

# The Thai Census of 1904: Translation and Analysis

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## Introduction

Pre-twentieth century estimates of the Thai population do exist, but their accuracy is highly questionable. Official Thai documents from the early Bangkok period seldom give overall population figures for specific Thai *müang* (เมือง) or even for the whole kingdom. The Thai government and its various departments kept records of commoners (*phrai*, ไพร่), and in particular of tax-paying able-bodied men (*chai chakan*, ชายฉกรรจ์). They were obliged to fulfill *corvée* labour for the crown, either personally attached to the king (as "King's Men" *phrai luang*, ไพร่หลวง), or to noblemen (as "private retainers" *phrai som*, ไพร่สม).<sup>1</sup> Making up roughly one fourth of the total population, the *chai chakan* were attached to different departments (*krom*, กรม) according to functional criteria such as occupation and ethnic origin. Moreover, debt-slaves (*that*, ทาส) and prisoners of war (*chaloei sük*, เชลยศึก), were registered separately.

The closest equivalent of a bureau of statistics was the Department of Registers (*krom suratsawadi*, กรมสุรัสวดี). But its main purpose, in keeping long lists of numbers of people, was to check whether a particular group was fulfilling its obligations to the government, and how much manpower, money and goods could be raised for the state from a particular group (Terwiel 1989, 228).

The Thai administrators in the early Bangkok period were obviously not interested in compiling aggregate data by adding up numbers of different categories of people. Even if they had done so, only male commoners, not their wives and children, would have been counted. The slaves, up to one fourth of the total Thai population,<sup>2</sup> stood outside the normal procedures of registration in any case. Furthermore, in the second half of the eighteenth century a large number of people had fled the Thai-Burmese wars by seeking refuge in mountain and jungle areas. Although the government tried both persuasion and coercion to get these people to return to agricultural areas, many former *phrai* preferred to stay in remote villages outside the traditional patron-client relationship. Thereby, they escaped government control and evaded official registration.<sup>3</sup>

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Throughout the nineteenth century, Thailand lacked sophisticated methods of counting its population. Precise administrative records, comparable to the Burmese *sit-tàns*, did not exist (See Trager/Koenig 1979). We should therefore regard with great caution those figures of the pre-twentieth century population of Thailand which were reported by foreign visitors, mostly European or American diplomats, who based their findings on "local statistics" and "personal observations." The various figures differ considerably, both concerning the total number of inhabitants in the Thai kingdom and the ethnic composition (Table 1).

Skinner (1957) and Sternstein (1965) have shown convincingly that most western estimates generalized and extrapolated data obtained from Bangkok and the surrounding areas to the whole country. For instance, estimates by Roberts (in Malcolm 1835), Bishop Pallegoix (1854), Rautier (in Hallett 1890) and many others, indicated a Chinese share of population as high as twenty-five to thirty per cent. Though this high percentage appears reasonable for Bangkok and some coastal areas, it does not make sense for the rest of the kingdom, since only very few Chinese had settled outside the central and southern regions before the 1920s.<sup>4</sup>

Western population estimates for pre-twentieth century Thailand can only become meaningful when they are compared with official census data from the beginning of the twentieth century. The first nation-wide census of Thailand (*kan samruat sammanokhrua ratsadon thua ratcha-anacak thai*, การสำรวจสำมะโนครัวราษฎรทั่วราชอาณาจักรไทย) was held in 1909/10, with revised versions published in 1910/11 and 1911/12. However, only the ensuing census of 1919 matched contemporary international standards. Additional censuses were carried out in 1929, 1937 and 1947. From 1960 on, the Thai government undertook censuses at the beginning of every decade in accordance with UN guidelines (Wilson 1983, 25).

