or in decline". Other major Thai rebellions at approximately the same time took place at *Phrae* in 1902 (Ramsay 1977) and in the Northeast (Chatthip 1984; Ishii 1986; Keyes 1977a) over the period 1900-1902. Similar movements have taken place in Burma in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Mendelson 1961a, 1961b; Sarkisyanz 1965; Spiro 1982; Stern 1968).
25. The imposition of new taxes and a new efficiency in the collection of teak taxes meant that the income of the senior princes increased during this period. Unlike the minor princes (the *cawnoi*) they did not join the rebellion (Ramsay 1979:288).
26. Tanabe (1984:8), seems to disagree with this assessment and suggests that such an analysis focuses only on the external political processes and that it "almost fails to detect the underlying ideological intentions of the actors". I argue, however, that we have no way of detecting the underlying, perhaps unconscious, intentions of our subjects and, thus, are more properly occupied in focusing upon the overt social processes to which we have access.
27. The spirit known as *phii ka* is transmitted both through matrilineal links and through affines (Davis 1984:59). Thus the number of people involved is much larger than the actual number of accusations.

28. McGilvary (1912:204) dates witchcraft accusations from his arrival in *Chiangmai* in 1867. However judging by the number of people coming to the missionaries for assistance, the frequency seems to have increased during the last twenty years of the century. The problem is that reliable data for this period is scarce. Not only are we relying upon missionary records and those of travellers, as Anan (1984b:60) acknowledges, no records are available prior to 1867, so we do not know what the situation was in earlier periods.
29. This route had previously been used by the 1837 expedition of Captain MacLeod from *Chiangmai* to *Kiangtung*. The English surveyor Hallett also used this route to *Mehwung* (present day *Amphoe Wungneua*, some sixty miles to the North East of *Chiangmai*) in April of 1884.
30. Such claims regarding Jesus' relation to the Buddha are still current. While in the field I acquired a contemporary, although anonymous document, which comprised a collection of Buddhist texts in support of such assertions. These claims are given little support by the official church.
31. The inheritance was given to his children prior to his death, usually when they married and needed to support their own families.
32. These are the precepts of the Christian Temperance Union, mentioned above.
33. This was *Gaaw's* second wife, *Mae Naang Luang*. After this period there are a number of verifiable Christian burials.
34. According to Martin (1963:462) "all Americans in Bangkok, except three or four women missionaries (who elected to remain) were repatriated at the same time, leaving Bangkok June 29, 1942".
35. Such memories are in contrast to Christian apologists such as (Smith 1982). He claims, that the effects of revival meetings held in major urban and regional centres in 1938 and 1939 by John Sung and other revivalist preachers, was to give an overall increase in the number of Christians in this period. At the overall level this may be the case. However, the bulk of the growth was among the Chinese who were feeling the influence of *Phibun's* anti-Chinese policies (Charnvit:1974). Small rural congregations were much less influenced and experienced no such growth in this period.
36. Although they are not necessarily applicable to all congregations and particularly to rural congregations, Hughes (1982) distinguishes several major periods of growth: the malaria epidemic of 1911-1913, the 1938-1939 revivals of John Sung, the 1946-1947 post-war expansion and, revival campaigns held between 1972-1975.
37. Genealogical for *Baan Maedorgdaang* (collected by Herbert Swanson) reveals also this pattern, as does my own work in other northern rural congregations.
38. Gustafson (1970:159) claims that ideas about the establishment of a national Thai church were current as early as 1875. However this became official church policy only in the wake of the 1910 "Edinburgh Conference" (Thompson 1967:667) and was not implemented until the "John R. Mott Conference" held in Bangkok in 1928 (Wells 1958:138).
39. McGilvary started training church leaders as early as 1889 (Swanson 1984:80-81) and small scale training projects continued throughout the early years of this century. The Thailand Theological College, which opened in 1949 and is now incorporated in *Payap* University, is an outgrowth of such small scale teaching

(Church News 1986:32-35). It differs from earlier theological training projects in that it focuses on training young people rather than training mature men, the focus of McGilvary's work (Smith 1982:220-221).

40. Wilson and Siewert (ibid.:452-453) list 45 American and Canadian based Christian groups who were active in Thailand in the mid-1980's. Pradit (ibid.) lists a much larger number deriving from Canadia and North America, as well as from Australia, Europe and other parts of Asia.

41. The Church of Christ (*Khriscag Khongphrakrid*) is to be distinguished from the Christian Church/Churches of Christ (Wilson and Siewart 1986:131) and from the major Thai Protestant Church, the Church of Christ in Thailand. Representatives of the Church of Christ commenced activity in the *Chiangmai* area in 1951 and anecdotal evidence suggests they played a part in formenting unrest in the *Khriscag Sansai* congregation prior to its fission in the early 1950's.

42. Ironically, schisms later occurred in the group of missionaries who founded *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* and in some of the congregations they founded.

Chapter 4

ON BEING CHRISTIAN: *KHRISCAG BOHIN*, ORGANISATION, RITUAL AND BELIEF

I. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the organisation of Christianity in the research area, on Christian ritual and belief, and on the transformations in the Northern Thai cosmology that they represent. I firstly discuss the organisation of *Baan Bohin's* two congregations and the context within which formal Christian ritual is performed. Following this I delineate my general approach to ritual and the ritual cycle of *Khriscag Bohin*. I then discuss aspects of ritual practice such as the derivation of Christian ritual, contexts of ritual performance, Christian ritual language and the ritual implements through which Christianity is symbolised. Finally, I examine some of the fundamental Christian beliefs and, associated transformations in the Northern Thai cosmology, as a result of conversion to Christianity.

My primary interest in this chapter is the role of Christian ritual in the reproduction and transformation of Northern Thai culture. I argued in chapter two that although Northern Thai Christians are little differentiated from their Buddhist neighbours at the material level, in terms of shared patterns of culture they constitute a group of people who are

distinctly different from their Buddhist neighbours. Here I examine the formal aspect of Christian ritual and belief and chart the fundamental transformations that have taken place in the Northern Thai cosmology as a result of conversion to Christianity. My focus is on the overall structure of the Christian ritual cycle and on the general dimensions of the Christian cosmology. On this basis, in the following two chapters I conduct an examination of the most important formal (belonging to the Church of Christ in Thailand) and informal (belonging to the family) Christian rituals.

I commence with a discussion of the general organisation of the two congregations within which Christian ritual takes place. The general organisation of the congregations determines the form and manner of ritual practice. The members of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* distinguish themselves from *Khriscag Bohin* through having relinquished or severely attenuated most of the rituals they previously performed as members of *Khriscag Bohin*. As this transformation of ritual is a recent and extraneously motivated transformation of historically developed Christian practices, the activities of this group are largely irrelevant to my focus on local, endogenous transformations of ritual and belief. As a consequence, my analysis in this chapter focuses primarily on the ritual and concomitant cosmological patterns of *Khriscag Bohin*.

I then discuss my general approach to ritual and give a brief description of the Christian ritual cycle. My approach to ritual draws on both the structuralist and performative approaches. I take it that ritual is a mode of cultural production and reproduction, that it is an arena for the working

out of contradictions within cultural systems and for making meaningful statements about cultural systems. Both at an analytic and at a descriptive level, I am concerned to portray the Christian ritual cycle as an integrated whole. While I argue that Christianity has been substantially transformed in its implementation in Northern Thailand, I am concerned to demonstrate the integrity of the entire corpus of Christian ritual and its overarching cosmology.

Here my argument is once again directed against notions of syncretism present in the work of people such as Gustafson (1970, 1971), Hughes (1982, 1983, 1984a, 1984b, 1985) and Tapp (1989). As I have previously argued, these rely on notions of pristine religion and view non-pristine religion as being "mixed" (Fischer 1973:38), or "intermingled" (Luzbetak 1966:115) with little internal coherence. As Wijeyewardene (1986:19) points out, the importance of a people's self-identification and self-perception of the integrity of their ritual practices should not be disregarded.

Tambiah's (1977a) analysis of Northern Thai Buddhism in which he differentiates four separate, yet interrelated, ritual complexes, is an example of an analysis which shows the interrelationships of the various components of a ritual field. Davis (1984), although conducting a different form of analysis, also shows a similar integration (albeit not without its contradictions and inconsistencies) between the archaic *Tai*, Mon-Khmer and Indic root elements which constitute the Northern Thai cosmological and ritual field. However, my focus here is in the opposite direction from these analyses.

Rather than stressing the difference between the various elements of the Christian ritual field, I am interested in their interrelationships, and the way that for their practitioners they constitute an integrated and meaningful world. I argue here and in the following two chapters, that although Christian ritual in *Baan Bohin* has diverse antecedents it constitutes a unified and coherent cosmology. Even though the members of the family recognise the opposition of the official church to their performing the homage ritual, they do not view the rite as being contrary to Christian doctrine. Rather, they view it as belonging within the same ritual field, within which it has a different emphasis to other rituals and pertains to a different sphere of relevance.

Having delineated the Christian ritual cycle, I discuss aspects of ritual practice, including the derivation of Christian ritual, performance contexts, ritual language and ritual implements. My discussion here aims at portraying the integrity of the Christian ritual cycle and at eliciting the transformations which Christian ritual practice and beliefs have undergone in their adoption by the Northern Thai. I show how the borrowing of Buddhist language to describe Christian concepts raises fundamental problems of cultural translation, which has led to the modification of a number of Christian concepts. Similarly, the borrowing of Buddhist ritual implements for use in Christian ritual has created some ambiguity in the meaning of those implements as Christian symbols.

Finally, I examine some of the most crucial Christian beliefs relating to God and the nature of the world. I look at

ideas in diverse areas including heaven and hell, sin, causation, individual responsibility, time, reality and the supernatural, geographical space and gender. Through my examination of these central Christian beliefs, I show how the Christian cosmology has been constituted from a synthesis of Northern Thai Buddhism and nineteenth century Presbyterian Christianity.

II. The Organisation of *Khriscag Bohin*

The organisation and administration of *Khriscag Bohin* today, is essentially that used since its foundation as an independent congregation some 35 years ago. One major change is that the congregation now has its own minister, *Aacaan Tongkham*. His presence is a symbol of the congregation's closer links with the wider church and has led to a greater formalisation of ritual practice in line with the approved practices of the Church of Christ in Thailand. He plays an important role in all the congregation's formal ritual activities, at both the organisational and preaching levels.

However *Aacaan Tongkham's* influence is largely restricted to the religious sphere. He is not important as a link with the wider secular world (cf. Mullings 1979:83, regarding religious leaders as links to the wider world). As dormitory villages *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* have strong links with world outside the village, and Christianity constitutes only one strand linking Christians with that world. Even within the sphere of *Khriscag Bohin*, *Aacaan Tongkham's* power is limited. In regard to the general organisation and administration of the congregation, he possesses little power of and in himself. He depends heavily upon members of the congregation for the implementation of his

policies and unpopular policies are resisted both directly and indirectly. Major decisions affecting the congregation, such as the decision to retain *Aacaan Tongkham's* services, or regarding the dates and forms of special services are made by a meeting of the full congregation following Sunday services. However the day-to-day running and long-term planning is in the hands of three groups elected at two yearly intervals by adult members of the congregation.

The guardians' group (*khana phuupogkhrong*) comprises seven men with the responsibility for visiting parishioners, teaching, preaching in the church and making weekly announcements to the congregation on matters that concern them. The deacons' group (*khana magunayog*) comprises seven people, both males and females. They have the duties of raising money, administering church property, organising religious and kindergarten instruction for the children, and leading the program during weekly church services. The guardians and deacons, together, constitute the members of a third group, the business group (*khana thammakid*). This group has its own elected office bearers and, is subdivided into several committees, dealing with evangelism (*kaanphroiphraj*), construction (*kaankorsaang*), property (*sabsin*), education (*kaansyksaa*), social welfare (*sawaddikaan*). It holds a monthly business meeting (*prachum thammakid*) to which these committees report. The congregation also includes a youth group (*khana anuchon*) and a women's group (the *khana satrii*). If their members are not represented in the guardians or deakons groups, as is the case with the youth group, a representative from these groups also attends the congregation's monthly business meeting.

The general qualification for membership of the guardians' group is that of mature age and the respect of the members of the congregation. The specific administrative or technical abilities that members may possess is less important. Thus, while administration is conducted according to a rational legal bureaucratic model (Weber 1964:57-58), administrators attain their position by virtue of their own charisma and the moral authority that is attributed to the aged or influential. A hierarchy based on Buddhist ideas of differential merit, such as Zehner (1990) describes for a Bangkok Pentecostal congregation, is certainly not found in this context. Decision making in this group tends to be by popular consensus, rather than by democratic means. At meetings, a great deal of time is spent trying to achieve a consensus, rather than merely acting according to the majority will. The deacons are younger and are elected more with a view to their ability and educational qualifications or training for particular tasks. Thus the treasurer during 1985-1986, for example, occupied an accountancy position at a local bank in *Chiangmai*.

In the generation since its establishment as a separate congregation, except for occasional visits by missionaries and by ministers from other congregations, preaching at *Khriscag Bohin* has been by members of the guardians' group. In many areas doctrine has been open to individual interpretation and local issues, rather than national or international ones, have been addressed. The 1960 schism led to a stronger emphasis on teaching of doctrine, in particular about baptism and communion. It also led to the requirement that outside ministers assist in

the performance of mortuary rites, in the interests of standardisation of practice.

III. The Organisation Of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid*

Its doctrinal stance and small size means that *Baan Bohin's* second congregation, *Khriscag Khongphrakrid*, functions in a very different manner to *Khriscag Bohin*. Doctrinally *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* holds that hierarchy is antithetical to Christianity. The congregation has no appointed minister, elected elders or formal administrative groups such as those described for *Khriscag Bohin*. Weekly preaching is by congregational members, or by a visiting theology student or other member of the *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* Bible College in *Chiangmai*. Other ritual activities such as funerals, also depend heavily upon these visiting ritual leaders.

Decisions regarding administration are made at full meetings of the congregation following Sunday services. Here *Suk*, one of its founding male members exercises guidance by virtue of his own strong personality. In contrast to *Khriscag Bohin*, leadership in the congregation of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* is by virtue of charismatic rather than legal authority (Weber 1964:65). This to hearkens back what informants claim was *Gaaw's* style of leadership during the first generations of Christianity. In regard to general organisation, the congregation of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* is too small to support viable organisational committees or women's, youth, or other special interest groups[1]. Functions normally fulfilled by these groups are, like administration, undertaken within the congregation on a

consultative basis, or in co-operation with other congregations of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid*.

Ostensibly each congregation of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* is autonomous of each other and of their parent congregation in *Chiangmai*. Offering money (*ngoen thawaaj*) collected in each congregation is utilised within that congregation. Members claimed that it was used in times of sickness or economic hardship, to help each other in the manner of the original Christians. However, despite these claims of autonomy, the group receives considerable economic and material support (I have not been able to quantify the amount), as well as organisational guidance from their parent congregation. As previously pointed out, this patronage role of the *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* mother church is significant in the maintenance of the Baan *Bohin* congregation of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid*. In contrast, at *Khriscag Bohin*, a portion of the offering money given by the congregation is used for the support of the wider Church. In return, the congregation receives only a relatively limited amount of financial support for specific expenses.

IV. Ritual Practice and History: The Past in the Present

The historical context in which Christianity was introduced in Northern Thailand and, in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* in particular, has had a significant influence on both Christian beliefs and ritual practice. I argued in the previous chapter that *Baan Bohin* Christianity developed as a Christian messianic movement, in response to the political and economic environments of nineteenth century Northern Thailand. I also pointed out that in this context conversion was less the result of missionary

persuasion, or their ability to supply patronage goods, than it was a fortuitous event.

In countries that were directly colonised, such as South Africa or Sri Lanka, missionaries generally had strong formal or informal links with the colonial government. The position of missions as providers of western style education gave them an influence over those who sought access to power in the colonial bureaucracy through learning (Beidelman 1982; Malalgoda 1973). Concomitantly, it meant missionaries were able to exert some control over indigenous interpretations of Christian doctrine and over ritual practice. Stirrat (1981:184) notes that during the colonial period French Catholic missionaries in Sri Lanka had the power to suppress heterodox religious activity "no matter how far the Catholic laity continued to subscribe to such practices in private". In contrast, missionary proselytising in Thailand took place in a context where western missionaries had little direct political influence and their power was restricted to the immediate mission sphere. While the missionaries were sometimes supported by the Bangkok regime following the 1879 Edict of Religious Toleration, their political power was very limited. In both the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, not only were the practices of converts subjected to only minimal missionary supervision due to logistical constraints, missionaries had only limited power to control the practices of which they disapproved.

I have suggested that as conversion was motivated by endogenous rather than extraneous factors, the majority of nineteenth century converts saw no real antagonism between

Buddhism and their new Christian beliefs and practices. As a result village converts, whose Christian practice was mostly unsupervised, combined the rituals, the cosmologies and the symbols of both Christianity and Buddhism in a synthesis, or in Levi-Straus's terminology, a bricolage (Levi-Strauss 1986), of concepts and practice. This synthesis between the ideas and practices of the two religions is apparent in a report of an early twentieth century Christian funeral by Pelmer (1907). The mourners took a copy of the gospels, a hymn book and a bag containing fermented tea (*miang*), a betel (*maag*) set, a comb and a change of clothes to be buried with the body. Thus, symbols of Christian power and the Christian practice of burial of the dead, were combined with the indigenous practice of providing goods for deceased's spirit to use in the next life. Remnants of this practice persist in the contemporary Christian mortuary rite. Christians frequently bury the clothes of the deceased with the corpse, in a manner which parallels the burning of the deceased's clothes in a Buddhist funeral.

The missionary response to the growth of unorthodox practices was varied. In mild cases such as the above instance it was merely didactic. The mourners were prevented from carrying out their plans by Dr. McGilvary, who told them that the deceased would not now need these goods (ibid.). More severe offences involved the suspension of offenders. Later attempts to prevent unorthodox practices involved an increasing codification of ritual activities, and the closer incorporation and supervision of rural congregations.

Such attempts, however, have only been partially successful. The distinction between Christianity as a bureaucratically organised world religion, and Christianity as a village level religion which developed on the basis of peasant messianic sentiments remains. The former is apparent in the commitment of the member's of *Khriscag Bohin* to the Church of Christ in Thailand, its rules, its officials and its ritual. This is the formal model of Christian practice followed by the ministers of the Church in their performance of Christian ritual, and which is specified in the various liturgical texts and manuals of the Church of Christ in Thailand. The latter is encoded in the Christianity that Christians speak of as belonging to them as a historical possession of their family (*khrobkhrua*). As I argued in chapter two, it is encoded in the understandings held by *Baan Bohin* Christians about the teachings and practices that they have inherited from previous generations and from *Gaaw* the first Christian. This aspect of village Christianity is significant both at the ritual and cosmological levels and in its role as an ideology of group organisation.

That I portray *Baan Bohin* Christianity as being in some senses dualistic, is not an attempt to generate a new version of Redfield's (1956:70) "great tradition-little tradition" dichotomy, or Marriott's (1955:202) "parochialization". It is merely to point out that *Baan Bohin* Christians recognise that some of their practices inherited from past generations differ from those approved by the Church of Christ in Thailand and meet its opposition. In respect to these differences, the relationship with the wider Church is viewed as a hegemonic one,

where outside agents, in the form of ministers and church officials, attempt exert control over local, family, practices.

Most of the time there is a high degree of congruency between the beliefs and practices pertaining to these two aspects of Christianity. However some of the beliefs and ritual practices of the family differ from those of the institutional Church and, due to this, incur its opposition. The members of *Khriscag Bohin* perform a ritual to pay homage to deceased ancestors each Easter (*phithii buuchaa banphaburud*). The rite is a special possession of the family and, as it relates to Christian ancestors, they consider to be a Christian ritual. Yet it incurs the opposition of *Aacaan Tongkham* and the official church who recognise it as doctrinally erroneous, and as taking place outside of the sphere of church control.

V. Ritual as a Mode of Performance and Transformation

The significance of ritual is that through its performance, ideas about the world and about religious teachings become concretised and given an "aura of factuality" (Geertz 1973:90). As Myerhoff (1984:151) puts it:

> In ritual, doing is believing. Ritual dramas especially are elaborately staged and use presentational more than discursive symbols, so that our senses are aroused and flood us with phenomenological proof of the symbolic reality which the ritual is portraying.

Thus, in South and South East Asia, as Keyes (1983a:4) points out, Buddhist doctrines such as the doctrine of *karma* acquire authenticity through being linked to powerful emotive experiences such as death and other forms of life crisis, and through the resolution of these crises in ritual. It is in ritual that interpretations of religious texts, myths and symbols, are

brought together to make sense and order out of the chaos of life and where, as Keyes (ibid.) states, "submission to the authority of the word" occurs.

The same is true of Christian ritual, just as empirical proof for the validity of karmic teachings cannot be obtained, so there is no empirical proof of the Christian teaching of life after death, and a later resurrection and eternal life (*chiiwid niran*). It is through the manipulation of symbols in ritual that they acquire an objective validity and are able to provide meaningful resolutions to the fundamental contradictions of human existence. Through these acts the world is made meaningful for believers and, perhaps, makes ethical sense.

Approaches to the study of ritual are legion, ranging from the structural-functionalism of Radcliffe-Brown (1964, 1968) and Gluckman (1954, 1971), to Victor Turner's (1957, 1975, 1981, 1984, 1987) semiological approach which focuses on the symbolic aspect of ritual. Then there are approaches which focus on ritual as a performance, such as Tambiah (1977a, 1981) and Kapferer (1983), structuralist approaches such as Traube (1986), and psychological approaches like that of Ortner (1978).

The structural-functionalists view ritual as a means of constituting the unity of social groups. For them, its meaning lies in its actions, in what it does. In contrast, Turner's semiotic approach views ritual as a means of constituting social integration (1957) and of mediating transitions of state. Structuralists focus on ritual in its function of manipulating and mediating symbolic categories, while for those who take a

performative approach to ritual, ritual is a special kind of communication, which enacts a societies cosmological conceptions and makes statements about cosmological and social relationships. The psychological approaches focus on the role of ritual in enabling the individual's adjustment to the conditions of the external world.

These approaches differ in relation to the manner in which they view ritual as acting to mediate between the ritual performer and the external world. The semiotic and performative approaches focus on the symbolic and textual aspects of ritual and, like the structural-functionalists, view ritual as relating directly to the everyday world and as acting to produce effects at that level. However both the structuralist and psychological approaches to ritual are more orientated to the effect of ritual upon the mind of individual ritual participants. Levi-Strauss, for example, views ritual as operating in relation to the sub-conscious mind and as having an effect at that level, through the manipulation of symbolic structures (1979a:186-205, 1986:30-33). Ortner, on the other hand, claims that in ritual a reshaping of consciousness take place whereby, in ritual, individuals come to terms with social reality. For her, Sherpa rituals are concerned with translating "external 'reality'...into 'self', subjective psychological states" (1978:8-9).

My approach to ritual draws on both the structuralist and semiotic approaches, as well as the performative approach. The central critique of the structuralist and semiotic approaches to ritual is that they are deterministic (Giddens 1983), and that they subordinate the meanings of individual actors to those

elicited by the analyst as being inherent in the structure of the social system (Moore 1986:5-6). As Ricouer puts it, they sacrifice:

> the message for the sake of the code, the event for the sake of the system, the intention for the sake of the structure, and the arbitrariness of the act for the systemacity of combinations within synchronic systems (1976:6).

Traube (1986:133) makes a similar criticism in her claim that some forms of structural analysis "underemphasize the sociology of ritual action in favour of its logical functions".

On the other hand, the performative approach, particularly that exemplified in the work of Tambiah (1977a, 1981) frequently rests on an implicit assumption of a relatively invariant ritual text and an interpretive context where meaning is unproblematic. I have already pointed out (in chapter one) the static nature of his approach to myth and ritual. Kapferer (1983:237) also notes the problem of focusing solely on ritual texts when he says:

> A reduction in analysis to the formal properties of a 'text' which ignores key dimensions of the way a 'text' becomes contextualized and 'textured' in practice fails to recognize that important properties of the meaning of the 'text' may only be realized in performance .

Moreover, any textual structure and cultural context may be interpreted according to multiple interpretive schemas (Sperber 1975; Turner 1981).

There are then, clear analytical advantages to be gained from a marriage of these approaches, and a focus on both text and performance as well as context. In my analysis of ritual I take it that ritual is a mode of cultural production and reproduction. Its power derives from its role as a performative arena for making statements about a cultural system, and for the

construction of cultural bricolages from the symbolic materials afforded by that system. I focus on both action and text and view meaning as that which emerges out of ritual practice in a particular historical context.

Many analysts focus on what they view as the stereotyped nature of ritual performance and the relative invariance of ritual texts. As Kajiwara (1983:66) points out in respect to the Northern Thai house blessing ritual, "most anthropologists have mainly paid attention to the invariant aspect of these rituals and have tried to understand the structure". However, I suggest that in the analysis of ritual there is a need not to accept the truism of textual or performative invariance, but to focus on the specificities of particular ritual performances. Just as meaning is problematic in everyday encounters, in ritual, practice and interpretations are also at risk, leaving the way open for the bricolage of ongoing cultural innovation. My approach here, incorporates a focus on the fragility of the ritual mode as well as the arbitrary and non-structured aspects of ritual performance. Most ritual performances specify certain minimal outcomes, a house blessing ritual aims at blessing a house, a mortuary rite aims at mediating the transition of the deceased from the world of the living to the world of the dead. However, beyond these minimal requirements, there is a broad area for negotiation of performance and outcome and this sphere relates directly to the historical meanings of the ritual and its specific performative context.

Turner (1981) draws a distinct division between what he calls ceremony and ritual. He suggests that the former is confirmatory and is associated with:

> religious behaviour associated with social states, where politico-legal institutions also have greater importance (ibid.:95).

The latter he associates with religious behaviour associated with transitions of state or status. That he makes such a distinction is a result of his approach to social change, a form of dynamic structural-functionalism, as well as the nature of his field work context among the Ndembu. Here, particular ritual/ceremonial complexes seem to be given a prominence above other forms (Turner 1981:6-11).

This analytical division between ritual and ceremony has been criticised by many writers. Tambiah, for example, argues against Turner's ceremony/ritual distinction, when he claims that there is no absolute way of separating the ritual from non-ritual (1981:116) and says that:

> Anything towards which an 'unquestioned' and 'traditionalising' attitude is adopted can be viewed as sacred (ibid.:121).

Kapferer (1983) also, argues against Turner's ritual/ceremony distinction. He points out that regardless of the definition used, the significant aspect of ritual is that it is:

> a social practice where ideas are produced in a determinant and dominant relation to action, and it is a practice where action is continually structured to the idea (Kapferer 1983:3).

He argues (ibid.), that ritual constitutes an arena for the manipulation of ideas in relation to action. In ritual there is a "bracketing off" from the everyday world where the symbolic

qualities of action are heightened. He claims that the transformational possibilities of ritual derive from this context where ritual acts upon the world to define actions and experience (ibid.:236). Most importantly, he claims (ibid.) that the manipulation of ideas in ritual is not confined to the arena of the supernatural (that is the religious arena), but is also involved in various types of formal gatherings such as birthday parties, meals, courts and the like, which possess ritualistic qualities.

In Thailand, at least, a conceptual division between ritual and ceremony is not supported by the ethnographic data. As Tambiah (1981:116) points out in regard to Thai Buddhism, the terms *phithii* (which he translates as ceremony) and *ngaan* (translated by Tambiah as festivity), are used to designate events ranging from marriage or funeral rites to temple fairs (*ngaan wad*) or domestic feasts (*ngaan liang*). There is no sense in which specifically religious events are linguistically distinguished from non-religious events. The same is true of the congregation of *Khriscag Bohin*, who use these same terms and, similarly, make no linguistic distinction between religious and non-religious events.

Nevertheless, within this broad classification the Northern Thai do distinguish between particular kinds of ritual events. Thus there is a fundamental distinction between ritual events that are primarily religious such as a funeral (*ngaan sob*, or *phithii sob*) and others, such as the winter fair (*ngaan ryduu naaw*) which, although they have a ritual structure, have little to do with formal religion. Thus, in my analysis of Christian

ritual I take it that the ritual cycle constitutes an integrated whole, differentiated only by the performers' understanding of the specific ritual's position in the whole cycle and differentiated from rituals not specifically concerned with religious activities.

VI. The Ritual Cycle of *Khriscag Bohin*

The aspect of Christian ritual which stands out above all others is the sheer amount of time Christians spent in the performance of ritual activities. As I demonstrate, a considerable amount of time each week is spend in such activity. This is relatively common in mission contexts. Writing in reference to Samoan Protestant Christianity, Roach (1988:178) notes that the missionaries made "a considerable effort ... to provide a full schedule of mission activities for converts and potential converts". Willems also (1967:166), notes that Protestant converts in Brazil and Chile spend a large amount of time in ritual activity. He claims this is in order to "leave little time for association with non-Protestants". However, I suggest, that in the case of the members of *Khriscag Bohin*, it is related to the fragility of the Christian cosmology which needs continuous re-affirmation in the wider Buddhist context. In the face of the all-pervasive nature of Thai Buddhism it is only through regular corporate practice that Christian beliefs can be sustained. Also, it is through regular participation in Christian ritual that people signify their continuing membership of the congregation. To cease participation in ritual activities over a period of time is symbolic of ceasing to respect (*thyy*) Christianity. At the time of my household survey, those village residents with no religious affiliation signified this by saying

"[I do] not go to the temple, [I do] not go to the church", rather than in terms of their not holding particular beliefs.

Van Gennep (1977) distinguishes between calendrical rituals which take place according to the calendrical cycle and rites which take place at stages in the life-cycle of the individual. The distinction, of course, is relative rather than absolute. Life-cycle rituals, or as Turner (1981:7) calls them "life-crisis rituals", may well take place according to a calendrical cycle. Similarly, rituals designed to deal with misfortune, which Turner calls "rituals of affliction" (ibid.:9) may be linked with or incorporated in the calendrical ritual cycle.

For analytic purposes the ritual cycle of *Khriscag Bohin* may be divided into three major series of rituals. Firstly, there is the re-occurring sequence of calendrical rituals that are performed afresh each year. Life-cycle rituals constitute a second category of ritual activities. In contrast to other ritual sequences these are a lineal series of rituals, normally performed only a limited number of times during the life span of each person. Both of these long ritual cycles are incorporated within a shorter weekly cycle of ritual activities. Table 8 and 9 list these ritual sequences and their component rituals[2].

VII. Sources of Christian Ritual

The New Year service, harvest festival service, Easter, Christmas, birth, first communion and marriage services, have direct Presbyterian liturgical antecedents. Since the early missionary period, a great deal of effort has been put into the translation and rewriting of western liturgical works. These are

Khriscag Bohin: The Weekly Ritual Cycle
Sunday service of worship (*Namassagarn Phracaw*)
Sunday school (*Kaansornraweewarn)*
Sunday evening Bible study (*Sygsaa Phrakhamphii*)
Friday evening youth Bible study (*Prachum Anuchon*)

Table 8

Khriscag Bohin: Calendrical and Life-Cycle Ritual	
Calendrical Rituals	Life-Cycle Rituals
Western (official) New Year (Jan 1, *Pii Maj*)	Baptism (*Baptisma/Hup Siin*)
Harvest Festival (mid Jan) *Wun Thawaaj Phon Hua Pii*	First Communion (*Phithii Siin Mahaa Sanid*)
Northern New Year and (*Dam Hua*) (13th April)	Marriage (*Phithii Taeng Ngaan*)
Easter (*Wun Khyyn Phrachon* and *Phithii Buuchaa Banphaburud* (April)	House Blessing rite (*Phithii Khyn Hyan Maj*)
Christmas (Dec 24-25) (*Khrismaad*)	Mortuary rite (*Ngaan Sob*)
	Memorial rite (*Phithii Raleuk*)

Table 9

available in various manuals and church publications produced by the Christian publishing house *Suriyaban* (Church of Christ in Thailand 1977, 1985). As Hughes (1984a:324) points out, the orders of service are "very similar" to those used in the West and "about 95 percent" of the hymns are translations from western hymn books (See also Hughes 1985:23).

Two life-cycle rituals performed by Christians have their origins in Northern Thai Buddhist ritual. These are the house blessing ritual (*phithii khyn hyan maj*) and the memorial ritual (*phithii ralyg*), held to commemorate the death of a family member. Similarly Christians celebrate the calendrical ritual of the northern New Year in the *phithii dam hua*, a Buddhist ritual, which according to Davis (1984:99) derives from an archaic *Tai* tradition.

In the present day, in both a structural and a liturgical sense, the weekly service of worship (*namassagarn Phracaw*) forms the basis for almost all Christian ritual activity. Both life-cycle rituals such as the baptismal service (*phithii hup siin*) and, calendrical rites such as harvest festival (*wun thawaaj phon hua pii*) and new year ritual (*wun pii maj*), take place within the same basic framework as the weekly service of worship. Its structure is heavily didactic, focusing on the central Christian teachings and their exposition. Primarily, it centres on a portrayal of the Christian cosmology, the God-man relationship, and the position of man in the world. The liturgy of worship delineates the fundamental Christian teachings of divine creation, original sin, God's forgiveness of sin, and the absolutes of heaven (*sawan*) and hell (*narog*). As it does so it

effects a kind of two way communication between individual members of the congregation and God.

On the part of the congregation it comprises hymns of praise to God, prayer for his assistance, confession (*saaraphaab*) of sin (*baab*), and monetary offerings to God. In return God's Word (*Sacha Khorng Phracaw*) and his promises, of deliverance from the tribulations of the human condition and of a final resurrection, are read from the Bible (*Phrakhamphii*). The forgiveness of sins is announced by the minister (on the part of God), and God's teachings and their relevance for daily life are expounded in the sermon (*theedsanaa*).

Weekly preaching follows a series of Bible readings set by the Church of Christ in Thailand[3]. It may be directed to the calendrical rituals of the church. Or, alternatively, it may relate to events of concern to the congregation, such as a recent death or an approaching festival. Christmas preaching, for example, commences four weeks prior to Christmas. Several times each year weekly preaching focuses on special themes such as missions, youth, students, or women in the church. Special mid-week services are also called for commemoration of days of national significance such as the King's Birthday. As many Christians are involved in regular wage labour or are subject to the imperatives of the agricultural cycle, these are not always strongly supported. Strikingly, the 1986 King's Birthday service had a congregation of only three, including myself.

Just as the service of worship incorporates the fundamental Christian teachings within its structure, so the structure of

both calendrical and life-cycle rituals teach other fundamental points about the Christian life. Through the calendrical cycle of the church year, various significant points in Jesus' life and teachings are focused upon, ranging from his birth (Christmas), his ministry and power and, finally, his death and resurrection in the Easter rituals. Similarly, in the case of life-cycle rituals, the various significant points of transition in the life of the individual Christian are focused upon. The individual becomes a member of the Church in baptism, is admitted to full membership at communion and, following death, is consigned to God's care through the performance of the mortuary rite. The theme of preaching at such rites varies according to the context. Thus at a funeral it will deal with death and the Christian understanding of death. In contrast, at a house blessing ritual it may deal with God as the head of the family and the household, while at a memorial ritual it may deal with the faithful example set by the deceased person, and his/her model for the living

The service of worship is normally attended only by congregational members and visiting Christian friends. Buddhist friends or relatives rarely attend. For Christians the individual's obligation to attend church is frequently stressed in preaching, yet it is common for one member of the household to attend a ritual as a representative (*tuathaen*) of the household. It is also common for Christians to partake in only part of the service of worship (or other ritual activity in which they are involved) and to wander in and out of the church depending on other activities in which they are engaged.

Both of these behaviours appear similar to the normative pattern of Buddhist attendance at temples on the Buddhist holy day (*wun phra*) or at other Buddhist rituals. For Buddhists, merit acquired by family members during visits to temples or through participation in other merit making activities, is transferable other members of the family. In this respect merit constitutes what Gombrich (1971:216-217) calls a "spiritual currency". Similarly, for Buddhists, it is attendance at rituals and the hearing of Pali chants that is meritorious (Tambiah 1968), rather than any specific attitude of concentration or understanding of preaching texts.

However, Christians attribute a specifically Christian meaning to these behaviours, which distinguishes them from Buddhist behaviour predicated on karmic doctrines. In respect to the sending of household representatives to attend ritual functions, informants claimed that they could not actually represent other persons, but were representatives of their households' affiliation with the Church. This is consistent with Christian practice. Persistent non-attendance at church symbolises that the individual or household wishes to leave the congregation and is an occasion for remedial action on the part of the congregational guardians.

Furthermore, although they frequently attend only a portion of any ritual performance, Christians distinguish between their behaviour from similar behaviour on the part of Buddhists. They say that Buddhists go to the temple and sit and talk and smoke, without paying any attention to the service, parts of which they don't understand as it is in *Pali*. They claim that when in

church Christians have to listen to the service, and say that their ability to understand Christian prayers and teaching (which are in the vernacular) makes Christianity significantly different from Buddhism. Christians also claim they are distinguished from Buddhists, as it is necessary for them to go to church, while Buddhist teachings make attendance at the temple a matter of individual conscience.

VIII. Christian Ritual Symbolism

The primary symbols, manipulated by Christians in ritual are the cross (*majkaangkheen*), the Bible (*Phrakhamphii*), flowers (*dorgmaj*), candles (*thian*) and lustral water (*nam sompauy*). All except the latter are utilised in the service of worship. These are not the only items used in the performance of Christian ritual but constitute the dominant symbols (Turner 1981:20) of Christianity, as they encode the fundamental Christian values and teachings. Of these, only the former two are recognizable as having distinctly Christian antecedents, as the latter four are also used in the performance of Buddhist ritual. However, for Christians, those symbols borrowed from Buddhism have been transformed to reflect the Christian cosmology.

Both the cross and the Bible have direct Christian antecedents. For Christians the cross symbolises the resurrection of Christ and his power over death and the congregation is reminded of this in almost every sermon. The cross decorates the altar and its vestments, the minister's stole used in preaching, is used as a marker of graves in the cemetery and, at a Christian funeral, a large cross leads the funeral procession to the cemetery. It is also made as a sign in the air

as the final blessing is bestowed over the congregation at the conclusion of all Christian rituals.

As used in ritual, the Bible is the source of ultimate authority and of the weekly preaching texts. It is carried by the minister and resides on the lectern in the Church or, in the case of domestic ritual, is placed beside the minister. Ritual participants frequently bring their own Bibles to follow texts. It is acknowledged to be the Word of God and a true account of God and his wishes for his people. Most Christians accept the Bible as providing a true historical account of history, including that of creation. Informants claimed that the creation account in the Bible is evidence of the superiority of Christianity over Buddhism, whose texts contain no such account.

Both the New and Old Testaments are available to Christians in Central Thai whereas many Buddhist texts are in *Pali* and inaccessible to the layman. As Christians have direct access to the Bible, in one sense they have direct access to the source of Christian power. However the words have no power in themselves, they are powerful only in that they allow the listener who understands them to have access to God. For example, the words of a blessing have power only in that they refer to the power of God and in a sense draw on that power. In contrast, as already pointed out, for Buddhists, certain words are auspicious through a power that is inherent in them, and are efficacious regardless of the understanding of the listener.

Flowers, candles and lustral water constitute part of the symbolic apparatus of both Christian and Buddhist ritual, but

each attribute different meanings to them. For Christians, flowers are considered things of beauty and offerings to God. Candles are viewed as a symbol of the "light" of God. Like flowers, they are considered beautiful and constitute an offering to God. Such offerings to God are in a sense a reciprocal payment for his care and protection. But their use is not a meritorious act, as are the Buddhist offerings of flowers, incense and candles (*suaj dorg*) which are presented to monks and to the Buddha[4]. The ambiguity and multivocality (Turner 1981:50) of Christian symbolism in the Thai Buddhist context, is apparent in a comment made by an informant at a Christian funeral (in a remote village). Pointing to candle on top of a coffin he explained "if we were Buddhists that would be to light the spirit (*winjaan*), but for us that means the light of God". All Christian preaching is orientated to teaching the specifically Christian meaning of these symbols.

Lustral water is produced by the addition of fragrant herbs and flower petals to water. The Northern Thai use it in the Northern New Year *dam hua* ritual. It is poured over the hands and shoulders of the recipients (or, in the case of the domestic ritual, it is presented to them in a container). Christians also use lustral water the homage ritual. Ritual performers pour or sprinkle it on the crosses marking the graves of deceased ancestors. Christian informants claim that its use is a traditional manner of showing respect and giving wishes of good luck to the recipient. For them it derives its efficacy as a symbol of the good wishes of the giver, it has no magical or super natural properties. In contrast, in Buddhist ritual lustral water is usually transformed into holy water (*namon*),

through the pronunciation of magical formula over the mix of water and herbs. Through this the lustral water acquires protective and therapeutic powers which are transferred to a recipient when it is poured or sprinkled on him/her. Its efficacy lies not in its symbolic power, but in these special inherent powers.

As I demonstrate in the following chapters, informants differ in their interpretation of the meanings of ritual apparatus, according to the ritual context. At a funeral informants interpreted the candle as being symbolic of the light of God, while during the performance of the homage ritual the candle was interpreted by one participant as a symbol of homage (*buuchaa*) and respect for the deceased. Similarly, the use of brightly coloured flowers in the service of worship are viewed as an offering to God, while at a funeral they are interpreted as a final sharing of the beauty of the things of the world with the deceased. In the homage ritual, like the candle, they are seen as a symbol of homage paid to the deceased.

IX. Christian Calendrical Ritual: A Brief Description

A. Christmas (*Khrismaad*)

Khriscag Bohin Christmas celebrations take place over two days, the 24th and 25th of December. Celebrations on the 24th commence about 8 p.m. in the evening with a service following the structure of the Sunday service of worship. Following this the youth group and other members with enough energy, go to *serenade* at the home of each member with a selection of Christmas carols from the hymnal. After a carol a blessing is pronounced upon the family, and the singers are invited in for a brief reciprocal

snack of biscuits (*khanom*) and a glass of water. The serenading group starts off with more than forty members of all ages. However, as it takes until about 5 a.m. to visit all members, by morning only one or two of the adults and less than twenty of the younger members remain.

The evening of the 25th is the major Christmas celebration. This commences with a Christmas service in the church, beginning about 8.30 p.m. and lasting for about an hour. Then various gifts that have been brought by the congregation for the children (sweets, biscuits and school stationary), are distributed to them by the congregational guardians. The congregation is then entertained in the church compound by a visiting music group and various items are performed by the youth group, the children from the kindergarten and individual congregational members.

This entertainment is also attended by Buddhists from *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* and other nearby villages. However they do not participate in the church service and, later, form a group on the periphery of the celebrating Christians. Most arrive following the church service and stand together at the rear of the Christian audience or on the road outside the church compound. Entertainment finishes about 11 p.m. at which time the audience fades away quickly and the visiting group from *Chiangmai* is driven home.

The congregation of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* do not celebrate Christmas as they believe it is a man made addition to the Bible. In contrast to *Khriscag Bohin* members, at Christmas time they have no special decorations about their houses, and they hold no

special church services or other celebrations. However some members attend the serenade and the celebrations following the *Khriscag Bohin* service.

B. New Year Ritual (*Namassakaan Pii Maj*)

The New Year ritual takes place at *Khriscag Bohin* late in the evening of December 31 each year, usually following a house party somewhere in the village. It is a short preaching service following the format of the Sunday service of worship and is usually preached by *Aacaan Tongkham*. Following its conclusion a senior member of the congregation may be invited to give an address appropriate to the New Year. That delivered in 1987 was given on the theme "to act as a good Christian is to act well in society". It is attended only by members of *Khriscag Bohin*. The members of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* attend a small worship service in their own church compound.

C. Harvest Festival (*Wun Thawaaj Phon Hua Pii*)

The harvest festival (literally, the "day of offering the results of fruits at the beginning of the year"), is held yearly in early January following the harvest. It is a variation of a normal Sunday service of worship, where people attending church take offerings of money and goods (such as rice, vegetables, fruits, and poultry) which are offered to God during the service. Following the service a communal meal (previously prepared by the womens' group) is eaten in the church compound, and then the donated goods are auctioned.

The harvest festival is a day of reciprocal visiting and invitations are usually issued to other congregations. Visiting

groups attend the service, contribute to the offerings and partake of the communal meal and auction. In 1987 *Khriscag Bohin* members were invited to attend harvest festival rituals at six churches and, some members, visited these congregations. However, they invited no other congregations to their own ritual. Members claimed that they needed a rest and that visitors were a drain on the financial resources of a small congregation such as *Khriscag Bohin*. Although visitors make monetary donations to the church this is never enough to cover the cost of the food they eat.

Christians view the harvest festival ritual as a parallel to the Buddhist harvest festival (*wunthaankhaaw maj*, literally, the "day of eating new rice"), and both are occasions for reciprocal Buddhist-Christian visiting. On the Saturday prior to the harvest festival ritual some congregational members invite Buddhist friends and relatives to visit at their house for a small celebration. On this occasion, visitors make a token monetary offering (*thawaaj*) to be presented during the ritual. Such visitings and offerings are viewed as merit making occasions (*tham bun*) for the visitors. In return, the *Khriscag Bohin* members who have sponsored the gathering, are invited to attend a similar domestic celebration for the Buddhist harvest festival. They also make a small financial contribution to be offered at the temple. However, they claim this is the return of an obligation rather than a merit making act.

D. Northern New Year and *Dam Hua*

At the time of the Northern New Year in April, like other Northern Thai, Christians pay ceremonial respect to their elders

in the *dam hua* (literally, the "anointing of the head") ritual. Elders are visited and, after a small ritual offering (flowers, lustral water and minor edibles) is presented to them, their forgiveness is asked for offences committed against them over the past year. Although Christians visit non-Christian relatives to perform this ritual, it has also been incorporated within the ritual structure of *Khriscag Bohin*. It is performed at the time of the Northern New Year, in conjunction with the normal Sunday service of worship. In the rite members of the congregation pay respect to their senior members, by pouring lustral water over their hands and by presenting them with small gifts. As performed by Christians, the rite differs from its Buddhist version. The benediction given by the elders at the end of the rite is couched in terms of the Christian cosmology (cf. Davis 1984:133-134) and is made in Northern Thai (*kham myang*) rather than *Pali*[5].

