Chinese Temples in Bangkok

Sources of Data for 19th-Century Sino–Thai Communities

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1. Introduction

Modern Chinese communities in Thailand have been the subject of extensive research by social scientists and historians (e.g., Landon 1941; Skinner 1957, 1958; Coughlin 1960; Purcell 1951). Much empirical data has been collected regarding Chinese ethnic groups in 20th-century Thai society, but not nearly as much hard data has been made available for the study of the Chinese in Bangkok during the 19th century. The numerous observations by European travelers are too sketchy for serious analysis and contemporary Thai and Chinese documentary sources seem to be very rare. However, rich epigraphic data from the last two centuries survives within the Chinese community in Thailand. Much of this is still on public display inside Chinese temples and ancestral halls. Elsewhere in Southeast Asia, much Chinese epigraphic material has been compiled by historians (e.g., Chen & Tan 1970; Chen 1977; Franke & Chen 1982-87). Some scholars have incorporated such material into broader studies of overseas Chinese culture (e.g., Salmon & Lombard 1977 for Jakarta). But in Thailand, no comprehensive survey of temple inscriptions has yet been published, apart from some of Franke's work (1976; 1991).[1] In deed, researchers generally have not paid much attention to Chinese temples in Thailand. Among the few exceptions are Skinner (1957:84,138 and Coughlin (1960:94-100).[2]

In 1990 and 1991, the author visited twenty-eight Chinese temples[3] as well as one Chinese and five Vietnamese Mahayana monasteries[4] in Bangkok (*Table 1: Fig. 1*).[5] These included all of the temples in Sampheng, Bangkok's traditional Chinatown, and several others in Thon Buri on the other side of the Chao Phraya River. At each, Chinese inscriptions on ritual objects and temple fixtures were recorded, temple personnel and patrons were interviewed, and written documents were collected when available. The inscriptions turned out to be the most important source of data. They showed that at least sixteen of the temples were already in existence before 1900 and about half of those before 1860.

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The idea that Chinese temples in Thailand are declining goes back to the dawn of Thai studies by westerners. Landon (1941:101), for instance, believed that the younger generation in his day was less religious than formerly and that they, therefore, rejected temples and temple activities. Other observers (Skinner 1957:132) suggest that the decline is due to assimilation as the second generation Sino-Thais are weaned away from Chinese culture and as they find that their spiritual needs can be filled by local Thai Buddhism. It is interesting to note that the missionary, Gutzlaff, who visited Siam in the 1830s made an almost identical prediction:

> indifferent religious principles of the Chinese do not differ from those of the Siamese, the former are very prone to conform to the religious rites of the latter.... Within two or three generations, all the distinguishing marks of the Chinese dwindle entirely away; and a nation which adheres to its national customs so obstinately becomes wholly changed to Siamese. (Purcell 1951:96).

Gutzlaff presumably includes Chinese temples as one of these "distinguishing marks." Yet in spite of the intense acculturative pressures of the ensuing 150 years, the number of Chinese temples in Bangkok has increased almost 100 percent. The 1883 Bangkok Postal Directory listed 16 Chinese temples (Wilson 1989:53).[6] By 1915, at least six more temples had been added in the Sampheng area. This might be put down to the "continual reinforcement of Chinese society through immigration" (Skinner 1957:134). However, in 1991, after fifty years of minimal immigration, there were twice as many temples in Sampheng as in 1883—by my count, 30. It is clear that the Chinese religion, at least in terms of architectural expression, has been more resilient than most observers expected.

The reasons for this resilience cannot be discussed here. Instead, I wish to focus on certain historical aspects of the temples during the 19th century. It is important to understand their role at that time if we are eventually to produce a more satisfactory analysis of the past and present functions of religious institutions in Sino-Thai society.

2. The Growth of the Chinese Community and the Development of Bangkok

When King Rama I decided to build a new palace on the east bank of the Chao Phraya River, the land he chose—the present Rattanakosin "Island"—was occupied mainly by Chinese merchants. These merchants were resettled out-

side the walls of the new city in 1782; the main road of this Chinese quarter, Sampheng Road, was completed at about the same time. Forty years later, European travellers in Bangkok commented on the many Chinese houseboats moored along the banks of the Chao Phraya and the Chinese shops concentrated on Sampheng Road (e.g. Crawfurd 1830:121). In 1861, Charoenkrung Road was built, adding a third major thoroughfare, after the river and Sampheng Road, to Bangkok's Chinatown.