By 1960, it became evident that the preceding five censuses, particularly those in 1910/11 (8.13 million) and 1919 (9.21 million), had each undercounted the population by five to ten per cent. Nevertheless, the first two nation-wide censuses should be reasonable points of departure for exploring the state of the Thai population prior to 1900, although not the only ones. The census of 1910/11 did not provide any valid data on the numerical strength of ethnic groups. Eight years later, non-Thai races such as Chinese, Malay, Khmer and Burmese were registered. But, apart from the Malay Muslims, these "foreign" groups were grossly undercounted due to a rather restricted definition of ethnicity.<sup>5</sup> Khmer, Mon and Burmese practised Theravada Buddhism, as did the Thai. Their customs and folk traditions, too, were very similar to those of the Thai people. Perhaps for that reason most Thai citizens of Khmer, Mon or Burmese origin were counted in 1919 (and succeeding censuses) simply as "Thai."

## The Census of 1904

I believe that the hesitation to recognize races other than Thai resulted from the surge of Thai nationalism under the reign of King Vajiravudh (1910–1925), which aimed at uniting all Thai citizens under the banner "nation-religion-king."<sup>6</sup> During the reign of Vajiravudh's father, King Chulalongkorn (1868–1910), certain measures had already been taken to create a sense of "Thai-ness" among the poly-ethnic population of Thailand, then known under its old name, "Siam." Nevertheless, the existence of non-Thai ethnic groups was much more acknowledged than in the post-1910 period.

Therefore, I want to call scholarly attention to a still widely unknown demographic document which included the explanations of the Thai census of 1904.<sup>7</sup> This census was limited in scope, covering only the twelve inner circles (*monthon*, มณฑล)—roughly three-fifths of present-day Thailand. As to the ethnic origin of the Thai population, the census provides a rather accurate breakdown among the various races (*chat/chüachat*, ชาติ/เชื้อชาติ), describing by which criteria a particular ethnic group is defined and is distinct from the ethnic Thai. Unlike the nation-wide censuses after 1910/11, the census of 1904 included households and draught animals. Bangkok and surrounding areas (*monthon* Krungthep), the North (Lan Na, ล้านนา) and the Northeast (Isan, อีสาน) were not covered by the 1904 census. I collected additional data from provincial censuses which were undertaken between 1899 and 1909.<sup>8</sup> The figures obtained from these population counts will partially supplement the results of the census of 1904.

### Non-Thai Races

Slightly more than eighty per cent of the inhabitants in those *monthon* where the census had been undertaken were ethnic Thai. The non-Thai groups constituted one-fifth of the population, perhaps even more, since the procedures of registration favoured the "Thai race."

**Chinese.** The Chinese were the most influential minority in Thailand at the turn of the twentieth century, at least in the economic sphere. Chinese had been settling in Thailand since the Sukhothai period, where they were active in commerce and certain handicrafts.<sup>9</sup> Even a Thai king, Taksin (1767–1782), the liberator of Thailand from Burmese domination, was half-Chinese.<sup>10</sup> But until the middle of the nineteenth century the Chinese element was very small in

number, apart from Bangkok where immigration of Chinese merchants and labourers was encouraged in the decades following the founding of Thailand's new capital (1782).

Two events in Thailand and China stimulated immigration in the second half of the nineteenth century: first, the Bowring Treaty (1855) integrated the Thai economy into the world market (causing additional demand for labourers); second, the Taiping rebellion in southern China (1850–1864/65).

Thus, just as south China was ending a period of peace and prosperity—in a state of overpopulation—and beginning a series of foreign wars and internal rebellions, Siam was ending a period of continual war—in a state of underpopulation—and entering a period of peace and prosperity. In this general situation, immigration from Fukien and Kwangtung to Siam was almost certain to increase (Skinner 1957, 30).

However, the influx of Chinese had by no means been dramatic until World War I; it accelerated after 1917 reaching a peak first in 1927/28, and a second one shortly after World War II (Skinner 1957, 175). Therefore, the results of the 1904 census reflected the demographic situation in Thailand before the massive immigration of Chinese settlers.

Even by then, the Chinese made up a sizeable minority. In the twelve inner *monthon*, they amounted to 5.9% of the total. In the lower Chao Phraya basin (Nakhon Chaisi: 13.8%, Prachin Buri: 12.7%, Ratchaburi: 11.3%), along the eastern coast (Chanthaburi: 10.6%) and the southwestern coast (Phuket: 18.1%), Chinese constituted more than one tenth of the population.