E. The Easter festival (*Easter*)

The members of *Khriscag Bohin* celebrate Easter each year over a period of several days, around the general time of the Northern New Year[6]. Its major focus is on the two days of April designated as Good Friday (*Wun Siin Phrachon*) and Easter Sunday (*Wun Khyyn Phachon*), which are sometimes preceded by preliminary services on the two or three nights prior to Good Friday. A major service of worship is held on the evening of Good Friday. Saturday is as a time of individual prayer and meditation, while Easter Sunday is the high point of Easter celebrations. Easter Sunday ritual begins with a 4 a.m. early morning service, following which the congregation go to the cemetery to perform the homage ritual (*phithii buuchaa banphaburud*). As I discuss

more fully in chapter six, the rite is an indigenous local ritual, which is opposed by the Church of Christ in Thailand. The early morning Easter Sunday service is an attempt, by *Khriscag Bohin's* minister, to incorporate the homage ritual within the compass of formal Christian observances. The major (formal) Easter Sunday service takes place at 10 a.m. following the format of the normal Sunday service of worship.

Apart from the mortuary rite and the homage ritual, Easter rituals constitute one of the most significant ritual sequences performed by the members of *Khriscag Bohin*. With their teachings about the death and resurrection of Christ, they encode some of the most fundamental (formal) Christian values. By contrast, the homage ritual which is performed on Easter Sunday morning, encodes the central values of transformed indigenous Christianity (those relating to the family). Through the performance of this rite, homage is paid to deceased ancestors and participants demonstrate their membership of the family.

X. Christian Life-Cycle Ritual: A Brief Description

A. Baptism (*Phithii Baptisma*)

Birth, the first of the life-cycle rituals in which the individual participates, may be celebrated ritually in one of two forms. Depending on the wishes of the parents, the baby may be named as an offering (*morb thawaaj*) to God, or it may be baptised (*hup baptisma*) (Church of Christ in Thailand 1977). These rites take place within a few weeks of birth in order that the child be formally placed under God's care as soon as possible. If it is baptised, the baptism is through the wiping or anointing (*cerm*) the head of the child with water, rather than full immersion as

is the case with baptism at *Khriscag Khongphrakrid*. Although this is the most common method of baptism, the Church of Christ in Thailand's manual for ritual practice (Church of Christ in Thailand 1977:27) claims full immersion baptism (*cum*) may also be used.

B. The first Communion ritual (*Phithii Siin Mahaa Sanid*)

Like baptism, the first Communion ritual is celebrated within the context of the normal Sunday service of worship. For those who have been born into Christian families, this takes place at about 15 to 17 years of age, and is preceded by a public affirmation of faith (*jyynjan khwaamchya*). In the case of those who convert to Christianity the baptism and first communion services frequently occur on the same day.

The congregation normally celebrates the communion rite (*phithii siin mahaa sanid*, literally, "the sacrament of intimacy") twice yearly, within the context of the Sunday service of worship. It uses fruit juice rather than wine and, as its name suggests, is understood as a memorial of Christ's death and resurrection. In the case of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid*, communion is one of their points of dissension from *Khriscag Bohin*. As previously noted, they claim "every Sunday is Easter" and distribute fruit juice every Sunday as a celebration of Christ's resurrection at Easter.

C. Marriage (*Phithii Taeng Ngaan*)

In the 1980's Christian marriage may take place any time after about 17 years of age, although many claim this is too young. A general rise in educational levels (see table 6 in

chapter one) over the past two generations, has been paralleled by a concomitant increase in the age of marriage over this period. Many Christian marriages depart from the Northern Thai Buddhist ideal that the male partner should be older than the female partner. Also, unlike the majority of local Buddhist marriages, no payment is made to the matrilineal spirits (cf. Potter 1976:115; Turton 1985: 258)[7]. No bride price payment (*kar nam nom*) is normally required, unless the parents are particularly wealthy or they wish to discourage an unwelcome suitor.

Three types of marriage are recognised amongst *Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen* Christians. In the past the most common form of marriage was by marriage by agreement, where the couple commence living together following discussion between their parents. In some cases a small ceremony was conducted by church and family elders who tied the hands of the couple together (*madmyy*), as a symbol of the marriage and, according to informants, to wish them good luck. The practice of *madmyy* derives from the normal Northern Thai marriage (Tambiah 1977a:231-234; Turton 1975:257-283), although the thread (*fai*) used to tie the wrists is merely symbolic and has no auspicious character. Today, most Christians hold their marriage ceremony in their compound or in the church. While the latter style of marriage is recognised as more progressive (*carun khyn*) due to the opportunity for conspicuous display, it is limited to Christian couples. Mixed marriages are conducted in the compound of the bride's house. *Khriscag Bohin's* minister explained that:

> marriage in the church is a public announcement of marriage together as Christians, but to be married in a house isn't really a religious ceremony.

The preferred pattern of post-marital residence is family centred, as I discussed in chapter two. However rising educational levels frequently necessitate a move to Bangkok or other centres to find appropriate work and, thus, a concomitant neo-local pattern of post-marital residence.

D. Death (*Phithii Ngaan Sob*)

The Christian mortuary rite (*phithii ngaan sob* or *phithii sob*, literally, the "ritual of the corpse"), combines elements of both Northern Thai Buddhist and Christian ritual practice. As in the case of Buddhist mortuary rites, Christian mortuary rites are major rituals, occupying much time and financial outlay. The mortuary rite and the homage ritual are the two most important rituals performed by Christians. I discuss them in detail in the following chapters.

It is in these rituals, concerned with the ultimate fate of human life, that Christians articulate their beliefs most clearly. Also, it is in these rituals that the distinctions between the formal institutional Christianity of the Church of Christ in Thailand, and the indigenous practices of the family are most apparent. They also provide a key to understanding other parts of the ritual cycle. Rituals such as the communion rite and the memorial ritual derive much of their significance from the understandings which the family (*khrobkhrua*) hold in regard to death and ancestors.

E. The House Blessing Ritual (*Phithii Khyn Hyan Maj*)

The house blessing ritual (*phithii khyn hyan maj*, literally, the "ceremony to lift up a new house") may be

performed several times throughout ones life. It is carried out following the building of a new house, or upon the completion of renovations or additions to an old house. The amount of elaboration of the ritual is usually commensurate with the amount of money spent on the house. The former case is usually much more elaborate and expensive than the latter. The latter usually takes place following the normal Sunday service of worship, at which the congregation is invited to go to the newly renovated house for a house blessing ritual. The ritual constitutes a short service held in the house (following the order of the service of worship), during which God is asked to bless the house and its inhabitants. When the service is over it is followed by a communal meal, cooked at the house by the women of the congregation.

A house blessing ritual for a new house or following substantial renovations, differs only in scale from the above. It is usually not held on a Sunday and more guests are invited, sometimes using printed invitations rather than word of mouth. The service order and form of blessing pronounced on the house are the same.

F. The Memorial Service (*Phithii Ralyg*)

The memorial service (*phithii ralyg*, literally, the "rite to remember") is performed following a death in the family. In theory it is performed at either seven or one hundred days after the death, following the Central Thai Buddhist custom. However, in practice, it is performed at a convenient time at about the seven or one hundred day mark. It may also be performed in memory of a group of deceased persons from the same family, in

which case the time span following the death is not significant. One such ritual I attended, was in memorial of the deceased wife and two deceased children of a congregational member. It was held less than a month following the death of the man's son, but some years following the death of his wife and daughter.

The memorial ritual is usually performed in the house of the deceased, on a Sunday following the service of worship. Non-Christian friends and relatives also attend this ritual. In common with most other Christian rites it broadly follows the order of the Sunday service of worship. It gives thanks to God for the Christian life of the deceased and teaches the Christian message that death is not the end, that following death Christians have a continuation of life and of individual identity, with God.

XI. The Weekly Ritual Cycle: A Brief Description

A. The Worship Service (*Namassakaan Phracaw*)

At *Khriscag Bohin* the service of worship (*namassakaan Phracaw*, literally, the "showing of respect to God") is held weekly each Sunday morning. Various members of the congregation (both male and female) assist in the conduct of the service. Preaching is by either *Khriscag Bohin's* resident minister, one of the congregational guardians, or by visiting ministers or guardians. It follows a service order combining hymns of praise to God, prayer, an expository Bible reading and a didactic sermon on the Christian life.

B. Bible Study (*Sygsaa Phrakhamphii*)

Led by *Aacaan Tongkham,* Bible study (*sygsaa Phrakhamphii*, literally, "study of the Bible") is held on Sunday evenings in the home of one of the members. It follows the order of an abbreviated service of worship, with hymn singing, prayer, a Bible reading and its exposition.

C. Sunday School (*Kaansornraweewarn*)

Taught by teenagers of the congregation, the Sunday school class meets weekly each Sunday morning at 9 a.m. Here the children of the congregation from about 4 to 12 years are introduced to the fundamental Christian teachings of God, creation and redemption, through Bible stories, song and projects.

D. Youth Group (*Prachum Anuchon*)

Meetings are held each Friday evening at the home of one of the members. Attended by *Aacaan Tongkham* they include a short Bible study/prayer segment, and some form of entertainment such as a visit to a neighbouring youth group or festival.

XII. The Ritual Context

For the congregation of *Khriscag Bohin* (the same is true of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid*) the church building (*bood*) is the primary locus of Christian ritual activity. Of the rituals listed above, seven rituals (weekly preaching, new year celebration, harvest festival, Easter, Christmas, birth and first communion) are always performed in the church or church compound. The house blessing ritual and the memorial ritual are performed in private houses. The *dam hua* ritual is performed at both the church and

private houses, and the marriage and funeral rituals may be performed either in the church or in private houses.

Built in the early 1950's following the separation from *Khriscag Sansai*, *Khriscag Bohin* is constructed of brick blocks, with large wooden shuttered windows and a concrete floor. Seating is in two rows of wooden pews, which are moved outside for rituals such as funerals where the maximum amount of seating is necessary. The compound of *Khriscag Bohin* is crowded and unambiguously symbolised as a focal point of Christian activity. In addition to the *bood* (or main worship building) it also houses a shade house (*saalaa*), a Sunday school, a kindergarten and the minister's residence.

The floor plan of *Khriscag Bohin* takes the form of a cross, with the long arm constituting the body of the church where the congregation is housed. The arms to the sides are preparation and storage areas, while the altar cum lectern is in the short arm, its floor raised 300mm above the floor of the church. The altar is covered by a white cloth with a large red cross which faces the congregation. The cross is repeated again in white on a blue cloth that covers a small table in front of the altar. About the walls are framed pictures showing a head of Jesus, Jesus on the cross (tall, blond and white skinned) and other biblical scenes. In their representation of central Christian motifs, they play the same didactic role as the paintings from the *Jataka* stories on the walls of Thai temples.

The building then, in its structure, function and decoration, draws on established Christian symbols to proclaim

the message of the formal Christianity of the Church of Christ in Thailand. But at the same time the significance of the family is not forgotten. The church was built by members of the family, on land donated by them. At the front of the church, opposite a plaque listing serving ministers, hangs a drawing of *Gaaw* in western dress, seated on a chair. Larger than all other photographs, it looks out over the congregation he established.

XIII. Ritual Language: the Problem of Translation

The first Protestant translation of a part of the Bible from English into Thai was a translation of Matthew into Central Thai[8]. Done in Burma between 1817-1818 by Ann Judson, the translation was undertaken as part of a mission to Siamese slave colonies in Rangoon and Moulmein (Smith 1982:12). Another translation into Thai was commenced in Singapore in 1823, by Milton of the London Missionary Society.

More serious translation work commenced with the first resident missionaries in Thailand. Within two years of their 1828 arrival in Thailand Gutzlaff and Tomlin had produced a complete translation of the New Testament. Most of this was not published (Grether 1957) but formed a basis for the first published translation by the American Baptist missionary J. T. Jones (ibid.). This was published piecemeal in Bangkok over the period 1939-1843. The Old Testament was then translated through the combined efforts of a group of missionaries and published some time between 1893-1896[9]. Subsequent revisions have been made between 1926-1930, in 1948, 1958, 1968 and in 1980.

Thus, when McGilvary moved from Bangkok to *Chiangmai* in 1867, he took with him a complete Siamese translation of the

Bible. The Northern Thai however spoke *kham myang*, (which the westerners called Lao) so McGilvary followed a dualistic language strategy. He already knew some Lao, learned during his period among the Lao community at *Petchaburi*. In *Chiangmai* he preached in *kham myang* and translated portions of the New Testament into *kham myang*[10]. At the same time, he followed a policy of teaching Central Thai as a means of giving people access to a common religious language and to tracts and Bible passages previously translated into Central Thai. As I pointed out in chapter three, the Presbyterian missionaries relied heavily on tract distribution and the teaching of reading skills. Swanson (1988:193) notes in this regard:

> The missionaries believed that all Christians should be able to read the Bible, that literacy contributed to spiritual growth, and literacy made converts more intelligent and faithful Christians.

During fieldwork, most preaching, both in the church and at domestic rites, was conducted in *kham myang*, as were most church related activities. However, Central Thai was used as the medium of preaching if visiting preachers, or other visitors, who only spoke Central Thai were present. Although textual materials were written in Central Thai, they were translated into *kham myang* during preaching. Often preachers alternated between languages, borrowing words from *kham myang* or Central Thai for emphasis, sometimes using the more polite words of Central Thai to temper earthy allusions made in Northern Thai.

However, regardless of the language used, the conversion of the Judaeo-Christian concepts of the Bible into a form that is meaningful for Thai Buddhists raises fundamental problems of cultural translation (Nita 1982:25). At a general conceptual

level the Thai language evokes the Buddhist cosmology. In Thai distinctions are made according to the relative status of the speaker and listeners. Also, a distinction is made between ordinary speech and that used when speaking with royalty or high ranking priests (*raadchasab*). Thus, the language encodes the hierarchical nature of Thai society and the Buddhist cosmology on which that hierarchy is founded.

Protestant translators of Christian texts borrowed words from the language of Thai Buddhism to describe central Christian concepts such as sin (*baab* or *khwaamphid*), heaven (*sawan*), hell (*narog*), justice (*khwaamyutitham*). They aimed to use words that were familiar and meaningful, and to redefine them for use in the Christian context. However this process raised a number of problems as Seeley (1957), a Bible translator, points out when he says:

> such words as those having to do with sin, guilt, heaven, and salvation have little meaning to Thai people apart from their Buddhist context and so must be redefined when used in a Christian context. It is often impossible or unwise to use a religiously neutral word to convey Christian meanings, and yet to use a term packed with Buddhist connotations in order to convey a Christian meaning may fall short of its objective and may even cause antagonism in the Buddhist mind (Seeley 1957:49).

There is, for example, a great disparity in meaning between the normative Buddhist usage of words and, words adopted by Christians, to describe such central tenets of Christianity as "good", "evil" and sin. The Christian concept of sin, is, as Ricoeur (1969:52) points out, "a religious dimension and not a moral one". Its primary root means to miss the target (ibib.:72), in the sense of deviation from God's will. However, in the Buddhist cosmology, the closest approximation to the idea

of sin is *khwaamphid* meaning wrong in the sense of morally wrong, or *baab*. The latter term, when used in the Buddhist context, relates to karmic doctrines. It refers to acts which transgress the natural order and which in turn bring their own natural retribution on the individual. It may be quantified and can be cancelled out by doing good (*bun*). Such meanings are a far cry from the originary meaning of the Christian concept of sin. The problem is not confined to Thailand, but is common to all cross cultural missionary contexts (cf. Nita ibid.). Leach (1968), for instance, notes that missionaries working amongst the Kachin in North Burma faced similar problems regarding the meaning and translation of these central Christian doctrines.

In Thailand modern translations of the New Testament translate sin by both *khwaamphid* and *baab*, depending on the context. However, even the addition of tortuous circumlocutions has not transformed them into Christian concepts. In daily life there is some blurring in the way in which Christians use them. Buddhists frequently announce that they are going to the temple or to a household rite (both of which are merit making occasions) by saying that they "*paj tham bun*" (literally, that they are "going to do merit"). Christians also use the same phrase to announce their intention to attend a Christian ritual event. Yet, when questioned, the more theologically articulate, explain that for Christians this form of merit is something to be equated with a general form of good (*dii*) and that Christians do not make merit like Buddhists.

Thus, Christian ritual language has evolved in such a way that most of the most fundamental Christian concepts are rendered

in terms borrowed from Thai Buddhism and still possess Buddhist fringes of meaning. Even the words for the church building, *bood* and *wihaan*, are derived from Buddhist religious language where they refer to the main preaching hall at the temple. In the present day, this has two main outcomes. Firstly, many Christians, particularly the old and those who have converted to Christianity on marriage, have only a rudimentary knowledge of the central tenets of Christianity and the degree to which they are distinguished from Buddhist teachings. Unlike the younger generation who learn the fundamentals of Christianity in Sunday School, these groups are essentially self taught. Secondly, the use of Buddhist terms to describe Christian concepts, makes those concepts difficult to understand for non-Christians. Buddhists frequently commented that when they heard Christian preaching at public rituals, or when they read Christian tracts, they could not understand the Christian usage of Buddhist concepts[11].

XIV. Some Major Christian Cosmological Categories

At this point, I move to examine some of the central Christian cosmological categories and the degree to which they represent transformations of Northern Thai Buddhist cosmological classifications. These are articulated in preaching, in the structure and practice of ritual and in the practice of daily life as a Christian. Having delineated the basic cosmological classifications here, the following two chapters concentrate on examining the manner in which Christian practice itself, has been transformed by the context in which it was implemented.

A. God and Central Christian Teachings

As I suggested in my discussion of the worship service, God forms a central focus of Christian ritual activities. Most Christian ritual activity is directed to him, either in praise or in supplication. The teaching of the Church of Christ in Thailand and the understanding most Christians have of God, is that of the Protestant triune god of Father (*Phrabidaa*), Son (*Phrajeesuukhrid*) and Holy Spirit (*Phrawinjaan*). Through preaching they are taught that God the Father is addressed through his Son Jesus, who reconciles man to God. The work of conversion, of comfort and strengthening of the faith of man is that of the Holy Spirit.

The members of *Khriscag Bohin* also have a literal belief in the existence of Satan (*Saataan*). Boyd (1973) argues that a critical distinction between Buddhism and Christianity is that through the figure of Satan, Christians locate evil outside of man, whereas for Buddhists evil is located within man in the nature of the human condition. Certainly this is the case for *Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen* Christians, who conceptualise Satan as being opposed to man, and as having attributes which are the antithesis of those of God. He is believed to be the root cause of suffering, and of all forms of dissension and strife in the world. Following the end of the world and the resurrection it is believed that he will be confined to hell to rule over an eternal suffering visited upon unbelievers.

The relationship of man to God is understood in rather anthropomorphic terms, as being similar to that which villagers once enjoyed with their princely patrons. God is portrayed as

being above man in terms of power and status and as deserving of his respect and obedience. In return he promises them protection from danger in this life and eternal life following death. Hughes (1984a:331) describes the Northern Thai conception of God as a "powerful, and beneficent spirit patron who is willing to help those and give benefits to those who seek his assistance" (see also Hughes 1985:37).

The relationship then approximates a sort of celestial patron-client relationship between God and man, whereby through conformity to the wishes of God man receives eternal life. I have already pointed out that the members of *Khriscag Bohin* view their relationship to the Church of Christ in Thailand in terms of a relationship of clientage. However Christians draw a clear distinction between their relationship to God and the relationships Buddhists have with the Buddha. Many informants made the point that God is alive, while the Buddha is dead.. As Stirrat (1981:187) points out, Sri Lankan Catholics make a similar distinction between the Buddha and God "God is alive, or at least exists".

Heaven (*sawan*) and hell (*narog*), represent two of the more significant, if rather amorphous, dimensions of the Christian cosmology. The members of *Khriscag Bohin* believe that these are real places, although they exist in a kind of supra-geographical location that defies specification. Although Christians use the Buddhist terms for heaven and hell, the Christian heaven and hell are significantly different from those in the Buddhist cosmology[12]. Informants pointed out that for Christians there is only one heaven and one hell in contrast to the many levels of

heavens and hells in the Buddhist system (Davis 1984; Tambiah 1977a). Sirrat (1981:188) found that Sri Lankan Catholics viewed the Buddhist Gods as forming a parallel, if evil, hierarchy to the Catholic saints. *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* Protestants merely deny the reality of the Buddhist cosmology and the entire Buddhist pantheon of gods. The reality that these entities have in the eyes of non-Christians is put down to demonic illusion.

Unlike Buddhist texts, the Bible says relatively little about the specific attributes of heaven and hell, and the details Christians are able to give about these places are similarly scanty. Heaven is conceptualised in slightly more detail than is hell. Christian preaching promises that life in heaven is the reward of belief/faith (*khwaamchya*) in God, only given to those who have followed his teachings. And most informants claimed that all Christians go to heaven irrespective of their acts during their life, a view similar to that which Hughes (1985:36) found in a survey of the beliefs of Christian students.

Formal Christian teachings hold that immediately following death the spirit (*winjaan*) of the deceased goes to be with God in heaven. However, I point out in chapter six that there is some ambiguity here, as the beliefs members of the family hold about ancestral Christians suggest they remain on earth within reach of the living. Keyes (1987b:187-188) defines the *winyaan* as the essence or consciousness of the individual and the *khwan* as the spirit which animates man. However, in the same way as they deny the reality of the Buddhist pantheon of gods in order to make sense of Christian teachings, most Christian informants insist

the *winjaan* and the *khwan* are in reality the same entity and that it is the *winjaan* (spirit) which animates man.

Heaven is portrayed by Christian villagers as all things good, and an absence of things bad: a reunion with loved ones in a place of material plenty, light, clean and with good food obtained without back-breaking work. It is characterised by an absence of all the things that the word *khwaamthug* (suffering), conjures up, such as pain, separation, uncertainty and death. By contrast hell is negatively defined as an absence of heaven, that will be the lot of unbelievers and features much less prominently in preaching. It is portrayed as separation from God, an absence of good things, as well as a place of eternal torment, of suffering and hell fire.

The major promise of Christianity, and that which absolutely distinguishes the Christian cosmology from that of Buddhism is the promise of a resurrection (*koed maj*), and life eternal (*chiiwid niran*). *Baan Bohin and Baan Chiangseen* Christians believe that following a virgin birth and later earthly ministry, Jesus the Son of God was crucified on a cross, but was raised to life three days later by God. They believe that through belief (or faith) in God, they too will be restored to life following death and that this life will be an eternal life in heaven with God. Both preaching and teaching emphasise that it is through belief/faith in God that the individual attains resurrection to life in heaven, and not through doing good or meritorious acts.

In this respect a critical distinction between Christians and Buddhists in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* is in their attitude towards the world. Buddhists consider that the world is a neutral, ethically ordered world in which the individual has total responsibility for his acts. This is encapsulated in the karmic formula "do good, receive good" (*tham dii, daj dii*). They consider that the natural state of the world is one of relative discomfort and suffering, encoded in the formula by which they describe the life-cycle: "birth, aging, pain, death" (*koed, kae, ceb, daaj*). For them existence is an infinitely long series of rebirths in the world, as a result of their actions in this and past lives. Only through right action and the acquisition of merit can they hope to eventually escape the karmic cycle.

Hughes (1984a:327, 1985:29) found that the Christian students he surveyed also subscribed to the formula "do good, receive good". Similarly, this is true for *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* Christians, who, as I have pointed out, draw comparisons between the moral teachings of Buddhism and Christianity.. However, attachment to such ideas are not only indications of a lingering attachment to karmic law, as he suggests. They also constitute a statement about how relations should be in an ideal moral order.

Like their Buddhist neighbours, Christians use the formula "birth, aging, pain, death" to describe the lot of man. However, while they recognise that life may be accompanied by suffering, such suffering is not conceptualised as inexplicable (cf. Ricoeur ibid.:32). They claim, that to feel the effects of old age, to feel pain and eventually to die, is natural. Yet, at the same

time, for Northern Thai Christians the world is not the ethically neutral karmic world of Buddhists. They believe that the world has been constructed by God and, despite the introduction of sin (through the original sin of Adam and Eve), life continues under his guidance. Thus, they claim, that regardless of the vicissitudes of life, their ultimate fate is determined by their belief in God rather than the uncertainty of the karmic cycle.

For Christians, then, the world has a fundamental order and knowability that it does not have for Buddhists. For them, actions are not relative to impersonal karmic law, but are judged by the absolute formula of God's teachings, the ten commandments (*bunyatsibprakaan*). Moreover, actions are highly personalised for Christians. Although they may sin, it is through their own personal faith that they are forgiven (*haj aphaj*) by Jesus and their sin is removed (*laang baab*).

B. Cosmic and Profane Life-World Time

For Buddhists time is cyclic. The universe is subject to an endless series of vast cycles (*kan*) of dissolution and regeneration (Davis 1984:85; Tambiah 1977a:36). Within these cycles the worlds of men are periodically created and destroyed and men themselves are subject to an infinitely long series of deaths and rebirths according to the cycle of *karma*. Within this karmic cyclic the eventual aim of all beings is the cessation of individual existence (*nirvana*) following, over a series of lives, the reduction of desire and attachment to the sensory world. Thus, the doctrine of *karma*, not only provides an ethos of action (Keyes 1983a) and an explanation of misfortune (Davis 1984:79) in each life, it also explains the link between successive lives.

Each incarnation comprises a unique individual with only the *winjaan,* what Keyes (1987b:27) calls a "liminal essence", providing a link between successive incarnations.

In contrast to this Buddhist notion of cyclic time, for Christians, time progresses lineally from conception and birth to death, then entry to heaven and a once only rebirth (*koed maj*) followed by eternal life. Critically, unlike Buddhists, Christians expect to retain their individual identity and personality forever.

This conception of a linear time scale means that both individual and cosmic history have a fundamentally different meaning for Christians than they have for Buddhists. For Buddhists any one life-cycle is epiphenomenal in a cosmic sense. The untoward acts in one incarnation will be atoned for in a later incarnation. In contrast, for Christians the periodic regeneration of the Buddhist cosmos is replaced by a single future regeneration. This not only abolishes history in the sense that Eliade (1954:111-112) claims, it personalises and transforms the meaning of each individual history. For Christians actions in this world are crucial in that they determine their future existence - life in either heaven or hell - for all time. The implications such Christian beliefs have for this worldly action have been pointed out by Weber (1976). However, as I have noted, Northern Thai Christians have been impelled toward entrepreneurial activity to no greater degree then their Buddhist neighbours.

C. Reality and the Phenomenal World

For Buddhists, the material world is an illusion (*maajaa*), rather than an eternal reality. With its recurrent cycles of creation and destruction it is impermanent, its delights merely distract from the ultimate reality, which is the knowledge of its illusory nature and the quest for the reduction of one's desire for the things of this world. Moreover this world is not the only human reality. The thirty-one planes of existence in the Buddhist cosmology have four planes inhabited by humans (Tambiah ibid.).

In contrast, for *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* Christians, the world reflects the only ultimate and eternal reality, a reflection of God's original design. For them, the reality they experience in daily life is real, it is not the changing, illusory Buddhist world, nor is it only one of many alternative realities. Because they understand the world as the ultimate reality created by God for man to live in and use, Christians view their relationship to the world differently from Buddhists. While, as I have shown in chapter two, both Buddhists and Christians exploit the physical world in a similar fashion, the meanings they attribute to that exploitation are quite different. For a Christian, passion (*tanhaa*) for the things of this world is good as it leads to progress and development, both of which are indications of God's presence and blessing. Similarly, their personal success in the world both symbolises their fulfilment of God's command to master it and validates the promises of God to be with and support his people (cf. Weber 1964). As one informant explained, while we were discussing the political and

economic successes of the *Rangsan* family, "this shows the religion is the truth".

This is in stark contrast to the Buddhist position. While, like Christians, Buddhist's must also exploit the physical world to sustain themselves and their families, such exploitation can only lead to a deeper entanglement in the illusory web of *maajaa*. For them, many of the acts necessary to sustain existence, further entangle man in the illusions of the ephemeral world. Even the killing of animals for food, is generative of demerit (*baab*), and further entrapment in the karmic cycle.

The Christian attitude to the world is then a pragmatic and instrumental one, which has accomplished a demystification and rationalisation of the Buddhist world. This rationalisation includes the spirit world, as well as the physical world. Christians do not deny the existence of the spirits propitiated by Buddhists, but have incorporated them in the Christian pantheon. Indeed Hughes (1985:39) claims, I suggest with some validity, that Thai Christians make no real distinction between the power of the spirit world and that of God's. He argues (ibid.) that they consider "the power of God, [to be] a power similar in kind, but greater in extent and beneficence, than that of spirits or magical techniques or objects". Spirits (*phii*) are believed to be satanic spirits who delude those who respect (*thyy*) them. Christian informants claimed that as long as they kept to Christian teachings they need not be afraid of spirits and would not see them. They frequently pointed out that the villages now had no problem with spirits as "they are afraid of Christians".

Amongst Christians, most forms of magical practices have suffered the same fate as Buddhist spirits and gods. Magic associated with sorcery, cursing and the magical potency of Buddhist amulets (Tambiah 1984) are considered to be merely satanic delusion and to have no real power except that existing in the practitioner or client's mind. However, although frowned upon by the official Church as being superstitious, some forms of semi-magical practices are still practiced by Christians.

Most villagers classified magical practices according to their source: Buddhist practices (including those deriving from Hinduism), magical practices of Siamese derivation, and a wider category of practices which they claimed to be traditional Northern Thai knowledge. Christians frequently participated in practices of the latter category. Informants claimed that these practices, which included fortune telling, the selection of auspicious periods for ritual and, traditional methods of healing, were concerned with the manipulation of the natural properties of the world rather than religion. Thus, some Christian women made regular visits to various fortune tellers (*mor duu*), of reputation. Christian domestic rituals were sometimes scheduled according the most auspicious period. Also, some claimed to have witnessed the healing of wounds and burns through the use of traditional Northern Thai medical practices (magical healing formula). Informants' accounts suggest that such practices constitute cultural and ethnic markers, grafted onto introduced Christianity. No informants viewed these them as opposed to Christianity. Indeed, as I argue in this thesis, it is through such syntheses between local and introduced beliefs and practices that Christianity has been domesticated.

D. Geographical Space

Bourdieu (1989:89) argues that the organised environment and, particularly the house, is an objectification of the social classifications that constitute our cultural system. Through the examination of these spatio-temporal forms, the inner logic of social systems, not normally accessible at the conscious level, becomes apparent. In Northern Thailand, the study of Northern Thai spatial classifications has been a major focus of ethnographers. Works in this area cover a range of areas from geographical space (Davis 1984:79-80) and the sacred topography (Keyes 1975a; Rhum 1987), to personal (ibid.:81) and domestic space (ibid.:43-52; Potter 1976) and, in regard to the house in the North East (Tambiah 1977a:19-23). In the following, through an examination of these spatial dimensions as they pertain to the beliefs of the members of *Khriscag Bohin*, I point out further aspects of the Northern Thai cosmology that have been fundamentally transformed amongst Christians.

I noted in the previous chapter that the nineteenth century incorporation of Northern Thailand in the Central Thai state provided a new basis for relationships to land (that is to geographical space). The commoditisation of land meant that payment to the princes or to its spirit owners was no longer the fundamental link between land and those who utilised it. Subsequent twentieth century social changes in Northern Thailand have done much to erode beliefs in spirits (Davis, 1984:267). Nevertheless, most Northern Thai still distinguish geographical space according to its spirit owners. At the time of field work, most Buddhists in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen*, still made placatory offerings (*liang phii*) to their compound and house

spirits. With the protection afforded by these spirits, their house and compound offer the highest degree of safety outside of the sacred space of the temple. Other areas are relatively dangerous, inhabited by unknown and untamed spirits.

For Christians geographical space has a fundamentally different meaning. As they recognise no spirits or spirit owners of land, for them geographical space is undifferentiated under the ownership and protection of God. All space is equally auspicious and the activities of man can do nothing to render it more or less auspicious. The effect of the Christian conception of space as neutral is clearly visible in customs surrounding the care of the new born. Buddhists confine the mother and child to the safety of the house and compound (safe from potentially malevolent spirits) for a period after giving birth. Christians, by contrast, take children to the church for baptism within days of birth and thereafter into normal society. They also claim that in comparison with non-Christians, they have a freedom to travel at night (normally potentially dangerous for those who are afraid of spirits) and in the selection of house building sites.

The Christian homogenisation and neutralisation of geographical space also has implications for the performance of ritual. As space is conceived of as neutral, unlike Buddhists (who perform the *song saduang* ritual to expel evil), Christians do not purify the ritual stage prior to the performance of domestic ritual. The Christian preference for conducting rituals in the church relates to the formality possible with such rituals, the large size of the church building and its central

location in the village, rather than to any air of auspiciouness it possesses.

The transformation of the meaning of space for Christians is also apparent in the organisation of the Christian house. This is apparent in the organisation of the sleeping area (*hyan*), and the public area of the house (*toen*). For Northern Thai Buddhists the main bedroom is the location for the shelf, or shrine, to the tutelary spirits of the house and for ancestral spirits. However, as they respect neither the tutelary spirits of the house (*phii hyan*) or the matrilineal spirits (*phii buu njaa*), Christians do not observe any of the prohibitions that would normally apply to this part of the house (Davis 1984:48-49). Christians maintain the Buddhist practice of sleeping with their heads to the East, which the Northern Thai believe is more auspicious than the West (Davis 1984). However this is encoded into the spatial orientation of houses and of sleeping chambers, and informants claimed that this was done to follow Northern Thai tradition rather than being particularly auspicious[13].

For Buddhists, the public area of the house normally contains the Buddha shelf (Wijeyewardene 1970:253) and is an arena for the careful storage of ritual texts and implements. In contrast the Christian house contains no form of domestic shrine, and Christian ritual apparatus is merely stored in the main room of the house anywhere it is convenient. As the power of Christian texts resides in God, rather than the words themselves and, due to the absence of retribution from tutelary spirits or other cosmic powers, these books are treated differently from Buddhist ritual texts. The Bible and hymnal take their place on

a convenient shelf alongside other domestic books and papers. This is in sharp contrast to the reverence that Davis (1984:96-97) records as being paid to Buddhist ritual texts and the possible illness of the owner in retribution if the rules of storage and propriety are neglected.

E. Gender Roles

The cosmological transformations discussed above have led to significant transformations in male and female roles and gender relations. In the previous chapter I noted that the abandonment of ritual to the matrilineal spirits led to a re-evaluation of female and male roles within the household. Whereas women were predominant in the performance of domestic rituals concerned with the matrilineal spirits, when this rite was transformed into a rite paying homage to deceased Christian ancestors, the first ritual leaders were males. As I discuss in chapter six, although women play an integral role in the Christian homage ritual, it has a patrifocal emphasis in that it traces the family to *Gaaw*, its apical male ancestor.

Even more than a transformation of household roles, for Christians there has been a transformation in the valuation given women vis-a-vis that given men. This is firstly in terms of the general sense of inauspiciousness (*majsilimongkon*) that the Northern Thai associate with women and female objects (cf. Davis 1984:65-66), both of which are threatening to male magical powers. Secondly, according to Buddhist ideology, women are viewed as being more attached to the sensory world than are men (Kirsch 1975:1982), and are prevented from attaining the religiously most valued status of *bhikkhu*, in the *Sangha*.

In contrast, according to Christian teachings, women have an equal valuation with men. Christians claim that God's power is given equally to all, and depends upon no arcane knowledge for its manipulation. There is no special power available to Christian men, solely by virtue of their gender. As the Bible is available to women in the vernacular, they too have equal access to God's power through his word and a formal religious equality with men (cf. Swanson 1988). Thus, at *Khriscag Bohin*, women frequently fill key performative roles in the Sunday service of worship. However, they take lesser roles in central rites such as the mortuary ritual, where, as I point out in chapter five, one of their primary roles is the preparation of food for guests. This suggests not only lingering notions of male ritual superiority, it also suggests that like Buddhist women, Christian women model themselves on the role of the nurturing mother, which Keyes (1984) argues is the predominant role for women in rural Thai communities. Indeed, it could be argued that even those organisational and ritual roles which Christian women occupy in the congregation, have been subsumed within the primary female role of nurturer, whereby women nurture the religion itself (cf. Keyes ibid.:237). Thus, while there has been a fundamental transformation in male-female relationships within the domestic sphere, as far as the ritual sphere is concerned, Christian gender roles are strongly influenced by traditional Northern Thai conceptions of gender.

XV. Summary

This chapter firstly discussed the organisation of the congregations of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* and *Khriscag Bohin*. My concern here was to emphasise the different styles of

organisation and administration in these congregations and to explain my exclusive focus on the ritual of *Khriscag Bohin*. Founded under the relatively recent influence of a new wave of American missionaries, the members of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* differentiate themselves from *Khriscag Bohin* through a severe attenuation of all forms of ritual observances. In contrast to this, formal ritual observances at *Khriscag Bohin* follow those of the Church of Christ in Thailand.

I then outlined my general approach to ritual, one which focused on ritual performance as a mode of cultural reproduction and transformation. At its most basic, the significance of ritual is that it is through ritual that we mediate the transitions, crises and contradictions of the social world. Through ritual, our ideas about the world, particularly the unseen world, are given reality. Thus, for the anthropologist, the exegesis of ritual performance is a way of eliciting a peoples' most deeply held beliefs and values.

Having delineated a general approach toward ritual, I then discussed the *Khriscag Bohin* ritual cycle in terms of its component rituals, their derivation, performative contexts, language and Christian ritual symbolism. My primary aim here has been to provide a general account of Christian ritual, its derivation, language and symbolism and, to demonstrate that although Christian ritual practices have diverse antecedents, there is an overall integrity to the ritual cycle. I have also been concerned to demonstrate the manner in which contemporary Christian ritual represents a transformation of both Buddhist and Christian teachings. Thus, I have demonstrated that from the

early years of Northern Thai Christianity, converts combined elements of both Buddhism and Christianity in their Christian practice.

Finally, I discussed some central Christian teachings and the major dimensions of the Christian cosmology. I examined areas such as heaven, hell, sin, causation and individual responsibility, time, reality, space and gender. My aim here was partly to demonstrate the degree to which contemporary Northern Thai Christian beliefs represent transformations of the Buddhist cosmology. Also, I have been concerned with demonstrating that despite their material similarities with their Buddhist neighbours, the beliefs which Christians hold constitute them as a distinct group. In the following chapters, where I examine specific Christian rituals in detail, I move one step further and show how these fundamental cosmological concepts are incarnated through ritual and, as such, create the world to which they refer.

Endnotes

---

1. Teenage members of the congregation frequently attend the meetings of the youth group at *Khriscag Bohin*, against the wishes of their parents.
2. *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* members do not celebrate harvest festival, the northern New Year, Easter, or Christmas and they hold no form of memorial ritual.
3. During the research period, the service of worship and all other Christian rituals were attended at *Khriscag Bohin*, as well as at several other rural and urban congregations. A large sample of sermons were recorded and subsequently transcribed.
4. In the performance of Buddhist ritual, incense, flowers and candles are frequently combined together to make a ritual set called *suaj dorg*, which is used as an invocatory offering presented to monks or to the Buddha.
5. The following blessing, pronounced by a Christian elder, is typical of Christian benedictions: "God, may you bless everyone who has had the kindness to come today. Please give them

happiness and escape from all forms of sickness and from all dangers. May this blessing be with you always."
6. The members of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* do not celebrate Easter, as they hold that every Sunday is a memorial to the original Easter Sunday.
7. Although I have not witnessed the ritual, most Buddhist marriages still make payments to the matrilineal spirits.
8. Conflict between Catholic missionaries and Thai authorities had led to a prohibition on Catholic missionaries writing books in the Siamese or *Pali* alphabets (Renard 1984:10). This led to the development of a romanisation system called *Farang Tham Thai*, or, the "westerner does Thai", which was used by Catholics up until 1850 (ibid.:16), long past the abolition of the legal requirement for its use. Grether (1957:10) claims that it was not until 1952 that Catholics translated "any extensive portion of Scriptures into Thai". He also points out that this was produced without any apparent reference to the Protestant version.
9. Grether (1957:9) notes some discrepancy in publication dates given by various authorities and suggests that this represents the lag between the completion of translation and publication.
10. Dr. McGilvary was not able to obtain a Lao type font until 1889 and the first Lao publication, the book of Matthew (translated by Mrs McGilvary), was not published until 1891.
11. Contemporary Christian scholars such as Hughes (1983) still claim that this revaluation of Buddhist language can be achieved through the presentation of Christianity in terms of pre-existing Thai cultural categories. However, this appropriation of Thai cultural classifications for the presentation of Christianity is strongly resisted by Buddhists who view it, particularly in its Catholic version, as attempting to undermine Buddhism (*Phra Sobhon* 1983).
12. The use of the Buddhist terms for heaven and hell, seems to confuse the issue for many. In an informal survey in which I drew out various schematic diagrams of the Christian and Buddhist cosmologies and discussed the difference between these, many of my respondents considered that the Christian and Buddhist heaven and hells were the same place.
13. Similarly, for Christians, the house posts called the Lady Post and the Auspicious Post (Davis 1984:49) are not auspicious.

Chapter 5

THE CHRISTIAN MORTUARY RITE: THE CHRISTIAN COSMOLOGY THROUGH AN ANALYSIS OF BELIEFS ABOUT LIFE AND DEATH

I. Introduction

In this chapter I move from the previous chapter's general discussion of Christian ritual to focus on the mortuary rite. Through an exegesis of the performance of the mortuary rite I elicit the various dimensions of the Christian cosmology, discuss their derivation as transformations of the Buddhist and Presbyterian Christian cosmologies and, make some general propositions about the cultural change and the transformation of mortuary ritual. My analysis of Thai Christian mortuary ritual follows in the Hertzian tradition (Hertz 1960), in as much as I am interested in the processing of the corpse and the fate of the soul during the liminal period of the rite. However, my focus is on the symbolic dimension of the rite. I examine Christian beliefs about the nature of the world and about the transformation of the deceased from living kinsman to deceased, yet sentient ancestor. I pay little attention to the reconstitution of society following death which is, as Kessler (1985) points out, the primary focus of functionalist and structural-functionalist approaches to mortuary ritual .

Keyes (1983b:273) claims that in Theravada Buddhist societies those rituals associated with death and with ordination

are the central rites upon which the religion is based. In the case of Northern Thai Christianity, I suggest that the rituals which encode the major Christian beliefs and values are the two rituals concerned with death and the deceased. The mortuary rite (*ngaan sob*), derives from the Church of Christ in Thailand, while the homage ritual (*phithii buuchaa banphaburud*), has been developed in *Baan Bohin* by members of the family (*khrobkhrua*).

The mortuary ritual and, in a different manner, the homage ritual, deal with some of the most fundamental human problems, the inevitable mortality of the individual and the pain and suffering of the bereaved. The mortuary rite aims at making death meaningful through a recasting of relations between the living and the deceased and at the same time reconstituting relations amongst the living. The significance that Northern Thai Christians attach to this rite is apparent in its structure and performance. Of all Christian rituals the mortuary rite is the longest, most elaborate and most expensive rite[1]. It also involves the whole community both Christian and Buddhist and, thus, becomes an important arena for making public statements about Christian beliefs. The homage ritual (which I discuss in the following chapter), is concerned with the ongoing relationship between the living and the deceased. More important to Christians than the formal Easter celebrations of the Church, it is the primary locus for delineating the membership of the family and for constituting the Christian version of descent.

I firstly examine the two major anthropological traditions in the analysis of mortuary ritual. One, which stems from the work of Bachofen (1967) focuses on the themes of fertility and

sexuality in the mortuary rite, while the other derives from the work of Hertz (1960). Focusing on the mortuary rite as a two stage act and the transition of the soul, the Hertzian approach pays particular attention to the healing of the breech in society left by death. By means of a summary of the major anthropological works dealing with mortuary rites, I show that Hertz's approach to mortuary ritual has been, generally, more influential than that of Bachofen. In particular, I note that the most significant analyses of Thai Buddhist mortuary ritual have been strongly influenced by Hertz.

I then move to the primary focus of this chapter, the Northern Thai mortuary rite. In my discussion of the Christian ritual cycle in the previous chapter, I suggested that it is important to view all ritual performances within a historical context. My analysis of the Christian mortuary rite draws on early twentieth century accounts by missionaries and travellers, to examine the historical development of the Northern Thai Christian mortuary ritual. I then discuss the development of Christian mortuary ritual in *Baan Bohin* over the past five generations of Christianity, following which I a give detailed description and analysis of a Christian mortuary ritual, the funeral of *Mae* (Mrs) *Dii*.

Through my analysis of the rite I continue my exegesis of the Christian cosmology, discuss Christians beliefs about the soul and the person of the deceased, the nature of death and pollution and, examine the Christian conception of the relationship between the living and deceased ancestors. My analysis concentrates on the liminal period of the mortuary rite

as it is in this period in which some of society's deepest values emerge (Turner 1984:22). Through this analysis I suggest that the mortuary rite performed by the congregation of *Khriscag Bohin* constitutes a synthesis between Buddhist and Christian practices. I suggest that by virtue of this synthesis, the beliefs of the family about death and the person of the deceased, constitute transformations of both Buddhist teachings and the formal teachings of the Church of Christ in Thailand. Finally, I make some propositions regarding the Hertzian model and its application in situations of cultural transformation. Hertz considered secondary treatment of the corpse was almost a cultural universal and, that its abandonment, was primarily due to acculturation. However, I suggest this should not be viewed as the loss of cultural traits, that in reality the abandonment of secondary treatment of the corpse suggests complex transformations in a society's cosmology.