The chronology and distribution of Chinese temples in Bangkok reveal a similar geography of development. As far as one can judge from the dates of the inscriptions they contain, the temples progressed in three phases (*Table 2, Fig. 1*). In the first quarter of the century, they were located on both sides of and close to the Chao Phraya River. In the following two quarters, temple construction moved inland to the immediate vicinity of Sampheng Road. In the last quarter of the century, new temples were added to the north of Charoenkrung Road.

Persons familiar with the more recent history of Bangkok may be surprised to learn that, in the late 18th century, substantial numbers of Chinese resided in Thon Buri as well as in the future Rattanakosin area. The temple here designated as No. 36, the oldest in Bangkok, is located close to the river in Thon Buri. A plaque there bears a date equivalent to 1781, one year before King Rama I came to power.

Temple 24, Sanchao Poseau, the only Chinese temple located inside the walls of Rattanakosin, was in existence by 1824 according to a dated plaque. Few documents of the early 19th century refer to a substantial Chinese community living within the walled city, and one does not expect to find the Thai government tolerating a Chinese temple in an area supposedly reserved for administration and official residence and ritual. Yet, Sanchao Poseau is a major temple of the kind usually associated with numerous worshippers. Today it is the third most popular Chinese temple in Bangkok, after the Wat Mungkon Kamalawad (*Table 1, No. 1*) at Charoenkrung Road, and Sanchao Haihongkong (*No.9*).

3. Temple Demography Among the Chinese

In the 1950s, seven Chinese speech-group associations in Bangkok were registered with the government: Hakka; Teochiu [Chaozhou], Hokkien [Fujian]; Hainan; Taiwan; Canton [Guangdong]; Jiangxi-Zhejiang (Skinner 1958:23). The presence of the first four speech groups was already noted by Dean in 1835: 270,000 Teochius; 70,000 Hokkiens; 30,000 Hainanese; 30,000 Hakkas (Terwiel 1989:225).[7] As will be shown below, the Cantonese only came into the picture in the last quarter of the 19th century.

Formal speech group associations did not come into existence much before Thai laws requiring legal registration of Chinese organizations began to be enforced in the early 20th century. However, most temples before then were supported and patronized by members of single speech groups, as shown by donors' inscriptions. A few such temples, in fact, were run by societies (for instance, of Hakkas, Cantonese and Hainanese) that can be considered predecessors of the later formal associations.

Moreover, by examining the locations of speech group-oriented temples in 19th-century Bangkok, it is possible to gain a rough idea of the contemporary distribution of different Chinese ethnic groups. The key assumption here is that the choice of a temple site usually signifies corresponding communal support in the immediate neighborhood. As will be seen, not all groups were rigorously segregated; while some neighborhoods may have been dominated by a single group, others were inhabited by two or more groups living side by side.

a. Teochius

The dominating presence of the Teochius in 20th-century Bangkok is an undoubted fact; they are much richer and more numerous than any other speech group. However, the Teochiu Association was not registered until 1938, the latest among the five leading Chinese speech group associations. Skinner's thesis (1957:167) is that the Teochiu found it unnecessary to organize before then due to their dominant position. However, a look at the locations of the older Teochiu-related temples suggests that the Teochius may not have been so overwhelmingly powerful until the late 19th century.

Before 1900, the Teochiu "territory" appears to have been confined to the Sampheng area. Six temples can be identified by their names and inscriptions as having been patronized mainly by Teochius. All are located along Sampheng Road (Temples 4, 5, 8, 29 and 30); none is on the bank of the Chao Phraya. Sampheng Road was the most busy commercial street in Bangkok at that period. Many of the Teochius there seem to have been settled merchants, some very wealthy.

Four of the six temples are dedicated to the cult of Poontaokong, primarily a Teochiu local earth god.[8] All are small and not richly furnished; at least three were already in existence in the mid-19th century. The supporting community evidently did not invest much money in its religious houses. It is not sure if this reflects lack of wealth, of interest, or of community cohesion.

Temples 29 and 5 differ from the other four; they have large compounds and were built in the exuberant style of Chinese architecture. The ornateness of Temple 29, a late example built in ca 1898, is a sure sign of the Teochius having become interested in impressing their neighbors as well as their deities.