The bulk of the Chinese in Thailand, however, were not recorded by the 1904 census, because the census did not cover *monthon* Krung Thep. The capital area was not counted until 1909. Nearly 198,000 Chinese lived in *monthon* Krung Thep by then. If we adjust this figure to apply to 1904 by assuming an annual natural increase of 1.5% between 1904 and 1909, we should add 185,000 Chinese of *monthon* Krung Thep to the 195,500 of the twelve inner *monthon*. Skinner assumed another 16–17,000 Chinese in those areas uncovered by the 1904 census, thus bringing the total to nearly 400,000 Chinese.

The actual number of ethnic Chinese who were living in Thailand at the turn of the twentieth century was certainly higher. As most commune chiefs and village headmen entrusted with the census could neither speak nor understand Chinese, superficial criteria like clothing and haircuts had to define ethnicity. Many Chinese of the second generation, especially the women, dressed themselves like the Thai. The "Explanation of the Census Figures" states: "All women

wearing Thai style clothes were counted as Thai. Therefore, only the women wearing Chinese clothes, i.e., those quite numerous women who immigrated from China, were regarded as Chinese."<sup>11</sup>

The available data are not sufficient to determine the exact amount of undercounting. Unfortunately, the "Explanations of the Census Figures" do not break down the figures according to sex. The census count of *monthon* Prachin Buri (1905–7) indicates that only 3.5% of the Chinese population in that *monthon* were female.<sup>12</sup> Although during the nineteenth century many more men than women had migrated from China to Southeast Asia, the ratio in Thailand was certainly not 30:1. The census count of four *müang* surrounding Bangkok shows that the ratio of male to female Chinese could vary considerably, depending on the narrowness of ethnic criteria.<sup>13</sup>

**Malay.** The Malay are the largest non-Buddhist minority in Thailand. Virtually all Malay believe in Islam, and nearly all Thai Muslims are of Malay origin. The great majority of the Malay live in the extreme south of Thailand. At present, they form a majority of the population in the provinces of Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat. These three provinces formed the core of the Sultanate of Pattani, which had been a vassal state (*prathetsarat*, ประเทศราช) of Thailand since the Ayutthaya period. By 1904, the region became a dependency of *monthon* Nakhon Si Thammarat. Two years later it was separated under the name *monthon* Pattani. Almost a quarter of a million Malay were counted in *monthon* Nakhon Si Thammarat. In *monthon* Saiburi, Müang Kelantan and Müang Trengganu, the Malay also constituted the overwhelming majority. However, the 1904 census did not cover these territories which, in 1909, the Thai had to cede to British Malaya. Only Satun, the northernmost part of *monthon* Saiburi (Kedah), was left to Thailand and it joined *monthon* Phuket.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Malay language was more widely spread along the coast of the Andaman Sea than nowadays. In 1904, one-fifth of the population in *monthon* Phuket was counted as Malay. Now, the Malay language and culture have sharply declined in provinces like Patthalung and Krabi. Even in Satun, most Malay Muslims have forgotten the language of their ancestors and now speak Thai. Only in the Pattani core area has Malay ethnicity remained quite strong.

Malay communities have spread in areas outside peninsular Thailand in small groups. Malay communities are scattered as far north as Ayutthaya. The 1904 census mentions more than 5,000 Malay in *monthon* Krung Kao and about the same number in *monthon* Prachin Buri. In these two central Thai *monthon*, ethnic Malay numbered 1.1% and 1.8% of the total population respectively.