Methodologically, my description and analysis of mortuary ritual in this chapter and of the homage ritual in the following chapter, refer to specific ritual performances[2]. My aim here is not the production of ethnographic realism. Clifford (1986), Geertz (1988) and Marcus and Cushman (1982), among many others, have pointed out the impossibility of such representations. Rather, in the previous chapter I argued that abstract cultural categories are objectified in ritual (Kapferer 1983; Traube 1986). In this objectification, contradictions between cultural classifications are brought about and emphasised, people are forced to confront novel situations and to make choices about practice and meaning. Through a focus on specific ritual situations I show how *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* Christians

make these choices about cultural practices and meanings. In their case, as a religious minority group with ideas about the world that diverge markedly from those of the Buddhist majority, the making of such cultural choices is both a regular and significant feature of ritual performances. It is through the making of such choices over the past five generations that the members of *Khriscag Bohin* have created a synthesis between Buddhism and their new Christian religion and, in doing so, transformed that religion.

II. Anthropological Approaches to Mortuary Rites

Anthropological approaches to mortuary ritual may be traced to two major theoretical positions and concomitant research orientations. The earliest anthropological approach to mortuary rituals is one that focuses on the themes of fertility and sexuality in the mortuary rite. This approach stems from the 1859 work of Bachofen (Bachofen 1967) and later Frazer (1963). A central focus in these works was on the killing of divine kings in order to regenerate the community, and the question of how the killing of the king could at the same time be a rite of fertility and renewal. This is apparent in Evans-Prichard's (1969) work on Shilluk kinship. Later works moved away from these foci. This change in orientation was primarily due to a pre-occupation with social structure, on the part of those trained in the British social anthropological tradition. There may also be some validity to Bloch and Parry's (1982:3) suggestion that this was also a distancing of the more mystical elements, by a discipline anxious to establish its academic respectability.

An alternative approach to mortuary rituals is the French tradition which stems from the work of Hertz, a student of Durkheim. Hertz's 1907 "A Contribution to the Study of the Collective Representation of Death" (Hertz 1960), focused on societies where death is conceptualised as a process that takes place over a long period of time. In the same way that Durkheim focused upon suicide as a collective social phenomena, Hertz focused on death as a social phenomena that involved not only the biological extinction of individuals, but their removal from their positions in society:

> Death does not confine itself to ending the visible bodily life of an individual: it also destroys the social being grafted upon the physical individual and to whom the collective consciousness attributed great dignity and importance (Hertz 1960:77).

He viewed death as a two-stage process: a provisional burial during which time the individual is separated from society, followed by a permanent burial (or secondary processing of the corpse) at which time the breech in society caused by the death is closed. The central foci of his work are the rites of secondary burial (or secondary treatment) of the corpse and the concomitant healing of the breach in the social body through the re-assignation of statuses, rights and obligations. According to Hertz, the decomposition of the corpse during the liminal period of the rite acts as a model for the fate of the soul. It reflects the deceased's gradual exclusion from human society and concomitant integration in the society of the deceased in the next world.

Of these two analytic traditions that stemming from Hertz has been the most popular and, consequently, the most fruitful.

Major works following the Durkheimian model of Hertz are that of his contemporary Van Gennep (1977) (first published in 1909), who elicited a three stage structure in rites of passage such as the mortuary rite. Although not translated into English until 1960, his work has exerted a significant influence upon subsequent analyses of mortuary ritual. Malinowski's 1925 (Malinowski 1984) analysis of Melanesian funerals follows in the Hertzian tradition as he viewed the funeral rite as acting to restore the cohesion of the group in the face of the disintegrative threat of death. Gluckman (1937) in regard to the Southeast Bantu and Radcliffe-Brown (1964) in regard to the Andaman islanders, in their focus on the re-integrative role of mortuary rites, also follow in this tradition. While he points out the possibility of the generation of conflict in the mortuary ritual, in his focus on the collective sentiments surrounding death, Wilson's (1939) work on Nyakyusa burials is also influenced by Hertz. Warner's (1959) work on American death follows Hertz, as does Goody's (1962) comparison of the LoWiili and LoDagba mortuary rites. In the latter work the influence of Durkheim is apparent in Goody's focus on the restoration of social order following the breech of death.

Many of the more recent analyses of death and mortuary rites have also been strongly influenced by Hertz. Bloch (1971) discusses Merina society, secondary burial and the use of relationships amongst the deceased as a model for relationships amongst the living[3]. Both Danforth's (1982) discussion of liminality and transition in the Greek mortuary rite and Douglas' (1969) highly descriptive work on the "death theme" in Basque society follow the Hertzian approach. Metcalf's (1982) work on

Berawan eschatology, which focuses on mortuary and ancestor rites, is also influenced by Hertz. Huntington's (1973) work on Bara funeral customs and Huntington and Metcalf's (1979) work on the transformation of the corpse during the mortuary rite, are primarily influenced by Hertz. However these latter two works are also influenced by the earlier Bachofen-Frazer approach, as they also pay attention to the themes of sexuality and fertility in the mortuary rite. A collection of essays by Bloch and Parry (1982), also suggests a conscious attempt to draw on both analytical approaches (Bloch and Parry 1982:6). Three other significant contributions to the anthropology of death and mortuary rituals are collections of essays edited by (Cederroth et.al. 1988; Reynolds and Waugh 1977b) and (Stannard 1975). As in the previous case, their contributors draw on both the Bachofen-Frazer and Hertzian approaches, to address a variety of themes relating to death and mortuary ritual.

The study of Thai Buddhist mortuary rites is a field that is not particularly well developed. Possibly due to the richness of the Thai ritual field, mortuary rites have rarely constituted the focus of anthropological analysis. In village studies they are usually subsumed within the context of a discussion of ritual. And in more comprehensive works dealing specifically with ritual and cosmology, such as Tambiah (1977a), mortuary ritual is treated as only one component of the wider ritual field. This is a significant omission in the ethnography of Thailand. I suggest that a focus on the rituals and beliefs relating to death is fundamental to anthropological analysis. It allows us to elicit a people's ideas about the other world and the fate of the soul and, at the same time, it allows an

examination of their beliefs about relations between members of the social group. Critically, as Goody (1975:4-5) points out, this includes relations between both the living and the dead members of the group.

Approaches to Thai mortuary ritual may be divided into three categories, according to ethnographic region: those dealing with Central Thailand, those dealing with Northern Thailand and a general category dealing with other regions or regionally based ethnic groups. In regard to Central Thailand, the general ethnographies of deYoung (1966:68-74) and Kaufman (1977), include brief discussions of Central Thai mortuary practices. Terwiel (1979) and Wells (1975) discuss mortuary practices amongst the Central Thai in the context of analyses of Buddhist ritual. A comprehensive discussion of royal mortuary rites is found in Wales (1931), while brief accounts are given by Wells (ibid.) and Wilson (1970). Yet another approach to Central Thai mortuary ritual is found in works by Thai authors who seek to document and explain Thai traditions. Works such as Poonpisami (1986), Satean (1989) and, Somchai and Sireewiriyapon (1985) are typical of this genre.

In respect to Northern Thai mortuary rites, Kingshill (1976) describes a death and gives a description and analysis of the subsequent mortuary rite. Manee (1986), Nantajar (n.d.), Sanguan (1966) and Singkha (1978), general works on Northern Thai customs and ritual practices, all discuss Northern Thai mortuary practices. Wijeyewardene also (1986), discusses aspects of the mortuary rite and the Northern Thai attitude toward death. However, the most comprehensive treatments of death and mortuary

rites in Northern Thailand are found in the works of Anusaransasanakiarti and Keyes (1980) and Keyes (1975b, 1982, 1987b). These works present detailed accounts and analyses of the mortuary rites for both Buddhist monks and the laity. In their focus on the deceased, the corpse and its relationship to the living and the secondary treatment of the remains, all follow in the Hertzian approach.

There are also several other valuable analyses of mortuary rites in other regions of Thailand or amongst other ethnic groups. Kickert (1960) gives a description mortuary practices in the North East. Tambiah (1977a) discusses the mortuary rite in the North East and its relationship to other elements in the ritual field. Terwiel (1979b) discusses the evolution and distribution of *Tai* funeral customs, while Trankell (1987) gives a brief description of *Tai Yong* mortuary practices.

Like most of the works discussed above, my analysis of Christian mortuary and ancestor rites has also been strongly influenced by Hertz. However, my focus is not concerned with the re-establishment of the social order amongst the living, as has been the case with most of the works in this tradition (Bloch 1971; Bloch and Parry 1982; Huntington and Metcalf 1979; Metcalf 1982). Rather the primary focus of my analysis is on the long liminal period of the rite during which the deceased is transferred from the world of the living to the world of the dead. I focus on the symbolism of the rite in order to elicit Christian conceptions about the transformation that takes place in the mortuary process and the Christian conception of ancestors. However, like Hertz, I am interested in the treatment

of the corpse and the person of the deceased and his/her relation to the living. Through this I extend my analysis of the Christian cosmology outlined in chapter four. I show the synthesis constituted between Buddhism and Christianity and the transformations of the Buddhist and Christian cosmologies which this represents.

III. Development of the Christian Mortuary Rite

I suggested in chapter three, that although nineteenth century converts were formally required to relinquish spirit related practices, the majority of their ritual activities were given little supervision. However, I also pointed out that missionaries attempted to have converts living near *Chiangmai* participate in some life-cycle rituals. For these converts there was an attempt (largely ineffectual due to logistical problems) to celebrate the major Christian life-cycle rites pertaining to birth, death and, sometimes, marriage.

Mission records and anecdotal evidence in missionary letters and books, contain a number of brief accounts of funerals held for deceased first generation converts. These suggest that when a Christian convert died, one of the missionaries would attempt to be present to direct the service. They also suggest, that although the corpse was disposed of by burial, the acts that preceded and succeeded the burial were very similar to Northern Thai Buddhist funerals of the time (cf. Brock 1884:261-262; Cort 1886:365-366; Curtis 1903:153-158; Le May 1926:121-122)[4].

This is apparent in two reports of early twentieth century Christian funerals. In terms of the ritual sequences they

describe, both reports echo the contemporary Buddhist funeral. The first is an 1907 account from The Lao News (noted in the previous chapter), where the Rev. Pelmer reported the holding of a Christian funeral. The funeral was for missionary McGilvary's ex-cook and Dr. McGilvary officiated. Pelmer describes the setting as follows:

> A few women were pounding rice in a corner of the yard; a few men were playing a native game of chess while others were making a gaudy catafalque in which to carry the gaily covered coffin box to the cemetery (Pelmer 1907:67-68).

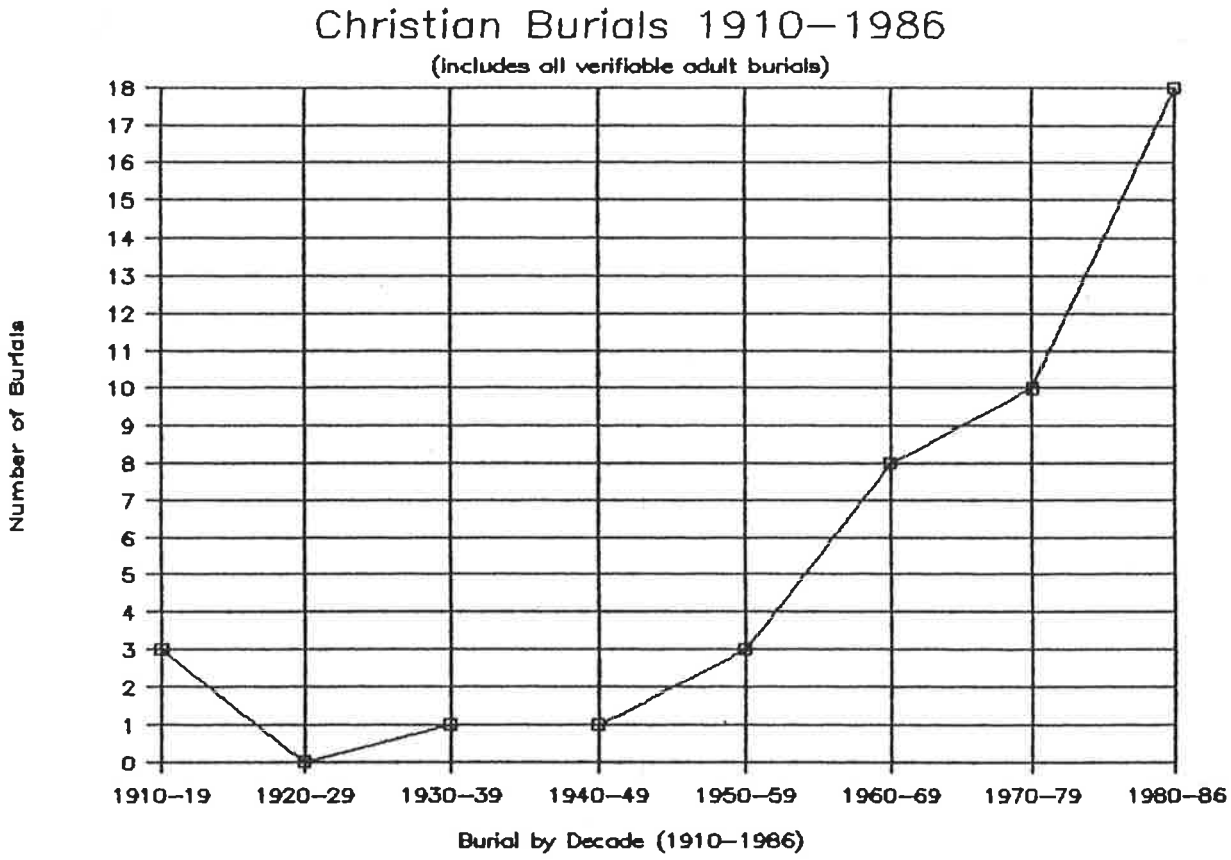
A later anonymous report in The Lao News (1908:95) gives an account of a Catholic funeral in *Myang Nan*. The coffin was decorated with "black cloth and silver cord" and was taken to the cemetery on a cart "draped with black and silver cloth" and wreaths of flowers.

Although missionary records make no reference to them, there were a number of deaths in the early years of the *Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen* Christian community[5]. These included the infant death of *Gaaw's* sixth child in 1891 and the death of his father *Pau Tib* about 1900[6]. Both *Gaaw's* servant and his wife also died in the early years of this century. In the case of these deaths, the mortuary rite was probably similar to those described in the above reports from The Lao News: disposal of the body by burial in an unmarked grave in the village cemetery, using a combination of Buddhist and Christian mortuary practices. The burial position of these first generation Christians is now uncertain as graves were not marked during this period. However, there are indications that *Pau Tib* is buried about fifteen metres from the main gate of the cemetery. *Gaaw's* youngest son (*Khambuan*) claimed that about 1940 he saw his elder brother (*Taa*)

conducting a homage ritual near the entrance to the cemetery and said he believed it had been conducted at *Pau Tìb's* grave.

It was not until the second decade of this century, with the deaths of *Gaaw's* second wife *Mae Naang Luang* in 1915, and his children *Saaw* in 1918, and *Ping* and *Bun* in 1919, that some graves began to be marked with wooden crosses (*majkaangkheen*). These three graves, at the Southwestern end of the cemetery, are the first verifiable Christian burial sites. Later, when the technology of using concrete crosses as grave markers was introduced, wooden crosses were replaced by crosses cast in concrete. The first remembered Christian funeral is that of *Gaaw* who died in 1938 at the age of ninety. His body was buried next to his second wife at the Southwestern end of the cemetery, a position chosen by his son *Taa*.

As the Christian group grew in size and its second generation members aged there were more Christian deaths, (see graph 3) and informants report that they found a need to *khyn* (to lift up or improve), the style of funeral they were using. They claim the Buddhist reaction to the increasing number of Christian funerals was "they came and laughed" and that their elaboration of the rite was a response to this. Such a response by Buddhists to the increasing number of Christian burials is logical. As Tambiah (1969:439) points out, for the Northern Thai "burial has the implication of neutralizing ritual danger and pollution". For Buddhist villagers, burial of the deceased was reserved for inauspicious death such as an accident (*taaj hoong*) or the death of a mother during childbirth (*taaj kom*, if the child is unborn, or *taaj phaaj* if the child has been born), it was perfunctory and


Christian Burials 1910–1986
(includes all verifiable adult burials)
Number of Burials
0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
1910–19
1920–29
1930–39
1940–49
1950–59
1960–69
1970–79
1980–86
Burial by Decade (1910–1986)

Graph 3

fraught with danger from the spirit of the deceased (Anusaranasasanakiarti and Keyes 1980:14-16; Manee 1986:21; Singkha 1978:87; Turton 1975:248-249). Thus, for them, Christian burials represented an inversion of accepted mortuary practice.

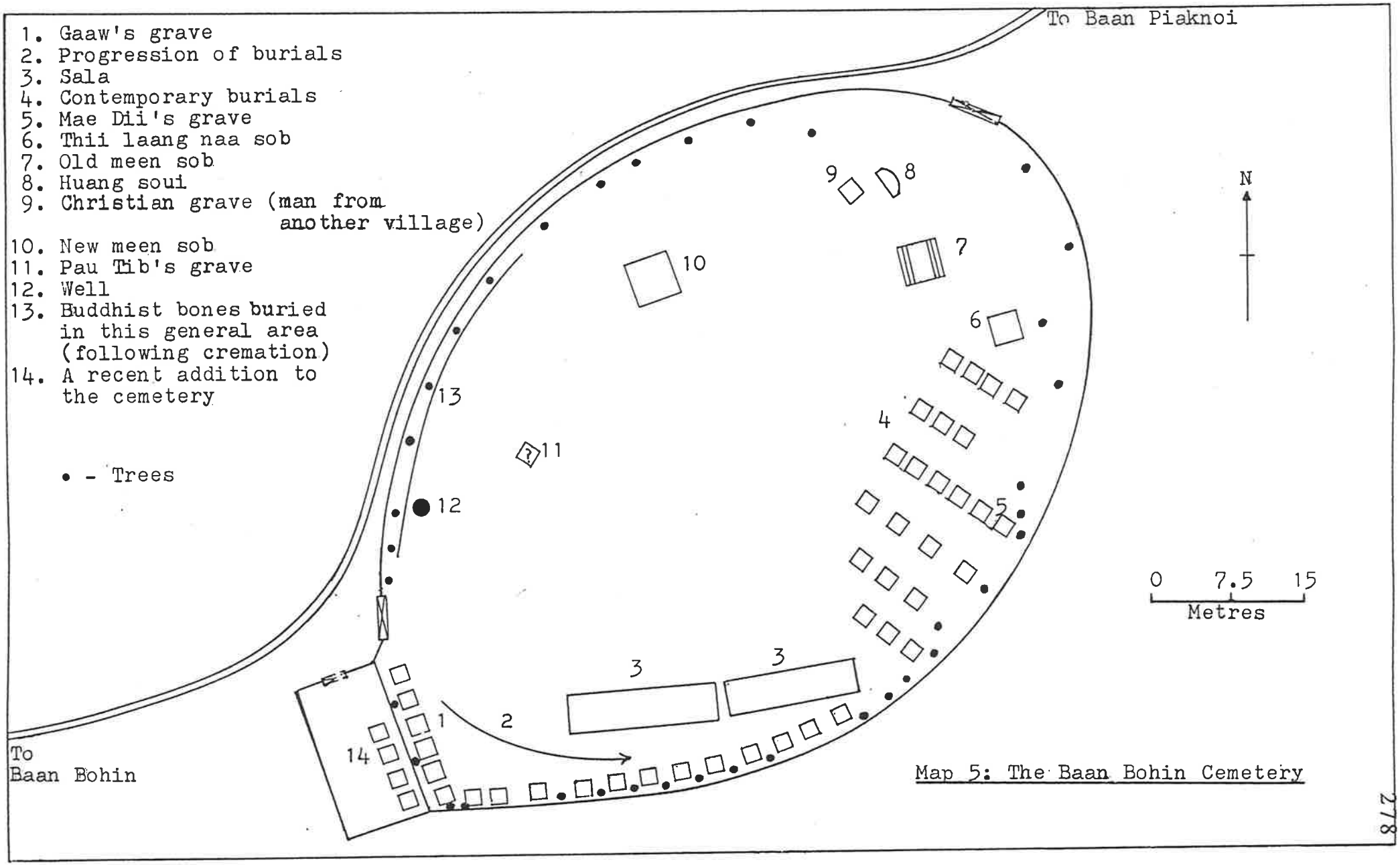
Elaboration of the Christian mortuary rite in the 1950's and 1960's took the form of inviting preachers from the city to conduct the sermon, special dress for the preacher conducting the service and his assistants and, longer hymns and prayers. However, it is significant that concomitant with the elaboration of the mortuary rite, was an elaboration of the homage ritual. Informants reported that prior to 1951 this was only a small rite, as the main focus of Christianity was at *Khriscag Sansai*. Following the 1951 relocation of the congregation to *Baan Bohin*, a concentrated effort was made to raise the standard of the ceremony. The elaboration of Christian ritual during this period, then, appears to have been concerned not only with the maintenance of decorum, but with the establishment of the identity and unity of the new congregation (at that time *Khriscag Silarchai*). As I point out more fully in the next chapter, it was also concerned with the increasing significance of ancestors as a means of family unification.

From the early years of this century the relationship between Buddhists and Christians in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* was mirrored in the structural layout of the cemetery (*paachaa*). Buddhists were cremated (*phaw*) at the North Eastern end of the cemetery and Christians were buried directly opposite, at the South Western end. And, as through the passage of time, Christian grave sites were positioned around the edge of the oval

cemetery towards the Buddhist crematorium (*men sob*), a new crematorium was constructed (see Map No.5) in such a position that it remained opposite the Christian graves.

The *Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen* cemetery is located on the outskirts of the village to the North East. It is an oval shaped piece of land of about two *rai* (just over a quarter of a hectare), 89 metres by 59 meters with its longest axis lying in a North Easterly direction. Informants claim that it dates from at least the mid-nineteenth century and, that until the end of World War II, it was forested and swampy[7]. Then, under the leadership of a Christian *tambon* headman (a descendant of *Gaaw*, resident in *Baan Bohin*), a co-operative working party cleared it of trees and filled in the low-lying parts so that it remained dry during the wet season. It was later demarcated by a post and wire fence and *Khambuen* and two other village men, planted teak trees (*tonmajsag*), coconut trees (*tonmaphraaw*) and a decorative red flowering tree (*tonkwaawsiidaeng*), around the circumference just inside the fence. These are now tall trees and from a distance they enclose the cemetery and demarcate it from the normal space of the surrounding rice fields. The past forty years have seen other developmental activities, the building of a shade house (*saalaa*) in 1956 for the comfort of all mourners and, for Buddhists, the construction of a new crematorium in 1981.

Both Buddhists and Christians proclaimed these developments as progressive (*carun khyn*). Buddhists claimed that prior to being cleared the cemetery had been a frightening place (*naaklua*), inhabited with spirits. Christians, although they claimed there were no spirits there, also said it had been a



Map 5: The Baan Bohin Cemetery

terrible place, as it had been wild and overgrown. However, the clearing and enclosure of the cemetery by a fence and ring of trees and the erection of a shade house and other structures, are more than acts of village development. They constitute the demarcation and bounding of a special kind of liminal space (Leach 1976:82) and, simultaneously, acts of domesticating and controlling that space. Inside the cemetery the disorder of naturally sown trees and bushes was removed and replaced by domesticated trees (those recognised as being either useful or beautiful) planted in an orderly fashion by men. Similarly, the erection of man-made structures symbolised the imposition of human order upon disorder. Davis (1984:82) notes that the Northern Thai city is conceptualised as ordered and controlled space, separated from disordered and uncontrolled space by city walls (*wiang*). In the case of the cemetery, its ambiguity (as a liminal space) and potential danger was controlled through physically bounding it with a fence and a ring of trees.

In the present day, although tidy and domesticated, the cemetery encodes different meanings for Christians and Buddhists. For Christians, it is an enclosed liminal space, inhabited by known, benevolent, ancestral Christians and is given periodic maintenance on their behalf. Once, passing the cemetery, I commented on the neatly mown grass and well maintained graves at the *Baan Bohin* cemetery. My companion replied: "that is because our ancestors are there, we take care of it for them". It was never a problem to get Christian informants into the cemetery to discuss the placement of graves. In contrast, for Buddhists, the cemetery is a liminal space which houses unknown and potentially malevolent spirits and is a place to be avoided. Buddhist

informants were always loath to spend time with me in the cemetery and continued to describe it as a place which was *naaklua*.

IV. The Christian Mortuary Rite: view

The mortuary rite is the longest and most expensive ritual performed by Christians. They say it not only marks the final point in the deceased's life, it is the last part of the deceased's life that may be shared with family, friends and the general community. Thus, it must be conducted properly as a gesture of respect to the deceased and his/her family. Christians also say that the mortuary rite is a good time to reflect on one's own future, ones own inevitable death and, accordingly, utilise the occasion of the rite to proselytise non-Christians.

In this, the mortuary rite at *Khriscag Bohin* is different from all other Christian rituals as it is the only Christian ritual where it is acceptable to proselytise aggressively. Manuals advising on the conduct of Christian ritual advise that the funeral rite is an occasion for the living to be witnesses (*phajaan*) to the beliefs of Christians (Church of Christ in Thailand 1977; *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* 1985). During the performance of the rite Buddhist guests are proselytised with a direct message about the truth of Christianity in comparison with the falsity of Buddhism. This occurs primarily in preaching (*theedsanaa*) during funeral services. Guests are told that Buddhism is not correct (*majthug*) and that Buddhists will not go to heaven, but that as a Christian, the deceased is already with God in heaven.

The Christian funeral involves three groups of people, each of which have slightly different aims. While the general structure of most funerals is the same, the specific conduct of each ritual is a working out of the efforts of these three groups. The overall responsibility for the organisation of the funeral rests with the host (*cawphaab*), who is usually the eldest most capable male in the deceased's household[8]. He is assisted by close members of the deceased's kindred (normally those of the compound grouping), and directs them and other relatives and friends in the work of the ritual. In planning the funeral the family of the deceased are primarily concerned with the aesthetic and financial aspects of the rite. As the mortuary ritual is a major arena for conspicuous display, they have a concern with balancing present and desired status with financial resources and available manpower.

The resident minister and other visiting ministers who assist with the preaching each night and on the final day, constitute a second group at mortuary rites. They play a role as comforters and proselytisers through their preaching, and are concerned with monitoring the performance of the rite, in respect to doctrinal correctness and moral practice and decorum. Here, they take the role of a doctrinal and moral policeman and in this are sometimes opposed to the wishes of the host. For example a good host provides plenty of alcohol for male guests during the nights of the funeral. Yet, as too much alcohol leads to drunkenness and the breakdown of decorum, this is opposed by Christian ministers. However, their other duties mean they cannot attend all sequences of a funeral, and this leads to a

movement toward and away from conformity with their wishes, depending on their presence.

As comforters of the bereaved, proselytisers, and moral policemen, the role of ministers at Christian funerals is fundamentally different from that of monks at Buddhist funerals. In the Buddhist mortuary ritual monks chant prayers (*sud*), which make merit for the deceased and guests, and provide protection for the bereaved (Anusaranasasanakiarti and Keyes 1980; Keyes 1987b). Their presence is essential for the efficacy of the funeral. In contrast, the primary role of ministers at a Christian funeral is in preaching and comforting the bereaved and their presence has no effect upon the efficacy of the rite.

The third group involved in the conduct of a Christian funeral are the guests, a high percentage of whom are Buddhists. This group includes guests who attend in order to assist with the performance of the rite, those who attend as mourners (of course these roles are not exclusive), and those who attend purely for the rite's entertainment and financial possibilities[9]. Throughout the duration of the funeral a significant part of the energies of the former two groups is the organisation and policing of the activities of this heterogeneous group.

A Christian funeral, similar to a Buddhist funeral, normally takes three to four days, although they may be as long as seven or eight days. The primary factors determining the length of a funeral are the amount of money and credit available, the distance that relatives have to travel to attend the funeral and the difficulty in communicating the death of the deceased to

them. However mortuary rituals are utilised as an occasion for conspicuous display. Thus, the status of the deceased and the claims of the deceased's family to any particular status level also play a role in determining the length of a funeral.

The ritual involution that Tambiah (1981) points out as having occurred in Central Thai mortuary rites, which may extend for some months, has not taken place in the Christian rite. Unlike Buddhist funerals where the prolonging of the rite gives the occasion to do more merit for the deceased (I discuss this in the following section), Christian funerals have no real justification beyond three or four days.

Preparations for a funeral commence immediately following a death. The rite is brought to a peak over several intermediate days of preparation, then on the final day the body is disposed of, usually for Christians, by burial[10]. The intermediate days are days of preparation of the site and of the ritual apparatus. During this time relatives and friends visit the funeral site and assist with the various activities to be carried out. While males assist with the general work of the funeral, women assist in the preparation of food, as guests are served meals each mealtime for the duration of the funeral. For Christians food preparation during the mortuary rite is an almost exclusively female activity (cf. Trankell 1987:638, regarding male cooks in the *Tai Yong* mortuary rite) and, constitutes one of the primary female roles in the Christian mortuary rite.

Preparatory activities each day lead up to a major preaching service at night, the most important of which is the

final evening (*khyynsudthaaj*) before the burial. Each night a number of guests (usually only males) sit and watch over the body (*faw sob*) all night. Two preaching services are held on the final day, firstly at the church or home and, following a break for lunch, a final service is held at the cemetery.

Within the structure of the overall mortuary ritual, four main ritual sequences may be distinguished. This classification derived from the way the ritual performers differentiate the various sequences of the rite according to function. These are repeated, with some variation, for the several days of the ritual. The first and last day of the rite have unique sequence of ritual processes, while intervening days follow the same ritual order. In practice, clear-cut divisions are not always made between one sequence and the next, and one sequence flows into and, at times, is coterminous, with another. The four major ritual sequences are: major preaching (didactic) ritual, transitional sequence, preparatory sequence, rest sequence.

The major preaching (or didactic) sequence is that ritual sequence performed for two to three hours each evening and on the morning of the final day. It is conducted by a local or visiting minister and Christians (both local and visiting) constitute the main participants. Buddhist guests form an audience spatially distinct from Christians and usually take no active part in the service. If the funeral is at *Khriscag Bohin*, Christian guests from *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* also adopt a similar non-participatory position. They do not sing hymns or pray, as a means of demonstrating doctrinal dissension. Conversely if it is held at *Khriscag Khongphrakrid*, the members of *Khriscag Bohin*

participate in all aspects of the ritual as they consider that there is no real doctrinal dissension. It is at these ritual sequences that an aggressive didacticism is directed to visiting Buddhists. A clear statement of the central Christian teachings is given and the death is cast in Christian terms. The world is portrayed as God's creation, in which death is only by his fiat and is the door to eternal life (*chiiwid niran*). The congregation is told that only the body has died not the spirit and that death is a necessity if the spirit is to go to heaven.

What I call transitional ritual sequences are characterised by the fact that they are short rites of separation and reaggregation (Turner 1981; Van Gennep 1977). During the performance of the rite they mediate the relationship between the world of the living and the world of the dead and, following the burial, the relationship between the living. Christian funerals have two major transitional sequences which open and close the long liminal period of the rite. The first is a rite of separation, held on the first day of the funeral to put the body in the coffin (*lorng*), which inaugurates the liminal period of the rite. The second includes the removal of the corpse to the cemetery, the service at the cemetery and, finally, the burial. It is followed by a series of three short transitional sequences, in the form of nightly prayer meetings held at the home of the deceased. These are rites of reaggregation which mark the conclusion of the ritual[11].

The preparatory sequences of the mortuary rite, which take place each morning and afternoon for the duration of the rite, constitute the periods of preparation and organisation for the

major ritual sequences. The rest sequences of the rite are those sequences, held overnight, when only a few people are present on the ritual stage and are either resting or engaging in the funeral night-time activities of drinking and gambling.

V. The Mortuary Rite: Structure and Meaning

Table 10 delineates the overall structure of the funeral for *Mae Dii,* which with the exception of time of death, is typical of most Christian funerals. The overall processual structure, portrayed here is very similar to the first part of the contemporary Buddhist mortuary rite (Anusaranasasanakiarti and Keyes 1980; Keyes 1987b; Kingshill 1976; Tambiah 1977a). However, as I demonstrate, in both its overall structure and modes of performance it is quite different from the Buddhist rite. Moreover, for Christians it fulfils very different functions from those performed by the Buddhist rite and suggests a quite distinct Christian eschatology and cosmology.

For Buddhists death is a long process that is potentially dangerous to the living, which is mediated through a two stage treatment of the corpse of the deceased (Anusaranasasanakiarti and Keyes 1980; Keyes 1975b; Tambiah 1977a). Until the completion of the final part of the two-stage rite, the spirit of the deceased is always potentially dangerous. Moreover, the circumstances of the death or improper conduct of the mortuary rites may lead to it remaining on earth in which case it is considered to be particularly malevolent.

The function of the Buddhist mortuary rite is then, the disposal of the corpse and the transformation of its

The Christian Mortuary Rite

First Day

8 a.m.	death in hospital
9-10 a.m.	transitional sequence (put body in coffin)
9-12 a.m.	preparatory sequence (church compound, church, and kitchen)
12 a.m -1 p.m.	lunch in church
1-5 p.m.	preparatory sequence continues (church compound, church, and kitchen)
5-6 p.m.	dinner in church
6-9 p.m.	major preaching sequence (church)
9 p.m.-7 a.m.	rest sequence (minding of body in church)

Second and Subsequent Intermediary Days

7-8 a.m.	breakfast in church
8-12 a.m.	preparatory sequence (church compound, church, and cemetery)
12 a.m.-1 p.m.	lunch in church
1-5 p.m.	preparatory sequence continues (church compound, church, and cemetery)
5-6 p.m.	dinner in church
6-9 p.m.	major preaching sequence (church)
9 p.m.-7 p.m.	rest sequence (minding of body in church)

Final Day

7 a.m.-8 a.m.	breakfast in church
8-10 a.m.	preparatory sequence (church compound, church, and cemetery
10-12 a.m.	major sequence (final service in church and body removed to *rod sob* in church compound)
12 a.m-1.30p.m.	lunch in church compound
1.30-3 p.m.	transitional sequence (cemetery)
3-5 p.m.	cleaning up
7-8 p.m.	transitional sequence (prayer meeting in the house of the deceased)

For Two Days Following the Burial

7-8 p.m.	transitional sequence (prayer meeting in the house of the deceased)

(* carriage for conveying the body to the cemetery)

Table 10

potentially threatening spirit (*phii*) into a *winjaan*, what Keyes (1987b:198) calls a "liminal essence", that will later be reborn. The primary rite is a large public ritual which terminates in the cremation of the corpse of the deceased. It is followed three days later by the secondary rite, when some of the remaining bones are gathered in a clay pot and buried in an unmarked place in the cemetery[12]. Through the performance of the rite, the spirit of the deceased is released from the body and eventually leaves the earth. Unlike the primary treatment of the corpse, Buddhist secondary rites in the *Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen* district are short, verging on the perfunctory. They involve only the immediate family of the deceased and monks who make merit for the deceased (cf. Tambiah 1977a:186-188). They are not occasions for the public display of the remains of the deceased as is the case in many other cultures (Bloch 1971; Danforth 1982), or any form of conspicuous consumption (Metcalf 1982; Miles 1965).

The fundamental distinction between the Buddhist and Christian conceptions of death and its accompanying mortuary ritual, is that in contrast to the Buddhist conception of protracted death mediated by means of a double burial, for Christians, death is instantaneous. The spirit (*winjaan*) is believed to leave the body at the moment of death and go into God's care (*paj juu kab Phracaw*). Accordingly, the Christian mortuary rite comprises a single treatment (burial) of the corpse, with no secondary rites.

For Christians, the type of death and manner of conducting the mortuary rite has no influence over the destination of the

spirit or the efficacy of the rite. Here lies another of the fundamental distinctions between Christian and Buddhist mortuary rites. Outside of its role in mediating the transition of the deceased, the performance of the Christian rite is primarily directed to religious didacticism, rather than to ensuring its ritual efficacy. Moreover, for Christians, the mortuary rite is not an occasion for the generation and transference of merit, as is the Buddhist rite (Anusaranasasanakiarti and Keyes 1980; Keyes 1975b, 1982, 1987b; Tambiah 1977a; Trankell 1977). Formal Christian teachings hold that the deceased is already with God and that participation in the mortuary rite comforts the bereaved, rather than assists the deceased. This is a significant distinction from the Buddhist rite which is directed to technological and symbolic manipulation in order to ensure the efficacy of the rite. For Buddhists, the conduct of the mortuary rite has a crucial effect on the future of the spirit of the deceased. It can determine whether it remains on earth where it may constitute a danger to the living, or whether it goes to one of the Buddhist heavens or hells. Moreover, when transferred to the deceased, the merit (*bun*) made during the mortuary rite, influences the position of the heaven or hell to which the spirit of the deceased is sent and the amount of time it spends there.

Another contrast between the Buddhist and Christian mortuary rites, is that in the performance of the Christian rite there is no sense of potential danger to the living from the spirit of the deceased. This is apparent in the absence of interdictions designed to protect the living from the potential danger of the spirit of the deceased. As is general in South East Asia (Fox 1973:351-356; Kirsch 1973:15; Metcalf 1982:254-

256; Nash 1973:151-152), the Northern Thai distinguish between good and bad death. However, even in the case of bad deaths such as the death of a mother during childbirth, or accidental or violent deaths, Christian mortuary rites have no extra interdictions to protect against the spirit of the deceased.

While death in childbirth is now comparatively rare, accidental or violent deaths (*taaj hoong*) are common[13]. Buddhists consider death from these causes to be highly inauspicious as they are dangerous and polluting due to the threat of a lingering and malevolent spirit (Anusaranasasanakiarti and Keyes 1980:14-15; Keyes 1987b:186-187; Manee 1986:21; Singkha 1978:87; Tambiah 1977a:189-90). They normally require special mortuary treatment to protect against pollution and, as noted above, the corpse was traditionally disposed of by burial. Today, these corpses may be cremated (cf. Singkha ibid.), yet the deceased are given, at the most, only very short funerals.

Khriscag Bohin Christians also distinguish between good and bad deaths. When they talk about the circumstances of deaths considered bad deaths, they say that the person "died badly" (*taaj maj dii*) (cf. Fox 1973:363 who claims that Rotinese Christians do not distinguish between good and bad death). Accidental deaths and deaths which involve misfortune and suffering, either for the deceased or for living relatives, are bad deaths. Deaths by car crash, murder or suicide are all bad deaths. However, even in these cases, while they say that they feel sorrow (*khwaamsiacaj*) about the waste of life, Christians perform the mortuary rite in the same manner as a normal death.

There are no extra interdictions regarding the deceased, nor is there any sense that the corpse is any more polluting for the living than in the case of a normal death.

Bloch and Parry (1982:15) and Parry (1981:359) claim that the "good death" is one which suggests man has some degree of mastery over the arbitrary forces of biology and contingent events. They argue that through conformity to a general pattern such deaths are able to be represented as part of a repetitive and necessary cyclic order. Kellehear (1986) makes a similar claim. Writing in respect to western society, he argues that control over the process of dying is a significant factor in the "good death". The Northern Thai Christian response to death suggests that these assertions are valid. For the members of *Khriscag Bohin* it is a lack of preparedness for death and aspects of death which cannot be controlled, such as pain and expense, which constitutes a bad death. A quick death for which one is prepared, is uniformly preferable to a long pain-filled period in hospital with cancer. While it was certainly not a bad death, the death of *Mae Dii* was considered relatively unfortunate as it involved a protracted and pain filled period in hospital and the medical costs were very high.

The Christian mortuary rite is, then, significantly different from the Buddhist rite. As far as the official teachings of the Church of Christ in Thailand are concerned the main function of the rite is the disposal of the body and the comfort of the deceased. The Church teaches that on death the spirit of the deceased goes to be with God and that the mortuary rite disposes of the corpse and comforts the bereaved.

However, equally significantly, some of the beliefs articulated in the performance of the mortuary rite suggest that the ideas Christians hold about death and the deceased are also different from the formal teachings of the Church. From the point of view of the family, what takes place in the mortuary rite is the transition of the deceased from a living member of the family to a deceased ancestor. The deceased are believed to retain their individual identity and personality and, to some extent, their corporal identity[14]. They are not only remembered as genealogical ancestors, they are remembered as ancestors, who while not bodily present, are existent sentient ancestors who retain an interest in life on earth and whom their descendants expect to meet in heaven. Moreover, in the yearly homage ritual, the living not only pay homage to deceased Christians but are also able to communicate with them. I explore these and other aspects of Christian belief about the dead in the following analysis of the mortuary rites of *Mae Dii*. In the following chapter I argue, in respect to the homage ritual, that these beliefs about the deceased result from a synthesis of Christian teachings about resurrection and eternal life and, of beliefs regarding the matrilineal spirits.

VI. *Ngaan Sob Mae Dii*[15]

Mae Dii died in 1986 following a illness of over two months during which time she grew progressively weaker and thinner. She had firstly been sent to a modern private hospital, *Suandorg* hospital, in *Chiangmai* for almost three weeks. When she showed signs of recovery she returned home and then, a few days later, was admitted to the (Christian) McCormick Hospital on the North Eastern side of *Chiangmai*. McCormick hospital was located in a

more convenient position to the village and was cheaper than *Suandorg*. *Mae Dii* spent almost a month here undergoing a range of tests and treatments before dying in late June. Throughout the period she was in hospital, at least one of her children or their spouses watched over her (*faw*) and attended to her needs. This is a normal practice for both Buddhists and Christians when in hospital. She had also been visited by relatives from as far away as *Amphoe Chiangraaj* to the North, from *Amphoe Dojtaw* to the South and from Bangkok.

A. Pollution Beliefs

That *Mae Dii's* death took place in hospital rather than at home is a common occurrence for Christians. In the case of the diagnosis of fatal illness, the terminally ill are often sent to hospital to die. There is a strong feeling that ill people belong in hospital and in the period since 1956, of the 26 natural deaths that occurred among the congregation, 10 took place in hospital[16]. The preference for death to take place in hospital is stronger than these figures suggest. Some of the 16 people who died at home had been returned home from hospital due to financial hardship, not a wish that death should occur in the home. This almost occurred in the case of *Mae Dii*. Expenses were minimised by returning her home when she showed signs of recovery and sending her back to hospital as her health deteriorated further.

Death in hospital is uncommon amongst Buddhists who, in almost all cases, bring their terminally ill relatives home to die. *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* Buddhists claim that death away from home is most inauspicious (*majsilimongkon*) and believe

that if the corpse is brought home after death the spirit of the deceased will haunt the vicinity (cf. Kingshill 1974:198). As a consequence, the funeral of someone who dies in this manner must be held at the temple (Manee 1986:31). Such a death is highly polluting and its danger can only be controlled by holding the mortuary rite in the auspicious environment of the temple.

I suggest that these differing Buddhist and Christian ideas about where death should take place relate to different ideas about the pollution of death and the different basis of that pollution. Douglas (1970) asserts that pollution beliefs are related to cultural classifications and the maintenance of symbolic order[17]. Fundamentally, she claims that pollution is a result of conceptual ambiguity or, as she puts it, that which is polluting is that which is out of place. Thus, the liminal period of the mortuary rite where the status of the deceased is highly ambiguous, is a context which is likely to generate highly elaborated ideas about pollution.

Almost uniformly ethnographic accounts point to the polluting nature of normal death (*taaj thammadaa*) for the Northern Thai. Keyes (1975b:47, 1982) distinguishes between the death of a layman whose corpse is dangerous due to its potentially malevolent spirit and the death of a monk which, in contrast, provides a field of merit. In another work, with Phra Khru Anusaranasasanakiarti (Anusaranasasanakiarti and Keyes 1980:26), he mentions specific dangers from the spirit of the deceased and a more "diffuse pollution", which I interpret as the general inauspiciousness associated with death in Northern Thai Buddhist thought. Further, in (Keyes 1987b:186-190) he points

out the use of the terms *phii* (spirit) or *phii taaj* (literally, spirit of the dead) for the corpse. He argues (ibid.:187) that the term *phii*, even when extended to other categories of spirit, carries the root meaning of the polluting dangers of death. I suggest that the term *phii* carries not only these associations but is also associated with notions of disorder, disintegration and uncertainty, central ideas associated with death.

Trankell (1977) also, claims that among the *Tai Yong* death is moderately polluting and claims that ideas of pollution are also found in interdictions in regard to the house of the deceased. She points out (Trankell 1987:637) that among the *Tai Yong* the house of the deceased is said to be "hot, smelling and impure" and that because of this it is considered dangerous for pregnant women. The only contrary ethnographic evidence is Tambiah (1977a:189) who claims, in respect to the mortuary rite in North Eastern Thailand, that "no concepts of pollution apply to close kin or participants". However, this claim needs to be assessed carefully, as it is made in comparison with Hindu India (1977b:193-194), where there are strong, highly formalised categories of death pollution (Parry 1980, 1985).

Douglas (1970) also draws a correlation between community boundaries and bodily symbolism, claiming that danger to community boundaries is mirrored in the symbolism of bodily boundaries. In an analysis of pollution beliefs she distinguishes (1970:146) four kinds of pollution each of which symbolises a different form of danger to the community boundary. In the Northern Thai context, that which is most relevant is one in which the community boundary is viewed as being subject to

penetration from the outside. In Northern Thailand, repeatedly subject to Burmese domination and the carrying off of the peasantry, political boundaries have always been problematic. Just as the boundaries of the country have been viewed as being susceptible to penetration from the outside, so bodily boundaries are viewed as being prone to penetration. I noted in chapter three, that beliefs concerning the *phii ka* symbolise this spirit as invading the individual's bodily boundaries and consuming the entrails.

The same logic holds true for Northern Thai Buddhist conceptions of death pollution. The danger of pollution is embodied in the corpse and the spirit of the dead. Through contact with the corpse, or mere proximity to the general inauspiciousness of death, the bodies of the living may be penetrated by its polluting essence. Thus, when funeral guests make merit prior to the cremation by pouring water along the corpse (*laang naa sob*), they incur a mild degree of pollution. Nantajar (n.d.:212) notes that following attendance at a cremation, it is customary to have lustral water sprinkled on people's heads and, later, for them to bathe and change their clothing in order to get rid of inauspiciousness adhering to their body (see also Sanguan 1966:260). Similarly, Anusaranasasanakiarti and Keyes (1980:11) note the use of lustral water to wash where the corpse has lain in the house and to wash the hands of guests on their return from the cemetery. Tambiah (1977a:185) also, reports that in the North East, people returning from a cremation must pass through the temple compound in order to immunize "the dangers of death".