Temple 5 is early and important. It is likely to have been built before 1824 and is the only one directly managed by the Teochiu Association today. However, in spite of its present importance to the Teochiu community, it seems not to have been originally a Teochiu institution. Customarily, Chinese folk temples are named after the main deity to which they are dedicated; the statue of that deity is always placed in the central shrine of the building. This is not true, however, of Temple 5, which was dedicated to the North God but is now named after Poontaokong. Today the shrine of the latter deity stands in front of and almost eclipses the centrally located shrine of the former. It would seem that here we have an example of a temple coup. Poontaokong has usurped the position of the North God to a substantial degree since the late 19th century. If it were not dangerous and perhaps ritually impossible to remove a deity from an existing shrine, Poontaokong might have taken over completely.

The shift of emphasis from the North God to Poontaokong may represent a shift of administrative control from one speech group to another. Three points support that interpretation. First, a large iron bell, one of the most sacred objects in any temple, was donated to Temple 5 in 1824 by a Hokkien. Thus the temple could not have been solidly in the hands of the Teochius at that date. Second, while Poontaokong is specifically Teochiu, the North God is worshipped by most Chinese speech groups, including the Hokkiens. Third, Temple 5, unlike the other Teochiu temples, faces toward the Chao Phraya and is not too far from the river bank areas which, during the 19th century, seem to have been inhabited largely by Hokkiens and Hakkas. All these points suggest that the ritual takeover by Poontaokong reflects an administrative takeover by an expanding and increasingly prosperous Teochiu community.

b. Hokkiens

While the Teochius appear to have lived along Sampheng Road, the Hokkiens probable lived mainly along the Chao Phraya. Today, Temples 12, 36 and 37 are in the hands of Hokkiens, with the former two directly under the management of a Hokkien society founded in 1872.[9] If one adds Temple 5, seemingly still a Hokkien institution during most of the 19th century, one can make a case for a strong Hokkien presence along the river.

All four temples are located in large compounds with luxurious architectural furnishings and fixtures, indicating a strong and wealthy community behind them. Moreover, they are among the oldest Chinese temples in Bangkok: Temple 36 was in existence by 1781;[10] Temple 123 in 1804; Temple 5 in 1824; Temple 37 in 1848 (*Table 1*). Significantly, no Hokkien temple was built after 1850.

The age and apparent wealth of the Hokkien temples are in accord with the prominence of that speech group in Southeast Asia during the last few centuries. Although they have now been eclipsed by the Teochius in most of Thailand (Skinner 1958:5), they may have played a more important role before 1850. We may presume that many were traders who needed access to the river. They would have formed part of the Hokkien-dominated commercial network which had long interconnected southern Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines and, of course, southern Fujian in China. Epigraphic material from Temple 12 confirms the existence of these long-distance connections. Among the donors to the temple were Chinese from Singapore and Malaysia or Indonesia bearing the titles of "Singapore Kapitan" and "Kapitan".[11]

c. Hakkas

The Hakkas may not have had their own part of Bangkok's Chinatown. Judging from the location of their temples, they lived along the river bank as well as on Sampheng Road and later, on Charoenkrung Road. Thus, they appear to have been well mixed within the territory of the Teochius, and, to some extent, the Hokkiens. Since the Hakkas and Teochius had been immediate neighbors back in Guangdong province (in fact, some came from the same county within Guangdong[12]), they may have found each other comfortable as neighbors.

Today, the Hakka Association holds six temples in Bangkok (Temples 11, 14, 25, 28, 31, 38), more than any other speech-group association. Two of them are close to Hokkien temples: Temple 11 is practically next door to the Hokkien Temple 12 and shares a similar architectural style; Temple 38 is in Thon Buri not too far from Hokkien Temple 36. Temple 25, a small Poontaokong temple, stands in the most thriving commercial part of Sampheng Road. Temples 14 and 31 were built north of Charoenkrung Road at approximately the end of the 19th century. The splendid main building of Temple 14 was burned down in 1990, but within a year an even more showy piece of architecture was on the rise; this time in a Chinese palace-style design that advertises Hakka prosperity. When the Government requisitioned the premises of a Hakka temple in 1915, the Hakka Association used the compensation money to build a new three-storey headquarters with a successor to the original temple, No. 28, on its roof.