The pollution that adheres to funeral guests is then, a supernatural form of pollution which invades the bodily boundary without the necessity of direct physical contact with the deceased (cf. Hertz 1960:38 and Metcalf 1982:149-150)[18]. Little in the way of precautions are taken in order to minimise this pollution. Although Buddhist corpses are covered with a cloth and put in their coffin at an early stage of the rite, these acts are directed more at the symbolism of death rather than concealment of the corpse or the prevention of contagion[19]. As Keyes (1975b:47) points out, in Buddhist cosmogony the corpse is a central symbol of Buddhist teachings about the impermanence of self and the transitory nature of life. For Buddhists, the decomposition of the corpse through natural decay and then through cremation in the first stage of the mortuary rite, is an essential process if the *winjaan* (the essence of the deceased) is to be separated from this world and its material body (Keyes 1982:153-154).

By contrast, the different views held by Christians in regard to where death should take place, suggests they hold quite different beliefs regarding the pollution caused by death. Douglas (ibid.) points out another form of pollution, that which results from conflict within the society itself arising from an internal contradiction between its basic classifications. Christian mortuary rites are not polluting for Christians due to a fear of the invasion of their bodily boundaries by the spirit of the deceased - as they believe it is already with God. However, I suggest that for Christians the mortuary rite is potentially highly polluting, in that it poses fundamental

contradictions between Christian teachings about eternal life and the reality of death and the dissolution of the corpse.

I suggest that the isolation of the terminally ill in hospital and the preference for death to take place in hospital, is related to efforts to avoid this contradiction through a denial of the decomposition of the corpse. The fundamental nature of this contradiction is apparent in that it also appears in other Christian cultural contexts[20]. Discussing the American response to the terminally ill, Reynolds and Waugh (1977a:7) note that terminally ill cancer patients are isolated from the living. Prior (1989:128-130) also notes the emphasis placed on the isolation of the dying in western society. In addition, he points out (1987:358, 1989:157-158) that in contemporary western society there is an emphasis on the concealment of the corpse following death:

> it is noticeable that the collection of bodies is normally carried out surreptitiously, and at this stage there is a great deal of emphasis on hiding the face of death (Prior 1989:157).

He argues that this is a means of controlling the polluting nature possessed by the corpse as a result of its liminal state. I suggest, however, that the isolation of terminally ill people and the concealment of the corpse is not primarily a matter of distancing between life and death, as in the former case, or pollution, as in the latter case, but is due to the contradictions which death poses for conventional Christian teachings. In all cases, the isolation of the dying person or the corpse, takes place during phases in which visible deterioration is taking place. In all cases when the corpse has been processed for burial and deterioration has been stabilised, it again becomes a public object.

Christian teachings about bodily resurrection (*koed maj*) and eternal life (*chiiwid niran*) deny the finality of death, whereas everything concerned with the human experience of death emphasises its terminal nature. As Keyes (1987b:181) puts it:

> the inevitable transformation of a living individual into a decomposing corpse renders it impossible to deny that death has ruptured personal time.

The human sensory experience of death - smell, decay and the physical reality of bodily death and separation from the deceased - are in stark contradistinction to teachings about eternal life and the illusory nature of death. Ethnographic evidence suggests that in a wide variety of cultures the decomposition of the corpse symbolises the transformation of the deceased to that which is permanently non-human. For example, Turner (1981: 67) points out that amongst the Ndembu filth and dissolution of form is used as a metaphor for social transition.

By contrast with Buddhist teachings that the decomposition of the body is essential for the release and later rebirth of the spirit, for Christians, the decomposition of the corpse is highly problematic. I suggest, that for Christians there is a need to deny this sense data as far as possible in order to avoid the contradiction between the observable reality of death and Christian teachings about its illusory nature. Christians do this through the isolation of the terminally ill in hospital from the time of observable physical decline. For them, death begins with this social death, where the ill person is separated from normal social life and isolated in hospital, together with those family members who watch over them. This practice not only aims at avoiding the contradictions which death raises for Christian teachings. It also gives the living an increasing degree of

control over death, as the family of the dying choose the time at which it should commence. In seeking to control aspects of death in this manner, Christians strive to make every death a good death (cf. Bloch and Parry 1982:15-16; Kellehear 1986) and, attempt to constitute the cosmos as ordered and knowable, in accord with the claims of their religion.

Moreover, the logic which seeks to deny the decomposition of Christian corpses is maintained throughout the conduct of the mortuary rite. When the body is put in the coffin it is only viewed briefly, then the body and face are covered by white cloths (cf. *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* 1985:2) and the lid is closed[21]. It is not opened again as is a coffin at a Buddhist funeral, prior to the cremation. Later in this chapter, I point out that the same logic which denies the decomposition of the corpse following death, is also apparent in regard to mortuary practices regarding the use of preservative, the containment of the fluids of decomposition and burial technology.

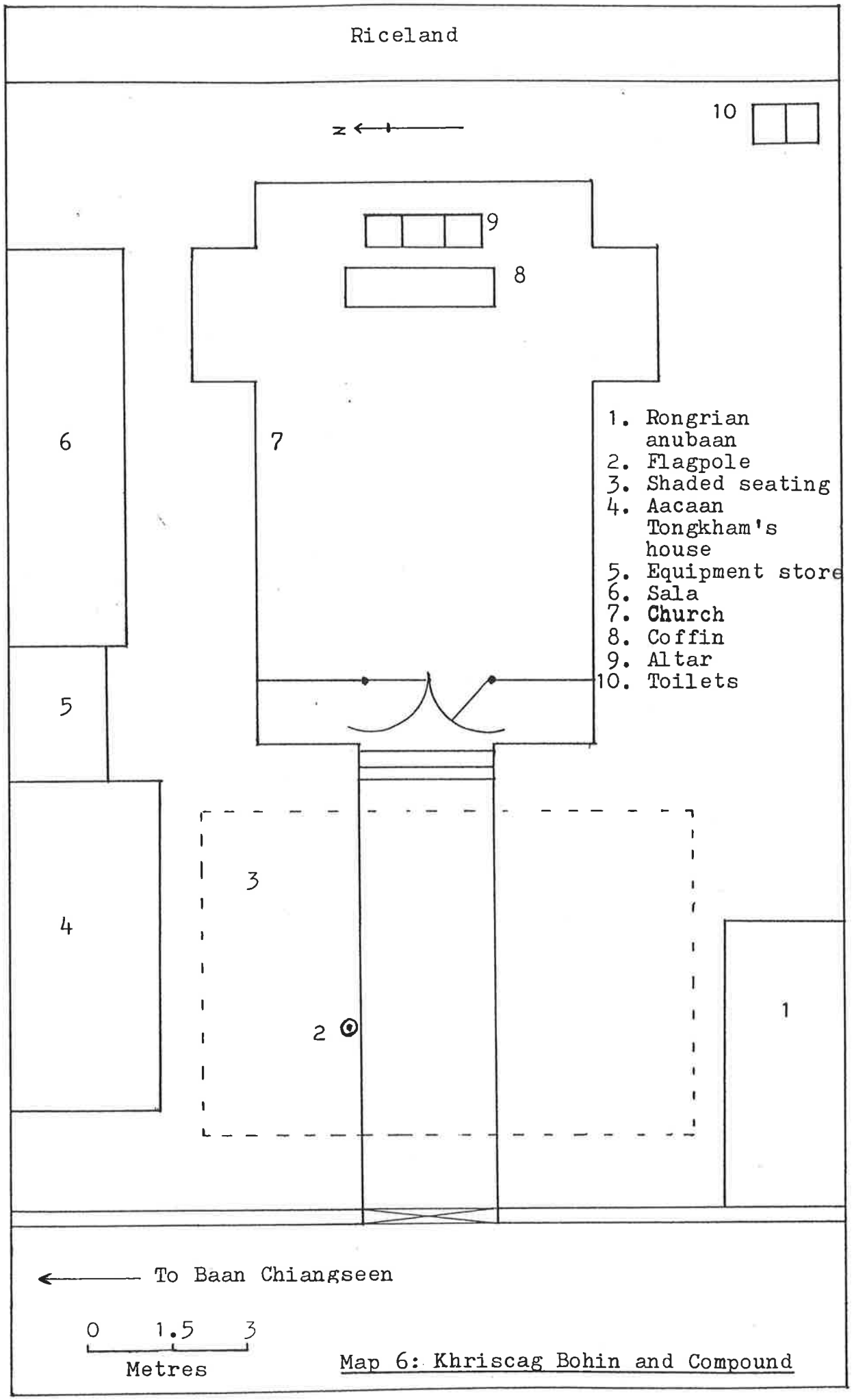
Mae Dii died at 8 a.m. on a June Tuesday morning. Immediately following her death her daughter-in-law, who had been watching over her the previous night, returned to the village. She reported the death to the members of *Mae Dii's* household, close relatives and the minister (*Aacaan Tongkham*). These people then in turn informed other family and congregational members and commenced the initial preparatory phase of the funeral. She then returned to the hospital, together with five other relatives and *Aacaan Tongkham*. Here, the body had been washed and dressed and the first transitional ritual sequence was performed by *Aacaan Tongkham*. This was a short ritual called the "rite to put the

corpse in the coffin" (*phithii saj sob naj lorng*). Attended by only the small group, the rite comprised a Bible reading, a hymn and two prayers, during which time the body was transferred to the coffin (procured from a near-by coffin maker)[22]. This initial ritual sequence is significant as it marks the point of final separation of the deceased from the society of the living and inaugurates the liminal phase of the mortuary rite.

Position wise, all Christian corpses are placed in the coffin face up and are buried in this position. This is contrary to the normal Northern Thai Buddhist practice of cremating men face down while women are cremated face up (cf. Brock 1884:262 and Trankell 1987:640). Parallels between gender differentiation amongst the living and gender specific treatments of corpses are a common phenomena of mortuary practice. Jackson (1977:279), for example, notes that among the Kuranko all corpses are buried head to the East but that men are placed on their right side which is associated with masculine, strong, clean attributes. By contrast, women are placed on their left side, which is associated with the feminine, weak, polluting attributes. Needham (1973:xxii) describes a similar distinction between male and female corpses in Nyoro mortuary practice. I pointed out in the previous chapter that amongst Christians there have been substantial transformations in regard to gender differentiation. I suggest that the degree to which the Northern Thai notions of male-female differentiation has been attenuated amongst Christians is reflected in the mortuary rite, where Christian corpses are buried with the same orientation, regardless of sex.

After the corpse was put in the coffin it was taken back to the village and about 10 a.m. it was placed in the church in front of the altar (Map 6). As the church is sited on an East-West axis, with the altar to the East, this necessitated the corpse being placed on a North-South axis (head to the North) in order that it be placed in the best position at the front of the church. Conversely, if the coffin had been placed in the house, the head would have been oriented to the East, in the direction of the normal sleeping position. This is in opposition to the Buddhist position for a corpse where the head is placed toward the West, the direction of death (Kickert 1960:75; Nantajar n.d.:208; Trankell 1987:636; Tambiah 1977a:180). As I later discuss more fully, Christian corpses are buried in the same direction. Informants could give no explanation for this but claimed it was the appropriate direction for Christian corpses. It suggests, however, not only a diacritical marker of the distinctiveness of Christian practice but is consistent with Christian teachings about rebirth and the illusory nature of death. Christians deny the reality of death through orienting the corpse in the direction of life.

This same logic is manifest in the absence, in the Christian mortuary rite, of the ritual reversals normally found in Northern Thai Buddhist mortuary rituals. Ritual reversals symbolising the magnitude of the transition of death are a relatively prominent feature of Buddhist funerals. They take forms ranging from the reversal of clothing on the corpse (Kickert 1960:74-75; Le May 1926:121), a reversal of the house ladder following the removal of the corpse from the funeral house (Tambiah 1977a:182), the use of a temporary ladder



Map 6: Khriscag Bohin and Compound

(Anusaranasasanakiarti and Keyes 1980:11) and the breaking of water pots at the funeral house (Anusaranasasanakiarti and Keyes ibid.; Sanguan 1966:242; Singkha 1978:94). Trankell (1987:638) also claims that *Tai Yong* commensal practices, where the deceased is offered food yet eats alone, constitute a reversal of normal commensal practice.

Jacobson-Widding (1988) claims that such ritual reversals constitute an implicit denial of the overt message of the mortuary rite, that, contrary to appearances, death is not the end. Thus, through an inversion or smashing of objects, ritual reversals symbolise irrevocable change, what she calls the "inofficial [sic] truth...[that] Death is the end" (Jacobson-Widding 1988:152). Given the contradiction the decomposition of the corpse presents for Christian teachings, it is intriguing to find the Christian rite contains none of the ritual reversals normally encountered in Northern Thai mortuary ritual. On the other hand, the absence of these normative ritual reversals may merely act as diacritical markers of Christian ritual, denoting the distinctive nature of the transition in Christian death (cf. Leach 1976:63).

Immediately the coffin was placed in the church a group of villagers who had not been present at the hospital, briefly opened the lid of the coffin to examine the deceased. As is usual, they examined and commented upon three points: the beauty and style of decoration inside the coffin, the dress of the deceased, how the deceased looked and the presence or absence of preservative in the body (I take this up later). This examination of the corpse poses no contradiction for my claim

that it is highly polluting for Christians as its decomposition challenges some of their central teachings. The corpse is viewed by a group that has not seen it before and it is viewed at a time when its deterioration during illness has briefly stabilised, before visible decomposition commences. Moreover, at this end of the brief (only a minute or two) period of examination, the point was always clearly made that it was necessary to get the lid on the coffin before the corpse began to smell. Even when enclosed in its coffin the odour of the corpse is apparent after only a short period. However, I suggest that statements about smell are generally metaphoric statements about the inauspiciousness of death, rather than commentaries on the condition of the corpse (Trankell 1987). Significantly, although the lid is not screwed down, once it is closed at this point it is not opened again and no approaches are made to do so. At this point in the rite, not only has the spirit that animated the body returned to God, the body is now permanently separated from the living and its transition to ancestorhood has commenced.

Anusaranasasanakiarti and Keyes (1980:16) note in regard to the Buddhist mortuary rite, that the terms *baan sob* (the corpse's house) and *baan phii* (the spirit's house) are used to refer to the house of the deceased while the corpse is present in the house. Keyes (1987b:185-6) also points out that the corpse is normally referred to as *sob/sarksob* (corpse) or *nawsob* (decaying corpse) and, as noted above, that the terms *phii* or *phii taaj* may be used to refer to corpse (of ordinary persons). These terms are those generally used by Buddhists in the research district. However, some contrasts are apparent in Christian usages. Christians used *baan sob* to refer to the house of the deceased

whether or not the corpse was present in the house (as was the case if the funeral is held in the church) and the normal terms used for the corpse were *sob/sark sob*. I did not hear Christians use the term *phii*, *phii taaj* or *nawsob* to refer to the corpse. This is consistent with the Christian belief that the spirit has already left the body rather than having been transformed to a dangerous and liminal essence (the *phii taaj*). It is also consistent with the Christian belief that the deceased maintains his/her corporal identity (later manifest in the person of Christian ancestors) and their denial of the decomposition of the corpse.

Concomitantly with the ritual sequence at the hospital and the later removal of the corpse to the church, preparatory activities began at the house of the deceased. A group of Christian women (who lived nearby) gathered to discuss culinary arrangements for the funeral: the site of the outdoor kitchen, the dishes to be served and the amount to be prepared each meal. This form of voluntary participation is common to both Buddhist and Christian funerals and is in contrast to participation by invitation at other ritual events. Many brought small plastic bags containing about a kilogram of rice as contributions for the first meal (cf. Trankell 1987:635). This occurs at both Christian and Buddhist funerals and takes place regardless of the actual amount of rice on hand at the house of the deceased. Informants explain their actions as a contribution to the first meal. However, as previously pointed out, exchanges create and reaffirm social bonds. I suggest that the reciprocity involved here is a symbolic reaffirmation of the social bonds ruptured by death.

In the case of *Mae Dii's* funeral, the women made a temporary decision to commence cooking at the house of the deceased. However the final decision to hold the funeral in the church (due to the small size of the house) and to site the kitchen (*khrua*) in a close-by compound, was made by male elders. Just as the host is usually male, decision making about most aspects of the funeral is male dominated. From the time of their arrival in the village at about 11 a.m., *Mae Dii's* eldest sons *Preechar* and *Prachun* were hosts of the funeral and made all decisions about the conduct of the rite.

Initial preparatory activities take place over several arenas: the house of the deceased, the church building and compound and the cemetery. On the first day of *Mae Dii's* funeral, preparations aimed at the readying of the major ritual stages of the church and cemetery and at informing relatives and friends in remote areas. The death was recorded at the *Amphoe* office and financial matters arising from the death were taken in hand. A decision was also made (by consultation between *Khriscag Bohin's* minister and the hosts) regarding the length of the funeral and preachers for the preaching service each night. Few of these activities are brought to their final stage of readiness on the first day. The aim is to achieve full readiness by the final night of the funeral.

Work also commenced on the provision of comforts for the guests who were expected to attend the funeral: the provision of fermented tea (*miang*) for chewing, water, food, seating and shade. Sun canopies and external lighting were erected in the front of the church compound, chairs for guests were taken out of

storage and additional chairs and cooking equipment were borrowed from the village equipment co-operative in *Baan Chiangseen*. A public address system was set up to relay sermons from the church to those seated in the church compound and, during the day, this was used to supply cassette music to guests. Finally, a kitchen was constructed in a near-by compound, complete with sun canopies, dish draining racks and general cooking equipment.

In the church, the primary locus of ritual performance, the coffin was decorated by a group of young Christian men. They covered it with a black cloth with silver edging (a normal funerary drape for coffins) and then changed this for a thin yellow mesh material which they considered more beautiful. Over this were draped two sets of "fairy lights" and, later, flowers were purchased in *Chiangmai* and arranged in bowls on top of the coffin. At this stage of Buddhist funerals a lamp (*kom*) is placed by the head of the body to give light to the spirit. However, at Christian funerals, consistent with the belief that the spirit has left the corpse this custom is not practiced.

Decoration of the coffin is always a male activity while the arranging of flowers is always a female activity. Informants say that this is like giving a final gift of beauty to the deceased. The flowers used are a mix of varieties and colours, depending upon price, the season and their keeping qualities. Informants claimed they had to be bright in colour and that during the early stages of the funeral they should retain their freshness. While the bright colours of the flowers symbolise beauty, the black of the cover initially used on the coffin symbolises death and sorrow. The logic of this colour symbolism

is also apparent in the clothing worn by participants in the mortuary rite. Women wear black skirts with white tops and men wear dark coloured trousers and shirts. As Turner (1981:89) points out, black is almost universally associated with death, while white colours are associated with fertility. Thus, in the mortuary rite, life and death are symbolically depicted as being closely associated, yet in opposition.

From the time the coffin is put in the church or the house of the deceased, old people visit and sit and talk. Unlike the younger funeral visitors who only visit for short periods the old remain almost all day for the duration of the rite. I suggest that this behaviour, glossed by informants as customary behaviour, is in reality a form of voluntary temporary seclusion of those who by their age are rendered socially marginal. Douglas (1970:114-118) claims that to be at the margins of symbolic boundaries is to be out of structure, to be dangerous and in need of control. Like the corpse the old occupy a liminal position within social life due to their proximity to the boundary between life and death. Thus, they are an important category of persons to control through seclusion for the duration of the rite.

B. Liminality and the Representation of the Deceased

The major characteristic of the liminal period of rites of transition such as mortuary rites is that of a lack of structure and a confusion of symbolic categories. The deceased is, in Turner's (1981:93) terms, "betwixt and between". He/she is no longer a living human being and yet he/she is not yet a full ancestor with a named grave site (and thus a physical

representation of genealogical position) in the cemetery. I have already pointed out that for the members of the family what takes place in the mortuary rite is the transition of the deceased from a living contemporary to a deceased ancestor. Given a degree of conflict between this belief and official church teachings regarding the deceased, during this period of the rite ideas about the deceased are likely to be highly ambiguous. I suggest that this is reflected in the difficulty the members of *Khriscag Bohin* find in producing an adequate pictorial representation of deceased members.

At both Buddhist and Christian funerals, it is normal practice to have an enlarged photograph of the deceased on display near the coffin. Mounted in a polystyrene frame and decorated with flowers, this is carried (by two young adults of the deceased's kindred) at the head of the procession to the cemetery on the final day of the funeral. Later, it is hung on the wall of the deceased's house as a memorial.

The photograph (usually approximately 400 x 300 mm in size) is made on the first day of the funeral from an enlargement of a smaller photograph of the deceased. For Buddhists the photograph, regardless of its quality, was always considered to be like (*myankan*) the deceased. However, for Christians it was never considered an adequate representation. Christian relatives talked about it as being "too small" (*leg koen paj*), "not clear" (*majchad*), or "not the same as [the deceased]" (*majmyankan*). In the case of *Mae Dii's* funeral, the deceased's daughter considered that the enlargement of her mother's identity card photograph made her look like a criminal (*phuuraaj*)[23]. Yet, after the

funeral and the ambiguity of the liminal period of the rite, the same photographs were mounted on the wall of the deceased's house and were considered to be adequate representations of the deceased.

For Buddhists the physical (and metaphysical) transformation of the deceased in the mortuary rite is from known human form to formless non-human liminal essence. I have already pointed out that for them this is a necessary and conceptually unproblematical transition. During the conduct of the mortuary rite guests see this transition taking place. At the cemetery prior to the cremation the ephemeral nature of human existence is graphically portrayed when the partly decomposed corpse is removed from the coffin. Later, through cremation, the corpse is transformed into ash and a few bone fragments. Thus, for them, at all times the representation of deceased must be as he/she has been in life, an image from the past. This is an image that can adequately be represented by a photograph.

However, for Christians the transformation taking place in the mortuary rite is from living being to ancestral being and ancestors are conceptualised as maintaining both human form and individual identity. Thus, what Christians attempt to portray in their photograph of the deceased is an image of the ambiguous present, the deceased as not human but not yet an ancestor with a position in the cemetery. However, after the mortuary rite, the deceased have been transformed into ancestors who, as they maintain their human form, can be truly represented by their photograph. Then, Christians, like their Buddhist neighbours,

mount the deceased's photograph on the wall of his/her house and consider it an adequate representation.

C. Music and Transition

I have claimed that the transition which occurs in the Christian funeral rite is fundamentally different from that which takes place for Buddhists and that the Christian funeral suggests an implicit denial of the decomposition of the corpse. I have also shown that the distinctive nature of this transition is reflected in the structure of the rite and in areas such as the representation of the deceased. Importantly, it is also reflected in the music and food which accompany the performance of the rite.

Needham (1967:611) suggests that in ritual there is an association between sound and the type of rite being performed, and that percussive sounds are associated with transition "from one status or condition to another". Huntington and Metcalf (1979:49) also suggest that percussive noise "seems to punctuate and divide time" and claim it is a natural symbol to mark the enormity of the transition that takes place at death. Indeed, most rites of transition and, particularly, mortuary rites where the transition of state is very pronounced, are marked by drumming and other percussive music (Metcalf 1982:142-144; Huntington and Metcalf 1979:49). Leach (1976:63), who points out that noise may be used as a marker of temporal and spatial boundaries, claims that "gunshots and firecrackers are the characteristic markers of funeral processions" (cf. Goody 1962:99). Traube also (1986:17), notes that in Mambai rituals

percussive instruments are used to make contact with the other world.

While percussive music played on instruments such as the xylophone (*ranaad*), cymbals (*ching*) and drums (*klorng*) is a common feature of Northern Thai mortuary rites, anthropologists have paid it little specific attention. Anusaranasasanakiarti and Keyes (1980:12,n.1) give a brief report of the use of a gong to proceed the funeral procession in *Mae Sariang*. Kingshill (1976:206, 218-219) notes the use of drums and loud music in the mortuary rite and suggests that is a means of frightening ghosts. In a more detailed analysis, Trankell (1987:637), following Needham (1967), notes the role of loud percussive music as a marker of "transitional time" in the *Tai Yong* mortuary rite.

In the *Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen* district, percussive music is utilised in all Buddhist mortuary rituals. Through the use of live orchestras and cassette music, funerals are accompanied by special funeral music. Informants claimed that this form of music, which is only played at funerals, announces the funeral and the depression (*khwaamsawcaj*) of the bereaved and makes those who hear it feel depressed. Percussive noise is also found in other parts of the Buddhist mortuary rite. I have noted that the secondary treatment of the deceased sometimes took the form of using gunpowder to propel fragments of crushed bone into the sky. Not only is this a graphic enactment of the passage of the spirit of the deceased into heaven, the transition from this world to the next is mediated by the percussion of the exploding gunpowder. Similarly, percussive fireworks are often used to

light the funeral pyre (Keyes 1975b:58), again graphically punctuating the transition of the deceased with loud noise.

However, Christian mortuary rites were distinctive in comparison with those of their Buddhist neighbours, as they were not accompanied by any form of percussive music. Buddhist style funeral music was never played at Christian funerals, as Christians claimed it was inappropriate. At Christian funerals loud music was played over the public address system from about 8 a.m. in the morning until late evening, but it was relatively euphonious, consisting of hymns, western classical music and popular Thai and western instrumentals. During fieldwork instrumental versions of western songs such as <u>You Don't Have To Say You Love Me</u> were encountered at Christian funerals over a wide geographical area.

That the Christian mortuary rite is not punctuated by percussive music marking the transition of the deceased conforms to the logic of the Christian conceptual system and its implicit denial that death is followed by a fundamental change of state. For them, the transition of the deceased is a transformation from human form to ancestral form, a transformation which at the conceptual level preserves the integrity of the corpse. It is fundamentally different from the transition from human form to "liminal essence" (Keyes 1987b:198) which takes place in the Buddhist mortuary rite. Accordingly, music symbolising change of state would be highly inappropriate at a Christian funeral. Indeed, this is what was indicated by Christian informants in their rejection of Buddhist funeral music during the performance of the Christian rite.

However, in addition to signifying that fundamentally different transformations take place in the Christian funeral, Christian funeral music (and Christian music per se) also has a political dimension. Writing in reference to the Sri Lankan context, Roberts (1990) discusses the competitive use of music by opposing religious groups. He claims that music and drumming constitute the "commemorative 'occupation' of space through sound" and, argues that:

> drumming and appropriate forms of music act as an extension of self. They are at once existential and proclamatory. They function as commemorative and/or celebratory claims. They speak to the world at large, both sowing and reaping the wind.

Like Buddhist funeral music, the music used in a Christian funeral also announces a death and the feelings of the bereaved. However, the unique style of Christian funeral music also announces Christianity as an alternative religion. Although direct proselytising is only rarely possible, through music Christians indicate their different beliefs about life and death. The same is true of other ritual contexts. During the Sunday service of worship, for instance, hymns were broadcast throughout the village over a powerful public address system which reached far beyond the immediate performative context. Here, they both announced the service to Christians and, in Roberts (ibid.) "commemorative 'occupation' of space", announced Christianity and Christian religious distinctiveness to non-Christians.

D. Commensality and Change of State

Commensality during the Christian rite is an even more important symbol of Christian beliefs about death and the form of transition it involves. As Trankell (1987) demonstrates in

regard to the *Tai Yong* mortuary rite, the symbolism in this area is particularly rich and I restrict my analysis to beliefs about the person of the deceased, the nature of the transition mediated by the rite and to beliefs regarding pollution.

Throughout the duration of both the Christian and Buddhist funeral, meal breaks form a division between ritual sequences and sometimes within sequences. Commencing at lunch time on the first day, food is served to visitors and helpers three times a day for the duration of the funeral. A snack of rice cakes is also provided for guests after the main preaching service each evening. In contrast with Trankell's (1987) experience amongst the *Tai Yong*, a restructuring of food preparation cycles is not used as a mechanism for the reordering of time duration during the Christian mortuary rite.

After the first day in the intervening days prior to the final day of the rite (*wun song sob*, or *wun paj paachaa*), friends and relatives and other Christian acquaintances visit and share the midday meal with the bereaved family and helpers. In this they show their support for the bereaved and demonstrate their respect for the deceased. As Goody (1982:38) points out, the consumption of food at the table is significant in symbolising the identity and differentiation of the group. In the Christian mortuary rite I suggest the major significance of commensality, is its role in symbolising a common human identity in the face of death.

Meals are served to guests seated in informal groups in front of the coffin in the church or in the house of the

deceased. In the communitas (Turner 1987:96-97) of the Christian mortuary meal, groups of varying statuses are undifferentiated (cf. the *Tai Yong* mortuary meal, where Trankell 1977:638 finds a high degree of structure in seating during mortuary meals) and eat together from common trays, sharing a last meal with the deceased. However, as Christians believe that the spirit leaves the body on death, they claimed it was pointless to leave food for an empty corpse. Thus, they normally did not follow the Buddhist practice of placing a tray of food under the coffin for the spirit of the deceased to eat[24].

On arrival and departure visitors show respect for the deceased by presenting a *waaj* (a gesture made by bringing the hands, palms together, up to about face level) to the coffin. Wealthy guests and representatives of various institutions with which the deceased was involved, bring large wreaths (*phuangriid*) which are arranged about the coffin. Most guests make a donation (*thawaaj sob*) toward the cost of the funeral and various church institutions often sponsor the cost of one of the nights of the funeral[25]. In this act of generalised reciprocity, the church once again acts the part of a patron in the final stages of its member's lives.

The food at Christian funerals is similar to that served at Buddhist funerals and the mix of dishes is formulated according to the same culinary rules. The general aim is to provide a balance between foods that are spicy and mild, hot and cold, wet and dry, cooked and uncooked. An appropriate meal might contain one wet mild curry dish such as a pork curry (*kaenghinlee*), a hot curry such as chicken curry (*kaengphed*), dry dishes such as spicy

chopped meat (*laab*), chilli paste (*namphrig*) and fresh vegetables to eat with the *laab* and *namphrig*. These are typical funeral foods which accompany sticky rice (*Khaawniaw*). Although food preparation is a female task, if *laabdib*, the male food par excellence (Rhum 1987:104), or *laabkhua* (its cooked form) is to be served, it is prepared by men. The varieties of food served are a marker of the desired or real status of the host and his family and an attempt is make to provide delicious food for guests. At *Mae Dii's* funeral spicy chopped meat and pork curry, both expensive and time consuming dishes, were served at each meal. Lesser dishes would not have been appropriate to the status of the deceased's family.

I pointed out that Christian beliefs regarding pollution are quite different to those of Buddhists. While the supernaturally polluting essence of death is problematic for Buddhists, for Christians pollution is primarily a matter of conflict between Christian teachings and observable reality. This distinction in the nature of pollution is also reflected in Christian methods of preparing and serving food.

At Buddhist funerals in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* most cooking takes place in adjoining compounds away from the house of the deceased, safe from its potentially polluting atmosphere (Nantajar n.d.:208; Trankell 1987:638). Trankell (1987:639) also claims that regardless of such precautions, due to the polluting effect of death, the *Tai Yong* consider food served during the mortuary rite to be unsatisfying. However, at Christian funerals food there was no prohibition on cooking at the house of the deceased, even if the corpse is present[26]. Moreover, when food

is served to guests in the church (or in the house of the deceased) neither the food nor the diners are in any sense polluted by proximity to the corpse. Nor are there any prohibitions relating to food and the distribution of left-over food to other family members. That this is the case accords with my previous assertion that for Christians fear of pollution from contagion is low.

At *Mae Dii's* funeral, first day preparations continued until the evening meal about 5.30 p.m. By mid-afternoon relatives of *Mae Dii* had started to arrive from *Chiangraaj* and *Dojtaw* and those in Bangkok were in transit. A blackboard in front of the church announced forthcoming service times and preachers for these services and a sign had been put up to ban smoking in the church. In the late afternoon a sign writer had visited the church and painted *Mae Dii's* name, her age at death and the dates of her birth and death on her coffin.

The evening meal marks the end of the day's preparatory activities and following washing up (by women) the rite moves into the first major preaching sequence. At *Khriscag Bohin* the first mortuary service is always preached by the resident minister while succeeding sermons are given by visiting ministers. At *Mae Dii's* funeral this first service took about an hour and was attended by some 80 people, a small gathering as this was the first evening service. About fifty five Christians sat in the church and took part in the service while Buddhist visitors sat outside the church, chatted and listened to the amplified service. By the second and subsequent nights the news of the death had spread more widely and the ritual was attended

by a larger number of people. Most people prefer to go to the later nights of a funeral as these are more elaborate performances.

Khriscag Bohin's minister and other visiting preachers sat on chairs behind the altar while the family of the deceased sat at the front of the church, followed by other members of the congregation, while visitors sat towards the rear. Unlike other ritual occasions, at funerals guests sit on the floor as this is the most economical use of space. The Christian belief in formal gender equality is apparent from the mixed sex seating. Males do not precede females as is the case during the performance of Buddhist rituals at the temple.

The service followed the order of the service of worship, prayers, hymn, Bible reading, hymn, sermon, hymn, prayer and a concluding hymn. Funeral preaching has the dual orientation of comforting the bereaved and proselytising non-Christians. The message of didacticism and comfort directed to the family of the deceased, told them that *Mae Dii* had departed this life, but that she was not dead, that because of faith in Jesus she had eternal life. Proselytising directed at visiting Buddhists outlined the fundamental teachings of Christianity and then told them that belief in the Buddha would not lead them to eternal life, that it was only through belief in God that they could avoid certain death. It is in such preaching that death is rendered meaningful for the living, one of the most fundamental tasks of the mortuary rite. In preaching the Christian cosmology is constructed and contemporised and the death of the individual is transcended by recasting it in an alternative time scale, an eternal and

timeless cosmic order. Through presenting death within this context, its finality, and its terminal nature is denied.

I pointed out in the previous chapter that Christians differ from Buddhists in regard to how sacred words uttered in preaching become efficacious. For Christians, the efficacy of sacred words lies in the listener hearing, understanding, and then acting. While they have potential power, that power is only activated if the listener hears them, then they have the power to impel him/her to make a response. A preamble to a major preaching ritual at *Mae Dii's* funeral shows the Christian emphasis on hearing God's word:

> On this occasion I would like to invite you all who are in [under] the tent or in the *saalaa* to stop talking and doing other things, to stop doing everything and listen to todays' preaching. Now we will listen to God's word. Please do not divide your attention in listening. When I have finished preaching and praying you can talk. Now we will listen to the word of God....

This follows the logic of the Christian cosmogony. For Northern Thai Christians, one's fate is the result of one's own choice to receive God "*hup Phracaw*" or reject him. Yet in order to be able to make this choice, people need to be empowered through hearing the word of God in preaching.

After the service, as most guests left for home, the rite moved into the first rest sequence at about 9 p.m. Blankets and pillows were brought to the church for those who would watch over the corpse throughout the night (*faw sob*). Those who sit with the corpse are normally males and, during Christian mortuary rites, it is usually a mixed group of Christian and Buddhist men who sit with the corpse[27]. Informants explained this activity as making sure that neither the deceased nor their relatives were

left alone. In reality, the majority of the deceased's relatives go home to sleep as they need to refresh themselves for the work of the following day.

The atmosphere of the early evening at Buddhist funerals is anything but morbid, with music, drinking and gambling (Kickert 1960:76-77; Kingshill 1976:218-219; Anusaranasasanakiarti and Keyes 1980:9,n.42; Keyes 1975b:54-55; Singkha 1978:89) and small stalls set up to sell food to guests. Later, the night is a time of continued drinking and gambling by male guests. Trankell (1987:637) claims that the disorder produced at night by drinkers and gamblers forms a counterpoint to the order produced by elders and ritual officiants. Keyes also (1975b:54-55) suggests that nightly activities such as these emphasise the liminality of the funeral period. He points out that *likee* (folk theatre) and movies, drinking and gambling are temporary events or states, and that like the liminal period of the funeral, they are opposed to the structure of everyday life[28]. I concur with these analyses, but emphasise that this period of the rite and its attendant activities is integral to the performance of the rite and is not merely an "off-stage" period.

Similar behaviour is found in Sinhalese exorcism rituals, where, at times during the ritual performance, the audience "exchange gossip...play cards and drink" (Kapferer 1979:168). Kapferer (1983:181) notes that throughout the performance of exorcism rituals the audience alternately moves between the mundane world and the world constructed in ritual action. He claims that these alternating perspectives are integral to the construction of the context of the meaning of the rite and that:

> This oscillation between engagement and nonengagement produced in performance has the potential of exposing individuals to the subjective experience of the rite, and then removing them from such experience so that they can objectify the nature of that into which they passed (ibid.).

In the case of Northern Thai mortuary rituals, I suggest that the rest sequences of the rite, with their drinking and gambling, are not solely counterpoints to the structure of the ritual, but that they are integral to the constitution of the meaning of the rite. The major sequences of the rite deal with eschatology, with ultimate religious values, all of which are far removed from everyday reality. However, the juxtaposition of ultimate religious values and the values of the mundane world allows what Kapferer (1979:170) calls an "aesthetic distancing", whereby the audience "experiences the emotions [of the rite] but is not overwhelmed by them". Through the alternation between the meaning context constituted in preaching and the mundane world of the rest sequences, fundamental Christian values (or Buddhist values in the case of the Buddhist rite) are brought into a meaningful relationship with those of the everyday world.

The evening and rest period of Christian funerals is similar to its counterpart at Buddhist funerals in as much as following the preaching service attention is paid to the living, rather than the deceased. In contrast to the attention directed to the corpse during the day (by visitors), during the night it is studiously ignored. People sit and talk, or sleep, at times leaning against the coffin, but pay no specific attention to it.

However, the Christian rest period is distinct from its counterpart at Buddhist funerals, in that it is a relatively

ordered sequence. Order is maintained in the church and church compound, or the compound of the deceased's house (if the funeral is held at the home of the deceased) and the drinking of alcohol and gambling are prohibited in the vicinity of the church. On the first evening of *Mae Dii's* funeral about a dozen people sat with the corpse. In contrast to the above Buddhist funeral pastimes, a colour television was procured and placed near the coffin, so that the group could view the world series soccer. When a mixed group of Christians and Buddhists commenced to play cards in the church about 1 a.m. on the second day of *Mae Dii's* funeral, they were swiftly ejected by *Aacaan Tongkham*.

I suggest that the maintenance of order at Christian funerals relates not only to Christian teachings about the evils of alcohol and gambling, but to the fundamental ideas Christians hold about the nature of the world. In Northern Thailand drinking and gambling are conceptualised as productive of disorder, in that the outcomes are unpredictable and that they frequently lead to a loss of bodily (behavioural) control (Wijeyewardene 1986:53-56). For Christians, such activities must be suppressed at the mortuary rite as they challenge the order, control and predictability that Christianity claims exists in the cosmos. Like denial of the decomposition of the corpse this attempts to reduce ambiguous and contradictory states that challenge fundamental Christian beliefs.

The second day of funerals commences early, about 6.30 a.m., as those who have sat with the corpse assist with the preparation of the morning meal which is served between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. After this, the day's preparatory sequence begins.

As Table 10 suggests, the second and subsequent days prior to the last day, have a similar sequence. The one exception is that on the second day preparations for the burial (*fang*) are made at the cemetery. The grass is cut, the grave site is selected and the grave is dug. This is then lined with concrete blocks and a concrete cross is cast. The cemetery is also cleared of rubbish such as tree branches and the debris of broken wreaths and coffin lids from previous funerals.

The digging of *Mae Dii's* grave commenced about 9.30 a.m., by a mixed group of eight young Buddhists and Christians. Tools had been borrowed from their owners and the hosts had arranged for the workers to be supplied with cigarettes and whisky. No specific people are appointed to this role, family elders call upon any young men who are available. Graves are accorded no special reverence and, when digging new graves, the living walk or stand on earlier graves with no sense that this is a profanatory activity.

The cigarettes and whisky given to grave diggers are said to be payment for doing the job. The workers claim that this is necessary due to the physical effort the work demands. However, whisky is a normal accompaniment for the living when they are working at the cemetery on activities related to the disposal of a corpse. The men who tend the cremation fire at a Buddhist funeral also drink whisky, while men working on general cemetery maintenance do not. Whisky is drunk then, when men are working in the liminal space of the cemetery, engaged in activities related to the corpse's transition of state.

I suggest that alcohol is drunk by Christian grave diggers in order to allow them to enter into the liminality of the context and to reduce the danger from what is a structurally liminal position. Grave diggers carry out their task standing in the grave, the living in the abode of the dead. Thus, they confuse classificatory categories, a position which Douglas (1970) points out is normally considered dangerous or polluting. However, mild intoxication creates an internal state of some ambiguity, a confusion of time sense and of normal classifications. Through the use of alcohol the drinker constitutes him/herself as a liminal being and his/her attachment to structure is reduced, so that, in the case of the grave diggers, they are able to enter into the liminality of the context. Parallels are apparent in other Northern Thai rituals where those occupying structurally liminal positions also consume alcohol. Wijeyewardene (1986) for example, notes the consumption of alcohol by spirit mediums during ritual activities.

The grave site is always selected by the host and, *Mae Dii's* son, *Prachun*, selected a site that placed *Mae Dii* next to her husband. Burial in family groups is the usual method of siting graves. This pattern of burial is significant as it gives the deceased a marked genealogical position in a past that reaches back to the time of the first Christian (cf. Bloch 1971). I have already pointed out that while Christians subscribe to the formal Christian doctrine that the deceased are with God, at the same time Christian ancestors are believed to retain an interest in the world of the living and it is believed that they can be contacted by the living during the performance of the homage ritual. Named grave sites are particularly significant here.

Danforth (1982:133) argues that the grave may come to stand for the deceased and claims that:

> A person's grave serves to maintain the reality of his existence in tangible form, in the world of physical space, for those who want to continue to engage in a social relationship with them.

Equally significant, as I point out in the next chapter, is the manner in which the manipulation of the placement of grave sites and grave markers over the past five generations has allowed the construction of a highly fallacious version of Christian descent.

As is usual the completion of the grave took until the morning of the third day, when it was lined with a concrete floor and cement blocks. Christians claimed that this practice protects the coffin and corpse from the earth collapsing inwards and prevents the by-products of decomposition seeping into nearby rice fields. It is a relatively new and expensive mortuary technology, costing several thousand *baht*, which I encountered in several Christian villages. In *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen*, it is the high level of participation of Christians in the *Chiangmai* labour market which makes this form of burial possible.

I have already suggested that Christian ideas about ancestors and the resurrection of the dead demand their denial of the decomposition of the corpse. I suggest that this same need to prevent contradiction between Christian teachings and observed reality is apparent in burial practices relating to the fluids of decomposition. By enclosing the coffin and corpse in a tomb of concrete bricks they protect it and attempt to contain the products of decomposition. As Parry (1985:627) notes regarding Hindu practices that aim at conservation of bodily fluids:

> If the maintenance of the cosmic order is based on the generalised exchange of transformed substance, escape from that order would seem to require its non-exchange.

Thus, this practice conforms to the Christian logic of a linear time span and ancestors who maintain their unique identity. Or, as an unsympathetic informant from *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* put it, "they think the corpse is still alive". It is in stark contrast to Buddhist mortuary practice which, as I have pointed out, relies on the transformation of the remains of the deceased in order that a later recycling of "essence" (Keyes 1987b:184) might take place.

Analogous behaviour, which implicitly denies the fluids of decomposition and the transformation of form they imply, is found in the Christian approach to the injection of preservative into the corpse and soaking up leakage from the body during the mortuary rite. Terwiel (1979b:404-405) points out, that the placing of ashes, earth, or leaves in the bottom of graves or coffins is a common practice among the *Tai*. In *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* Buddhist funerals often use ashes (cf. Bloch 1971:144, regarding the use of charcoal in Merina graves) or jackfruit (*khanun*) leaves in the bottom of the coffin[29]. The *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* (1985:2) manual of mortuary practice also suggests that at Christian funerals, tea (*chaa*) and guava (*makruud*) leaves may be placed in the bottom of the coffin as they absorb smell. However, when the use of such absorbent materials is discussed at Christian funerals Christians say they are unnecessary. Similarly, they claim that it is not necessary to inject preservative into the corpse, although this is a fairly routine practice at Buddhist funerals. They defend this stance by claiming that the funeral will only be short and that the weather is not too hot. In saying this, they imply that there

will be no fluids of decomposition, an implication in keeping with their denial of the decomposition of the corpse.

The mode of Christian burial also conforms to the logic of the Christian system which denies the cyclic nature of the Buddhist world, instead positing a linear time scale. I have pointed out that in the secondary sequence of the Buddhist mortuary rite the bones of the deceased are buried in a pot in an unmarked spot. Few remember the exact place where the remains of relatives are buried and so in death Buddhists are depersonalised with no markers of identity. Thus, the impermanence of all things and the cyclic nature of their world is re-affirmed. In contrast, through burial in a marked concrete tomb, Christians retain their individual identity after death. Such a burial method may also be interpreted as the ultimate assertion by the deceased of the linear nature of time. Entombment not only denies the decomposition of the corpse. It permanently preserves the remains of the deceased (cf. Bloch 1986:168-169, in regard to Merina burial practices), in a denial of the ultimate significance of life-world time.

The evening meal and major preaching ritual on the second day of *Mae Dii's* funeral echoed that of the first, with the exception that there were more guests. Similarly, the rest sequence on the second night of the funeral substantially replicated that of the previous evening. The overwhelming feeling at this stage of the mortuary rite is of timelessness, a denial of time through immersion in the routine of the rite (Leach 1982). The alternative cycle of activities during the ritual period and the repetitious nature of the ritual

performance suspends ordinary time in favour of the time scale of the rite. And this, as Bloch (1986:184) points out in regard to all ritual, is (like the time scale built up in preaching) a time scale which transcends that of the life-world and individual human experience:

> Rituals reduce the unique occurrence so that they become part of a greater fixed and ordered unchanging whole; this whole is constructed identically by every ritual performed in a hazy, weakly propositional manner; it appears to have always existed, and will always exist. Because of this, ritual makes the passage of time, the change in personnel, and the change in situation, inexpressible and therefore irrelevant.

This feeling of timelessness ends on the afternoon on the third day of the rite when preparations are made for the final evening service and for the procession to the cemetery on the following day (*wun song sob*). At *Mae Dii's* funeral new and more elaborate floral decorations were made for placement on the coffin and the *rod sob* (the carriage for carrying the coffin) and the photograph of the deceased was redecorated[30]. The ephemeral nature of these decorations is consistent with the liminality of this period of the rite. A wooden cross was repainted to be used in the procession to the cemetery on the following day. In the late afternoon *horsaj* (literally wrapped sand) was made, by wrapping sand in 200 mm squares of black and white paper and securing it with a rubber band. These are used in the final transitional sequence at the cemetery, where they are thrown into the grave by guests as a mark of respect for the deceased.

The major sequence on the final night of the funeral is larger and more elaborate than the preceding major sequences. The size of *Mae Dii's* funeral was attested to by the several food and drink vendors who set up stalls near the church, to take

advantage of the over 250 guests. Later in the evening, during the final rest sequence almost the entire family of *Mae Dii* slept in the church as they watched over the corpse for the last time.

On the final morning of the funeral the preparatory sequence commenced at 8 a.m. with the moving of the carriage to a position in front of the Church ready to receive the coffin[31]. At 8.30 a money box (*hiib ngoen*) was set up on a table to the right of the church door, manned by *Mae Dii's* brother-in-law, to receive offerings (*ngoen thawaaj sob*) from guests. The funeral society of which *Mae Dii* was a member, also prepared to receive contributions, at a table to the left of the church door.

By 9 a.m. funeral guests were arriving in a steady stream. The final ritual sequence in the church commenced at 10 a.m., when the minister who was to conduct the service arrived from the city. As occurs in almost all Christian funeral services, a history of the deceased, written by her sons, was read out and all guests received a printed copy in their service order. This is a relatively new funeral custom practiced in wealthier villages, derived from the early twentieth century custom of writing the biographies of monks and the publishing of cremation volumes in honour of deceased monks and laymen (Keyes 1982:151). As Keyes points out (ibid.:154), such accounts also give meaning to death by reassuring the living about meanings that transcend death. Thus, at *Khriscag Bohin* biographies make frequent reference to the good done by the deceased, to the example of the Christian life they have bequeathed to their descendants and to the opportunity the occasion of their death gives for non-Christians to find God.

However, in the *Baan Bohin Baan Chiangseen* Christian funeral context these histories have an additional significance. They constitute sanitised versions of the deceased's life and descent relations, objectified in print in the public sphere. I take up their significance more fully in the next chapter when I look at the production of histories of the family and *Khriscag Bohin*. I suggest that the production of this form of historical material, written by second and third generation Christians, constitutes a form of contemporary myth making. Their role as myth is to legitimate the version of descent relations constituted in the layout of the cemetery and in the homage ritual.

This final major sequence took about two hours. The sermon followed the broad themes of previous sermons and, after telling the biblical story of King David and his repentance, suggested that the listeners should learn from his example and start a new life with God without procrastinating. It is at the end of this ritual sequence that the period of liminality and its concomitant ambiguity regarding the corpse and the status of the deceased comes to an end. At this point, the transformation of the corpse from deceased person to full ancestor begins. The final part of the service involved the carrying of the coffin out of the church in a procession led by the officiating ministers and placing it on the carriage. The photograph of the deceased was then placed at the front of the carriage.

Following the end of the service, lunch was served to the approximately 400 guests. These sat in the church and at tables erected in the church compound. They ate in a rowdy celebration

of life, with no sense of sharing the meal with the deceased in their midst. This suggests a further movement of the deceased from the world of the living and an initial stage in the reintegration of the community of the living.

Following lunch and the completion of the washing up (again an exclusively female activity), the group assembled in a procession to convey the corpse to the cemetery. Two ropes, each about 15 metres long, were tied to the carriage and people took hold of these in order to assist in pulling it to the cemetery. Christians claim this act is a mark of respect for the deceased rather than a meritorious activity as it is for Buddhists. One man (the eldest son of the deceased) sat on the carriage and steered it, while others stood on the side and assisted in the retention of the coffin and its floral decorations.

The transformation of the deceased from the world of the living is then, directly symbolised by physically pulling him/her out of the village, from the world of the living, to the society of the ancestors in the cemetery. The coffin is orientated on the carriage so that it is taken to the cemetery feet first, the traditional orientation in which Northern Thai corpses leave their villages (cf. Tambiah 1977a:182). At *Mae Dii's* funeral, as is normal Christian practice, the procession was led by the ministers who had conducted the rites. Behind them came a man carrying a large wooden cross, then the photograph of *Mae Dii* carried by two relatives, followed by a small group of mourners walking in front of those who pulled the carriage. Unlike most Buddhist funeral processions which are accompanied by funeral music, Christian funeral processions are not accompanied by

music. This is consonant with what I have previously interpreted as a Christian denial of transition of state and the decomposition of the corpse and, the role of music, in mediating these transformations.

When the procession reached the cemetery, a matter of only some five minutes, the mourners moved into the shade house (*saalaa*). At this stage final photographs of relatives are usually taken. However, as funeral photographs had already been taken at the church, the coffin was removed from the carriage and placed on bamboo supports above the grave. Although it was not done at *Mae Dii's* funeral, the deceased's clothes are frequently disposed of by burial with the body[32]. The coffin was orientated with the head to the East, as I have argued, symbolising that the person was not really dead. The wooden cross was placed at the end of the grave and the flowers and wreaths were arranged about the grave site. Cool drinks and the previously prepared packets of wrapped sand (*horsaj*) were distributed to mourners and a public address system was set up.

When the site was readied a short service took place led by *Aacaan Tongkham*. This consisted of a prayer, a hymn, another prayer during which the coffin was lowered into the grave and then a hymn (*phleeng thawaaj sop,* lit. an offering song for the corpse) was sung by a group from a visiting congregation. Then, in a final short didactic sequence, *Aacaan Tongkham* explained that the *horsaj* which people were about to drop in the grave was not to feed the spirit, but was to allow them to assist in the burial by demonstrating their respect for the deceased. The funeral guests then filed past the grave, dropped their *horsaj*

into the grave beside the coffin and, immediately, started to move away from the cemetery in small groups. As they left the photograph of *Mae Dii* was taken from its floral mounting and given to one of her family to take home.

The grave diggers then took over. They concreted a lid across the top of the grave thus sealing the coffin in a small concrete box and fitted the cast concrete cross at the head of the grave symbolising *Mae Dii* as an ancestral Christian. When the burial is complete and the burial site is marked with a cross bearing the name of the deceased he/she now occupies a fixed genealogical position in the society of the ancestors. I pointed out in chapter three that Christian women have a formal equality with men. However, women are buried under their married name, symbolising, perhaps, an ultimate male dominance.

Buddhists informants claimed that there is a need to control emotions following a death, as displays of attachment to the deceased may lead to the spirit (*phii*) remaining on earth. Thus, Trankell (1987:635) notes that following a death amongst the *Tai Yong* there "is no wailing and no tears to be seen, but possibly smiles". Accordingly, reports of formal keening during the Buddhist mortuary rite are rare and, those accounts available, suggest that when practiced it is (or was) restricted to the bereaved household and to specific short periods of the rite. Kickert (1960:78) reports keening on the part of a bereaved wife as her husband's corpse was removed from the house for cremation and Sanguan (1966:243) and Singkha (1978:87) claim that in the past keening by the bereaved was a method of announcing a death.

In contrast to the tightly controlled emotions during the performance of the Buddhist rite, at Christian funerals there is little emphasis on the control of emotions. Some display of grief on the part of relatives, particularly close female relatives (wives, sisters and daughters), is considered normal. This usually occurs at the end of the burial sequence as helpers commence to close the grave, the point of final separation from the deceased. It ranges from quiet sobbing to extreme cases of frenzied wailing and screaming that are considered excessive and those so affected are comforted by relatives. That Christians are able to display emotions at this time is, I suggest, related to beliefs regarding the manner in which the rite is efficacious and the status of the spirit. For Christians the efficacy of the rite is not affected by its performance and, in any case, according to Christian teachings, the spirit is believed to be already in God's care.

Following the burial, mourners returned to the church and the house of the deceased and cleaned and returned borrowed articles. Later, in the early evening, the hosts invited helpers to the home of the deceased for a meal and drinks to thank them for their assistance. In accord with the logic of Christian pollution beliefs, Christians exhibit no sense of pollution by contagion when they return from the burial sequence of the mortuary rite. Unlike Buddhists, Christians do not use lustral water, or any other means of removing the polluting essence of death.

The funeral proper finished with a series of three transitional ritual sequences. These took the form of short

(about one hour) evening prayer meetings held at *Mae Dii's* house, commencing on the night of the burial. They involved only Christians and consisted of an almost perfunctory sequence of prayer, hymn, Bible reading, hymn and prayer. Participants said that the bereaved had been "separated from a member of the family" (*khaad samaachig khrobkhrua*) and that they "felt bad" (*ruusykmajdii*). They explained these meetings as a means of comforting the family in the face of these feelings of loss.

At this point the focus of the rite has changed. Prior to this, all aspects of the ritual revolved about the deceased's transition to ancestorhood. Now that the burial is over and the deceased has been fully transformed into an ancestor, this closing period concentrates, in a Hertzian sense, on mending the rift in the social world. The congregation meets in the house of the deceased, but without him/her.

While these final sequences terminate the mortuary rite, in most cases they are followed some weeks later by one final act. The family of the deceased usually make a presentation of a gift (in the case of *Mae Dii's* family, a wall clock) to the Church, in recognition of the work of the minister during the period of the mortuary rite. Similar forms of prestations may be made on the occasion of weddings and birthdays (Hughes 1985:31). Hughes claims that for some this is "a similar act to making merit" (ibid.). While this may be true in some contexts, I suggest it is more likely that these gifts constitute counter prestations, from a client family to the institutional Church, in return for support or assistance (patronage) it has given. Significantly, such counter prestations usually take place following rites of

transition in which the institutional Church has played some form of mediatory role.

VII. Summary

This chapter has focused on the Northern Thai Christian mortuary rite. My aim here was firstly, through the medium of the mortuary ritual, to elicit some of the fundamental Christian beliefs about the nature of the world. Secondly, I have been concerned to demonstrate the extent to which the Christian beliefs and ritual practices of the members of *Khriscag Bohin*, have been transformed through their implementation.

I firstly discussed anthropological approaches to mortuary rites and current analyses of Thai Buddhist mortuary rites. My aim here was to site my analysis as being broadly within the Hertzian approach, and to point out the relative neglect in the ethnography of Northern Thailand of this very significant aspect of social life. Indeed, as Fabian (1973:194) points out, in Tristes Tropiques Levi-Strauss makes the proposition that all of anthropology is the study of death:

> The world began without man and will end without him...except when he has been engaged in self-reproduction - what else has man done except blithely break down billions of structures and reduce them to a state in which they are no longer capable of integration?...Anthropology could with advantage be changed into 'entropology', as the name of the discipline concerned with the study of the highest manifestations of this process of disintegration (Levi-Strauss 1984:542-543).

Through an examination of the contemporary Northern Thai Christian mortuary ritual within a historical perspective, I have shown that over the past five generations a synthesis has been constituted between Christian and Buddhist mortuary practice.

Moreover, I have shown that Christian ideas in respect to the nature of death, pollution and about the relationship between the living and the deceased are fundamentally different both from those of neighbouring Buddhists and from the formal teachings of the Church of Christ in Thailand.

For Buddhists, death is a slow, potentially dangerous and moderately polluting process, mediated via a double funeral. In contrast, for Christians, death is quick and poses no danger to the living. Death is polluting for both Buddhist and Christians, but as I have shown, the nature of the pollution is fundamentally different. For Buddhists, the spirit of the dead (*phii taaj*) is potentially dangerous for the living and they may be polluted by the general inauspiciousness of death. By contrast, I have argued that for Christians, the pollution of death is the result of conflict between internal contradictions in their beliefs (Douglas 1970). The reality of physical death and the decomposition of the corpse, conflicts with Christian beliefs about the illusory nature of bodily death and teachings about a later bodily resurrection. They resolve this conflict through a denial of aspects of illness and the mortuary process suggesting bodily decomposition. The rapid deterioration of the body in terminal illness is secluded from public view and, during the performance of the mortuary rite, ritual practices both implicitly and explicitly deny the decomposition of the corpse and the production of fluids of decomposition.

I have also argued that the transition which takes place in the Christian mortuary rite is fundamentally different from the transition which takes place in the Buddhist rite. Through a

detailed examination of the liminal period of the mortuary rite, I demonstrated that the transition the Christian corpse undergoes is symbolised in areas such as music, food and the nature of behaviour during this period. In the Buddhist ritual, the two stage mortuary rite transforms the deceased from the world of the living to a liminal essence which will be reborn at a later date with a wholly new identity. However, with a belief in eternal life and in ancestors who retain their unique identity, the Christian mortuary rite is fundamentally different. As far as the formal teachings of the Church of Christ in Thailand are concerned man's animating spirit, the *winjaan*, goes to God on death and the mortuary rite merely disposes of the corpse. However, I have argued that the members of the family (*khrobkhrua*) believe that deceased ancestors remain sentient and, to some extent, are involved in the world of the living,

At a theoretical level, my approach in this chapter has been primarily concerned with an analysis of the symbolic structure of the liminal period of the rite including the treatment (or in this case the denial of the need for specific treatment) of the corpse of the deceased. In this I have broadly followed in an analytical tradition that extends from the Durkheimian based approach of Hertz (1960), formulated in the early years of this century. The mortuary rites with which Hertz was concerned were rites where there was a two-part mortuary process, a primary and secondary treatment of the body. He focused on the corpse as a model for the social group, whereby the dissolution of the corpse acted as a model for the breaking of the deceased's social relations with the group and its reintegration without his/her presence. However, my analysis of

the treatment of the corpse departs from a classical Hertzian analysis (cf. Huntington and Metcalf 1979 and Metcalf 1981, 1982) in two areas.

Firstly, I pay little direct attention to the role of the mortuary rite in the reconstitution of society and the corpse as a model for that reintegration. Thus, I do not pursue the more Durkheimian aspects of this model. However, I do not reject the reintegrative role of mortuary ritual. That the bereaved suffer feelings of loss following the death of relatives and loved ones and that the mortuary ritual, for them, is accompanied by high emotion, is axiomatic. Here I have argued that the mortuary rite constitutes an arena for ritualised expressions of those feelings and as a context where the death can be viewed within the Christian understanding of death. In this the loss suffered by individuals and society as a whole is assuaged.

I depart from a Hertzian analysis in a second area. Hertz (1960:58) considered secondary processing of the corpse was almost a cultural universal and, paid little attention to those cases where it was not carried out, suggesting only that its abandonment was due to acculturation. The Northern Thai Christian mortuary rite engages in a once only treatment of the corpse. There is no secondary treatment or secondary processing of any kind given to the corpse, a situation in direct contrast to the Thai Buddhist mortuary rite which engages in a two-part treatment of the corpse.

My work here, in a Christian community whose Buddhists forebears practiced and, whose Buddhist contemporaries continue

to practice, secondary treatment of the dead, refutes Hertz' claim regarding acculturation. Through an examination of the symbolic structure of the mortuary rite and the meanings of the various ritual practices, I have demonstrated that the abandonment of secondary treatment was, as Metcalf (1981:565) suggests, the result of very complex transformations in a total cosmological view. Certainly it was not a simple process related solely to acculturation as Hertz (1960) claims or changes in economic position as materialist explanations such as Miles (1965) might suggest.

Indeed, similar transformations in the way in which death is conceptualised and concomitant transformations in the treatment of the corpse, appear to be a widespread concomitant of conversion to Christianity and other mono-theistic religions such as Islam. Metcalf (1981:565) notes the late nineteenth century abandonment of secondary treatment of the corpse amongst the Alfuru (central Celebes), on conversion to Islam. Even more importantly, he notes (ibid.) that among those Berawan who have converted to Christianity, the secondary treatment of the dead has been abandoned. Bloch also (1971), suggests that the conversion of the Merina to Christianity has had significant effects upon the secondary treatment of the dead. Possibly these transformations in the conceptulisation of death are related to a concentration of power in the person of the high god, who alone has the power to confer and take life.

Finally, this chapter has continued to argue, albeit implicitly, against the view that missionary activity is solely an act of religious imperialism whereby missionaries substitute

new beliefs and practices for old ones, as authors such as Amas (1983), Dachs (1972), Comaroff (1985), Comaroff et.al. (1986), Malalgoda (1973) and Shapiro (1981) claim. Conversely, I suggest the position of Kammerer (1990a), who argues that converts can merely replace their old religion with Christianity, is equally problematic. By analysing the contemporary *Khriscag Bohin* mortuary rite within a historical context, I have shown that Christian beliefs and practices have been fundamentally transformed through the constitution of a synthesis with pre-existing Buddhist ideas and practices. Thus, as I claimed in chapter one, contemporary *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* Christian practices have been influenced less by missionary imperialism, than by the transformation of the missionary message by the past five generations of converts. The missionary project is an activity which provides materials for the on-going work of cultural synthesis. Like all human activity this is subject to the specificities of historical circumstances, as well as the whims of historical chance.

Endnotes

1. The Northern Thai recognition of the expense of the mortuary rite is attested to in the proverb, "the dead sell the living", and writers on Thai customs such as (Nantajar n.d.:215) frequently counsel restraint in this area.
2. While in the field I attended some thirty mortuary rites (both Buddhist and Christian) and two rituals paying homage to Christian ancestors. My attendance at mortuary rituals ranged from visits for only a few hours in the evening, to round the clock observation and participation in the work of the rite for its duration. I attended the full performance of both ancestor rituals.
3. Bloch (ibid.) claims that there are a number of distinctions between the Merina rite of secondary treatment and the forms of secondary treatment discussed by Hertz. However, regardless of his claim that the changes taking place are all on the part of the living, I consider this to constitute a genuine rite of secondary treatment as it marks the point of final separation between the living and the dead. As he puts it "The ritually

sacrilegious attitude which is forced on the living is one which makes them consider their relatives as irreversibly dead, and consequently separates the dead from them in a definite manner" (Bloch 1971:169).

4. A brief description of the sixteenth century Northern Thai mortuary rite (Finch 1927:307), portrays a rite little different from that described in these late nineteenth and early twentieth century reports.

5. The lack of references to these deaths can be explained by *Baan Bohin's* insignificant status with only one Christian family and by the fact that the focus of Christian activity in this area was *Khriscag Sansai* rather than the villages of its members. Also, as I have previously suggested, this was a period when missionary resources were becoming over-stretched.

6. *Pau Tib* moved to *Baan Bohin* and converted to Christianity prior to his death.

7. Informants reports on this differ. According to some in the mid-nineteenth century it was the cemetery used for auspicious deaths, while in the case of inauspicious deaths the bodies were disposed of in a second (now non-existent) cemetery on the other side of the village. Other informants insisted that this cemetery came into use only when the other one fell into disuse.

8 According to informants, a funeral host could be female, but most people suggest that a man is more appropriate and more capable. A son-in-law will usually take the role of host in preference to a bereaved wife or daughter. No informants were able to give an instance of a female host.

9. In some areas of Thailand, gamblers who make a living by gambling at funerals will sponsor a long funeral in order to obtain the maximum opportunity to practice their trade. As Singkha (1978:89) points out, such professional gambling is a recent practice at Northern Thai mortuary rites. I have not distinguished gamblers as a separate group, as in *Baan Bohin* gamblers are non-professionals, indistinguishable from other categories of guests.

10. Christians may also dispose of the corpse by cremation. However, I encountered this only once in a relatively remote Northern Thai village. Informants from *Khriscag Bohin* who accompanied me claimed that this funeral was very similar to a Buddhist funeral.

11. Later memorial rites are held at seven or one hundred days, or even more following the death. Like Keyes (1987b:182,n.2) I consider that a clear distinction must be made between mortuary rites held to dispose of the body and memorial rites held to remember the deceased. More importantly, both Buddhist and Christian villagers make a clear distinction between the function of these rites.

12. A more elaborate method of disposing of the remains of the deceased following cremation, is to grind some of the bones and, following a small merit making rite, to shoot them into the heavens from a canon made from water pipe and gunpowder. This practice is followed in only a minority of funerals.

13. A high proportion of deaths in Thailand fall into this category. According to the National Statistical office (1985:17), in 1983 there were 21,102 deaths from accidents, homicide and purposely inflicted injury, exceeded only by deaths from heart disease/heart failure (26,447) and a consolidated category of "others" (138,967) where cause of death was not specified.

14. The resurrection is conceptualised as a bodily resurrection, with people looking as they do in this life, only younger and in full health.
15. *Mae Dii*, who died in 1986 at the age of 65, was a daughter-in-law of *Gaaw*, the first Christian convert. She was the widow of *Bunthung* (*Gaaw's* third last son) and had converted to Christianity on marriage. Following her husband's death she lived in the stem home together with her third son *Prasit* and his Buddhist wife, who inherited her house.
16. I have not included deaths from occurrences such as suicide, murder, or accidental death where the option of going to the hospital or staying home has not occurred.
17. I reject the type of analysis of pollution phenomena that links beliefs about pollution to Freudian-based ideas of guilt (cf. Goldschmidt 1973). It is particularly inappropriate in the Thai Buddhist context where the decomposition of the corpse is a prerequisite for the release of the spirit and a later rebirth.
18. *Tai Yong* beliefs regarding the susceptibility of food to pollution (Trankell ibid.) can probably be traced to their position as a ethnic minority group with social boundaries always under potential threat.
19. Kingshill (1976:207), Le May (1926:121) and Tambiah (1977a: 181) report that prior to being put in the coffin the corpse is covered with a cloth and separated from public view by a white cloth (a blanket in the case of Kingshill) hung on a string stretched across the room. Trankell also (1977:636), reports that among the *Tai Yong* the body and face of the corpse are covered with white cloths, prior to being covered by a suspended white cloth. In comparison with these accounts, Buddhist mortuary practices in *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* seem to place less emphasis on the covering of the body and its separation from public space. On one occasion, I witnessed the injecting of preservative (formaldehyde) into a partially unclothed male corpse in full view of funeral guests.
20. Yet, as Danforth's (1982) work demonstrates, in some Christian cultural contexts an emphasis is placed upon the decomposition of the corpse. Ariès' (1975,1976,1987) work, which also points out the modern denial of death in the west and the isolation of the dying, offers some suggestions regarding this contradiction. He claims, that prior to the eighteenth century, death and the decomposition of the corpse was regarded as natural. Possibly in peripheral areas such as rural Greece remnants of such attitudes still remain.
21. There is no adorning of the body beyond the use of clean clothing (cf. Kingshill 1976:207) although, in the case of those who die in hospital, bodily orifices may be plugged.
22. I did not witness this ritual sequence as I was in the village at the house of the deceased, but informant's descriptions suggest it was similar to those I had witnessed at previous funerals. Christians use the same "ready-made" coffins used by Buddhists. Depending on cost, they range from plain, unlined coffins with a stained finish, to lined coffins, with a painted exterior decorated by elaborate scroll work.
23. As I was known to have some knowledge of photography, my opinion was always asked about the choice of photograph to enlarge. However my choice, made in terms of contrast and clarity, was never considered adequate. This suggests that the difficulty which Christians encounter in the representation of the deceased is not primarily related to technical considerations.

24. In one case, at a funeral of a member of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid*, Buddhist relatives lit a lamp for the spirit, burned incense and provided it with food offerings. A visiting missionary was not impressed, but Christian family members said they permitted this to please (*aw caj*) the bereaved relatives.
25. Typical donations given by villagers are between 10 and 20 *baht*. Institutional offers of sponsorship are typically between 1000 and 2,000 baht.
26. There may be a relationship between the place of death and prohibitions regarding cooking in the deceased's house. However I have not encountered a Christian funeral where the death took place at home.
27. On this occasion, on the final night of the funeral, *Mae Dii's* daughter and her husband and children also watched over the corpse as a mark of respect and affection for the deceased.
28. I only encountered one movie at a Christian funeral, at the funeral of a man only recently converted to Christianity. Due to the expense, folk theatre is now only an option for the very rich and I have never encountered it at a village level funeral.
29. Buddhist informants claimed that the *khanun* leaves are used because they lift up (*nun*) the corpse.
30. Floral decorations are made in a variety of ways, often by the splitting of banana tree trunks in half and using them as a base in which to mount the stems of flowers. These are placed on and about the coffin. Artificial flowers may also be made by using the unrolled layers of the banana tree trunk to form leaves which are then sprayed with red paint. Photographs of previously successful decorations are frequently used as a guide.
31. The carriage is normally kept in a shelter to the North of the church
32. Christian informants claimed that the clothes of the deceased are disposed of in this manner as the living would not feel good about wearing the clothes of a dead person, suggesting contagion from the general inauspiciousness of death.

Chapter 6

HONOURING THE ANCESTORS: CHRISTIANITY, FAMILY AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF NORTHERN THAI MATRILINIY

I. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the Christian ancestor ritual (*phithii buuchaa banphaburud*, hereafter the homage ritual) and the Christian conception of ancestors.* I firstly discuss ancestor ritual as a social phenomenon and its relation to Christianity in a mission context. Following this, I examine the relatively poorly developed ancestor beliefs found amongst the Northern Thai. I then discuss the performance of the Christian ancestor rite and suggest that this ritual is fundamental in the constitution of the family centred model of kinship relations. I argue that through participation in the ritual, Christians constitute a descent relationship with ancestral Christians and, ipso facto, a kin relationship with their fellow Christians. I also hypothesize regarding the origin of this ritual. I suggest that it originated in a late nineteenth century transformation of ideas relating to Buddhist mortuary practices and ritual practices concerned with the matrilineal spirits (*phii buu njaa*), synthesised with rudimentary Christian understandings about death and the person of the deceased. Finally, I hypothesise regarding the future significance of the homage ritual and the family (*khrobkhrua*) as a means of kin organisation amongst *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* Christians.

In chapter five I suggested that the complex of two rituals relating to death and ancestors, constitute the central Christian rituals. There, in the context of an analysis of Christian mortuary ritual, I introduced the Christian conception of ancestors as sentient beings who retain an interest in the living. I now turn to the second ritual of this complex and discuss how Christians mediate relations with their ancestors through the medium of the homage ritual[1]. It is through participation in the homage that Christians signify membership of the family, a supra-household, supra-kindred group. While mortuary ritual relates to the formal institutional aspect of Christianity, the homage ritual relates to the informal dimension of indigenous village Christianity.

Firstly, with reference to African models, I discuss ancestor ritual (or, as it is variously known, ancestor worship or ancestor veneration) and the nature of the relationship between the living and their deceased ancestors. The African context, with both a high incidence of ancestor worship and widespread conversion to Christianity, constitutes a useful comparative case. Also, as ancestor worship among Northern Thai Christians exhibits some fundamental differences from its African counterpart, I am concerned to elicit the utility of the classical African models in the South East Asian context. I examine the relationship between Christianity and ancestor related beliefs and practices in a variety of African mission contexts. While Christianity is strongly opposed to ancestor related activity at the official or doctrinal level, in many cases a synthesis has taken place between Christianity and the old ancestor beliefs. I also point out that indigenous ancestor

beliefs not only persist in this synthesis, but that they may be used in the organisation of kin relations amongst the living.

Following this I examine Northern Thai beliefs and ritual practices relating to ancestors. These are found in both Buddhism and in the matrilineal spirit cult. The Buddhist ritual corpus includes mortuary and merit making practices which suggest at least the short-term survival of the identity of the deceased after death. The matrilineal spirit cult is only peripherally related to the survival of the identity of the deceased. However, I later suggest that in concert with Buddhist mortuary practices, ritual practices relating to the matrilineal spirits have been significant in the generation of Christian ancestor beliefs and practices.

I then move to my central focus of this chapter, the homage ritual. I begin with a detailed description of a particular ritual performance and then conduct an analysis of that performance. This has several major foci. As in previous chapters, I am generally interested in the Christian cosmology as revealed in this rite. I discuss the Christian concept of ancestors and the relation between the living and their deceased ancestors. Here, I suggest that although in chronological terms ancestors are not always structurally senior relatives, as deceased persons they are always viewed as being structurally senior to the living. Secondly, I am interested in the nature of the relationship which, through the homage ritual, Christians constitute between themselves and deceased ancestors. In chapter two, I argued that the family, constituted in relation to ancestral Christians, is the most fundamental kin group for *Baan*

Bohin/Baan Chiangseen Christians. Here, I discuss how Christians utilise ancestors and ancestor ritual in its constitution.

Finally, I suggest that the homage ritual derives from a synthesis between beliefs and practices relating to Buddhism and the matrilineal spirits and, Christianity. I make some propositions regarding its generation in the political context of the late nineteenth century and hypothesise regarding its future significance.

II. Ancestors and Ancestor Rituals

In many societies the deceased, as ancestors, play an integral part in daily life, as it is believed they continue to exert an influence on the lives of the living[2]. Rituals of sacrifice and offering are directed to them in order to ensure their benevolence or to ask their pardon for transgression. Such beliefs and ritual activities are usually termed ancestor worship or ancestor veneration. As Fortes (1987:68) puts it, in "ancestor worship...an ancestor receives ritual service and tendance directed specially to him by the proper class of his descendants".

The term ancestor worship tends to be misleading, as Fortes (1961), Kopytoff (1971), Mendonsa (1976), and West (1975) among others have pointed out, as the attitude toward ancestors is generally not one of worship. Fortes (ibid.) claims it is one of pietas, one of filial piety where ancestors represent the jural authority of the father-son relationship. In contrast Kopytoff (ibid.) claims that the attitude toward deceased is the same as that toward tribal elders, one of respect for age and that there

is no conceptual distinction made between these groups. I point out below that this is certainly not so in the case of Christian ancestor worship, where there is an absolute distinction between living elders and deceased ancestors (cf. Brain 1975). Mendonsa (1976) takes an intermediate position, claiming that the Sisala attitude toward ancestors is both one of respect rather than worship and, of fear, attitudes which are not held toward ordinary elders. Goody (1962:379), on the other hand, says that in this context he interprets worship as meaning acts of "propitiation" and "conciliation" directed to the deceased. My own approach, as will become clear in the following, tends towards that of Fortes. I claim that in the case of Northern Thai Christians ancestors are conceptualised as senior generations and are accorded the respect due to senior generations.

There is a good deal of variation in ancestor cults and Tatje and Hsu (1969) distinguish four categories of ancestor cult, with infinite local variations. Generally ancestors are believed to have the ability to exert benevolent and/or punitive influences over the lives of the living (Beidelman 1986; Fortes 1949, 1959, 1961, 1965, 1987; Goody 1962; Gluckman 1937; Kopytoff 1971; MacGaffey 1986; Middleton 1971; West 1975). Significantly, as all these authorities point out, ancestor worship is part of a wider social system. Ancestors derive their authority from parental authority, and their worship is related to descent and succession within the living generation.

III. Christianity and Ancestor Ritual

Since the early years of the Christian Church practices reminiscent of paganism, such as offerings to the dead, have been forbidden by the official Church (Ariès 1987:147). Until recently (Smith 1989:30) Christian missionaries have been similarly antagonistic to ancestor cults (Pauw 1963) and aimed at their eradication. In Africa during the 1940's and 1950's anthropologists such as Radcliffe-Brown claimed that in concert with the introduction of European culture, the effect of Christianity was to weaken ancestral cults. As Radcliffe-Brown put it, "The disintegration of the social structure and the decay of the ancestral cult proceed together" (1945:38). As a structural functionalist he considered that ancestor cults played a primary role in the constitution of group solidarity and viewed the two as disintegrating together (Radcliffe-Brown 1968:163-164). Schapera (1958:4) also, claimed that due to the introduction of Christianity ancestor worship has "virtually disappeared" amongst the Tswana.

In general, such views are not supported by contemporary ethnographic literature. This clearly demonstrates that in contexts of conversion to Christianity ancestor cults tend to be retained and that sometimes new groups are generated in a synthesis of new and pre-existing practices. Beidelman (1982) notes that among the Kaguru, converts retain a belief in ancestral spirits and that some draw parallels between their ancestor beliefs and Catholic beliefs regarding saints. Bond also (1987), claims that among the Yombe of Northern Zambia an ancestor cult co-exists with Protestant Christianity as part of a wider ritual field. Comaroff (1985) describes an analogous

situation among Tshidi Zionist churches where, in a synthesis of African and Christian beliefs, ancestors play a role of mediation between God and man. Middleton (1971) claims that although Lugbara Christian households may have no ancestor shrine, ancestors and the values they embody remain significant for Christians. Pauw (1975) notes that Xhosa Christians believe in the power of ancestors to intervene in their lives. Sanneh (1983) points out the assimilation of ancestor worship and Christianity in the Kimbanguist independent church in Zaire (cf. MacGaffey 1986; Thornton 1984). Schutte (1974) describes what he calls a dual religious orientation among the members of a Dutch Reform Church in Soweto, who retain some beliefs and practices concerning ancestors. West (1975) surveys a number of African independent churches where ancestor related activities take place alongside more formal Christian religious observances. Wilson and Mafeje (1963) claim that for the Langa, belief in God is combined with a belief in ancestral spirits (or as Wilson calls them shades).

Significantly, several ethnographers report instances where indigenous conceptions of ancestors not only persist among groups who convert to Christianity, but where they have been combined with Christian teachings about the ancestors. Clark (1985, 1989) discusses the Wiru in the Southern Highlands of New Guinea, who converted to Christianity in the early 1960's. He claims that among the Wiru, prior to contact and the entry of missionaries, both matrilineal and patrilineal ancestors were significant in the constitution of group identity. In particular, identity was constituted in relation to a cult centred about the propitiation of paternal ancestors. This was concerned with the growth of the

individual, group fecundity and warfare. Today, the Wiru belong to the Wesleyan mission in Takuru. Patrilineal descent groups are still organised about a core of male agnates who claim common descent, while ancestral spirits are condemned as satanic. However, Clark (1989:181) claims that this group now uses church membership as a means of making statements about group identity. He writes "Adam and Eve are envisaged as the ultimate apical agnates" and argues that this allows a notion of a much wider group membership than the previous model. Instead of groups belonging to cult houses, they now belong to various Christian denominations and are defined through these affiliations.

Similarly, deceased ancestors also play a significant role in the lives of the Merina of Madagascar (Bloch 1971, 1986). The largely Protestant Merina were first contacted by missionaries from the London Missionary Society in 1820 and later came under the influence of Catholicism. Yet, the Merina still perform rituals to deceased ancestors who are important in terms of control of land and as representatives of the moral values of the community[3]. Bloch claims that among the Merina relationships among the living are structured in terms of relationships constituted with deceased ancestors:

> there are no descent groups of the living, but there is a notion of descent groups in relation to the dead in the tomb (1971:165).

He says that individuals hold an ideal model of their kinship system as being one of segmented corporate groups. This is constituted through identification with ancestral tombs and deceased ancestors who are conceived of as a depersonalised but united group, no longer divided by the realities of kinship relations that cut across this ideal model.

These two cases are particularly significant for my discussion in this chapter. They demonstrate how Christian ideology, in concert with pre-existing ideas about ancestors, has been used by indigenous peoples to generate new possibilities of social organisation within the colonial or post-colonial mission context. I will argue that in Northern Thailand, both the political context and the relationship between pre-existing ancestor beliefs and introduced Christianity, were crucial in the generation of ideas about ancestors and an ancestor cult amongst the ancestors of *Khriscag Bohin*.

IV. Ancestors and Northern Thai Belief

In comparison with many other societies, ancestors play a relatively insignificant role in Northern Thailand. The Northern Thai have little interest in specific ancestors more than a few generations remote and genealogical data is rarely more than five generations deep (Potter 1976). There are, however, some general beliefs and practices relating to ancestors. These can be classified into two categories: those relating to Buddhism and those relating to the matrilineal spirits and their associated ritual complexes. In both cases these beliefs are poorly elaborated and are often internally contradictory.

Keyes claims that Buddhist teachings have left the Northern Thai little scope for the elaboration of beliefs about ancestors:

> belief in rebirth aborts a tendency on the part of Northern Thai to think of the dead as ancestors having persistent interest in the world of the living (Keyes 1987b:185).

As I have already pointed out, for Buddhists, following death and the appropriate performance of the mortuary rites, the spirit (*winjaan*) of the deceased is consigned to one of the many

Buddhist heavens and hells. Here it is uncontactable by the living, although merit made on ritual occasions such as the mortuary rite may be transferred to it in order to ameliorate its position. However, the merit is transferred to the spirit, Keyes' (1987b:198) "liminal essence", which is without an enduring human identity. Following a time in heaven or hell, depending on the *karma* of the individual, the spirit is eventually reborn into a new body and possesses a new identity and personality. The only link with previous existences is *karma* and the spirit, the essence or consciousness of the individual.

Nevertheless, there are a numbers of practices within Northern Thai Buddhism which are concerned with the transference of merit and/or goods to the deceased. These practices suggest that there are at least some minimal conceptions of the survival of the individual after death. As Keyes (1987b:199) points out, such practices constitute a form of ancestor worship. Terwiel (1979b:414-415) notes that the erection of "mortuary huts" over the grave to provide provisions for the *khwan* (or more likely the *winyaan*), is characteristic of archaic-*Tai* burial practices. Indeed, they are also characteristic of relatively contemporary mortuary practices. Cort (1886:365) notes a report of a Lao funeral practice where "Over the grave they erect a small bamboo house, and in it lay gifts for the dead", including cloths, food items, betel and tobacco. Curtis also (1903:154), reports the provision of food and clothing in the mortuary rite for the use of the spirit. The Northern Thai funeral rite witnessed by Pelmer (1907) included offerings of betel, fermented tea and personal goods for the deceased. Other mortuary practices such

as the putting of a coin in the mouth of the deceased (Anusaranasasanakiarti and Keyes 1980:7; Kickert 1960:73; Sanguan 1966:163; Tambiah 1977a:180) also suggest some form of enduring human identity after death. Thus, Satean (1989:60-66) and Somchai and Yunyong (1985:132) interpret this practice as providing money for the use of the deceased in the spirit world[4].

Writing of contemporary practices in the *Mae Sariang* district, Keyes (1987b:193-194) discusses the making of offerings to the deceased whereby a "miniature house filled with utensils and clothing" is offered to the monks with the intention that the essence (the merit) of the goods accrue to the deceased (see also Anusaranasasanakiarti and Keyes 1980:18). He points out (1987b:194) the ambiguity of the status of the deceased in popular Buddhist belief and the clear symbolism in this rite that the surviving essence of the deceased can utilise the goods. Sanguan (1966:241-243) also discusses this rite, the festival of rice [offerings] for the the *Sangha* (*phithii poj khaaw sang*), where the necessities of life are provided as if for the use of the spirit of the deceased. There are numerous other similar ethnographic reports. Kingshill (1976:228-229) discusses a ritual in *Ku Daeng* whereby, following a funeral, merit is made *"tham bun"* for the deceased at the temple. The ritual he describes includes the offering of a model house and various domestic articles to the monks in order that "the dead would receive them in the other world" (ibid.). Trankell (1987:642), reports the performance of a similar ritual amongst the *Tai Yong*. Tambiah also (ibid.:186-188), describes this ritual as performed in the North East. Following a funeral a representation of a palace (*praasaad peueng*) together with other gifts is presented to

the monks in order to provide for the deceased in heaven[5]. These practices all suggest that in popular Buddhist thought there is a conception of the survival of some form of individual identity, at least for a short time following death. They also suggest the possibility of at least a unidirectional contact between the living and the deceased during this period.

An alternative, if more controversial, group of practices relating to ancestors, are the beliefs and ritual activities concerning the matrilineal spirits (*phii buu njaa*). Turton (1972:237, 1975:233) claims these spirits represent a type of ancestor spirit. However, as previously pointed out, they are not true ancestral spirits (Cohen and Wijeyewardene 1984:249; Davis 1984:60; Wijeyewardene 1977:19). They are spirits inherited from ancestors, rather than the spirits of specific deceased ancestors, a distinction also made by Buddhist informants in *Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen*. Yet in their concern with reinforcing the authority of senior generations, the constitution of the domestic group and matters such as gender, sexuality and property, they fulfil the same function as an ancestor cult. Also, as Turton (1972:241-242, 1975:237-238) points out, as an inheritance from senior generations, in a sense they also represent the jural authority of those generations.

While they are certainly not ancestral spirits, I later argue that practices and ideas relating to the matrilineal spirits have been of primary significance in the constitution of contemporary Christian ancestor beliefs. I suggest that the idea of the constitution of the matrilineal group through the performance of corporate ritual directed to the matrilineal

spirits, the ritual practices themselves and, their timing, were particularly important.

V. Christian Beliefs About Ancestors

As noted in chapter four, according to the formal teachings of the Church of Christ in Thailand, Christians believe that following death the spirit of the deceased goes to heaven or hell. However, for most people, there is some ambiguity in beliefs about the exact nature and location of the spirit following death. Some informants claimed that it immediately enters heaven or hell while others suggested that it goes to a waiting place where it (the deceased person) has an opportunity to repent of unbelief. However, all conceptualised the deceased as retaining their individual identity and personality and, to some extent, their corporal identity. At the resurrection they expected to see people looking as they do in this life, only younger and in full health. I have pointed out the conflict encountered by Christians holding these beliefs, when confronted with the reality of death and the dissolution of the body.

In contrast with formal beliefs about the deceased articulated in the teachings of the Church of Christ in Thailand, *Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen* Christians have a number of other beliefs about ancestors. The deceased are not only remembered as genealogical ancestors, they are remembered as ancestors who, while not bodily present, are sentient ancestors who retain a benevolent interest in life on earth and whom their descendants expect to meet in heaven. Accordingly, as they believe their ancestors are still interested in the world of the living, Christians feel a responsibility for continuing their traditions

and practices. Most importantly, members of the family said that they must perform the homage ritual each year to pay homage to Christian ancestors.

However, the homage ritual incurs active opposition from *Aacaan Tongkham* and other ministers of the Church. They explained their opposition to this extra-Church ritual to the deceased, on the basis of the practice's theological error. They claimed that while not exactly anti-Christian, the homage ritual was theologically incorrect (*majthug*) and had to be opposed. *Aacaan Tongkham*, for example, interpreted the homage ritual as a corruption of Christian practice, rather than one directed to family unification. He opposes it firstly, through his refusal to participate and, secondly, in the active private discouragement of elders from holding the ritual. He has also attempted to incorporate it in the wider structure of *Khriscag Bohin's* Easter celebrations and has attempted to correct Christian ideas about ancestors through his preaching during the main Easter Sunday service. Thus, in the 1987 Easter Sunday service of worship, he spent some time discussing the relationship between the living and the deceased. As he put it regarding Christian ancestors "its not that they come to help us in doing things, they have no place to do this now, it is enough that we think of them". He then suggested that any assistance needed by the living should be sought from God.

This opposition is significant, as it emphasises the dualistic aspect of *Baan Bohin* Christianity. On the one hand, the members of *Khriscag Bohin* are members of the wider Church of Christ in Thailand and are subject to is rules and teachings. On

the other, they view Christianity and practices such as the homage ritual as their own historical possession, received from ancestral Christians and the opposition of the wider Church is met with a determination to carry on. In the case of *Aacaan Tongkham* his opposition is interpreted as the result of his lack of understanding of the ritual's significance. As one informant put it, "*Aacaan Tongkham* says its wrong, he does not understand as he does not belong, he is not necessary...we cannot change it".

VI. The Homage Ritual

The homage ritual takes place in the cemetery in the early hours of Easter Sunday morning each year. I have designated it the homage ritual, because this is what Christians say they do in the ritual. When questioned about its performance they say that they go to the cemetery to "*buuchaa banphaburud*" (to honour, or pay homage to the ancestors)[6]. Chronologically, at least, it has been incorporated in the ritual cycle of the Church, as it is encapsulated between an early morning Easter Sunday service in the church and the normal mid-morning Easter Sunday service of worship. By holding a short church service prior to the ritual's performance *Aacaan Tongkham* has attempted to give it a Christian emphasis.

Although I have not witnessed them, informants reported that Christians in some other centres also made offerings to their ancestors. However, they emphasised that the *Baan Bohin* homage ritual was unique, as only there did Christians and non-Christians, direct blood relatives and others, come together as a group to pay "*buuchaa*" (homage) and "*khawrob*"

(respect/esteem) to their ancestors, to show that they belong to the one family. They said that in other centres people merely made an offering of a garland (*phuangmaalaj*) to the deceased.

Khriscag Bohin's Easter celebrations vary slightly from year to year. Typically they follow the pattern discussed in chapter four, with between one and four nights of services prior to Good Friday. However, in 1987, due to the New Year celebrations of *Songkran* falling in the week prior to Easter, there was only one evening service prior to Good Friday[7]. Easter Friday evening has a major preaching service, Easter Saturday is reserved for private prayer and meditation, an early morning service is held on Easter Sunday prior to the performance of the homage ritual, followed by the normal Sunday worship service at 10 a.m. Although the Good Friday and Easter Sunday services are important in terms of formal Christian theology, for Christians the homage ritual is the most significant part of Easter.

Preparations for the 1987 homage ritual began on Easter Saturday afternoon when adult male members of the congregation gathered at the cemetery to tidy it up[8]. The cemetery clean-up was similar to that conducted during the performance of the mortuary ritual. It comprised cutting the grass, and the collection and burning of dead tree branches and the left over debris from funerals (coffin lids and foam wreaths). As I previously pointed out, this is not just a process of cleaning but is the fulfilment of a responsibility toward ancestors.

Later as darkness fell, Christians went to the cemetery in small groups and marked the commencement of the ritual period by

placing a lighted candle (or candles) on crosses marking the graves of relatives. On this evening, also, families made their preparations for the ritual, the purchase of flowers and candles, incense and plastic bags of the mix of perfumed herbs and flower petals used to make lustral water (*nam sompauy*).

On Easter Sunday, villagers were woken up at 4 a.m. by music played over the church's public address system. Over the next hour a series of announcements called people to an open air service of worship, held by *Aacaan Tongkham* in the church compound, prior to the performance of the homage ritual. As in the case of the mortuary rite, the music played is non-percussive, a blend of hymns and everyday music. The musical preamble to the 1987 homage ritual comprised instrumental versions of Abide With Me and When Irish Eyes Are Smiling. I have discussed the role of music and noise as a marker of transition and of spacio-temporal boundaries and, as a means of occupying space. In this case, music is only played prior to the official church component of the ritual, while the homage ritual is conducted in silence. However, in announcing the service of worship, at the same time, albeit temporarily, the music occupies the space in which the homage ritual will be performed. As such, like the service of worship it announces, it attempts to incorporate the homage ritual within the compass of official religious practice.