d. Hainanese

The Hainanese do not appear to have had any strong footing inside the Sampheng area in spite of their historic importance in up-country Siam. Their two oldest temples, built after 1850, are both at the periphery of Bangkok. Temple 34 faces the Klong Phadonkrungkasem, and the other, a Goddess of Heaven temple to which I have not assigned a number, is on the east bank of the

river at Krungthon Bridge, far north of central Bangkok. The Hainanese are perhaps the most secluded Chinese ethnic group in Bangkok. The author regrets that she was not able to collect much temple data from them, perhaps partly because Hainanese men still feel uneasy about talking to unaccompanied women (Chen 1975:25).

e. Cantonese

The coming of the Cantonese, mostly speakers of the Taishan dialect, seems to have been relatively late. Their temple-like building, Kwong Siew (Temple 2), which is also their association office, was completed in 1886 after nine years of struggling with finance; at the time, it had only two thousand members (Kwong Siew Association 1958: Reports). Perhaps because they were newcomers, the Cantonese had to be satisfied with a temple location along the newly built Charoenkrung Road, when the area was still a relatively undeveloped part of Bangkok. The central hall of the temple is not dedicated to a single deity; it holds a statue of the carpenter god, Luben,[13] along with four other revered figures.[14] Luben's presence indicates that some of the Bangkok Cantonese were builders and carpenters.

f. Others

Chinese ethnic groups other than those from Fujian and Guangdong provinces are few. There is no data suggesting any particular pattern of residence. One man from Anhui province appears among the names of donors at Wat Bampenjeen Bamprod (*Table 1, No. 10*) as well as Sanchao Chosukong (*No.12*) in the Sampheng area.[15] Although eastern and northern Chinese ("Jiangzhe") speakers have an association in Bangkok, they do not maintain a temple of their own.

4. Administration and Functions of Temples in the 19th Century.

In terms of financial support and control, present-day Chinese temples in Bangkok belong to one of four types. A temple may be run by a given speech-group association, by groups of neighborhood shops, by a wealthy family, or by a charitable society (*Table 1*). One temple is now under the patronage of His Majesty the King. Most are now managed by paid employees under the supervision of committees that resemble boards of trustees.

Before speech-group associations and charitable societies in their modern form came into existence during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, temples played the part not only of religious houses but also of mutual aid associations, tribunals, clanship societies, and chambers of commerce supporting a given speech group within the Chinese community. The author of the *History of Chi-*

nese Associations in Thailand, a Sino-Thai himself, states:

> The early structure of the Hakka, Cantonese and Hainanese associations derived from that of temples. It was after years of progress in social philosophy that the leaders of these temples gradually reformed their systems to meet the needs of society (Chen 1975: 224).

But how did these leaders actually run their temples without formal associations to back them up?

The Hakka temples in the days before the Hakka Association, first registered in 1913, are good examples. A tablet erected in 1889 at Temple 11 documents one of the earliest speech group-specific organizations in Bangkok, a Hakka Merchants' Society.[16] The text of the tablet reveals that temple policy was determined by a group of nine Hakka leaders who (1) were exclusively men,[17] (2) were mostly full-time successful merchants, and (3) took care of the business of the temple as a voluntary service to the community. The committee was evidently rather like a modern businessmen's fraternal organization. The text does not mention anything about the day-to day care of the temple, which was presumably in the hands of a concessionaire or manager hired to run the business.

From the published history of the Hakka Association, one learns that the predecessor of the present-day Association was called Jixianguan and that it split into two camps, Mingshun and Qunying, sometime after the mid-19th century (Chen 1975: 18). While this information may be no more than oral history, the tablet in Temple 11 confirms the existence of an early speech group-specific Hakka organization that was centered on a temple.

The history of the Cantonese Association tells a story that is different but equally revealing of the role of temples in Chinese social life. Although latecomers, the Cantonese have the best documented of all Chinese temples in Bangkok.[18] Apparently in the 1870s, a group of about ten well-to-do Cantonese merchants decided to show their solidarity by establishing their own organization. As has been noted above, by then the Hakkas and Hokkiens already had their own societies. But the Cantonese were obviously not impressed by them. The text of their foundation tablet inside the temple cites Chinese associations in North America as their models, noting that these succeed in uniting economic strength for business purposes. The text also states that the dominant Chinese groups in Bangkok were the Teochius and Hainanese and implies that the Catonese needed to organize in order to compete.

The founding merchants decided that their headquarters was going to look like a classical Cantonese house, which is a temple-like structure. The building

material was to come from their home districts in Guangdong. The founders worked on planning, fund-raising, supervising the construction, and cultivating support from other speech groups; they also served afterward on the overseers' committee. The outlook and the functions of the committee do not seem to have been too different from that of their Hakka counterpart.

One of the leaders, Mr. J.L. Wang, returned to Guangzhou in 1879 to shop for building materials. There, he consulted with a Guangzhou scholar about choosing a suitable title for the new organization:

> We ... want to have our own place for burning incense to deities, and to set up a society for worshipping spirits. But Siamese regulations forbid us Chinese to have associations because mass gatherings are feared. We have therefore told the local authorities that we are going to set up a temple instead. But temples are not allowed to commemorate ancestors and predecessors.

Such was the dilemma of Mr. Wang (Kwong Siew Association 1958: Reports). A "villa" with shrines and altars was built, and a formal association was eventually registered in 1936. The building now has rows of photographs of deceased members but still no ancestor tablets.

One of the founders also served as the accountant of the organization. He appears to have become quite rich, according to Mr. Wang, because there were no clear policies regulating the use of visitors' donations. Interestingly, the Cantonese society appears to have had friendly relations with the Hainanese, exchanging gifts and labor (including lion dancers) at festival times.

5. Secret Society Connections

Temples, especially those of the Guandi cult, have been recognized to have close connections with secret societies (Skinner 1957:141). From my own survey, at least five temples in Bangkok can be connected with secret societies at some point in the 19th century. Only one of them is in honor of Guandi, however. The others are dedicated to Poontaokong and the Immortal Qingshui (*Table* 3), suggesting that a number of deities could be patrons of secret societies in Bangkok.

One unmistakable secret society trait inside these temples can be seen on inscribed tablets and other objects, where dates are given in the form of a *tianyun* mark plus a cyclical date. The mark was a substitute for the standard Qing Dynasty reign mark and indicates that the users rejected the legitimacy of the

Qing (Manchu) government in China. It was used first in documents of the Tiandi Hui (Heaven & Earth Society, usually called the Triad Society by Europeans) in Taiwan in 1786 and in Indonesia and Malaysia in the mid-19th century.[19] In Bangkok, the oldest *tianyun* date (in *Temple 6*) is 1829. That evidence for the Tiandi Hui exists in Bangkok temples has not previously been reported. In fact, the evidence cited here is the earliest yet discovered in Southeast Asia, antedating by more than thirty years the first records of Triad activity in Jakarta and Singapore.[20]

It is significant that the Hokkiens are the only speech-group in Bangkok indentifiable with the Tiandi Hui. However, the Bangkok Tiandi Hui penetrated beyond the Hokkien community and seemingly had strong roots in the neighborhood temples. Four out of the five temples bearing *tianyun* marks belong to that group, and two of the four are unambiguously Teochiu (*Table 3*). Presumably the loose structure of neighborhood temples made them good breeding grounds for secret society racketeers.

The Thai government made efforts to suppress Chinese secret societies in the 1840s and 1850s and again in the 1890s (Vella 1957: 18-19; Skinner 1957: 145). Hence, the branches of the Tiandi Hui seem to have been quite daring in exposing themselves. Perhaps, as in Malaysia during the late 19th century, the Bangkok branches were in some degree tolerated by the authorities (Blythe 1969: 3). Not only did Tiandi Hui members display their *tianyun* marks openly in Chinese temples but they even went so far as to announce themselves at one of the most sacred Thai wats in Siam, at Nakhon Pathom. A large iron bell cast in 1868 in a hybrid Thai–Chinese style, hanging in the open area of the wat compound, bears a *tianyun* mark. The donor was a Chinese with the Thai official title of Jaokun.[21]

Table 1 (a):
Temples and Mahayana Monasterier visited at Sampheng Area 1991.