As people arrived for the open air service in the church compound they brought with them their ritual implements (*khryang phithii*), candles, flowers, freshly made lustral water and, for some, incense. These were placed on a table to one side of the

church, away from the main ritual stage where the service is held. In contrast to the mortuary rite where no specific varieties of flowers, or colours are used, in the homage ritual the flowers are the cheaper, less beautiful varieties. Informants say that this is the case as they are an offering of respect for the ancestors and not for public display. Also, in contrast to the sombre colours of the mortuary rite, are the colours of the clothing worn by participants in the homage ritual. Unlike the dark colours worn during the performance of the mortuary rite, many of those participating in the homage ritual wear light colours, clearly symbolising the rite as relating to living ancestors. Although clothing is every-day type clothing, it is fresh and clean, as a demonstration of respect for the ancestors.

The service commenced at 5.15 a.m. following the format of the normal Sunday service of worship, although incorporating a dramatic presentation by the youth group. This took the form of a short procession carrying the symbols of Easter, the cross, the Bible and the crown of thorns worn by Jesus at his crucifixion. They then explained the meaning of these symbols in a brief dramatic reading of the Easter story. The accompanying sermon retold the Easter story and drew out the Christian message of the death and resurrection of Christ. It explained that those who have faith in Christ, like him, will not die, but following death will have a rebirth and eternal life with God in heaven. People were then invited to pray for their deceased ancestors, Buddhist or Christian, that they might be in heaven. Following a short Easter egg hunt at the conclusion of the service, *Aacaan Tongkham* retired into his house as a mark of opposition to the ritual.

At this time, about 5.45 a.m. people were still arriving at the church. These late arrivals were mainly households comprising some non-Christian members who did not attend *Khriscag Bohin*, or who were not normally resident in the village. Most waited outside the church compound and did not participate in the service. These informants later explained that their participation in the homage ritual was concerned with the constitution of the family, not with *Khriscag Bohin* or the Church of Christ in Thailand.

At this point, the homage ritual proper commenced. People gathered their ritual implements from where they had been placed prior to the formal Church service and started to walk the kilometre to the cemetery in an informal procession. This had no formal leaders and no formal groupings. Some walked in family groups some walked with friends, while a few walked alone carrying their bowls of lustral water and the other ritual implements. In total, the procession and subsequent ritual involved about one hundred and twenty people, including a number of children who, as I discuss in the following, played an integral part in the ritual's performance. It also included most of the old people of the congregation, who were not marginalised as was the case during the performance of mortuary ritual. That these old people participate in paying homage to their ancestors, suggests that for the Northern Thai Christians an absolute distinction is made between the elderly living members of the group, and their deceased ancestors (cf. Kopytoff 1971).

The informal procession from the village to the cemetery is important as it physically marks the transition from the

threshold to the liminal period of the rite. This is a transition from the sphere of the living to the sphere of the dead and, to a place and time where contact can be made with the dead, who normally cannot be contacted. The possibility of this is, I suggest, inherent in the characteristics of the liminal period itself. Liminality is, as Turner (1987:96) puts it, a "moment in and out of time". It is here where the normal social classifications such as the separation between the living and the dead do not apply and are able to be transcended. Places such as cemeteries, churches and shrines are, as pointed out, permanent liminal zones (Leach 1976:82) and possess the qualities of both this and the other world. To move to the cemetery is to move toward the deceased.

The passage by the living to the cemetery is also a replication of the passage of the corpse of all ancestors who, on their death, were taken out of the village to the cemetery. As in that procession the passage of the living to the cemetery is only temporary and it is the living who control the process. It is the living who go to contact and pay homage to their ancestors, the deceased cannot contact the living. However, in this case it is a procession of family members, not a procession led by *Aacaan Tongkham* and other representatives of the official Church. Also, the nature of the procession is different. The procession in the mortuary rite is orderly and structured as people pull the corpse to the cemetery. In the homage ritual the procession is disorderly and unstructured as people wander to the cemetery. The disorder of life, contrasts with the order of death.

When the procession reached the cemetery people filed into the cemetery grounds. One or two moved to specific grave sites on the Western and Southern sides of the cemetery and a group moved to the Eastern side, where they commenced acts of homage. However, most people stood inside Western gate and waited for a Christian elder to commence the first act of homage at the grave site of *Gaaw* (the first Christian). Concomitantly, *Gaaw's* youngest son, *Khambuan*, commenced an act of homage at the adjacent grave of his mother. As they commenced these initial acts of homage, there was a general move by the waiting group to commence their own acts of homage at the graves of their immediate ancestors. Due to the number of people wanting to commence acts of homage, at this stage of the ritual it is common for concomitant acts of homage to be performed at the same grave.

The homage act itself involves the individual approaching the selected grave and kneeling down either behind, or in front of the cross. Several flowers are selected from his/her bunch of flowers and the ritual performer then sprinkles lustral water on the cross using a brush made from flowers (an alternative method sometimes used, is to sprinkle it from the fingers, or to tip it from the bowl). At this point, those few who use incense light one stick and place it in the ground near the cross[9]. He/she then *waaj's* the grave as a gesture of respect for the deceased and prays silently (sometimes for two or three minutes) with the hands in the *waaj* position. During this period the flowers are usually held between the hands, in a position similar to that used by Buddhists at the temple. When the prayer is finished, the flowers are placed on the grave and one or more candles are

lit and placed on the cross. Prior to leaving the grave the deceased is usually given a final *waaj*.

That the rite is not a Christian ritual in derivation is apparent in the ritual implements used in performing the act of homage. In contrast to the specific emphasis on the manipulation Christian symbols in the formal Church service preceding the homage ritual, the ritual itself uses no symbols that are specifically Christian. The ritual implements described above are those normally used in Northern Thai Buddhist ritual to demonstrate respect/homage (*khryang buuchaa*) (Singkha 1978:92). Informants claimed they are used because they are the traditional implements used in Northern Thailand to demonstrate respect and are the only ones that the ancestors would recognise.

During the homage ritual people move about the cemetery either as individuals, or small family groups of a parent and children, performing acts of homage for deceased siblings, parents, or grandparents. Children accompany one of their parents or some other close relative. At each grave site they are told about their descent relation from the ancestor for whom the ritual is to be performed and are encouraged to make their own act of homage and prayer. They, in turn, teach these models of descent to others. In one instance I witnessed a group of children of about twelve years old guiding a group of younger siblings and friends about the graves and teaching them about descent relations. Similar explanations of descent relations are given to in-marrying spouses who participate in the ritual for the first time.

Each act of homage takes approximately between two and five minutes. There is a great deal of variation between individual acts of homage and no sense in which the efficacy of the act is dependent upon a specific invariant format. Participants, both male and female, may act autonomously, performing acts of homage at each selected grave site. For onlookers, there is no specific sense of sacredness when the act of homage is being performed, people mill about talking as they wait their turn, and some stand or kneel on graves to get to get to a good position.

Acts of homage are performed sequentially in terms of the closeness of relatives, or convenience according to congestion in the cemetery and the layout of the graves. In most cases people perform the homage ritual for deceased spouses, followed by parents and then more remote relatives. After paying homage to the most significant relatives, any leftover flowers are used to pay homage at the graves of less closely related persons. At this point the orientation of the acts of homage have a high degree of randomness and people merely pay homage at convenient graves until their ritual implements are exhausted.

In one case I observed a woman who was about to commence the ritual at a grave site without a cross, ask another women who had just completed her act of homage "who is this?". The answer she received was "[I] don't know". This suggests that while one aspect of the homage ritual is the constitution of links to named ancestors, ancestors as undifferentiated members of an ancestral group are also significant for the construction of links between the present and the past. This conforms to the logic of the ritual which, in an overall sense, constitutes a corporate

demonstration of homage to their ancestors, by the members of the family.

Interaction with ancestors during the homage ritual is of two types. Firstly, there is the payment of homage. Secondly, the ritual performer prays to God and to the deceased, and talks with the deceased. However, there is no sense in which deceased ancestors act as intermediaries with God as is the case in some African Christian groups (cf. West 1975).

I have already introduced the question of the attitude of the living toward ancestors which has been variously described as one of worship, pietas, respect, or propitiation. In the case of Northern Thai Christians the attitude toward ancestors is one of homage (*buuchaa*) or, as it is sometimes put, homage and respect/esteem (*khawrob buuchaa*). Homage and a demonstration of respect is paid to the deceased by the *waaj* given them at their grave and the pouring of lustral water over the cross, in the presentation of flowers, in the lighting of the candles and, for those who use it, in the lighting of incense. It is paid to ancestors partly in memory of the good they did during their lives but, is it primarily respect due to them by virtue of their senior structural position, which is normally that of parents or grandparents, or their collateral relatives.

However, the use of *buuchaa*, a term normally reserved for those of high status such as monks, suggests that ancestors are accorded the higher status of senior structural positions, regardless of their age or status at death[10]. Thus, the value of hierarchy between seniors and juniors, a fundamental axis of

interpersonal relations in Northern Thailand, is preserved in the relationship between the living and the dead. This, too, as previously pointed out, suggests that Northern Thai Christians make an absolute distinction between the living and the dead. Both linguistically and practically, in day to day life, living elders occupy a fundamentally different classificatory category to that occupied by the deceased. For Northern Thai Christians, ancestors are the deceased relatives of the living and are paid homage on that basis.

The pouring of lustral water over the cross or at its base also suggests that ancestors are conceptualised as being structurally senior to the living. Lustral water is normally used in rituals such as the *dam hua* ritual to show respect to structurally senior figures such as parents, elders, authority figures and monks. The use of water in this context has one other significance. In her analysis of Greek mortuary rites Danforth (1982:33, 106-112) suggests there is an association between water and rituals that aim at bridging the gap between the living and the dead. Its inherent qualities oppose desiccation and its flow is symbolic both of a passing of time and of a bridging of the gulf between the living and the dead.

The Northern Thai say that water possess the qualities of being soft and cooling, of cleanliness and, in the case of lustral water, that it is fragrant. It is used in rites of transition, such as marriage and in those rituals concerned with death and the deceased. It is particularly prominent in the latter complex of rituals. At funerals the corpse is washed after death (*ab nam sob*), monks pour water (*jaadnam*) to make

merit as the corpse is transferred to the coffin and later this is repeated in the *bangsukun* ceremony prior to the cremation (in this ceremony the monks meditate on the corpse and receive new robes, which they pull from where they have been attached to the coffin)[11]. Also prior to the cremation guests and relatives pour water on the corpse to make merit (*laang naa sob*) (Anusaranasasanakiarti and Keyes 1980; Nantajar n.d.; Sanguan 1966; Tambiah 1977a). Thus, I suggest a strong association between water and transition is found amongst the Northern Thai and that its use in the homage ritual is also concerned with bridging the gulf between the living and their deceased ancestors.

The other aspect of interaction with ancestors in the homage ritual is prayer to God and, if the deceased is a close relative, the ritual performer may talk with him/her. Prayers to God were silent. They usually asked that the spirit of the deceased be in heaven, that its time there be untroubled and that the deceased be given new life at the resurrection. They asked God's blessing on the congregation and that the supplicant and his/her descendants might have a long life and be preserved from danger.

Like the prayers to God, conversations with the deceased were silent and, as they concerned private matters, some ritual performers were loth to divulge precise details. They ranged from asking the spirit of the deceased to be with the living and give them happiness and peace, to asking parents to guide children from doing wrong and from the untoward results of inadvertent error. In the case of spouses separated by death, or

of young children with a deceased parent, conversations with the deceased were more personal, as the living told their loved ones of their trials and achievements over the past year. Not every act of homage included this form of communication with the deceased. The random pattern of homage included only a brief prayer to God.

It is significant that communication with ancestors in this ritual is conceptualised as direct communication with the deceased that is not possible outside of the ritual context. *Aacaan Tongkham* and other representatives of the Church have striven to interpret the rite as a memorial to the deceased and one that is an offering of respect to them. However, ritual performers clearly distinguished their communication with deceased ancestors from such interpretations. The term *ralyg*, meaning to remember or think of, was never used in any context dealing with the homage ritual. Also, when discussing their conversations with the deceased, ritual performers used the terms *borg* (meaning to tell) or *khor* (meaning to ask for), which suggest acts in the contemporaneous present.

The homage ritual commences just before 6.00 a.m. in darkness, as the sky is about to lighten and is complete half an hour later when the sky is light and the sun almost up. I suggest that the timing of the ritual is significant. It is performed at a time of structural liminality, when it is neither light nor dark. As I have pointed out, it is at such liminal periods when the boundary between life and death is most likely to be rendered permeable. Thus, the ritual is not only held in a context that is socially and geographically constituted as a

liminal space (see my analysis in the previous chapter regarding the layout of the cemetery), it is held during a period of chronological liminality[12]. It is also significant that this is an inversion of normal Northern Thai ritual practices, where taboos normally forbid the crossing of temporal boundaries Davis (1974:16). With respect to the Northern Thai Buddhist mortuary rite, he points out (ibid.) that neither cremations nor burials may be held at dawn or dusk.

Just after 6.30 a.m., as the sun comes up, almost everyone has completed their acts of homage, people have discarded any remaining ritual implements and are moving back to the village. As in the transition to the liminal phase of the rite, the transition back to normal society is physically symbolised in the procession back to the village. In contrast to the corporate procession by which people came to the cemetery, on their return to the village people leave individually and walk home alone or with only one or two companions. Again the randomness and disorder of the ritual participant's return to the village contrasts with the relatively ordered groups who return from the cemetery following a mortuary ritual.

The next three hours sees a variety of stragglers going to the cemetery to perform solitary acts of homage. These people range from those too lazy to get up at 4 a.m. to those unable to attend until they have finished selling in the early-morning market. This is also the time when some members of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid*, who officially do not participate in the ritual, go to the cemetery to perform acts of homage to their deceased relatives. Even though these late comers perform their acts of

homage alone, others watch their path to the cemetery and most members of the family are aware that these persons have joined in paying homage to the ancestors. Usually these acts of homage performed in bright sunlight are more perfunctory than those performed during the main ritual period.

VII. The Role Of The Homage Ritual

Participation in the homage ritual functions as a means of constituting descent links with *Gaaw*, the first Christian and, ipso facto, as a statement of membership of the family. Through paying homage to ancestors in this way Christians legitimate their tracing of descent along particular descent paths from *Gaaw* and other ancestral Christians and show that they belong to the family. As *Khambuan* put it when discussing the ritual "this is important, this is about the family [*khrobkhrua*]" and, later:

> People from remote areas come, even though they are Buddhist, to pay homage to the descent line [*khawrob trakuun*], [they] do this to prevent the descent line [*trakuun*] being scattered, or people falling out.

Thus participation in the rite is particularly important for people such as Buddhist spouses and those whose structural position or religion makes their social affiliation ambiguous. As I have previously pointed out, by constituting kin relations with reference to *Gaaw* and other ancestral Christians, members of the family extend the network of people considered as kin far wider than the encompass of the kindred or the Buddhist matrilineal spirit clan grouping.

The ritual also functions as an arena which allows individuals to make symbolic statements regarding the legitimacy of their descent from ancestral Christians. Further, it allows people to legitimate their position within the family by appeal

to the authority of Christian ancestors. This is most noticeable in the case of some Christians who make the initial acts of homage at *Gaaw's* grave. The first act of homage, at each ritual I witnessed, was made by a descendant of *Gaaw* via a matrilineal link, a link which direct patrilineal descendants consider illegitimate. However, through making first public acts of homage, the ritual performer laid claim to legitimate descent status and to *Gaaw's* ancestral authority.

Most importantly, the homage ritual is the primary locus for the generation and teaching of the Christian version of descent relations discussed in chapter two. I pointed out there, how the pattern of adoption of surnames in the first generations of Christians, now obscures the genealogical pattern of descent. I also noted that Christians consider they are closely related and say they are the one family. Yet, I showed that by the conventions of the Northern Thai kinship system, or by the standards of any consistent model of kinship, most Christians are, at best, only distantly related. Thus, the teaching of children and spouses about descent relations during the performance of the ritual comprises more than mere didacticism. It is a process which comprises the selection and emphasising of specific ancestral links and the omission or de-emphasising of others.

The physical layout of the cemetery and the marking, or failure to mark graves is also significant in this respect. The grave layout and pattern of marking/naming constitutes statements about descent and affiliation to the family, rather than statements about genealogy or religious affiliation (cf. Young

1960 who claims that cemeteries provide concrete quantifiable data about familism). By virtue of the pattern of naming graves, particular descent paths to *Gaaw* are emphasised over other less legitimate lines. Some graves have no cross and no identifying surname, others are identified by surnames that are misleading in that they do not reflect the person's use of the surname during his/her lifetime, or the way in which it was passed on to their descendants.

The graves of ambiguous persons, such as *Gaaw's* servant and his wife and *Dun's* husband who, although not descendants of *Gaaw* gave the surname *Rangsan* to their children, are not marked and do not feature in the ritual. Similarly, while *Bun's* grave is marked with the surname *Rangsan*, linking her closely with the *Rangsan* family, her husband's grave is marked with his surname. This allocates him a more peripheral position within the family and obscures the fact that when alive he took his wife's surname and passed it on to their children.

Equally significant is the placement of graves. Persons who are important in constituting descent lines are grouped together, while ambiguous or problematical graves are placed to one side (often remote from that of their spouse) and are usually not clearly marked. The graves of Christian ancestors are used, then, to construct an ideal model of Christian descent from *Gaaw* (see Bloch and Parry 1982:32-36 regarding the use of tombs in the constitution of an ideal model of Merina descent). In turn, this model of descent is used the constitution of the family. As one informant put it in regard to the order of the rite, "you must

start with *Noi Gaaw* first, as he is the beginning" (although as I pointed above this is not the case for most people).

The life histories of individuals and histories of the congregation (*Khambuan* n.d.; *Prachun* n.d.), which I mentioned in the previous chapter are also important in this respect. They are deliberate attempts to constitute a version of the past which integrates both general knowledge about descent relations and the version of descent constituted in the layout and marking of graves in the cemetery. They codify what is taught to children and spouses in an ad hoc fashion during the performance of the homage ritual. With titles such as A Tribute to the Faith of the Ancestors of *Khriscag Bohin* (Prachun n.d.), they constitute mythic accounts of the creation, unification and social placement of the congregation. I suggest that the generation of such accounts of the past is due to two factors. Firstly, in the present day, family elders find it increasingly difficult to unite the family as a geographically localised group. This is primarily due to the sorts of changes I discussed in chapter two and their impact on rural life. Secondly, it constitutes an attempt by second and third generation Christians to control perceptions of the past and, understandings of relationships in the present, part of what I have termed the moral dimension of the family.

I have pointed out how, through a family centred pattern of post-marital residence, Christians have attempted to prevent the fragmentation of the group of living Christians. Also, in chapter five, I discussed the Christian denial of the loss of bodily fluids following death and their attempts to contain

bodily fluids through burial in a brick and concrete enclosure. Such practices aim at preventing the fragmentation or loss of ancestral substance. A similar emphasis on preventing fragmentation of the ancestral body is found in relation to Christian burial practices. Since the late nineteenth century, members of the family who die in remote centres have almost always been returned to the village for their funeral and subsequent burial. These persons are usually buried beside other members of their households.

Christian attempts to prevent fragmentation of the ancestral body extends to Christians who "become" Buddhists on marriage to Buddhist spouses. In some cases, people in this category may be given a Christian funeral and buried as a Christian. However, while this indicates an attempt to prevent the fragmentation of the body of ancestral Christians, as is consistent with the logic of a linear life span, there is no conception of a recycling of essence. It also suggests that *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* Christians are less concerned with formal doctrinal issues or with religious affiliation, than they are with the constitution of the family.

In most respects then, the *Baan Bohin/Baan Chiangseen* Christian ancestor cult appears to be a fairly typical ancestor cult. Ancestors are the deceased members of senior generations. As such they represent the authority of those senior generations over the living, just as the living senior generations have authority over junior generations. Offerings and homage are given them in the homage ritual, in recognition of that position and in order they will assist the living in their life projects.

Similarly, in the *dam hua* ritual, offerings are made to members of the living senior generations, in recognition of their senior jural position. Significantly, the distinction between the deceased and senior members of the living generation is symbolised in the offerings presented in these two rituals. The offerings given to the deceased are fundamentally different from those given to the living. Christian dead have no need of goods from the living, and in the homage ritual they are only offered respect (cf. the offerings given to the deceased in the Buddhist *phithii poj khaaw sang*). In contrast, members of living senior generations are offered both respect and a basket of goods containing food, spices and clothing, which may be used in daily life.

However, the Christian ancestor cult is different from the majority of African ancestor cults in one respect. Failure to pay homage to ancestral Christians does not bring any punishment from ancestors. Cohen (n.d.), in a discussion of the status of the matrilineal cult, claims it is not an ancestor cult as the matrilineal spirits do not punish unfilial conduct toward either living or deceased parents. I make no suggestion that the matrilineal spirits constitute the focus of a matrilineal ancestor cult. As noted here and in chapter three, informants conceptualise the matrilineal spirits as spirits who belonged to the ancestors. However, I point out that the relationships and normal behaviours between senior and junior generations varies widely between cultures. I suggest that given this variation, the behaviour of ancestors will also vary and that the form of highly punitive behaviour characteristic of African ancestors, is not necessarily typical of ancestors in other cultural contexts.

The ethnographic literature dealing with ancestor cults recognises that the image of ancestors is modelled on the world of the living. As Beidelman (1986:118-119) puts it in regard to Kaguru ancestors "the dead embody another mode of the same contradictions and conflicts that disturb the living". Similarly, in respect to the Tallensi, Fortes (1959:28) notes that due to the rights exercised by Tallensi fathers over their grown up sons, "The image emerges of the father as a taskmaster and minor despot.". In an earlier work (1949:222-231) Fortes notes that the parent-child relation among the Tallensi is characterised by tension and that:

> ancestors are apt to be demanding, persecutory, and interfering for one reason because parents appear thus to their children when they are exercising authority over them (ibid.:140)**

In contrast to the situation amongst the Tallensi, parent-child relations and child rearing practices among the Thai are fairly relaxed. The world of the Thai child, according to Mulder (1985:91), is one where:

> The inner world of family and community, as it is initially presented, is a good and gentle world, indulgent and reliable, stimulating attitudes of dependence most of all. One learns to trust the goodness and the guidance of the mother, of parents, of the Buddha, and of old and wise persons.

Failure to fulfil responsibilities towards parents is met with discouragement, rather than direct punishment. Such discouragement takes the form of parental and community disapproval, with the threat of disinheritance being the ultimate sanction of senior generations (Cohen n.d.:4-5). Phillips also (1970:34), points out the general benevolence of Thai child rearing patterns. He says that *Bang Chan* parents inculcate good habits:

> through example, coaxing, and whipping ... although villages are more prone to talk about whippings than actually give them; most are too tender-hearted, and the rare whipping is almost always the result of sudden rage.

Given this generally benevolent attitude toward children, one would not expect ancestors in a Thai ancestral cult to exhibit the punitive qualities typical of African ancestors. Furthermore, given the Thai emphasis on the maintenance of *cajjen* (cool heart) and a smooth veneer over all social transactions (Mulder 1985:57-108), one might expect a Thai ancestors cult to exhibit just the form of behaviour found with the ancestors of the family.

VIII. Genesis of the Homage Ritual

In origin the homage ritual is most likely a transformation of the rituals performed to the matrilineal spirits which, as have noted in chapter three, were strongly opposed by the missionaries. Talking with *Khambuan* about the meaning of the homage ritual following its 1987 performance, he explained that just as people once made offerings in their houses to pay homage to the ancestors, offerings are now made to ancestors in the cemetery by the whole family. Moreover, when discussing relationships amongst the members of the family he said: "we cannot quarrel, we are relatives, people in the North say we are of the same spirit [*phii diawkan*]". This indicates the kind of relationship which members of the family believe they share. As previously pointed out, this term is normally used to describe the relationship existing between people sharing matrilineal links (Davis 1973:57, 1984:59; Turton 1972:220, 1975:216) not the broad group that contemporary *Baan Bohin* Christians call family.

While Christians do not respect (*thyy*) the matrilineal spirits, informant's accounts suggest that from the time of the first Christian burials, *Gaaw* made some form of offering (in the cemetery) to deceased ancestors at Easter. Of these, the first confirmed report is that mentioned in the previous chapter, when offerings were made by *Taa* at the site of *Pau Tib's* grave about 1940 (subsequent to *Gaaw's* death). I suggest that the timing of these Christian offerings to the deceased is highly significant. Easter occurs at the same general time as the Northern Thai New Year, a time when offerings are normally made to the matrilineal spirits (Cohen n.d.; Cohen and Wijeyewardene 1984; Davis 1973, 1984; Turton 1972, 1975) and when offerings are made to the living senior members of the community in the *dam hua* ritual.

I suggest then, that the practice of making offerings to deceased ancestors developed following acceptance of the Christian idea of the continuation of individual identity after death and the suppression of activities directed to the matrilineal spirits. The former led to the development of ideas about Christian ancestors and, when ritual practices directed to the matrilineal spirits were abandoned, "new" ritual practices were developed and directed to ancestral Christians. Originally an occasion for only modest offerings to the deceased, I suggest that the homage ritual initially functioned as a a rite of communication with Christian ancestors, prior to acquiring its present significance as a means of constituting descent relations and of symbolising incorporation in the family.

The adoption of Christian mortuary practices has also played an important part in the development of ideas about

deceased ancestors and the institution of the homage ritual. Unlike *Baan Bohin* Buddhist mortuary practice, the Christian practice of burial in marked graves leaves a permanent record of deceased ancestors as a focus for ritual practice. Significantly, as I have noted here and in chapter five, although this record appears permanent it is malleable and allows for the incorporation of affines and other affiliates of the family. The homage ritual then, developed concomitantly with the Christian funeral rite. Later, like the funeral rite, it was further elaborated following the foundation of *Khriscag Bohin* in the 1950's.

An equally significant factor in the generation of the homage ritual has been the manner in which it has been utilised in the unification and manipulation relationships within the family. I have already discussed how, in the political and economic conditions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, *Gaaw* used marriage patterns, patterns of naming and Christian religious affiliation, in the interests of strengthening and expanding his family unit. Although it could not be practiced until the first generations of the family were deceased, the homage ritual also acts in the interests of the strengthening of the group. Through the corporate performance of the homage ritual the family is unified in relation to ancestral Christians and is able to incorporate new members, such as in-marrying spouses, regardless of their religion.

The transformation of ideologies of descent and group membership to constitute bodies such as the family, is a phenomenon common to many bilateral societies. Leach (1973:53)

points out that groups with an alternative descent ideology may well form within bilateral kinship structures. He discusses the formation of a patrilineal descent ideology among the landed gentry class of eighteenth and nineteenth century England and the upper elite of the Kandyan ruling class and claims that such groups may form in bilateral kinship structures, "where such structures are associated with well developed notions of individual property". He continues:

> it is not uncommon to find that the practice of marriage and the rules of inheritance among the property owning sector of the community have been so contrived as to create notionally permanent property owning corporations (ibid.).

Even more significant is the work of Levi-Strauss (1982, 1987), who suggests that models of kinship organisation such as the family may develop in contexts of a general disruption and hiatus in power relationships, such as existed in Northern Thailand in the late nineteenth century. He proposes the house, as an alternative model for understanding social structure in cognatic societies. By house he means the house as a corporate group in the sense of the medieval house:

> a moral person possessing a domain, perpetuated by transmission of its name, wealth and titles through a real or fictitious descent line which is recognized as legitimate as long as the continuity can be expressed in the language of descent, of alliance or, most often, of both together (1987:152).

Levi-Strauss claims that the "domain" may consist of material or immaterial wealth, or "honours", and that the "honours" includes goods of supernatural origin. He cites ethnographic data from a wide range of cognatic societies ranging from Indonesia (the Daro Batak of Sumatra and the Atoniv of Timor), to Melanesia (the Mae Enga, Etoro), Polynesia (Fijian), as well as New Zealand, Madagascar, Micronesia and Africa, in

order to demonstrate its ubiquity as a category of social structure.

As a model of kin relations among Christians, the family is clearly of the same structural type as Levi-Strauss' "house". It shares the same central characteristics of alliance about a core group of families, traces its composition by means of fictitious descent and relations between members are constituted in terms of both descent and alliance. However, I emphasise that what is crucial in the generation of such structures is the role of ideology and of intent. As I have pointed out, religious ideology and deliberate strategies of domestic organisation, have been of primary significance in constituting the family as an economically and socially powerful local group. Also, as argued in earlier chapters, the broader political and economic contexts in which these strategies were enacted and the whims of historical chance have also been of major significance.

IX. Summary

In this chapter I have discussed the homage ritual, which Christians perform to constitute and demonstrate their descent relation to ancestral Christians and ipso facto their own interrelatedness as the one family. Through their participation in this ritual, Christians publicly demonstrate their relationships with deceased Christians and ultimately to the founding Christian ancestor, *Gaaw*. In this, they validate their membership in the Christian kin group they call the family. Although their genealogical relationship to *Gaaw* may be tenuous, as I have demonstrated, they simultaneously constitute a relationship to other present day Christians, through

constituting a relationship to him and deceased Christians in the homage ritual. My analysis of the homage ritual has, firstly, aimed to show the significance of ancestors and the homage ritual in the constitution of the family. Secondly, I have been concerned to produce a general hypothesis regarding the generation of this kin group and the homage ritual.

I commenced by examining ancestor ritual and its relationship to conversion to Christianity. Here, I indicated that in numerous ethnographic contexts a synthesis has been created between introduced Christianity and pre-existing ancestor beliefs. I also examined Northern Thai beliefs regarding ancestors and suggested that, although they are not well elaborated, there are practices within Northern Thai Buddhism which suggest some form of survival of the identity of the deceased after death.

I have suggested that ideas concerning Christian ancestors and the homage ritual, were generated following the introduction of Christianity and Christian ritual practices into Northern Thailand and the concomitant abandonment of Buddhist and matrilineal spirit ritual practices. I argued that Christian beliefs about ancestors represent a synthesis of Christian teachings about resurrection and eternal life, of Buddhist teachings about rebirth and of beliefs regarding the matrilineal spirits. I also noted that although the conception of benevolent ancestors held by the members of *Khriscag Bohin* is at variance with the conception of punitive ancestors found in many other contexts, this is a function of the wider social system. Ancestors represent the authority of senior generations and, in

Thailand, this authority is perceived as being relatively benevolent.

Significantly, the homage ritual has not been static, but has been elaborated through time, suggesting its elaboration is consonant with the need for the unification of the family. Given the kinds of changes which, as I pointed out in chapter two, are being experienced in rural villages such as *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen*, it might be expected that the homage ritual will undergo significant transformations in the future. As increasing numbers of Christians gain post-secondary qualifications or other formal job training, an increasing number of young people will be required to find employment in Bangkok or other major urban centres. For these people full-time residence in the village will no longer be possible. For them, the values of the family which I delineated in earlier sections of this thesis, will increasingly resemble an ideal, rather than a way of life that is attainable for all. I suggest that for these individuals, the homage ritual, rather than a particular parochial life-style, will be increasingly significant as a means of demonstrating their membership of the family. Thus, I expect a a continuing elaboration of the homage ritual and expect that in the future it will acquire an even greater prominence as a means of unifying the family.

I argued, in chapter five, that my analysis of the Northern Thai Christian mortuary rite challenges Hertz' (1960) view that the abandonment of secondary processing of the corpse is due to acculturation. My analysis of the Christian ancestor ritual raises an additional challenge for Hertz's approach to the

secondary processing of the corpse. Hertz considered secondary processing of the corpse to be almost a cultural universal, as he believed it was necessary to have a period of time between the death of the person and the final acceptance of the deceased as an ancestral being. He claims (Hertz 196081-82):

> We cannot bring ourselves to consider the deceased as dead straight away.... There is too deep an opposition between the persisting image of a familiar person who is like ourselves and the image of an ancestor, who is sometimes worshipped and always distant, for this second image to replace the former immediately.

Thus, in respect to the Thai Buddhist mortuary rite, Keyes (1982:171) argues that protracted period between the death and cremation of Buddhist saints or high ranking persons is necessary as:

> the images that they projected during their lifetimes were extremely powerful ones and could not be erased by the sheer act of cremating their remains.

He claims, that following the interval between death and cremation, the living "are better able to accept the new image ... of the deceased (ibid.) as portrayed on artifacts such as reliquary monuments or medallions. Similarly Turton (1975:250), arguing in regard to the nature of the matrilineal spirits, claims "it would be problematic to have recently dead kinsmen as enduring ancestral spirits".

I have already pointed out that when the homage ritual is first performed following a death, no changes take place in the status of the corpse or in the relationship between the living and the deceased. Equally significantly, in the case of deaths which had taken place only a relatively short period prior to the performance of the homage ritual, informants made no suggestion that treating the recently deceased as ancestors was in any way

problematic. My data, is based upon the only two Christian funerals which took place less than six months prior to the homage rites I witnessed. However, it strongly suggests that the time interval following death, which Hertz claims is necessary to allow the living to adjust to the deceased in their new status, is dictated by culturally specific beliefs about death and the deceased. As such it may be quite short or nonexistent. In the case of the members of *Khriscag Bohin*, as I suggested in chapter five, the deceased is transformed into an ancestor during the burial process. After this they are thought of as "full" ancestors, with God, yet at the same time accessible to the living through the medium of the homage ritual.

One final point might be made in relation to the role of ancestors and the homage ritual as the central unifying elements of the family. I suggest that, ultimately, loyalty to the family over-rides denominational affiliation or commitment to particular interpretations of Christian doctrine. Moreover, I suggest that this over-riding loyalty to the family vis-a-vis denominational affiliation can explain the failure of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* to succeed as an autonomous congregation (in respect to administrative and economic factors) in the wake of its 1960 schism from *Khriscag Bohin*.

In the case of *Khriscag Bohin*, its members perform the homage ritual together and are united by their relation to Christian ancestors. For them there is a homology between membership of the membership of the family and membership of the Church. Not only does the ideology of family penetrate and unify

all areas of life, as I have argued, Christianity in turn unifies the family.

However, in the case of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid,* following the schism its members ceased participating in the homage ritual. In their new status their unity was constituted in relation to a specific interpretation of Christian doctrine, rather than in relation to ancestors (who were concerned with *Khriscag Bohin*). Yet, while theological distinctions function very effectively as an ideology of group differentiation (see Clark 1985:182 regarding religious doctrine and group differentiation amongst the Wiru), I suggest they are not sufficient to constitute an ideology of group unification. Unlike the notion of family, doctrinal interpretations of theological texts, pertain only to formal church ritual. In contrast to the members of *Khriscag Bohin*, the members of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* have no unique group of ancestors to supply them with an ideology of descent and unity.

Moreover, I suggest that commitment to doctrine is overridden by a commitment to the family. Two factors indicate this. Firstly, at the time of fieldwork, Christians from two of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid's* member households had recommenced participation in the homage ritual, suggesting this is more important than doctrine. More significantly, at the time of fieldwork, like the members of *Khriscag Bohin,* the members of *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* evidenced a strong concern with the management of the moral reputation of the family. During the collection of genealogical data, they too provided highly inconsistent ad hoc versions of descent. Thus, I suggest this

over-riding committment to the family is the primary reason for the failure of the congregation of *Khrischag Khongphrakrit* to attain any real congregational autonomy over the past thirty years.

Endnotes

1. It is important to emphasise that the homage ritual is in no sense a second part of the Christian mortuary rite. Its first performance following a death is not attended by any special preparation or conduct. Nor does it bring about any change in the state of the corpse or the spirit of the deceased (cf. the Greek Christian mortuary rite discussed by Danforth 1982, where secondary processing of the bones caused a fundamental change in the state of the deceased).
2. Wilson (1963) uses the term "shades" with respect to the effect of the dead upon the living and reserves the term ancestors for deceased relatives. In the context of Thailand I prefer the term ancestors, which parallels the Thai conception of *banphaburud*.
3. Bloch (1971:147) claims that the ritual he describes is not a true ancestor ritual, as the deceased do not play an active part in the affairs of the living. The need for the autonomous intervention of ancestors in the lives of the living is highly debatable. However, the exact classification of this ritual is not important for my point here.
4. Drawing on Krai Krainiran (1953), Kingshill (1976:213) provides an alternative explanation for this custom. He claims it shows that the dead cannot eat and that when we die we cannot take the things of the world with us. A similar explanation is given by Sanguan (1966:163).
5. A recent work by Van der Haak (1987:123) describes twice yearly offerings made to "village ancestors" by the Kui, in the southern part of the North East. While his data are not comprehensive it suggests that these are not ancestors per se, but are village tutelary spirits (cf. Tambiah 1977a:263-271).
6. Although Haas (1985) glosses *buuchaa* as sacrifice, this does not accord with the anthropological use of the term. The terms offering and sacrifice are not interchangeable. Unlike an offering, a sacrifice requires the killing of a victim (Beatie 1980:31) or its symbolic equivalent (Evans-Pritchard 1977:197). Thus, as de Heusch (1985:69) points out, "A sacrifice may be an offering, but not all offerings are the object of a sacrifice". More importantly it does not accord with my experience in the field, where the homage ritual is conceptualised as an offering of homage and respect to ancestors and not a sacrifice.
7. My description of the homage ritual refers to its 1987 performance. The general structure and performance of the previous year's ritual was similar in all aspects.
8. At the same time this general period also involves the youth group and other helpers engaging in the preparation of decorations and special Easter displays at the church.

9. At Buddhist funerals, guests light one stick of incense and place it (in a container) near the head of the corpse as a gesture of respect. Similarly, in the homage ritual, ritual performers only use one stick of incense to pay respect to ancestors.
10. I pointed out in the previous chapter that infants who died in the early years of this century were not given marked graves. Genealogical data suggests at least fourteen deaths of infants and young children have taken place over the past fifty years. Most were unexpected deaths which occurred in the first six months of life. In all cases the corpse was given an unmarked burial in the cemetery with little in the way of mortuary rites, as we expect in the case of pre-social beings with little social status (Hertz 1960:84). The same logic holds true for the homage ritual. None of these unmarked infant and child graves featured in the homage ritual.
11. Wells (1975:219-220) explains the pouring of water on the ground, such as takes place in the *bangsukun* ceremony, as signifying the transfer of ownership when a gift (in this case merit) is presented.
12. Although this point was not directly made by informants, for Christians the Easter period between Good Friday and Easter Sunday is also one of liminality. This is the period between Christ's death and subsequent resurrection and, according to some accounts, a time when he descended to hell to preach to those imprisoned there. Parallels might be drawn with the movement of people to the *Bohin* cemetery to communicate with deceased ancestors, separated from the living by death.

*. Although the term *buuchaa* derives from the Sanskrit word *puja* (meaning an act or offering of worship of a deity) and, thus, should possibly be romanised as *puuchaa*, in the interests of consistency in the romanisation system, I follow Hass's rendering *buuchaa*. It may be argued, that given its Sanskrit root meaning, *buuchaa* should not be used to describe the respect given to monks (who are not deities). However, Buddhists informants routinely used this term to describe the payment of respect to monks.
**. Although he is arguing from a different theoretical position to that taken here, Spiro (1970:133-135) also discusses the significance of Burmese child raising patterns for the constitution of later cognitive structures. He claims that the Burmese child's deprivation of love and emotional nuturance, once past the period of early infancy, is significant for the development of the doctrine that people must save themselves and the failure of adults to develop "a cognitive structure consistent with the belief in a divine saviour" (ibid.:134).

Chapter 7

CONCLUSION

Throughout this thesis I have argued that on the part of Christian converts the introduction of Christianity into Northern Thailand caused a fundamental transformation (or re-evaluation) of Northern Thai cultural categories. Following Sahlins (1985), I have argued that Christian ritual and ideas about the nature of the world were received in terms of traditional cultural categories and the result was a synthesis, which transformed both Northern Thai Buddhist culture, as well as newly introduced Christianity. Clark (1989:171), who utilises a similar model of culture change, also derived from Sahlins, calls this kind of transformation a "cosmological shift".

Accordingly, I have argued, in particular, against models of religious change based on the "rice bowl Christian" model and, against those models which consider the conversion of indigenous peoples to result in religious syncretism, a poorly integrated mix of contradictory religious values and practices. I have also directed my analysis against deterministic models of conversion which portray missionary activity as merely one aspect of colonial domination and against those models which suggest that converts may adopt Christianity without transforming it in any way.

I have argued that the Presbyterian Christian conversion of the Northern Thai in the late nineteenth century was not fundamentally due to the poverty and marginal position of the converts. Instead, I have examined the general political, economic and social conditions of that period and have shown that conversion to Christianity was one of many responses to those conditions. It was a time of widespread messianic expectations and I have suggested that, while it was certainly not the intention of the missionaries that this would be so, many cases of conversion were probably directly attributable to these pre-existing, messianic Buddhist motifs. I have indicated that the Christian message was frequently interpreted in accord with these expectations. Other responses to the prevailing social conditions took the form of a wide-spread Buddhist revolutionary movement and an equally wide-spread outbreak of witchcraft accusations, movements which from the missionary perspective were fundamentally irrational.

With regard to the synthesis between both nineteenth century and contemporary Buddhist and Christian practice, two points must be emphasised. At the outset, in chapter one, I stressed the significance of contingent events in cultural transformation. I pointed out that meaning is at risk in all encounters - and especially so in the mission context - which I characterised as being a context of Wyllie's (1976:202) "working misunderstanding". Thus, I suggested that the development of the Christian ancestor cult, utilised by Christians as a means of unifying the family, was an unintended outcome of late nineteenth century *Baan Bohin* Christian practices. It arose from the confluence of Easter and the New Year ritual propitiation of the

matrilineal spirits, Christian teachings about death and the person of the deceased and, Christian burial practices.

Secondly, I argued that the tendency towards disorder within cultural schemas not withstanding, individuals have the power to creatively organise their own lives. Most importantly, I argued against the determinism implicit in the "missionary as imperialist" model of religious conversion and the western paternalism implicit in the "rice bowl Christian" model. These models pay little attention to the actor's explanations for their actions and ultimately provide only simplistic functionalist explanations of religious conversion. In opposition to these models, I have shown that in the political and economic contexts of the nineteenth century, *Gaaw*, the first Christian convert, engaged in a radical reorganisation of his domestic group, utilising cultural patterns and legitimations provided by western missionaries. I have pointed out that these acts of domestic group reorganisation, the manipulation of patterns of post-marital residence, the conversion of in-marrying spouses and the manipulation of patterns of naming, were all deliberate and calculated responses to their wider political and economic environments.

That these manipulations of cultural patterns occurred amongst the peasantry is highly significant. It is frequently assumed that unlike the rich and important the peasantry are powerless to exert significant power over the organisation of their own lives. Thus, according to Marx (1976:478-479), the nineteenth century French peasantry were an undifferentiated mass "much as potatoes in a sack form a sack of potatoes", uniform,

passive and incapable of acting in their own interests. Such descriptions certainly do not apply to the nineteenth century Northern Thai peasantry. My analysis here demonstrates that Northern Thai peasant responses to the changes of the nineteenth century were not limited to largely futile peasant rebellion, to witchcraft accusations or, to resignation, but also encompassed responses which creatively exploited their changing environment.

In this respect, my analysis of the manipulation of naming patterns by *Gaaw* in the early twentieth century is of particular significance. The genealogies of many important Thai families are relatively well known and it is documented that they have engaged in the manipulation of relationships and statuses (Vickery 1970; Wyatt 1968). However, apart from Vella's (1978:134) note regarding the commoner strategy of adopting names with royal or noble connotations, there are few concrete details of the manner in which the peasantry responded to the introduction of surnames. Most reports are highly derogatory about the peasant response and suggest that to the peasantry surnames were largely meaningless. The Bangkok Times of 9 October, 1925, for example, suggests that the significance of surnames would be lost on the peasantry:

> the head of the house would get a paper with his new surname on it, and when he got home he would stick that document into the wall, or in the roof. In a comparatively short time, the paper would be lost-destroyed by rats or white ants-and the next time he was asked the householder had [sic] no idea what his surname was.

The position taken by modern historians is almost identical. Vella suggests that "The majority of the farmers were illiterate, and surnames meant nothing to them" (ibid.).

Similarly, Terwiel (1983:300) claims that "the idea of choosing a surname seemed unnecessary to many farmers".

For many, even most of the peasantry, this was undoubtedly the case. However, this response was not universal. I have shown how in the early years of this century a *Baan Bohin* peasant, who had already utilised religious ideology in the unification of several discrete households, manipulated the adoption of surnames in such a way as to further unify those households into a strong supra-household and supra-kindred group. Today, those bearing the same surname, both the living and the dead, are widely thought to belong to the same descent line. Like the rich, some among the peasantry were able to use the introduction of surnames in their own political strategies. Significantly, the pattern of surname adoption described here was strategic rather than accidental and was distinct from the actions of others in the same area.

My analysis of contemporary Northern Thai Protestant Christian culture has relied on the exegesis of ritual. In general, as I demonstrated in chapter two, *Baan Bohin* and *Bohin Chiangseen* Christians are little differentiated from their Buddhist neighbours at the material level. However, through an analysis of ritual, I have examined Christian beliefs and have demonstrated that at the cosmological level, Christians are located in a position in the world which is fundamentally different from that occupied by Buddhists. Chapter four delineated the general ritual context, the major formal beliefs of Northern Thai Christians and some of the overall cosmological transformations implicit in conversion to Christianity. Then,

through a detailed description and analysis of mortuary and ancestor ritual in chapters five and six, I focused more specifically on the synthesis between Buddhist and Christian belief and ritual practice.