No.	Sino-Thai Title	Type	WhenBuilt/	Earlist Date*	Main Deity
1	Lengneuyyee	Chin Monastery	1871	1872	Buddha
2	Samakom Kwong Siew	Cantonese Aaan	1886	1878	Confucious
3	Sanchao Maekuan-im	Neighborhood	--	1888	Guanyin
4	Sanchao Maepradoo	Neighborhood(T)	--	1838	Lady Pootao
5	Lao Poontaokong	Teochiu Assn	--	1824	North God
6	Sanchao Sin Poontaokong	Neighborhood(T)	--	1829	Poontaokong
8	Samakom Issaranupab	Neighborhood(T)	--	1843	Longweiye
9	Sanchao Haihongkong	Benevolent Society	1911	1906	Dafeng
10	Wat Bampenjeenbamprod	Viet. Monastery	--	1795	Budhha
11	SanchaoRongkueg	Hakka Assn	--	1885	Kangshaobao
12	Sanchao Chosukong	Hokkien	--	1804	Qingshui
13	Nuay Aa Saa Samak Bantao Sataranapai Siangkong	Neighborhood	1854	1946	Xiangong
14	Sanchao Leeteebiew	Hakka Assn	1902	--	Ludongbin
15	Sanchao Kuanim	Family	--	--	Guanyin
18	Wat Apai Racha Bamroong	Viet. Monastery	--	--	Buddha
19	Sanchao Pochaomae	Neighborhood	--	--	Poontaokong
20	Sanchao Kuan-im	Benevolent Society	1940	--	Guanyin

21	Tangkao Sanchao Kuan-uu	Neighborhood	--	1834? 94?	Guandi
22	Wat Mongkon Samakom	Viet. Monastery	--	--	Buddha
23	Sanchao Jeentung Taitee	Neighborhood	--	--	Zhenjun dadi
24	Sanchao Poseau	Neighborhood?	--	1824	North God
25	Sanchao Poontaokong	Hakka Assn	ca 1860	1892	Poontaokong
26	Sanchao Junsieng Josu	Neighborhood	--	1887	Zunshang-zhushi
27	Wat Chaiyapoom Karam	Vient. Monastery	--	1886	Budhha
28	Sanchao Kuan-uu	Hakka Assn	1915	1915	Guandi
29	Samakom Chapanakid Songkroh Buddha Jak	Teochiu	1898?	1898	Doumu
30	Tangkao Sanchao Liangped	Neighborhood(T)	--	--	Lady Poontao
31	Sanchao Kuan-imnia	Hakka Assn	ca 1898	1944	Guanyin
32	Tan Prasrisongyod	Family	ca 1970	--	Mrs Jesuaniam
33	Pra Radchatannam Wat Kuson Samakom	Viet. Monastery	--	1914	Buddha
34	Sanchao Maetaihwa	Hainan Assn	--	1896?	Goddess of Heaven
35	Sanchao Mae...	Neighborhood	--	--	Goddess of Heaven
36	Sanchao Kuan-uu	Hokkien Assn	--	1781	Guandi
37	Sanchao Kianankeng	Family (Hokkien)	--	1848	Guandi
38	Sanchao Samnaikong	Hakka Assn	--	1847	Three Ladies

* These are the earlist egigraphic material available at the time of survey. They may not represent the date when the temple was built.
(T)=mostly patronised by Teochius.
No. 7 and 17 are not used.

Table 1 (b):
Cross-references for titles of temples in Table 1(a)

No.	Sino-Thai Name	Mandarin reading	Thai Name
1	Lengneuyyee	Longlinsi	Wat Mongkon Kamalawad
2	Samakom Kwong Siaw	Guangzhao Huiguan	--
3	Sanchao Maekuan-im	Guanyin Kumiao	--
4	Sanchao Maepradoo	Xin Bentouma	Nuay Aa Saa Samak Bantao Sataranapai Mittalad Kao
5	Lao Poontaokong	Da Bentougong	--
6	Sanchao Sin Poontaokong	Xin Bentougong	--
8	Samakom Issaranupab	Longwei Kumiao	Lengbuaea Kong Hooching
9	Sanchao Haihongkong	Baode-tang	Huakiaw Pohtech Sientung
10	Wat Bampenjeenbamprod	Yongfusi	--
11	Sanchao Rongkueg	Hanwang Gong	Sanchao Hangwongkong
12	Sanchao Chosukong	Shunxing Gong	Wat Sunhengyee
13	Nuay Aa Saa Samak Bantao Sataranapai Siangkong	Xian-gong Gong	--
14	Sanchao Leeteebiew	Ludimiao	--
15	Sanchao Kuanim	Guanyin Shengmiao	--
18	Wat Apai Racha Bamroong	Qingyunsi	--
19	Sanchao Pochaomae	Lao Bentaogong	--
20	Sanchao Kuan-im	Guanshiyin Pusa	--
21	Tangkao Sanchao Kuan-uu	Guandi Kumiao	--
22	Wat Mongkon Samakom	Huiqingsi	--
23	Sanchao Jeentung Taitee	Zhenjun	--
24	Sanchao Poseau	Xuantian Shangdi	--
25	Sanchao Poontaokong	Lao Bentougong	--
26	Sanchao Junsieng Josu	Zunshang Zhushi	--
27	Wat Chaiyapoom Karam	Cui-ansi	--
28	Sanchao Kuan-uu	Guandi Miao	--
29	Samakom Chapanakid Songkroh Buddha Jak	Doumu Gong	--
30	Tangkao Sanchao Liangped	Bentougong Miao	--
31	Sanchao Kuan-imnia	Nanhai Guanyin Gong	--
32	Tan Prasrisongyod	Guanglu Di	--
33	Pra Radchatannam Wat Kuson Samakom	Pufusi	--
34	Sanchao Maetiahwa	Taihua Shengling	--
35	Sanchao Mae...	Tianhou Shengmumiao	--
36	Sanchao Kuan-uu	Guandi Wushengmiao	--
37	Sanchao Kianankeng	Jian-an Gong	--
38	Sanchao Samnaikong	Sanlai gong	--

Table 2:
Chinese Temples along the Three main 19th century thoroughfares in Bangkok.

Chao Phraya Waterway		Samphaeng Road (built ca 1782)		Charoenkrung Road (built 1861)	
Temples	Earliest Epigraphic Date	Temples	Earliest Epigraphic Date	Temples	Earliest Epigraphic Date
No. 5	1824	No. 3	1888	No. 2	1878*
No. 6	1829	No. 4	1838	No. 8	1843
No. 11	1885	No. 13	1854*	No. 9	1906*
No. 12	1804	No. 21	1834? 94?	No. 14	1902*
No. 26	1887	No. 25	1860*	No. 23	--
No. 36	1781	No. 28	1915*	No. 30	--
No. 37	1848	No. 29	1898	No. 31	1890*

* dates for the construction of the buildings.

Table 3:
Temples with *Tianyun* marks.

Temple	Tianyun date	Year	Main Deity / speech-group
No. 4	Tianyun Daogyou	1837? 97?	Lady Poontao (Teochiu)
No. 6	Tianyun Daoguang Jiunian;	1829	
	Tianyun Jiazi	1804? 64?	Poontaokong (Teochiu)
No. 8	Tianyun Maoxu	1838? 98?	Longweiye (Neighborhood)
No. 12	Tianyun Tongzhi Gengwu;	1853	
	Tianyun Guimao	1810? 70?	Qingshui (Hokkien)
No. 21	Tianyun Jiawu	1834? 94?	Guandi (Neighborhood)

Temple No. 29.
The Exterior of Samakom Chapanakid Songkroh Buddha Jak.

Temple No. 29.
The interior of Samakom Chapanakid Songkroh Buddha Jak.

Temple No. 37
TheTempleBellofSanchao Kianankeng, cast in 1848.

Temple No. 36 Guandi Temple.