At a theoretical level, I have viewed ritual as a performative arena for making statements about cultural values, and have stressed that it is major arena for cultural transformation. However, I have focused on ritual performance and the performative context, rather than ritual texts, as analysts such as Tambiah have done (Tambiah 1977a, 1981). Some brief comments not withstanding, Tambiah views performance as being inscribed in the text. However, I take the approach that the performative context is of fundamental significance, in that it may deny, invert, or otherwise fundamentally transform the overt message in any ritual text.

In my focus on ritual performance, I have been concerned to point out the relative fragility of ritual as a mode of communication. My major analyses of Christian ritual have focused on particular ritual performances and the way in which ritual performances by the members of *Khriscag Bohin* involve continual decisions about cultural and religious values. Each of these decisions is potentially transformative of other aspects of Christian culture. Thus, I have argued that Christian concepts of ancestors derive not only from a synthesis of Buddhist and Christian teachings, but have also been influenced by the introduction of particular forms of burial technology, by the cessation of rituals to the matrilineal spirits and by the

political and economic contexts in which they have been constituted.

My approach towards Christian ritual has also emphasised the integrity of the corpus of Christian ritual. This is in accord with my general approach to religious change, which has argued against models of religious change which view the outcome of religious conversion as a mix of religious values and practices lacking in integration. I have been concerned to demonstrate that in the ritual life of *Khriscag Bohin* there is a fundamental integration between the values expressed in both the formal (the mortuary rite) and informal rituals (the homage ritual). In this respect, I also argued that because nineteenth century converts did not view Christianity as being fundamentally different from, or as being fundamentally opposed to Buddhism, they were more likely to create a synthesis between Buddhist and Christian practice.

I have also paid particular attention to the historical context in which Christian ritual practices developed. Thus I discussed the development of both the mortuary rite and the homage ritual over the past one hundred years. I showed how the Christian mortuary rite performed during the early mission period combined elements of both the Buddhist and Christian rite, some of which are still found in the contemporary mortuary rite. I suggested that the introduction of Christian mortuary practices and understandings about eternal life, in concert with Buddhist ideas concerning the survival of individual identity after death and the concomitant abandonment of ritual activities directed to

the matrilineal spirits, led to the development of the homage ritual.

Through my analysis of Christian mortuary ritual I have been concerned to demonstrate that Christian values and beliefs represent fundamental transformations of the Northern Thai Buddhist cosmology. I have also indicated that at the same time, they represent significant transformations of the formal teachings of the Church of Christ in Thailand. The Christian mortuary rite has been transformed from the Buddhist two-stage rite, to a once only processing of the corpse. As I indicated, this involves transformations in conceptions of the nature of death, of the deceased and of the nature of the change of state which is mediated through the mortuary ritual.

Most significantly, I have demonstrated that the transformation of the mortuary rite, represented in the shift from a two-stage rite to a single treatment of the corpse, is not due to acculturation or any form of cultural dilution. Nor is it due to the need for a time interval between a death and treating of the deceased as an ancestor, or to economic factors, which control the timing of the second stage of the rite and restrict the number of persons for whom it can be held. Rather, I have argued that the total abandonment of the secondary treatment of the dead involves fundamental and very complex, transformations in a culture's total cosmological conceptions.

It involves not only fundamental transformations in concepts of time and space but, ultimately, a denial of the reality of death itself. In their belief in eternal life and

bodily resurrection and, of sentient ancestors whose reality is constituted in the world through marked burial plots in the cemetery, Christians deny the reality of death and maintain links of communication with the deceased. In relation to her work on rural Greek mortuary rituals Danforth (1982:133) calls this form of relationship with and responsibilities to the deceased, a temporary denial of the reality of death. However, as Northern Thai Christians implicitly deny the dissolution of the body, their denial of the reality of death knows no chronological limits and ultimately is more successful than the situation Danforth describes.

In this regard, my analysis of pollution concepts in the Christian mortuary rite is of primary significance. I have moved away from approaches to death pollution which focus on contagion from the general inauspiciousness of death, in favour of an approach which focuses on the maintenance of conceptual order between a culture's fundamental symbolic classifications. Unlike the Buddhist mortuary rite where the decomposition of the corpse is a necessary pre-requisite for the release of the spirit, for Christians, such decomposition raises fundamental contradictions with teachings about bodily resurrection and ideas of Christian ancestors who retain a human form. As I demonstrated in chapter five, such contradictions are strenuously resisted, both through avoiding confronting the corpse and its accompanying physical deterioration and, through mortuary practices, which implicitly deny the deterioration of the corpse following death.

My analysis of the Christian ancestor ritual is also of significance here, as it demonstrates the role of ancestors in

the constitution of the family. While a shared lifestyle is highly significant in demarcating the family, the corporate performance of the ancestor ritual is the major means by which Christians constitute themselves as a united group. Moreover, participation in ancestor ritual is also the major avenue for the incorporation of outsiders in the family. In-marrying spouses, even those who remain Buddhists, may become members of the family through participation in the homage ritual. Also, as I have demonstrated, the homage ritual is one of the major loci for generating the public version of Christian descent relations.

Christian ancestor ritual and the role it plays in the constitution of the family, also demonstrates the extent to which the Northern Thai Buddhist cosmology has been transformed for Christians. In his analysis of Northern Thai Buddhist mortuary ritual, Keyes (1987b:199) claims "The dead never truly become ancestors for the Northern Thai as they do for peoples in other societies". However, I have shown that for Northern Thai Christians, the dead truly become ancestors. Their ascribed genealogical position as ancestors is fixed through their graves in the cemetery and their relationship with the living is renewed yearly in the homage ritual.

Throughout this thesis I have emphasised the influences which the political and economic contexts of Northern Thai society have exerted on the constitution of Christian practices at the micro-level. In conclusion, some comments and general observations may be made with respect to the general situation of Christianity and Christians in contemporary Northern Thailand. Keyes (1990) makes some very cogent points regarding the general

failure of Christianity to win acceptance in Thailand. He points out itsforeignness, the lack of charismatic authority on the part of second generation (and later) missionaries, the fact that missionaries "have been unable to persuade many people in Thailand that their religion offered greater insight into ultimate Truth than does Buddhism" (ibid.:25) and claims that these factors have prevented Christianity from attaining any significant degree of acceptance in Thailand. What I have shown here, is that it was only under very specific conditions that Christianity was able to shed its foreign image and be accepted as giving access to a significantly new ultimate Truth. As I pointed out in chapter three, the base of the Northern Thai Protestant Church was constituted in conversions during the latter part of the nineteenth century. Waves of conversions since that time have not generated any significant, sustained, increase in membership.

Keyes (1990:4-5) also points out that commitment to Christianity and its claim of a universal authority transcending state and ethnic boundaries, constitutes an implicit defiance of the authority of the state. In the past, almost all Thai opposition to Christianity has been related to the authority of the state over its people. This is the case in opposition to French involvement in seventeenth century Thai politics, in incidents of opposition to missionaries in nineteenth century Central Thailand, in nineteenth century opposition to missionaries in Northern Thailand and, similarly, was at the root of opposition to Christianity in the 1930's.

In the present day, as I have demonstrated with respect to *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen*, at the material level Christians are little differentiated from their Buddhist neighbours. However, Christians at both the village and national levels remain sensitive about the manner in which they mediate their Thai identity and allegiance to the Thai state with their Christian belief. I noted in chapter four, that at *Khriscag Bohin* a service is held on the occasion of the King's Birthday to demonstrate Christian support for the state. However, few Christians consider the Church-state link significant and the services are poorly attended.

Moreover, given the role which I have shown Christianity to play with regard to economic differentiation between Buddhists and Christians, as a group whose affiliations cross cut other significant cultural alignments and, as a group significant in village level politics, at least at this level, some ambivalence and even outright hostility towards Christianity might be expected. Thus, *Baan Bohin* and *Baan Chiangseen* Buddhists deny the significance of Christian doctrine, by calling the dispute between *Khriscag Bohin* and *Khriscag Khongphrakrid* a family disagreement.

Keyes (1987c:205) claims in regard to Christianity in the 1980's that "Christians appear to have accepted the fact that Thai national culture is rooted in Buddhism but have also gained acceptance for the proposition that Christians can still be Thai". Among the educated elite, some of whom are Christians or who have a Christian education, this is certainly the case. Zehner's (1990) work among Bangkok Pentecostal Christians also

suggests it is the case amongst young urban immigrants. However in rural Northern Thailand, amongst the peasantry, the situation is much less clear cut. Here, the foreigness of Christianity remains problematic and widespread adherence to *chat, sat, phra maha kasat* (nation, religion and king), what Keyes (1987c:201) calls "the dominant national ideology", means that many still consider Christianity a foreign religion. An old Buddhist women from *Baan Chiangseen* summed up peasant disquiet about the relationship between Christianity and national identity, when she commented of village Christians "they are not real Christians here, they are Thai".

Theologians sometimes make similar comments. Hughes (1985:41) claims that:

> Christianity has not produced a new culture among the Christians in Thailand. ....converts to Christianity have had to change their institutional affiliations from Buddhist *wats* to Christian churches. ....These new institutional affiliations and new beliefs have led to the formation of a distinctive Christian community ...However while the Christians have their own distinctive religious sources, and their own terminology for them, the soteriological patterns follow the patterns in Thai Buddhism and animism in the ways in which they are conceived.

Yet, I suggest that both these views miss the point. Since the first conversions in the nineteenth century, Northern Thai Christians have transformed both Buddhism and Protestant Christianity, to constitute a uniquely Northern Thai Christian culture. They demonstrate this in the organisation of their life-style, in their kin relationships and in their ritual practices. I have argued here, that while their beliefs and ritual practices are drawn from both Buddhism and Presbyterian Christianity, in their implementation they have been

fundamentally transformed. As Sahlins (1985:ix) puts it in a paraphrase of Marc Bloch (1966:90):

> the old names ...are still on everyone's lips [yet they have] acquire[d] connotations that are far removed from their original meaning.

APPENDIX 1

General Statistics of the Church of Church in Thailand

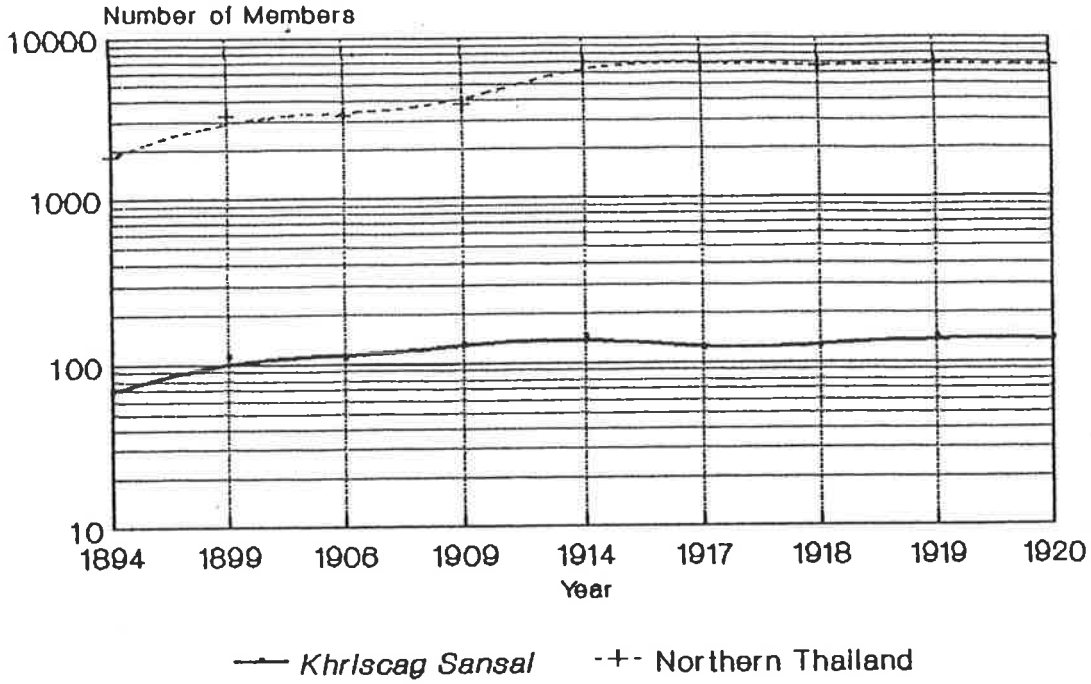
Membership of the Church of Christ in Thailand
According to District (1986)

District (*Phaag*)	Location	Number of Churches	Number of *Mooats*	Total Number of Members
1	*Chiangmai*	48	14	7,716
2	*Chiangraaj*	43	12	7,550
3	*Lampaang*	13	3	1,577
4	*Phrae-Uttaridit*	16	6	2,093
5	*Nan*	11	7	1,827
6	Bangkok-*Phitsanuloke*	12	1	2,775
7	Presbyterian Chinese (Bangkok)	32	0	4,345
8	*Rajburi-Suratthani*	7	4	541
9	*Nakornsrithamarat*	7	7	600
10	*Chiangraaj (Karen)*	9	8	1,850
11	*Nakornprathom*	4	2	579
12	Baptist Chinese (mainly Bangkok)	16	0	2,592
13	*Udonthani*	19	12	853
14	*Chiangmai (Karen)*	7	3	1,319
15	*Payow*	13	6	1,281
Total		257	88	37,468

These statistics derive from the statistical report presented to the 19th meeting of the Church of Christ in Thailand, *Payap* University, *Chiangmai*, 20-25 October 1986.
* *Mooat* - a group of Christians not yet organised into an autonomous church and who do not yet have a full complement of administrative officers

APPENDIX 2

Church Growth in Northern Thailand 1894-1920



Year	*Khriscag Sansai*	Northern Thailand
1894	69	1,836
1899	111	3,257
1906	108	3,273
1906	131	3,821
1914	144	6,934
1917	121	6,786
1918	125	6,571
1919	142	6,686
1920	138	6,649

Statistics regarding *Khriscag Sansai* derive from Chayan (1982) while those concerning Northern Thailand derive from Swanson (1984)

APPENDIX 3

GLOSSARY OF ROMANISED THAI WORDS

This glossary gives almost all Thai words used in this thesis. I give the transliterated word, its Northern Thai or Central Thai equivalent and then its meaning. After reference to Met (1965), Northern Thai words have been rendered as closely as is possible in Central Thai.

ab nam jaa (อาบน้ำยา) - ritual sacred bathing
aacaan (อาจารย์) - an honorific given to the educated
Aacaan Tongkham (อาจารย์ทองคำ) - the village minister
amnaad (อำนาจ) - power (legitimate power)
amphoe (อำเภอ) - administrative level below the province
Amphoe Dojsakt (อำเภอ ดอยสะเก็ด)
Amphoe Doitaw (อำเภอ ดอยเต่า)
Amphoe Maerim (อำเภอ แม่ริม)
Amphoe Sansai (อำเภอ สันทราย)
anuchon (อนุชน) - youth
aphaj (อภัย/ความอภัย) - forgiveness
awajjawa (อวัยวะ) - organ
aw caj (เอาใจ) - to please
Ayudhia (อยุธยา)
baab (บาป) - sin (in the case of Buddhists, demerit)
baan (บ้าน) - house (in other contexts village)
Baan Bohin (บ้าน บ่อหิน)
Baan Chiangseen (บ้าน เชียงแสน)
baan haw (บ้าน เฮา) - our village
Baan Huafai (บ้าน หัวฝาย)
Baan Kok (บ้าน คอก)
Baan Koogwat (บ้านโคกวัด)
Baan Maedorgdaeng (บ้านแม่ดอกแดง)
Baan Maepuka (บ้าน แม่ปูคา)
Baan Nongaabchaang (บ้าน หนองอาบช้าง)
Baan Paa (บ้าน แพะ) - the original name of Baan Bohin
Baan Paamyat (บ้าน ป่าเหมือด)
Baan phii (บ้าน ผี) - lit. the spirits house
Baan Sahagon (บ้าน สหกรณ์)
Baan Sansai (บ้าน สันทราย)
Baan Sansailuang (บ้าน สันทรายหลวง)
baan sop (บ้าน ศพ) - the funeral house (lit. the corpse' house)
bacing (บ่จริง) - not true

baengkryng (แบ่งกึ่ง) - to divide in half
baht (บาท) - unit of Thai currency
bangsukun ceremony (พิธีบังสุกุล) - one of the final ritual meditate on the corpse, make merit for the deceased and pull new robes from the side of the coffin
bood (โบสถ์) - the main church building (also used by Buddhists for the main preaching hall at the wat)
borg (บอก) - tell
Bun (บุญ) - merit
tham bun (ทำบุญ) - to make merit
Bunyat Sibprakaan (บัญญัติสิบประการ) - the ten commandments
cajjen (ใจเย็น) - cool heart
carun khyn (เจริญขึ้น) - progressive
Caw (เจ้า) prince/lord
Cawluang (เจ้าหลวง) - the ruling prince
Cawnoi (เจ้าน้อย) - minor prince
cawphaab (เจ้าภาพ) - host (at a ritual)
Cawuparat (เจ้าอุปราช) - second in command under the ruling caw, a viceroy
cerm (เจิม) - to annoint (baptism without full immersion)
chaa (ชา) - tea
chat, sat, phra maha kaset (ชาติ ศาสน์ พระมหากษัตริย์) - nation, religion and king
Chiangdaaw (เชียงดาว)
Chiangmai (เชียงใหม่)
Chiangraaj (เชียงราย)
chiiwid niran (ชีวิต นิรันดร์) - eternal life
ching (จิ่ง) - true
cum (จุ่ม) - to immerse (full immersion baptism)
diawkan (เดียวกัน) - the one, the same
dii (ดี) - good
dorgmaj (ดอกไม้) - flower(s)
fang (ฝัง) - to bury
fai (ฝ้าย) - cotton thread
Faang (ฝาง)
faw (เฝ้า) - to watch over
faw sop (เฝ้าศพ) - watch over the corpse at a funeral
Hangdong (หางดง)
hiib ngoen (หีบเงิน) - money box
horsaj (ห่อทราย) - sand wrapped in black and white paper
huang soui (ฮวงซุ้ย) - chinese toomb
hup Baptisma (อับรับบัพติสมา) - to receive Baptism
hup Phrachaw (อับพระเจ้า) - to become a Christian
hup satsanar (อับ ศาสนา) - lit. to recieve religon (to convert)

hup siin (ฮับ ศีล) - to recieve one of the sacraments, usually used to refer to having received baptism

hyan (เฮือน) - house

jaad (ญาติ) - relative

jaadnam (หยาดน้ำ) - to pour water on the ground during the transfer of merit to the deceased

jaeg paj (แยกไป) - split off

jyynjan khwaamchya (ยืนยันดวามเชื่อ) - to make a public affirmation of faith

kaankorsaang (การก่อสร้าง) - construction

kaanphroiphraj (การเผยแพร่) - evangelism

kaansornraweewarn (การสอนรวิวาร) - Sunday school

kaansyksaa (การศึกษา) - education

kaenghinlee (แกงฮินเล) - pork curry

kaengphed (แกงเผ็ด) - hot chicken curry

kan (กัลป์) - vast cycles of time

karma (กรรม) - fate, the law of cause and effect

kar nam nom (ค่าน้ำนม) - bride price (lit. the price of water and milk)

khaad samaachig khrobkhrua (ขาดสมาชิกครอบครัว) - separated from a member of the family

khaam (คาม) - refers to a compound or other local area

kham myang (คำเมือง) - the language of the north

khana magunayog (คณะมัคนายก) - the deakons' group

khana phuupogkhrong (คณะผู้ปกครอง) - the guardians' group

khana satrii (คณะสตรี) - the womens' group

khana thammakid (คณะธรรมกิจ) - the business group

khanom (ขนม) - biscuit

khanun (ขนุน) - jackfruit

khawrob (เคารพ) - respect

khawrob trakuun (เคารพตระกูล) - to respect the descent line

kheed (เขต) - area/district

khon (คน) - person

khon gae (คนแก่) - an old person

khon chaj (คนใช้) - servant

Khoogwat (โคกวัด)

khor (ขอ) - to beg, ask for

Khorat (โคราช)

Khriscag (คริสตจักร์) - church

Khriscag Bohin (คริสตจักร์บ่อหิน) - the Bohin church

Khriscag Khongphrakrid (คริสตจักร์ของพระคริสต์) - the Church of Christ

Khriscag Silarchai (คริสตจักร์ศิลาชัย) - the first name of Khriscag Bohin

Khrismaad (คริสตมาส) - Christmas
Khristian jaa sii khaaw (ดริสเตียนยาสีขาว) - white medicine Christians
khrobkhrua (ครอบครัว) - family (as used by Christians it refers to all Christians believed to be descendants of the first Baan Bohin Christian
khrobkhrua diaw kan (ครอบครัวเดียวกัน) - the one family/the same family
khrobkhrua Rangsan (ครอบครัวรังสรรค์) - the Rangsan family
khru (ครู) - teacher
khrua (ครัว) - kitchen
khrya jaad (เครือญาติ) - relatives
khryang phithii (เครื่องพิธี) - ritual implements
khunnang (ขุนนาง) - noble
khwaamchya (ความเชื่อ) - (belief/faith)
khwaamphid (ความผิด) - wrong
khwaamsawcaj (ความเศร้าใจ) - depression
khwaamthug (ความทุกข์) - suffering
khwaamyutitham (ความยุติธรรม) - justice
khwaen (แคว่น) - tambon headman
khwan (ขวัญ) - for Christians this is another name for the winjaan, but for Buddhists it is the spirit which animates man
khwaj phii (ไขว้ผี) - crossing the spirits
khyn (ขึ้น) - lift up/improve
khyynsudthaaj (คืนสุดท้าย) - final night
kinmyang (กินเมือง) - lit. to eat off the land
klajkwaa (ใกล้กว่า) - closer
klorng (กลอง) - drums
koed (เกิด) - birth
koed maj (เกิดใหม่) - rebirth
koed, kae, ceb, taaj (เกิด แก่ เจ็บ ตาย) - birth, aging, pain, death
kog diaw kan (ก๊กเดียวกัน) - of the same group
kom (กม) - a small kerosene lamp
krom (กรม) - government department
laabdip (ลาบดิบ) - chopped, highly spiced raw meat
laabkhua (ลาบคั่ว) - chopped, highly spiced fried meat
laang naa sob (ล้างหน้าศพ) - ritual washing of the corpse
laang baab (ล้างบาป) - to remove sin (lit. to wash away sin)
lamjaj (ลำใย) - longan
Lampaang (ลำปาง)
Lamphuun (ลำพูน)
Lan Na (ลานนา)

leg koen paj (เล็กเกินไป) - too small
liang phii (เลี้ยงผี) - propitiatory offering to the
matrilineal spirits
likee (ลิเก) - folk theatre
lorng (ล้อง) - coffin
luug phii luug norng (ลูกพี่ลูกน้อง) - cousins
maag (หมาก) - betel
maajaa (มายา) - the illusory nature of the world
madmyy (มัดมือ) - binding of the wrists
madthajom (มัธยม) - secondary school
Mae Bing (แม่ปิง)
Maehongson (แมฮองสอน)
Maerim (แม่ริม)
Maetaeng (แม่แตง)
Mahaawidthajaalaj Chiangmai (มหาวิทยาลัยเชียงใหม่)
majchad (ไม่ชัด) - unclear
majkaangkheen (ไม้กางเขน) - Christian cross
majmyankan (ไม่เหมือนกัน) - not the same
majsilimongkhon (ไม่ศิริมงคล) - inauspicious
majsuung (ไม่สูง) - low (lit. not high)
majthug (ไม่ทุกข์) - incorrect
makruud (มะกรูด) - the kaffir lime
meen sob (เหมื้นศพ) - crematorium for Buddhist corpses
mianoi (เมียน้อย) - minor wife
mialuang (เมียหลวง) - major wife
mor (หมอ) - doctor
mor duu (หมอดู) - fortune teller
mor phii (หมอผี) - spirit doctor
mor myang (หมอเมือง) - native doctor (herbal doctor)
morb thawaaj (มอบถวาย) - to donate as an offering
muad (หมวด) - administratively, a group of Christians not
formed into an autonomous congregation
myankan (เหมือนกัน) - the same as, like
Naaj Amphur (นายอำเภอ) - Amphur level Chief officer
naaklua (น่ากลัว) - terrible
naamsakun (นามสกุร) - surname
nag leeng (นักเลง) - ruffian (lit. force expert)
nam (น้ำ) - water
namon (น้ำมนต์) - holy water, with protective powers
nam sompauy (น้ำส้มป่อย) - lustral water
namphrig (น้ำพริก) - chilli paste
namagassagarn phracaw (นมัสการพระเจ้า) - the service of worship
Nan (น่าน)
narog (นรก) - hell

nawsob (เน่าศพ) - decaying corpse
ngaan (งาน) - work, festival, function
ngaan liang (งานเลี้ยง) - feast
ngaan ryduu naaw (งานฤดูหนาว) - winter fair
ngaan sop (งานศพ) - funeral
ngaan wat (งานวด) - temple fair
ngoen thawaaj (เงินถวาย) - offering money, donation money
ngoen thawaaj sob (เงินถวายศพ) - lit. an offering for the corps made by guests attending the mortuary rite
Nirvana (นิพพาน) - final escape from the karmic cycle
nun (หนุน) - to lift up
paachaa (ป่าช้า) - cemetery
paj juu kab Phracaw (ไปอยู่กับพระเจ้า) - go to live with God
paj tham bun (ไปทำบุญ) - go to do merit
phatkan (ผัดกัน) - exchange agricultural labour
phaag (ภาค) - district
phajaan (พยาน) - witness
phaw ((เผา) - to cremate
phid (ผิด) - wrong
phii (ผี) - spirit
phii borp - (ผีปอบ) a dangerous spirit with characteristics similar to that of the phii ka
phii ka (ผีกะ) - a dangerous spirit deriving from a matrilineal spirit whose rituals have been neglected
phii diawkan (ผีเดียวกับ) - the same spirit
phii norng (พี่น้อง) - lit. seniors and juniors (brothers and sisters)
phii phaay (ผีพาย) - a dangerous spirit, deriving from those who die in childbirth
phii taaj (ผีตำย) - used to refer to the corpse
phii taaj hoong (ผีตำยโหง) - a dangerous spirit, deriving from those who die sudden or violent deaths
phithii baptisma (พิธีบัพติสมา/พิธีศีลบัพติสมา) - baptismal ritual
phithii buuchaa banphaburud (พิธีบูชาบรรพบุรุษ) - ritual to pay homage to the ancestors (the homage ritual)
phithii damhua (พิธีดำหัว) - ritual to pay respect to elders
phithii khyn hyan maj (พิธีขึ้นเฮือนใหม่) - ritual to "lift-up" a new house
phithii poj khaaw sang (พิธีปอยเข้าสังฆ์) - ritual offering of goods, and merit to the deceased
phithii rab siin (พิธีรับศีล) - baptism
phithii ralyg (พิธีระลึก) - memorial service
phithii saj sob naj lorng (พิธีใส่ในล้อง - ritual to put the corpse in the coffin

phithii siin mahaa sanid (พิธีศีลมหาสนิท) - the sacrament of Communion
phithii taeng ngaan (แต่งงาน) - the marriage service
phleeng thawaaj sob (เพลิงถวายาบ) - lit. an offering song for the corpse of the deceased
phra (พระ) - monk
Phraklang (พระคลัง) - foreign minister
Phrabidaa (พระบิดา) - father, used to refer to God the Father
Phracaw (พระเจ้า) - God
Phrae (แพร่)
phraj (ไพร่) - commoner
Phrajeesuukhrid (พระเยซูคริสต์) - Jesus
Phrakhamphii (พระคัมภีร์) - the Bible
Phrawinjaan (พระวิญญาณ) - the Holy Spirit
phrig (พริก) - chili, chili paste
phuangmaalaj (พวงมาลัย) - a garland
phuangriid (พวงหรีด) - a wreath (mortuary wreath)
phuupogkhrong (ผู้ปกครอง) - guardian
phuujaj (ผู้ใหญ่) - an important person (lit. big person)
phuuraaj (ผู้ร้าย) - killer (lit. bad person)
phyanbaan (เพื่อนบ้าน) - lit. village friend, neighbour
porliang (ป่อเลี้ยง) - lit. father provider
porluang (ป่อลวง) - village headman
praasaad (ปราสาท) - representation of a palace, into which the coffin is placed at Buddhist funerals
prachum thammakid (ประชุมธรรมกิจ) - business meeting of the congregation
Prarachavunut Kanarm Narmsakun (พระราชบัญญัติขนานนามสกุล) - the rules for the designation of surnames
Prarachgitjarbaksar (พระราชกิจจานุเบกษา)
pratheed (ประเทศ) - country/nation
Prathom (ประถม) - primary school
prawad (ประวัติ) - history
prawad Khristian (ประวัติคริสเตียน) - a Christian history
prawad sia (ประวัติเสีย) - a bad history
raadchasab (ราชาศัพท์) - royal language
raj (ไร่) - a measure of land, approximately 1600 sq metres
ralyg (ระลึก) - to think of, to remember
ranaad (ระนาด) - Thai xylophone
Rangsan (รังสรรค์)
Rangsan de de (รังสรรค์แต้แต้) - a <u>real</u> Rangsan
rod siilor (รถสี่ล้อ) - a pickup
rod sob (รถศพ) - a wheeled carriage for carrying a coffin
roongrian anubaan (โรงเรียนอนุบาล) - kindergarten

run (รุ่น) - generation
ruusykmajdii (รู้สึกไม่ดี) - to feel bad (lit. feel not good)
Saacha Khorng Phracaw (สัจจะของพระเจ้า) - the Word of God
saajlyad diawkan (สายเลือดเดียวกัน) - the same blood line
saalaa (ศาลา) - a roofed but incompletely walled shelter, providing shade from the sun
saanphraphuum (ศาลพระภูมิ) - spirit house
sabsin (ทรัพย์สิน) - property
sagdinaa (ศักดินา) - dignity marks
samaachig (สมาชิก) - member
samaachig Khriscag (สมาชิกคริสตจักร์) - member(s) of the church
Sankamphaeng (สันกำแพง)
Sangha (สังฆ์) - the Buddhist monastic order
Sanpaatong (สันป่าตอง)
Saphaa Khriscag Naj Phratheed Thai (สภาคริสตจักร์ในประเทศไทย) - the Church of Christ in Thailand
Saaraphaab (สารภาพ) - to confess
Saraphi (สารภี)
sarksob (ศพ/ซากศพ) - corpse
Saataan (ซาตาน) - Satan
sawaddikaan (สวัสดิการ) - social welfare
sawan (สวรรค์) - heaven
sen (เส้น) - lit. a line or connection, a recommendation
serenade (เซอเรเนด)
syksaa Phrakhamphii (ศึกษาพระคัมภีร์) - to study the bible
siapriab (เสียเปรียบ) - to be disadvantaged/handicapped
siya phii (เสียผี) - rite performed to the matrilineal spirits to expiate sexual transgressions
sob/sarksob (ศพ/ซากศพ) - corpse
song saduang (ส่งสะตวง/พิธีส่งสะตวง) - a ritual performed prior to major ritual events, to expel harmful forces or inauspiciouness which may decrease the efficacy of the main ritual
suaj dorg (สวยดอก) - ritual set of flowers, incense and candles
suad (สวด) - Buddhist prayer
Suandorg hospital (โรงพยาบาลสวนดอก)
taaj hoong (ตำ่ายโหง) - violent and/or sudden death
taaj kom (ตำ่ายก้ม) - death in childbirth, prior to the birth
taaj maj dii (ตำ่ายไม่ดี) - to die badly
taaj paaj (ตำ่ายพาย) - death in childbirth, after the birth
taaj thammadaa (ตำ่ายธรรมดา) - normal death
tadsincaj (ตัดสินใจ) - to deciede
tam bun (ทำบุญ) - to do merit

tanhaa (ตัณหา) - desire, lust
thaat (ทาศ) - slave
tham dii, daj dii (ทำดีได้ดี) - do good, receive good
thawaaj sob (ถวายศพ) - to make an offering at a funeral
theedsanaa (เทศนา) - preaching
thian (เทียน) - candle
thii laang naa sob (ที่ล้างหน้าศพ) - the place for the ritual
washing of a corpse prior to the cremation
thuadin (ถั่วดิน) - peanuts
thuafagjaaw (ถั่วฝักยาว) - long green beans
thun (ทุน) - scholarship
thyy (ถือ) - lit. respect (in the sense of religious practice)
toen (เติน) - public area of the house
tonkwaawsiidaeng (ต้นกวาวสีแดง)
tonmajsag (ต้นไม้สัก) - teak tree
tonmaphraaw (ต้มมะพร้าว) - cocoanut tree
tuathaen (ตัวแทน) - representative
waaj (ไหว้) - a gesture of respect made with the raised hands
wad (วัด) - temple
Wad Payaagnoi (วัดพะยากน้อย)
Wad Rorngsag (วัดร้องสัก)
wiang (เวียง) - city
wihaan (วิหาร) - main preaching hall of Buddhist temples,
also sometimes used by Christians for the church
winjaan (วิญญาณ) - for Christians, the spirit which animates
man, and which is given by God
wun khyyn prachon (วันคืนพระชนม์) - Easter Sunday
wun paj paachaa (วันไปป่าช้า) the final day of a funeral
wun phra (วันพระ) - the Buddhist holy day
wun pii maj (วันปีใหม่) - new year's day
wun siin phrachon (วันสิ้นพระชนม์) - Good Friday
wun song sob (วันส่งศพ) - the final day of a funeral
wun thaan khaaw maj (วันทานข้าวใหม่) - day of eating new rice, th
Buddhist harvest festival
wun thawaaj phon hua pii (วันถวายผลหัวปี) - the Christian
harvest festival

BIBLIOGRAPHY (ENGLISH)

ARCHIVAL SOURCES

Bangkok Times: National Library, Bangkok

North Siam Mission: Microfilm records of missionary correspondence and reports from the North Siam Mission 1840-1910. Held in the Manuscript Division, Payap University. Chiangmai.

Presbyterian Mission Siam Letters: Microfilm records of missionary correspondence and reports from the Siam and Laos Mission 1865-1920. Held in the Manuscript Division, Payap University. Chiangmai.

GENERAL WORKS

Akin, Rabibhadana.
1969 The Organization of Thai Society in the Early Bangkok Period, 1782-1873. Data Paper No. 74, Southeast Asia Program, Department of Asian Studies, Cornell University. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

1975 "Clientship and Class Strucure in the Early Bangkok Period", in G.W. Skinner and A. W. Kirsch.,eds. Change and Persistance in Thai Society. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. pp. 93-123

Ames, M. M.
1973 "Westernization or Modernization: the Case of the Sinhalese Buddhism", Social Compass. Vol. 20/2, pp. 139-170.

Anan, Ganjanapan.
1984a "The Idiom of *Phii Ka*': Peasant Conception of Class Differentiation in Northern Thailand", Mankind. Vol. 14/4, pp. 325-329.

1984b "The Partial Commercialization of Rice Production in Northern Thailand (1900-1981)". Ph.D. Thesis, Department of Anthropology. Cornell University.

Anuman Rajadhon, Phya.
1986 Popular Buddhism in Siam and Other Essays on Thai Studies. Bangkok: Thai Inter-Religious Commission for Development and the Sathirakoses Nagapradipa Foundation.

Anusaranasasanakiarti, Phra Khru., and Keyes, C. F.
1980 "Funerary Rites and the Buddhist Meaning of Death: An Interpretative Text From Northern Thailand", Journal of the Siam Society. Vol. 68/1, pp. 1-58.

Ariès, P.
1975 "The Reversal of Death: Changes in Attitudes Toward Death in Western Societies", in D. E. Stannard.,ed. Death in America. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. pp. 134-158.

1976 (1974) Western Attitudes Toward Death: From the Middle Ages to the Present. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

1987 (1977) The Hour of Our Death. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Bachofen, J. J.
1967 (1859) Myth, Religion and Mother Right. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul

Bachus, M.,ed.
1894 Siam and Laos As Seen By Our American Missionaries. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publications, Westcott and Thomson.

Barnard, A., and Good, A.
1987 (1984) Research Practices in the Study of Kinship. London: Academic Press.

Bateson, B. A.
1974. "The Fall of the Phibun Government, 1944", Journal of the Siam Society. Vol. 62/2, pp. 89-120.

Beattie, J. H. M.
1980 "On Understanding Sacrifice", in M.F.C. Bourdillon and M. Fortes.,eds. Sacrifice. London: Academic Press. pp. 29-44.

Beidelman, T. O.
1974 "Social Theory and the Study of Christian Missions in Africa". Africa, Vol. 44, pp. 235-249.

1981 "Contradictions Between the Sacred and the Secular: The Church Missionary Society in Ukaguru, Tanzania, East Africa, 1876-1914", Comparative Studies in Society and History. Vol. 23, pp. 73-95.

1982 Colonial Evangelism: A Socio-Historical Study of an East African Mission at the Grassroots. Bloominton: Indiana University Press.

1986 Moral Imagination in Kaguru Modes of Thought. Bloomington: Indiana Universit Press.

Blanford, C. E.
1980 Chinese Churches in Thailand. Bangkok: Suriyaban Press.

Bloch, Marc.
1966 French Rural History. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Bloch, Maurice.
1971 Placing the Dead: Tombs, Ancestral Villages, and Kinship Organization in Madagacar. London: Seminar Press.

1986 From Blessing to Violence: History and Ideology in the Circumcision Ritual of the Merina of Madagascar. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

1988 "Introduction: Death and the Concept of a Person" in S. Cederroth, C. Corlin and J. Lindstrom.,eds. On the Meaning of Death: Essays on Mortuary Rituals and Eschatological Beliefs. Stockholm: Almqvist and Wilsell International. pp. 11-30.

Bloch, M., and Parry, J.
1982 "Introduction: Death and the Regeneration of Life", in M. Bloch and J. Parry., eds. Death and the Regeneration of Life. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 1-44.

Bock, C.
1884 Temples and Elephants: The Narrative of a Journey of Exploration Through Upper Siam and Laos. London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, and Rivington.

Bond, G. C.
1987 "Ancestors and Protestants: Religious Coexistence in the Social Field of a Zambian Community", American Ethnologist. Vol. 14/1, pp. 55-72.

Bourdieu, P.
1989 (1972) Outline of a Theory of Practice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bowie, K. A.
1981 "In the Wake of the Lords: A Historical Perspective on the Role of Irrigation in the Political Economy of Northern Thailand". M.A. Thesis. Department of Anthropology. University of Chicago.

Bowring, Sir. J.
1969 (1857) The Kingdom and People of Siam. 2 Vols. Singapore: Oxford University Press.

Boyd, J. W.
1973 "Satan and Mara: Christian and Buddhist Symbols of Evil", Modern Ceylon Studies. Vol. 4/1, pp. 84-100.

Brailey, N.
1968 "The Origins of the Siamese Foward Movement in Western Laos 1850-92". Ph.D. Thesis. University of London.

1973 "Chiengmai and the Inception of an Administrative Centralization policy in Siam (1)", South East Asian Studies. Vol. 11/3. pp. 299-320.

1974 "Chiengmai and the Inception of an Administrative Centralisation policy in Siam (11)", South East Asian Studies. Vol. 11/4. pp. 439-469.

Brain, J. L.
1973 "Ancestors as Elders in Africa-Further Thoughts", Africa. Vol. 43/2, pp. 122-133.

Breazeale, K.
1986 "English Missionaries Among the Thai". in R. D. Reynard.,ed. Anuson Walter Vella. Hawaii: Payap University, Chiangmai and Southeast Asian Studies Program, Centre for Asian and Pacific Studies, University of Hawaii. pp. 208-228.

Brown, A. J.
1925 The Expectations of Siam. New York: Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

Burridge, K.
1985 "Missionaries and the Perception of Evil", in V. H. Sutlive, N. Altshuler, M. D. Zamora and V. Kerns.,eds. Missionaries and Anthropologists Pt. 1. Studies in Third World Societies. No. 26. Williamsburg: Department of Anthropology, College of William and Mary.

Calavan, K. M.
1975 "Aristocrats and Commoners in Rural Northern Thailand". Ph.D. Thesis. Department of Anthropology, University of Illionois.

1980 "Princes and Commoners in Rural Northern Thailand: The Case of Cao Mahawong", Contributions to Asian Studies, Vol. 15. pp. 73-89.

Cederroth, S., Corlin, C., and Lindstrom, J.
1988 On the Meaning of Death: Essays on Mortuary Rituals and Eschatological Beliefs. Stockholm: Almqvist and Wilksell International.

Charnvit, Kasetsiri.
1974 "The First Phibun Govennment and its Involvement in World War 11", Journal of the Siam Society. Vol. 62, pp. 26-88.

Chatthip, Nartsupha.
1984 "The Ideology of Holy Men Revolts in North East Thailand" in A. Turton and S. Tanabe.,eds. History and Peasant Consciousness in South East Asia. Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology.

Clark, J.
1985 "From Cults to Christianity: Continuity and Change in Takuru". Ph.D. Thesis. Department of Anthropology, University of Adelaide.

1989 "God, Ghosts and People: Christianity and Social Organisation Among the Takuru Wiru". in M. Jolly and M. Macintyre.,eds. Family and Gender in the Pacific: Domestic Contradictions and the Colonial Impact. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 170-192.

Clifford, J.
1986 "Introduction: Partial Truths", in J. Clifford and G. E. Marcus.,eds. Writing Culture, The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography. Berkeley: Univeristy of California Press. pp. 1-26.

Coedes, G.
1968 (1964) The Indianized States of Southeast Asia. Ed., W.F. Vella. Tr. S.B. Cowing. Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii.

Cohen, P. T.
n.d. "The Cult of the Lineage Spirits in Northern Thailand". Typescript.

1984 "Are the Spirit Cults of Nothern Thailand Descent Groups?", Mankind. Vol. 14/4, pp. 293-299.

1987 "From Moral Regeneration to Confrontation: Two Paths to Equality in the Political Rhetoric of a Northern Thai Peasant Leader", Mankind. Vol. 17/2, pp. 153-167.

Cohen, P. T., and Wijeyewardene, G.
1984 "Introduction", to Spirit Cults and the Position of Women in Northern Thailand, Mankind. Vol. 14/4, pp. 249-262.

Collins, R. S. W.
1982 "Incarnation and Church Leadership in Thailand", in H. R. Swanson.,ed. To What Extent?: Incarnation and the Thai Context. Chiangmai: Manuscript Division, Payap College.

Comaroff, Jean.
1985 Body of Power Spirit of Resistance: The Culture and History of a South African People. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Comaroff, John., and Comaroff, Jean.
1986 "Christianity and Colonialism in South Africa". American Ethnologist, Vol. 13/1, pp. 1-22.

Cooper, R.
1984 Resource Scarcity and the Hmong Response: Patterns of Settlement and Economy in Transition. Singapore: Singapore University Press.

Cort, M. L.
1886 Siam or the Heart of Farther India. New York: Anson and D.F. Randolph.

Crawford. J.
1967 (1830) Journal of an Embassy to the Courts of Siam and Cochin China. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press.

Crick, M. L.
1976 Explorations in Language and Meaning: Towards a Semantic Anthropology. London: Malaby Press.

Curtis, L. J.
1903 The Laos of North Siam. Philadelphia: Westminster Press.

Dachs, A. J.
1972 "Missionary Imperialism - The Case of Bechuanaland". Journal of African History, Vol. 13/4. pp. 647-658.

Danforth, L. M.
1982 The Death Rituals of Rural Greece. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Davis, R.
1973 "Muang Matrifocality", Journal of the Siam Society. Vol. 61, pp. 53-62.

1974 "Tolerance and Intolerance of Ambiguity in Northern Thai Myth and Ritual", Ethnology. Vol. 13, pp. 1-24.

1984 Muang Metaphysics: A Study of Northern Thai Myth and Ritual. Bangkok: Pandora.

de Heusch, L.
1985 Sacrifice in Africa: A Structuralist Approach. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

de Silva, K. M.
1977 "The Religions of the Minorities", in K. M. de Silva.,ed. Sri Lanka: A Survey. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. pp. 389-402

1981 A History of Sri Lanka. Dehli: Oxford University Press.

deYoung, J. E.
1966 Village Life in Modern Thailand. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Dodd, W, C.
1899 "Preaching the Gospel to the Laos in Burma", Missionary Review of the World. April, pp. 337-339.

1923 The Thai Race, Elder Brother of the Chinese: Results of Exploration and Research of William Clifton Dodd. Cedar Rapids: Torch Press.

Douglas, M.
1970 (1966) Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo. Harmondsworth: Pellican Books.

Eliade, M.
1954 (1949) The Myth of the Eternal Return. New York: Pantheon Books.

Etherington, N.
1977 "Social Theory and the Study of Christian Missions in Africa: A South African Case Study", Africa. Vol. 47/1, pp. 31-40.

Evans-Prichard, E. E.
1969 (1948) "The Divine Kingship of the Shilluk of the Nilotic Sudan", in E. E. Evans-Prichard. Essays in Social Anthropology. London: Faber and Faber. pp. 66-86.

1974 (1949) The Nuer: A Description of the Modes of Livelihood and Political Institutions of a Nilotic People. New York: Oxford University Press.

1977 (1956) Nuer Religion. New York: Oxford University Press.

Fabian, J.
1973 "How Others Die-Reflections on the Anthropology of Death", in A. Mack.,ed. Death in American Experience. New York: Schocken Books. pp. 177-201.

Fernandez, J. W.
1982 Bwiti: An Ethnography of the Religious Imagination in Africa. Princeton: Princeton Univerity Press.

Finch, M. R.
1927 (1599) "The Voyage of M. Ralph Finch Marchant of London...", in R. Hakluyt.,cmp. The Principal Navigations, Voyages Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation. Vol. 3. London: J. M. Dent and Sons Limited. pp. 281-321.

Fisher, H. J.
1973 "Conversion Reconsidered: Some Historical Aspects of Religious Conversion in Black Africa", Africa. Vol. 43/1, pp. 27-40.

Fortes, M.
1949 The Web of Kinship Among the Tallensi. London: Oxford University Press.

1959 Oedipus and Job in West African Religion. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

1961 "Pietas in Ancestor Worship", Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute. Vol. 91, pp. 166-191.

1965 "Some Reflections on Ancestor Worship", in M. Fortes and G. Dieterlen.,eds. African Systems of Thought. London: Oxford University Press. pp. 122-142.