Notes

1. Franke does not attempt to give full coverage to Bangkok temples in either paper which are mainly focused on inscriptions in southern Thailand.
2. Coughlin's survey on temples is cursory. He counts only about a dozen folk religion temples in Bangkok and does not distinguish between such temples and Mahayana monasteries.
3. The Chiness temples described here are specially built structures for the practice of folk and quasi-Daoist religion, often with minor Buddhist elements. The architecture of such structures maintains traditional southern Chinese stylistic traits: halls separated by courtyards; bracket-supported beams; tile roofs with upturned ends. Altars and shrines representing a similar religious outlook but housed inside modern concrete buildings are not included here. Further, I have not included shrines within surname temples or guild halls. To avoid confusion, all Thai Theravada monastery temples are referred to as wats in the text.
4. There is only one Chinese Mahayana monastery in the Sampheng area (Table 1, No.1) The five "Vietnamese" Mahayana monasteries known to me represent a sect that is originally Vietnamese but now staffed by Thais. All are heavily patronized by Chinese. Their architecture is often a hybrid of Chinese temple and Thai wat.
5. This has been a side project carried out during breaks from archaeological fieldwork. A grant from the Southeast Asian Council of the Association for Asian Studies allowed me to complete a preliminary survey of the temples in Sampheng.
6. I am indebted to Constance Wilson for sharing the original data with me. At least six of those on the Postal Service's list can be identified with present-day temples.
7. As Terwile suggests, Dean's figures are probably not much more than guesswork. However, they are in accord with the impression of most foreign observers that the Teochius were more numerous than other Chinese speech groups in Bangkok.
8. The deity acts as a protector to a village or a small area. The name Poontaokong is Techiu. The Hokkiens call him Dabogong. The Hakkas seem to be ambivalent, using either Poontaokong or Dabogong. The Cantonese prefer the names Tudi or Fude instead.
9. The Hokkien Association was officially registered with the Thai government in about 1910. But the idea of forming a society representing Hokkiens is said to go back to 1872. The society used Temple 12 as its office (Chen 1975:315).
10. A plaque with an 1802 date is still on display at the temple. Two earlier plaques dated to 1781 and 1786 were photographed there by Franke (1991:315).
11. Two titles appear: one is Jiabidan (Kapitan or Captain) and the other is Jiabidan with the prefix, Tongkoupo (Singapore). Kapitan was commonly used in Malaysia and Indonesia as the title of Chinese headman appointed by local rulers. a Chinese headmen in Thailand were called "Nai amphoe jek" or "Jao".
12. Dapu County in eastern Guangdong contains both Hakka and Teochiu speakers. There are currently two Dapu Societies in Bangkok, one for Hakkas and the other for Teochius.

13. This is the only temple in the survey which contains an occupational deity. The carpenters guild was allowed to honor its deity after partly financing the construction of the temple, much to the regret of the organizers (Kwong Siew Association 1958: Reports).
14. Originally only Confucius, Wenchang (the God of Literature) and Guandi; a Guanyin statue was added in the mid-20th century. The side shrine houses an alter commemorating King Rama V. As the building was not intended to be a real temple (see below), its shrines are not as elaborately furnished as those in other temples.
15. A Mr.Xu Wanchang donated an incense burner to Wat Bampenjeen Bamprod (No.10) in 1888. Four years later he gave another incense burner to Temple 12 dedicated to its main (Hokkien) deity, the Immortal Qingshui.
16. The tablet recording the extension of the compound of Sanchao Rongkueg (No.11) was set up by a nine-man committee representing the Hakka Merchant Group; all personally involved in negotiating the land sale. The tablet also serves as a covenant to the successors that any income derived from the newly acquired land was to be used for the triennial parade of the temple deities, and that committee members would serve as executors.
17. I was able to find only one woman among all the donors appearing in temple inscriptions of the 19th century. Temple No.21 has a plaque contributed by a Mrs. Li whose maiden surname was Liu. The plaque was carved in either 1834 or 1894. Nowadays, although female donors are more common, most names in temple inscriptions still are those of men.
18. Judging from the style of writing, some members of the Cantonese Association were fairly well educated. Perhaps, that is why the Association has good records. Besides, the Cantonese temple is the only one in Bangkok to honor either Confucius or the God of Literature.
19. The earliest known association of the *tianyun* reign mark with the Tiandi Hui occurs in a document issued by Lin Shuangwen, the leader of a failed uprising in Taiwan, in 1786 (ZGRMDX 1980:I:pl.5). The suppression of the uprising caused many members of the secret society to flee to Southeast Asia (Tai 1947: 59). The *tianyun* mark was later used on Tiandi Hui documents in Indonesia (Schlegel 1866) and in Malaysia (Blythe 1969:Pls.4, 5).
20. The *tianyun* mark in Temple 6 is dated to 1892, and the one in Temple 12 is dated to 1853. Both are older than the Jakarta documents cited by Schlegel, which were written in the 1860s.
21. The inscription, in Chinese, reads: "Made in the 7th year of Tongzhi, Tianyun. This bell is given by the disciple, Jaokun Baotayuwen [a Thai place name?] Zeng Caihe, [who] joyfully donates [it]."

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