1969 Kinship and the Social Order: The Legacy of Lewis Henry Morgan. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

1987 "Ancestor Worship in Africa", in J. Goody.,ed. Religion, Morality and the Person: Essays on Tallensi Religion. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 66-83.

Fowler, D.
1979 "A History of Protestant Missions in Thailand" M.A. Thesis. Columbia Bible College.

Fox, J. J.
1973 "On Bad Death and the Left Hand: A Study of Rotinese Symbolic Inversions", in R. Needham.,ed. Right and Left: Essays On Dual Symbolic Classification. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. pp. 342-368.

Franklin, S. T.
1983 "A New Christian Community and its Surrounding Culture in Northeast Thailand", Missiology. Vol. 11/1, pp. 75-94.

Frazer, J. C.
1963 (1890) The Golden Bough. London: MacMillan

Freeman, J. D.
1961 "On the Concept of the Kindred", Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute. Vol. 91, pp. 192-220.

Friedman, J.
1985 "Captain Cook, Culture and the World System", Journal of Pacific History. Vol. 20/3, p. 191-201.

Geertz, C.
1973 The Interpretation of Cultures. New York: Basic Books.

1988 Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Giddens. A.
1983 (1979) Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure and Contradiction in Social Analysis. London: MacMillan Press.

Gluckman, M.
1937 "Mortuary Customs and the Belief in Survival After Death Among the South-Eastern Bantu", Bantu Studies. Vol. 11, pp. 117-136.

1954 Rituals of Rebellion in South-East Africa. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

1971 (1958) Analysis of A Social Situation in Modern Zululand. Rhodes-Livingstone Papers. No. 28. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Goddard, B. L.,ed.
1967 The Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Missions. Camden: Thomas Nelson and Sons.

Goldschmidt, W.
1973 "Guilt and Pollution in Sebi Mortuary Rituals", Ethos. Vol. 1/1, pp. 74-105.

Gombrich, R. L.
1971 "'Merit-Transference' in Sinhalese Buddhism: A Case Study of the Interaction between Doctine and Practice". History of Religions, Vol. 11, pp. 203-219.

Goody, J.

1962 Death, Property and the Ancestors: A Study of the Mortuary Customs of the Lodagaa of West Africa. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

1975 "Death and the Interpretation of Culture: A Bibliographic Overview", in D. E. Stannard.,ed. Death in America. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. pp. 1-8.

1982 Cooking, Cuisine and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gray, J.
1987 "Northern Thai Women and the Thai Dormitory Village", in A. Buller.,cmp. Proceedings of the International Conference on Thai Studies. Vol. 3, Canberra: Australian National University. pp. 513-521.

Grether, H.
1957 "The Revision of the Thai Bible". The Bible Translator. Vol. 8/2, pp. 9-19.

Guiart, J.
1970 "The Millenarian Aspect of Conversion to Christianity in the South Pacific". in S. L. Thurpp.,ed. Millennial Dreams in Action: Studies in Revolutionary Religious Movements. New York: Schoken Books. 122-138.

Gustafson, J. W.
1970 "Syncretistic Rural Thai Buddhism". M.A. Thesis. Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena.

1971 "Syncretistic Thai Religion and Church Growth". Typescript synopsis of M.A. Thesis (Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena). Payap College, Chiangmai.

Haas, M. R.
1985 (1964) Thai-English Student's Dictionary. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Hall, D. G. E.
1985 (1955) A History of South-East Asia. Basingstoke: MacMillan.

Hallett, H. S.
1890 A Thousand Miles on an Elephant in the Shan States. Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons.

Hanks, L. M.
1962 "Merit and Power in the Thai Social Order". American Anthropologist, Vol. 64, pp. 1247-1261.

Haymai, Y.
1990 "Karen Tradition According to Christ or Buddha: Implications of Multiple Reinterpretations". Paper presented at a panel on The Reinterpretation of Tradition among Southeast Asian Christians. annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies. Chicago.

Heald, S.
1986 "Witches and Thieves: Deviant Motivations in Gisu Society", Man. Vol. 21, pp. 65-78.

Heins-Potter, S.
1977 Family Life in a Northern Thai Village: A Study in the Structural Significance of Women. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hertz, R.
1960 (1909) Death and the Right Hand. Tr. by Rodney and Claudia Needham. Aberdeen: Cohen and West.

Hinton, P.
1979 "The Karen, Millennialism, and the Politics of Accommodation to Lowland States", in C. F. Keyes.,ed. Ethnic Adaptation and Identity: The Karen on the Thai Frontier with Burma. Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues. pp. 81-94.

Hortin, R.
1971 "African Conversion". Africa, Vol. 41/2, pp. 85-108.

1975 "On the Rationality of Conversion" Part 1. Africa, Vol. 45/3, pp. 219-235.

1975 "On the Rationality of Conversion" Part 11. Africa. Vol. 45/4, pp. 373-399.

Hughes, P. J.
1982 Proclamation and Response: A Study of the History of the Christian Faith in Northern Thailand. Chiangmai: Manuscript Division, Payap College.

1983 Christianity and Culture: A Case Study in Northern Thailand". Ph.D. Thesis. South East Asia Graduate School of Theology. Chiangmai

1984a "The Assimilation of Christianity in the Thai Culture", Religion. Vol. 14, pp. 313-336.

1984b "Values of Thai Buddhists and Thai Christians", Journal of the Siam Society. Vol. 72/1-2, pp. 212-227.

1985 "Christianity and Buddhism in Thailand", Journal of the Siam Society. Vol. 73/1-2, pp. 23-41.

Huntington, W. R.
1973 "Death and the Social Order: Bara Funeral Customs (Madagascar)", African Studies. Vol. 32/2, pp. 65-84.

Huntington, W. R., and Metcalf, P.
1979 Celebrations of Death: The Anthropology of Mortuary Ritual. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hutchinson, E. W.
1959 (1933) "The French Foreign Mission in Siam During the 18th Century", Selected Articles from the Siam Society Journal. Vol. 8, pp. 71-89

Ingram, J. C.
1971 (1955) Economic Change in Thailand 1850-1970. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Ishii, Y.
1975 "A Note on Buddhistic Millenarian Revolts in Northeastern Siam", Journal of Southeast Asian Studies. Vol. 6/2, pp. 121-126.

1986 Sangha, State, and Society: Thai Buddhism in History. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Jackson, M.
1977 "The Identity of the Dead: Aspects of Mortuary Ritual in a West African Society", Cahiers d'africaines. Vol. 17/2-3, pp. 271-297.

Jacobson-Widding, A.
1988 "Death Rituals as Inversions of Life Structure: A Comparison of Swedish and African Funerals", in S. Cederroth, C. Corlin and J. Lindstrom.,eds. On the Meaning of Death: Essays on Mortuary Rituals and Eschatological Beliefs. Stockholm: Almqvist and Wilsell International. pp. 137-153.

Jesuit Fathers.
1967 The Catholic Directory of Thailand. Bangkok: Jesuite Press.

Johnson, W.
1979 "The Africanization of a Mission Church". in G. Bond, W. Johnson and S. S. Walker.,eds. African Christianity: Patterns of Religious Continuity. New York: Academic Press. pp. 89-108.

Judd, L, C.
1977 Chao Rai Thai: Dry Rice Farmers in Northern Thailand, A Study of Ten Hamlets Practicing Swidden Agriculture and a Restudy Twenty Years Later. Suriyaban: Bangkok.

Kajiwara, K.
1983 "Blessing and Display: On Northern Thai House-Warming Ceremonies", East Asian Cultural Studies. Vol. 22/1-4, pp. 63-92.

Kammerer, C. A.
1990a "Customs and Christian Conversion Among Akha Highlanders of Burma and Thailand", American Ethnologist. Vol. 17/2, pp. 277-291.

1990b "Discarding the Basket: The Reinterpretation of Tradition by Akha Christian of Northern Thailand". Paper presented at a panel on The Reinterpretation of Tradition Among Southeast Asian Christians, annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies. Chicago.

1990c "Transformations in Kinship Among Akha (Hani) Christians of Highland Northern Thailand", in Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Thai Studies Vol. 1. 11-13 May. Kunming: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

Kapferer, B.
1979 "Emotion and Feeling in Sinhalese Healing Rites", Social Analysis. Vol. 1, pp. 153-176.

1983 A Celebration of Demons: Exorcism and the Aesthetics of Healing in Sri Lanka. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Kaufman, H. K.
1977 (1960) Bangkhuad: A Community Study in Thailand. Rutland: C. E. Tuttle.

Kellehear, S. A.
1986 "Good Death: The Social Life of the Dying Person", Ph.D. Thesis. School of Sociology. University of New South Wales.

Kessler, C. S.
1985 "The Cultural Management of Death: Individual Fate and its Transcendence", in M. Crouch and B. Huppauf.,eds. Essays on Mortality. Sydney: University of New South Wales.

Keyes, C. F.
1975a "Buddhist Pilgramage Centres and the Twelve-Year Cycle: Northern Thai Moral Orders in Space and Time", History of Religions. Vol. 15/1, pp. 71-89.

1975b "Tug-of-War for Merit: Cremation of a Senior Monk", Journal of the Siam Society. Vol. 63/1, pp. 44-62.

1977a "Millennialism, Theravada Buddhism, and Thai Society", Journal of Asian Studies. Vol. 36/2, pp. 283-302.

1977b The Golden Penisnula: Culture and Adaptation in Mainland Southeast Asia. New York: MacMillan.

1978 "Ethnography and Anthropological Interpretation in the Study of Thailand". in E.B. Ayal.,ed. The Study of Thailand: Analyses of Knowledge, Approaches, and Prospects in Anthropology, Art, History, Economics, History, and Political Science. Ohio University Centre for International Studies, Southeast Asia Series, No. 54. pp. 1-66.

1982 "Death of Two Buddhist Saints in Thailand", in M. A. Williams.,ed. Charisma and Sacred Biography. Journal of the American Academy of Religious Stdies, Thematic Series, Vol. 48/3-4. pp. 149-180.

1983a "Introduction: The Study of Popular Ideas of Karma", in C. F. Keyes and E. V. Daniel.,eds. Karma: An Anthropological Enquiry. Berkeley: University of California Press. pp. 1-14.

1983b "Merit-Transference in the Kammic Theory of Popular Theravada Buddhism", in C. F. Keyes and E. V. Daniel.,eds. Karma: An Anthropological Enquiry. Berkeley: University of California Press. pp. 261-286.

1984 "Mother or Mistress but Never a Monk: Buddhist Notions of Female Gender in Rural Thailand", American Ethnologist. Vol. 11/2, pp. 223-241.

1987a "Christianity as Indigenous Religion in Southeast Asia". Report on a conference held in Cebu, The Phillipines, September 1-5.

1987b "From Death to Birth: Ritual Process and Buddhist Meanings in Northern Thailand", Folk. Vol. 29, pp. 181-206.

1987c Thailand: Buddhist Kingdom as Modern Nation State. Boulder: Westview Press.

1990 "Why the Thai Are Not Christians: Buddhist and Christian Conversion in Thailand". forth coming publication in R. Hefner.,ed. Christian Conversion in Cultural Context.

Khun, I.
1984 (1956) Ascent to the Tribes: Pioneering in North Thailand. Singapore: Overseas Missionary Fellowship.

Kickert, R.
1960 "A Funeral in Yang Terng, Changwat Ubol, Northeast Thailand", Journal of the Siam Society. Vol. 48/2, pp. 73-83.

Kingshill, K.
1976 Ku Daeng-the Red Tomb: A Village Study in Northern Thailand A.D 1954-1974. Bangkok: Suriyaban Publishers.

Kirsch, A. T.
1973 Feasting and Social Oscillation: A Working Paper on Religion and Society in Upland Southeast Asia. Data Paper No. 92, Southeast Asia Program, Department of Asian Studies, Cornell University. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

1975 "Economy, Polity, and Religion in Thailand". in G.W. Skinner, and A.T. Kirsch.,eds. Change and Persistence in Thai Society. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. pp. 172-196.

1982 "Buddhism, Sex-Roles and the Thai Economy". in P. Van Esterik.,ed. Women of Southeast Asia. Occasional Paper No.9. DeKalb: Northern Illionois University, Center for Southeast Asian Studies. pp. 16-41.

1984 "Cosmology and Ecology as Factors in Interpreting Early Thai Social Organization". Journal of Southeast Asian Studies, Vol. 25/2, pp. 253-265.

Kirti, Bunchua.
1984 "The Portuguese Descendants in Thailand". Paper presented at the International Conference on Thai Studies. Bangkok, 22-24 August.

Kopytoff, I.
1971 "Ancestors as Elders in Africa", Africa. Vol. 41/2, pp. 129-142.

Kundstadter, D.
1983 "Animism, Buddhism, and Religion in the Life of Lua- People of PaPae, Northwestern Thailand", in J. McKinnon and B. Wanat.,eds. Highlanders of Thailand. Oxford: Osford University Press. pp. 135-154.

Lanternari, V.
1963 The Religions of the Oppressed: A Study of Modern Messianic Cults. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Leach, E. R.
1968 "The Concept of Sin Among the Kachin of North Burma" Paper presented at the Eigth Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences. Osaka. Japan.

1973 "Complementary Filiation and Bilateral Kinship", in J. Goody.,ed. The Character of Kinship. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

1976 Culture and Communication. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

1982 (1961) "Two Essays Concerning the Symbolic Representation of Time", in E. R. Leach. Rethinking Anthropology. New York: The Athlone Press.

Le May, R.
1926 An Asian Arcady: The Land and Peoples of Northern Siam. Cambridge: Heffer.

Levi-Strauss, C.
1975 (1964) The Raw and the Cooked: Introduction to a Science of Mythology: I. New York: Harper Colophon books.

1979a (1963) Structural Anthropology. Vol.1. Harmonds worth: Penguin Books.

1979b (1973) Structural Anthropology. Vol.2. Harmonds worth: Penguin Books

1982 (1975) The Way of the Masks. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

1984 (1955) Tristes Tropiques. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

1986 (1962) The Savage Mind. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

1987 Anthropology and Myth: Lectures 1951-1982. London: Basil Blackwell.

Long, N.
1972 (1968) Social Change and the Individual: A Study of the Social and Religious Responses to Innovation in a Zambian Rural Community. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Luzbetak, L.
1966 "Christopaganism", Practical Anthropology. Vol. 13, pp. 115-121.

McFarland, G. B.
1928 Historical Sketch of Protestant Missions in Siam 1828-1928. Bangkok: Bangkok Times Press Ltd.

MacGaffey, W.
1986 Religion and Society in Central Africa: The BaKongo of Lower Zaire. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

McGilvary, D.
1894 "Mission Work Among the Laos", Missionary Review of the World. May. pp. 373-377.

1905 "Discouraging Dissapointments and Interesting Incidents". The Lao News. Vol. 2, pp. 14-16.

1912 A half Century Among the Siamese and the Lao: An Autobiography. New York: Fleming H. Revell Co.

McMorran, M. V.
1984 "Northern Thai Ancestral cults: Authority and Aggression", Mankind. Vol. 14/4, pp. 314.

Malalgoda, K.
1970 "Millennialism in Relation to Buddhism", Comparative Studies in Society and History. Vol. 12/3, pp. 424-441.

1973 "The Buddhist-Christian Confrontation in Ceylon, 1800-1880". Social Compass, Vol. 20/2, pp. 171-200.

Malinowski, B.
1984 (1925) Magic, Science and Religion and Other Essays. Westport (Conn): Greenwood Press.

Marcus, G. E., and Cushman, D.
1982 "Ethnographies as Texts", Annual Review of Anthropology. Vol. 11. pp. 25-69.

Marriott, M.
1955 "Little Communities in an Indigenous Civilization" in M. Marriott.,ed. Village India. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. pp. 175-227.

Martin, J. V.,jnr.
1963 "Thai-American Relations in World War 11", Journal of Asian Studies. Vol. 22/5, pp. 451-467.

Marx, K
1976 "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte", in K. Marx and F. Engels. Selected Works. Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Publishers. pp. 394-487.

Mason, L., and Brown, R.
1983 Rice, Rivalry, and Politics: Managing Cambodian Relief. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press.

Mendelson, E. M.
1961a "A Messianic Buddhist Association in Upper Burma", Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies. Vol. 24, pp. 560-580.

1961b "The King of the Weaving Mountain". Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society. Vol. 48/2, pp. 229-237.

Mendonsa, E. L.
1976 "Elders, Office-Holders and Ancestors Among the Sisala of Northern Ghana", Africa. Vol. 46, pp. 57-65.

Metcalf, P.
1981 "Meaning and Materialism: The Ritual Economy of Death", Man. Vol. 16, pp. 563-578.

1982 A Borneo Journey into Death: Berawan Eschatology from its Rituals. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Middleton, J
1971 (1960) Lugbara Religion: Ritual and Authority Among an East African People. London: Oxford University Press.

Miles, D.
1965 "Socio-Economic Aspects of Secondary Burial", Oceania. Vol. 35/3, pp. 161-174.

Miller, E.
1970 "The Christian Missionary, Agent of Secularisation", Anthropological Quarterly. Vol. 43, pp. 14-22.

Moerman, M.
1987 "Meaning and Magnitude: Some Changes in How Ban Ping Farms" in A. Buller.,cmp. Proceedings of the International Conference on Thai Studies, Vol. 3, Canberra: Australian National University. pp. 393-400.

Moffat, A. L.
1961 Mongkut, the King of Siam. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Moore, H. L.
1986 Space, Text and Gender: An Anthropological Study of the Marakwet of Kenya. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mulder, N.
1985 (1979) Everyday Life in Thailand: An Interpretation. Bangkok: Duang Kumol.

Mullings, L.
1979 "Religious Change and Social Stratification in Labadi, Ghana", in G. Bond, W. Johnson and S.S. Walker.,eds. African Christianity: Patterns of Religious Continuity. New York: Academic Press. pp. 65-88.

Murdoch, J. B.
1974 "The 1901-1902 'Holy Man's' Rebellion", Journal of the Siam Society. Vol. 62, pp. 47-66.

Myerhoff, B. G.
1984 "A Death in Due Time: Construction of Self and Culture in ritual Drama", in J. J. MacAroon.,ed. Rite, Drama, Festival, Spectacle: Rehersals Towards a Theory of Cultural Performance. Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues.

Nash, M.
1973 (1965) The Golden Road to Modernity: Village Life in Contemporary Burma. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

National Statistical Office.
1985 Statistical Summary of Thailand 1984. Bangkok: National Printing Office.

Nida, E. A.
1982 (1975) Language Structure and Translation. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Needham, R.
1967 "Percussion and Transition", Man. Vol. 2/4, pp. 607-614.

1973 Right and Left: Essays on Dual Symbolic Classification. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

1979 Symbolic Classification. Santa Monica: Goodyear Publishing Company.

Ortner, S. B.
1978 Sherpas Through Their Rituals. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Overseas Missionary Fellowship.
1980 Dawn Wind. Belmont (Kent): OMF Publishers.

Parry, J.
1980 "Ghosts, Greed and Sin: The Occupational Identity of the Benares Funeral Priests", Man. Vol. 15/1, pp. 88-111.

1981 "Death and Cosmogony in Kashi", Contributions to Indian Sociology. Vol. 15/1-2, pp. 337-365.

1985 "Death and Digestion: The Symbolism of Food and Eating in North Indian Mortuary Rites", Man. Vol. 20/4, pp. 612-630.

Pauw, B. A.
1963 "African Christians and their Ancestors", in V.E.W. Hayward.,ed. African Independent Church Movements. London: Edinburgh House Press.

1975 "Universalism and particularism in the Beliefs of Xhose-Speaking Christians", in M.G. Whisson and M. West.,eds. Religion and Social Change in Southern Africa. Cape Town: David Philip. pp. 153-163.

Peel, J. D. Y.
1968 "Syncretism and Religious Change", Comparative Studies in Society and History. Vol. 10, pp. 121-141.

Pelmer, M.
1907 "Evangelistic Work for the New Missionary". The Lao News. Vol. 4/1, pp. 67-68.

Phillips, H. P.
1970 (1965) Thai Peasant Personality: The patterning of Interpersonal Behavior in the Village of *Ban Chan*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Pitt-Rivers, J. A.
1954 The People of the Sierra. New York: Criterion.

Potter, J. M.
1976 Thai Peasant Social Structure. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Pradit, Akrapram.
1985 Update Christian Directory 1986-1987. Bangkok: Update Publishers.

Prakai, Nontawasee.
1984 "Christianity in Thailand". Paper presented at the International Conference on Thai Studies. Bangkok, 22-24 August.

Prior, L.
1987 "Policing the Dead: A Sociology of the Mortuary", Sociology. Vol. 21/3, pp. 355-376.

1989 The Social Organization of Death: Medical Discourse and Social Practices in Belfast. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press.

Radcliffe-Brown, A. R.
1945 "Religion in Society", Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute. Vol. 75, pp. 33-43.

1964 (1922) The Andaman Islanders. Glencoe: Free Press.

1968 (1952) Structure and Function in Primitive Society. London: Cohen and West.

Ramsay, J. A.
1971 "The Development of A Bureaucratic Polity: The Case of Northern Siam". Ph.D. Thesis. Cornell Univerity.

1979 "Modernization and Reactionary Rebellions in Northern Siam", Journal of Asian Studies. Vol. 38/2, pp. 283-297.

Redfield, R.
1956 Peasant Society and Culture. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Renard, R.
1984 "'The Westerner Does Thai': Catholic Romanization Systems from the mid-17th Century to the Present". Paper presented at the International Conference on Thai Studies. Bangkok, 22-24 August.

Reynolds, C. J.
1976 "Buddhist Cosmography in Thai History, with Special Reference to Nineteenth-Century Culture Change", Journal of Asian Studies. Vol. 35/2, pp. 203-220.

Reynolds, F. E., and Waugh, E. H.,eds.
1977a "Introduction", in Reynolds, F. E. and Waugh, E. H.,eds. Religious Encounters With Death: Insights from the History and Anthropology of Religions. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. pp. 1-10.

1977b Religious Encounters With Death: Insights from the History and Anthropology of Religions. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Rhum, M. R.
1987 "The Cosmology of Power in Lanna", Journal of the Siam Society. Vol. 75, pp. 91-107.

Ricoeur, P.
1969 (1967) The Symbolism of Evil. Boston: Boston Press.

1976 Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning. Fort Worth: The Texas Christian University Press.

Roach, E. M.
1988 "Transformation of Christian Ritual in the Pacific: Samoan White Sunday", Missiology. Vol. 16/2, pp. 173-182.

Roberts, M.
1990 "Noise As Cultural Struggle: Tom-Tom Beating, The British and Communal Disturbances in Sri Lanks, 1880s-1930s". Typescript.

Sahlins, M.
1974 (1972) Stone Age Economics London: Tavistock.

1981 Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities: Structure in the Early History of the Sandwitch Islands Kingdom. ASAO Special Publications No. 1. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

1983 "Other Times, Other Customs: The Anthropology of History", American Anthropologist, Vol. 85/3, pp. 517-544.

1985 Islands of History. London: Tavistock.

Salamone, F. A.
1986 "Missionaries and Anthropologists: An Inquiry into Their Ambivalent Relationship", Missiology. Vol. 14/1, pp. 55-70.

Sanneh, L.
1983 West African Christianity: The Religious Impact. London: C. Hurst and Company.

Sarkisyanz, E.
1965 Buddhist Backgrounds of the Burmese Revolution. The Hague: M. Nijhoff.

Sartre, J. P.
1966 (1956) Being and Nothingness: A Phenomenological Essay on Ontology. New York: Pocket Books.

Schapera, I.
1958 "Christianity and the Tswana". Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. 88, pp. 1-9.

Schneider, D. M.
1984 A Critique of the Concept of Kinship. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Schutte, A. C.
1974 "Dual Religious Orientation in an Urban African Church", African Studies. Vol. 33/2, pp. 113-120.

Scott, J. C.
1976 The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Seeley, F. M.
1957 "Some Problems in Translating the Scriptures into Thai", The Bible Translator. Vol. 8/2, pp. 49-61.

Shapiro, J.
1981 "Ideologies of Catholic Mission Practice in a Postcolonial Era", Comparative Studies in Society and History. Vol. 23 , pp. 130-149.

Sharp, L., Hazel, M. H., Kamol, J., and Textor, R. B.
1953 Siamese Rice Village: A Preliminary Study of Bang Chan, 1948-1949. Bangkok: Cornell Research Centre.

Sharp, L., and Hanks, L. M.
1978 Bang Chan: Social History of a Rural Community in Thailand. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Siffin, W. J.
1966 The Thai Bureaucracy: Institutional Change and Development. Honolulu: East-West Centre Press.

Silcock, T. H.,ed.
1967 Thailand: Social and Economic Studies in Development. Canberra: Australian National University Press.

Stannard, D. E.
1975 Death in America. Piliadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Stern, T.
1968 "Ariya and the Golden Book: A Millenarian Buddhist Sect Among the Karen", Journal of Asian Studies. Vol. 27, pp. 297-327.

Stirrat, R. L.
1981 "The Shrine of St Sebastian at Mirisgama: An Aspect of the Cult of the Saints in Catholic Sri Lanka". Man. Vol. 16, pp. 183-200.

Skinner, G. W., and Kirsch, A. W.,eds.
1975 Change and Persistance in Thai Society. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Smith, A. G.
1977 Strategy to Multiply Rural Churches: A Central Thailand Case Study. Bangkok: OMF Publishers.

1982 Siamese Gold: A History of Church Growth in Thailand. Bangkok: OMF Publishers.

Smith, B. L.,ed.
1978 Religion and Legitimation of Power in Thailand, Laos, and Burma. Chambersburg: Anima Books.

Smith, H. N.
1989 "Christianity and Ancestor Practices in Hong Kong: Toward a Contextual Strategy", Missiology. Vol. 17/1, pp. 27-38.

Sperber, D.
1975 Rethinking Symbolism. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Spiro, M. E.
1982 (1970) Buddhism and Society: A Great Tradition and its Burmese Vicissitudes. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Swanson, H. R.
1982 "Advocate and Partaner: Missionaries and Modernization in Nan Province, Siam, 1895-1934", Journal of Southeast Asian Studies. Vol. 23/2, pp. 296-309.

1984 Kristchak Muang Nua: A Study in Northern Thai Church History. Bangkok: Chuan Press.

1985 "The Expansionist Web: The Ideological Sources of American Protestant Missionary Activity in Northern Siam". Typescript.

1988 "A New Generation: Missionary Education and Changes in Women's roles in Traditional Northern Thai Society", Sojurn. Vol. 3/2, pp. 186-296.

Swearer, D. K., and Sommai Premchit.
1978 "The Relationship Between the Religious and Political Orders in Northern Thailand (14th-16th Centuries)". in B. L. Smith.,ed. Religion and Legitimation of Power in Thailand, Laos,and Burma. Chambersburg: Anima Books. pp. 20-33.

Talmon, Y.
1966 "Millenarian Movements", Archives de Europeennes Sociologie. Vol. 7, pp. 159-200.

Tambiah, S. J.
1968 "The Magical Power of Words". Man. Vol. 3, pp. 156-208.

1969 "Animals are Good to Think and Good to Prohibit", Ethnology. Vol. 81, pp. 423-459.

1973 "The Persistence and Transformation of Tradition in Southeast Asia, With Special Reference To Thailand". Daedalus, Vol. 102, pp. 55-84.

1977a (1970) Buddhism and the Spirit Cults in North-east Thailand. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

1977b (1976) World Conqueror and World Renouncer: A Study of Buddhism and Polity in Thailand Against a Historical Background. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

1981 "A Performative Approach to Ritual", Proceedings of the British Academy. Vol. 65, pp. 113-169.

1984 The Buddhist Saints of the Forest and the Cult of Amulets: A Study in Charisma, Hagiography, Sectarianism, and Millennial Buddhism. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tanabe. S.
1984 "Ideological Practice Within Peasant Rebellions: Siam at the Turn of the Century". in A. Turton and S. Tanabe.,eds. History and Peasant Consciousness in South East Asia. Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology. pp. 75-110.

Tapp, N.
1989 "The Impact of Missionary Christianity Upon Marginalized Ethnic Minorities: The Case of the Hmong". Journal of Southeast Asian Studies. Vol. 20/1, pp. 70-95.

Tatje, T., and Hsu, F. L. K.
1969 "Variations in Ancestor Worship Beliefs and Their Relation to Kinship", South Western Journal of Anthropology. Vol. 25/2, pp. 153-172.

Tej, Bunnag.
1977 The Provincial Administration of Siam 1892-1915: The Ministry of the Interior Under Prince Damrong Rajanubhab. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press.

Terwiel, B.
1979a (1975) Monks and Magic: An Analysis of Religious Ceremonies in Central Thailand. London: Curzon Press.

1979b "Tai Funeral Customs: Towards a Reconstruction of Archaic-Tai Ceremonies", Anthropos. Vol. 74, pp. 393-432.

1983 A History of Modern Thailand: 1767-1942. St Lucia: University of Queensland Press.

1989 Through Traveller's Eyes: An Approach to Early Nineteenth Century Thai History. Bangkok: Duang Kumol.

The Lao News.
1908 "Personal and Otherwise", The Lao News. Vol. 5/4, pp. 88-98.

Thompson, V.
1967 (1941) Thailand, The New Siam. New York: The MacMillan Co.

Thornton,
1984 "The Development of An African Catholic Church in the Kingdom of Kongo, 1491-1750", Journal of African History. Vol. 25, pp. 147-167.

Trankell, I.
1977 "Food and Cosmology Among Thai Yong", in A. Buller.,cmp. Proceedings of the International Conference on Thai Studies, Vol. 3, Canberra: Australian National University. pp. 635-647.

Traube, E. G.
1986 Cosmology and Social Life: Ritual Exhange Among the Mambi of East Timor. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Turner, Paul. T.
1984 "Religious Conversion and Folk Catholicism", Missiology. Vol. 12/1, pp. 111-121.

Turner, V.
1957 Schism and Continuity in an African Society: A Study of Ndembu Village Life. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

1975 Revelation and Divination in Ndembu Ritual. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

1981 (1967) The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

1984 "Liminality and the Performative Genres" in J. J. MacAroon.,ed. Rite, Drama, Festival, Spectacle: Rehersals Towards a Theory of Cultural Performance. Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues.

1987 (1969) The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Turton, A.
1972 "Matrilineal Descent Groups and Spirit Cults of the Thai-Yuan in Northern Thailand", Journal of the Siam Society. Vol. 60, pp. 217-256.

1975 "Northern Thai Peasant Society: A Case Study of Jural and Political Structures at the Village Level and their Twentieth Century Transformations". Ph.D. Thesis. University of London.

1976 "Northern Thai Peasant Society: Twentieth-Century Transformations in Political and Jural Structures", Journal of Peasant Studies. Vol. 3/3, pp. 267-298.

1980 "Thai Institutions of Slavery" in J.L. Watson.,ed. Asian and African Systems of Slavery. Berkeley: University of California Press. pp. 251-292.

Van der Haak, F.
1987 "Calling the Spirits: An Observation of its Practice Among the Kui in Thailand", Journal of the Siam Society. Vol. 75, pp. 108-128.

Van Gennep, A.
1977 (1909) The Rites of Passage. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Vella, A.
1955 The Impact of the West on Government in Thailand. Berkeley: University of California Press.

1957 Siam Under Rama lll: 1824-1851. New York: J.J. Augustin.

1978 Chaiyo! King Vajiravudha and the Development of Thai Nationalism. Honolulu: UNiversity of Hawaii Press.

Vickery, M.
1970 "Thai Regional Elites and the Reforms of King Chulalongkorn", Journal of Asian Studies. Vol. 29/4, pp. 863-881.

Wakeman, E. P.
1984 Sri Ngam Church: An Historical Inquiry into the Origins of the Church in Northern Thailand. Typescript.

Wales, H. G. Q.
1931 Siamese State Ceremonies: Their History and Function. London: Bernard Quaritch.

Walker, A. R.
1986 "The Lahu Na (Black Lahu) Christian Community at Huai Tadt: Some Notes". in A.R. Walker.,ed. Farmers in the Hills: Ethnographic Notes on the Upland Peoples of Northern Thailand. Singapore: Suvarnabhumi Books. pp. 149-158.

Warner, W. L.
1959 The Living and the Dead: A Study of the Symbolic Life of Americans. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Watson, J. L.
1980 African and Asian Systems of Slavery. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Weber, M.
1964 (1947) The Theory of Social and Economic Organization, Ed., T. Parsons. New York: The Free Press.

1976 (1904-1905) The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. New York: Charles Scriber's Sons.

Wells, K. E.
1942 "Buddhism in Thailand: Its Sources of Strength". International Review of Missions, Vol. 31, pp. 199-204.

1958 History of Protestant Work in Thailand 1828-1958. Bangkok: Church of Christ in Thailand.

1975 (1939) Thai Buddhism: Its Rites and Activities. Bangkok: Suriyaban

Wells, K. Mrs.
1946 Siam Story. New York: Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church.

West, M.
1975 "The Shades Come to Town: Ancestors and Urban Independent Churches", in M.G. Whisson and M. West.,eds. Religion and Social change in Southern Africa. Cape Town: David Philip. pp. 185-207.

Widmer, F.
1915 "Notes by F. Widmer From Song-Khone", The Lao News. Vol. 11/4, pp. 119.

Wijeyewardene, G.
1967 "Some Aspects of Rural Life in Thailand", in T.H. Silcock.,ed. Thailand: Social and Economic Studies in Development. Canberra: Australian National University Press. pp. 65-83.

1970 "The Still Point and the Turning World: Towards the Structure of Northern Thai Religion". Mankind, Vol. 7, pp. 247-255.

1971 "A Note on Patrons and Pau Lieng", Journal of the Siam Society. Vol. 59, pp. 229-233.

1977 "Matriclans or Female Cults: A Problem in Northern Thai Ethnography", Mankind. Vol. 11/1, pp. 19-25.

1981 "Scrubbing Scurf: Medium and Diety in Chiang Mai", Mankind. Vol. 13/1, pp. 1-14.

1984 "Northern Thai Succession and the Search for Matriliny", Mankind. Vol. 14/4, pp. 286-292.

1986 Place and Emotion in Northern Thai Ritual Behaviour. Bangkok: Pandora Press.

Willems, E.
1967 Followers of the New Faith: Culture Change and the Rise of Protestantism in Brazil and Chile. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.

Wilson, C. M.
1970 "State and Society in the Reign of Mongkut, 1851-1910". Ph.D. Thesis. Cornell University.

Wilson, G.
1939 "Nyakyusa Conventions of Burial", Bantu Studies. Vol. 13, pp. 1-31.

Wilson, M.
1963 (1951) Good Company: A Study of Nyakyusa Age Villages. London: Oxford University Press.

Wilson, M. and Mafeje, A.
1963 Langa: A Study of Social Groups in an African Township. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Wilson, S. and Siewart, J.,eds.
1986 Mission Handbook: North American Protestant Ministries Overseas. Monrovia: Missions Advanced Research and Communication Centre.

Wolters, O. W.
1982 History, Culture, and Region in Southeast Asian Perspectives. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

Wood, W. A. R.
1924 History of Siam: From the Earliest Times to the Year A.D. 1871, with A Supplement Dealing with More Recent Events. Bangkok: Chalermit Press.

Wyatt, D. K.
1968 "Family Politics in Nineteenth Century Thailand", Journal of Southeast Asian History. Vol. 9/2, pp. 208-228.

1984 Thailand: A Short History. London: Yale University Press.

Wyllie, R, W.
1976 "Some Contradictions in Missionizing", Africa. Vol. 46, pp. 196-204.

Young, G. W.
1960 "Graveyards and Social Structure", Rural Sociology. Vol. 25/3-4, pp. 446-450.

Zehner, E.
1990 "Thai Christian Converts and Traditional Supernaturalism: The Conflict of Intersecting World Views". Paper presented at a panel on The Reinterpretation of Tradition Amongst Southeast Asian Christians. annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies. Chicago.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (THAI)

ARCHIVAL SOURCES

Documents of the 19th meeting of The Church of Christ in Thailand, Payap University, Chiangmai, 20-25 October 1986. Held in the Manuscript Division, Payap University, Chiangmai. (เอกสารของการประชุมสภาคริสตจักร์ในประเทยไทย สมัยสามัญ ครั้งที่ ๑๙. มหาวิทยาลัยพายัพเชียงใหม่. ๒๐-๒๕ ตุลาคม ๑๙๘๖. อยู่ที่ หอจดหมายเหตุมหาวิทยาลัยพายัพ เชียงใหม่).

Documents of the Meeting of the Business Group of the First Division of the Church of Christ in Thailand. Payap University, Chiangmai 20-22 May 1986. Held in the Manuscript Division, Payap University, Chiangmai.(เอกสารการประชุมคณะธรรมกิจสมัยสามัญประจำปี ๑๙๘๖, โบสถ์คริสตจักร์ที่ หนึ่งเชียงใหม่. อยู่ที่ หอจดหมายเหตุมหาวิทยาลัยพายัพ).

Prarachgitjarbaksar Vol. 20, 1913 (พระราชกิจจานุเบกษา เล่มที่ 20, 1913) National Archives, Bangkok (หอจดหมายเหตุแห่งชาติ, กรุงเทพมหานคร).

GENERAL WORKS

Chayan Hirapan (ชยันต์ หิรัญพันธุ์). (cmp)
1978 The History of the Church in the Number One Division: Chiangmai-Lamphuun (ประวัติศาสตร์คริสตจักร์ในภาคที่1 เชียงใหม่-ลำพูน). Chiangmai: The Church of Christ in Thailand (เชียงใหม่: สภาคริสตจักร์ในประเทศไทย).

Chayan Hirapan (ชยันต์ หิรัญพันธุ์)
1982 "The Sansai Church" (คริสตจักร์สันทราย). Typescript (เอกสาร).

Church News (ข่าวคริสตจักร์)
1986 "Faculty of Theology Invites Applications for New Students" ("คณะศาสนศาสตร์รับสมัครนักศึกษาใหม่"), Church News (ข่าวคริสตจักร์). Vol. 428 (ฉบับที่ 428), pp. 32-35).

Church of Christ in Thailand (สภาคริสตจักร์ในประเทศไทย)
1977 Manual for Religious Ceremonies (คู่มือศาสนพิธี). Bangkok: Suriyaban (กรุงเทพมหานคร: สุริยบรรณ).

--------, 1985 (1953). Hymns for Thai Worship (เพลงไทยนมัสการ). Bangkok: Suriyaban (กรุงเทพมหานคร: สุริยบรรณ)

Chusit Chuchart (ชูลิทธิ์ ชูชาติ)
1982 "The Phaya Phap Rebellion (Phrapsongkram): Peasant Rebellion in the Northern Region" ("กบฏพญาผาบ (ปราบสงคราม): กบฏชาวนาภาคเหนือ"). in Wodichai Moonsin (วุฒิชัย มูลศิลป์) and Tammanit Warapon (ธรรมนิตย์ วราภรณ์)., eds. Peasant Rebellion (กบฏชาวนา). Bangkok: Gidi Sidijindachok (กรุงเทพมหานค: นายกิติ สิทธิจินดาโชค ผู้พิมพ์). pp. 53-63.

Damrong Rachanuphap Kromphraya (กรมพระยาดำรงราชานุภาพ)
1957 On King Phrachomklaw (เรื่องพระจอมเกล้า). Cremation volume (อนุสรณ์งานพระราชทานเพลิงศพ). Bangkok. กรุงเทพมหานคร.

Khambuan Rangasn (คำปวน รังสรรค์)
(n.d.) A History of the Bohin Church (Silarchai) (ประวัติคริสตจักร์บ่อหิน (ศิลาชัย)). Typescript (เอกสาร).

Khristjuk Khongphrakrid (คริสตจักร์ของพระคริสต์)
1985 "The Funeral According to Saphaa Khrischag: First Division, Chiangmai" (งานศพตามสภาคริสตจักร์: ภาคที่ 1 เชียงใหม่). Typescript (เอกสาร).

Kraj Krajniran (ไกร ไกรนิรันดร์)
1953 "The Story of the Iron Flag and the Golden Flag" (เรื่องราวเกี่ยวกับธงเงินและธงทอง) Northern People (คนเมือง). Vol. 1/50.

Manee Payormyong (มณี พยอมยงค์)
1986 Lanna Thai Culture (วัฒนธรรมล้านนาไทย). Bangkok: Thai Wattana Parnit (กรุงเทพมหานคร: ไทยวัฒนาพานิช).

Met Radomprasit (เมธ รัตมประสิทธิ์). (cmp)
1965 A Northern Thai-Thai-English Dictionary (พจนานุกรมไทยยวน-ไทยอังกฤษ). Chiangmai (เชียงใหม่).

Nantajar (หนานเต๋จา)
(n.d.) Lanna Thai Customs and Various Rituals (ประเพณีลานนาไทยและพิธีกรรมต่างๆ). Chiangmai: Pratuang Whitar (เชียงใหม่: ประเทืองวิทยา).

Niwan Chimpalee (นิวัณ ฉิมพาลี)
1979 "Villagers and the Catholic Church: A Study Concerning the Power Structure in the Community of Kokwat ("ชาวบ้านและวัดคาทอลิก: การศึกษาเฉพาะกรณีโครงสร้างอำนาจในชุมชนโคกวัด"). M.A. Thesis. Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Chulalongkorn University. วิทยานิพนธ์. แผนกวิชาสังคมวิทยา จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย.

Phra Sobhon Ganabhon (พระโสภณคณาภรณ์)
1983 A Plot to Undermine Buddhism (แผนทำลายพระพุทธศาสนา). Bangkok: Jarut Wunatawee (กรุงเทพมหานคร: นายจรัส วันทนทวี).

Poonpisami Disakon (พูนพิศมัย ดิศกุล)
1979 Thai Traditions (ประเพณีไทย). Bangkok: Bungit (กรุงเทพมหานคร: บรรณกิจ).

Prachun Rangsan (ประชัน รังสรรค์)
(n.d.) A Tribute to the Faith of the Ancestors of Khriscag Bohin (คำสดุดีของบรรพบุรุษแห่งความเชื่อคริสตจักร์บ่อหิน. Typescript (เอกสาร).

Prakai Nontawasee (ประกาย นนทวาสี)
1987 "The Confrontation Between Christianity and Phii Ka" (การเผชิญหน้าระหว่างคริสตศาสนาและผีกะ), Church News (ข่าวคริสตจักร์). Vol. 441 (ฉบับที่ 441), pp. 14-19.

Prasit Pongudom (ประสิทธิ์ พงศ์อุดม)
1987 A History of the Church of Christ in Thailand (ประวัติศาสตร์สภาคริสตจักร์ในประเทยไทย). Bangkok: Church of Christ in Thailand (กรุงเทพมหานคร: สภาคริสตจักร์ในประเทศไทย).

Saad Chayun (สะอาด ไชยวัณ์)

1976 A Comparative Historical Study of Roman Catholic and Protestant Missions in Thailand (การศึกษาประวัติศาสตร์เปรียบเทียบงานธรรมทูตของโรมันคาธอลิคกับโปรเตสแตนท์ในประเทศไทย). Bangkok: Suriyaban (กรุงเทพมหานคร: สุริยบรรณ).

Sanguan Chotisukkharat (สงวน โชติสุขรัตน์)

1966 Customs of the Thai of the Northern Region (ประเพณีไทยภาคเหนือ). Chiangmai: Sanguan Chotisukkhart (เชียงใหม่: สงวน โชติสุขรัตน์ ผู้พิมพ์).

Sarasawadee Ongsagoon (สรัสวดี อ๋องสกุล)

1984 "The Phraya Phrapsongkram Rebellion led by Chiangmai in 1889 ("กบฏพระยาปราบสงครามแม่ทับเมืองเชียงใหม่ พ.ศ.๒๔๓๒"). in Ponpin Hundagroon and Acharapon Kumutpisamai (พรเพ็ญ อั้นตระกูล และอัจฉราพร กุมทพิสมัย).,eds. "Millennialism" and "Holy Men" Rebellion in Thai Society ("ความเชื่อพระศรีอาริย์" และ "กบฏผู้มีบุญ"ในสังคมไทย). Bangkok: Sarngsun (กรุงเทพมหานคร: สร้างสรรค์).

Satean Goset (เสฐียร โกเศศ).

1989 (1988). The Customs of Life: Death (ประเพณีเกี่ยวกับชีวิต: การตาย). Bangkok: Maekumpang (กรุงเทพมหานคร: สำนักพิมพ์แม่คำผาง).

Seri Phongpit (เสรี พงศ์พิศ)

1982 "Catholics and Thai Society from the Time of Pramari Until the Present Day" (คาทอลิคกับสังคมไทยตั้งแต่สมัยพระนารายณ์ถึงปัจจุบัน). Social Science and Humanities Foundation, Research Paper No. 42 (มูลนิธิโครงการตำราสังคมศาสตร์และมนุษยศาสตร์ เอกสารวิชาการหมายเลข 42). Thai Khadi Research Institute, Thammasat University (สถาบันไทยคดีศึกษา มหาวิทยาลัยธรรมศาสตร์).

Singkha Wannasai (สิงฆะ วรรณสัย)

1978 "Northern Thai Traditions" (ประเพณีลานนาไทย) in Prakong Niminhimin and Songsak Prangwatanarngoon (ประคอง นิมมานเหมินทร์ และ ทรงศักดิ์ ปรางค์วัฒนากุล.,eds. Accounts of Lanna Thai (ลานนาไทยคดี). Chiangmai: The Book Centre (เชียงใหม่: ศูนย์หนังสือ). pp. 65-105.

Somchai Jydee and Yunyong Sireewiriyapon (สมชัย ใจดี และ ยรรยง ศรีวิริยาภรณ์)

1985 Thai Customs and Culture (ประเพณีและวัฒนธรรมไทย). Bangkok: Thai Watana Parnit (กรุงเทพมหานคร: ไทยวัฒนาพานิช).

Sompon Sirigongarn (สมพร ศิริกลการ)

1984 "General Information About All Religions in Thailand" (ข้อมูลทั่วไปของศาสนาต่างๆ ในประเทศไทย), in Pradit Akrapram.,ed. Update Christian Directory 1985-1986). Bangkok: Update Publishers.