The origin of Malay communities in central Thailand is not clear. Malay were settled in the lower Chao Phraya basin in the Ayutthaya period. Wars between Ayutthaya and the Malay sultanates occurred frequently; the victorious side, usually the Thai, deported the conquered population in large numbers to populate their own realm. *Amphoe* (district) Bang Nam Prio, in *changwat* (province) Chachoengsao, situated thirty kilometres east of Bangkok is still well-known for its Malay Muslim majority.<sup>14</sup>

Unlike the Chinese, the Malay seemed not to have been undercounted in the 1904 census. The strict separation of the Malay from the Thai majority, reinforced by their religion, language, and customs, made their omission by census officials virtually impossible. As to the strength of the Malay minority, the results of the 1904 census are well in accordance with those of the second nation-wide census conducted in 1919.<sup>15</sup> Outside the twelve inner *monthon* of 1904, the only Malay minorities worth mentioning were in *monthon* Krung Thep and in Satun. Adjusting the figures of the 1909 census of *monthon* Krung Thep to apply to 1904, one has to add at least 15–16,000 Malay to the results of 1904.<sup>16</sup> Concerning Satun, one can take the figures of the 1919 national census as an appropriate point of departure. Making a similar adjustment, another 22,000 Malay have to be added,<sup>17</sup> arriving at a total of about 330,000 Malay who lived in Thailand by 1904.<sup>18</sup>

**Khmer.** According to the 1904 census, the Khmer constituted the third largest non-Thai ethnic group. They numbered 78,704 persons, i.e., 2.4% of the population in the twelve inner *monthon*. These Khmer can roughly be divided into two groups: the Khmer living in the border areas of Cambodia (*monthon* Prachin Buri and *monthon* Nakhon Ratchasima); the descendants of Khmer war captives (*monthon* Ratchaburi and *monthon* Nakhon Chaisi).

The last group was the smallest in number. During the wars between Ayutthaya and Cambodia, large numbers of Cambodian, generally ethnic Khmer, were expatriated to Thailand. The chronicles speak of 90,000 Cambodian prisoners of war who were captured during the Thai conquest of Angkor in 1431<sup>19</sup>. The war captives, including many scribes and artisans, helped spread Khmer culture and statecraft to Ayutthaya. In more recent waves, Khmer prisoners of war came to Thailand after 1771 and in the 1840s. During the early Bangkok period, Cambodian war captives and their descendants formed an important part of the workforce in central Thailand. For example, the canals (*khlong*, คลอง) east of Bangkok were built by 10,000 Khmer labourers.<sup>20</sup>

The largest concentration of ethnic Khmer in central Thailand was in Ratchaburi. As a result of the defeat of the Cambodian in 1771 by Phraya Chakkri, later Rama I, as many as 10,000 Khmer were settled in Ratchaburi. This

group, also known as the *khamen doem*, เขมรเดิม (Original Khmer) lived south-east of the town of Ratchaburi on the west bank of the Mae Klong. Another group known as *khamen mai*, เขมรใหม่ (New Khmer) probably arrived sometime in the Third Reign, allegedly from Kompong Thom (Rujaya 1984, 23 f.). The Khmer in Ratchaburi, as in other parts of central Thailand, were surrounded by a predominantly Thai (Siamese) population. Therefore, their assimilation into the mainstream of Thai society proceeded faster than would have been the case in areas adjacent to Cambodia. Nevertheless, nearly 20,000 Khmer in *monthon* Ratchaburi (5.8% of the total) in 1904, a century after their resettlement, appears to be a surprisingly high figure.

However, in demographic terms, the Khmer of the Thai–Cambodian border zone were more important than the descendants of war captives. Most of the 41,000 Khmer of *monthon* Nakhon Ratchasima lived in its south-eastern section, areas which at present make up *changwat* Buri Ram.<sup>21</sup> Apart from Buri Ram, many Khmer lived in *monthon* Isan, which the 1904 census did not cover. A recent linguistic survey estimates that at present in Surin and Sisaket ethnic Khmer make up 70% and 30% of the respective provincial populations (Rüangdet 1988, 218). At the turn of the century these percentages would not have been lower. Therefore, to the 78,000 Khmer of the twelve inner *monthon*, at least another 175,000 Khmer living in Sisaket and Surin should be added.<sup>22</sup> A significant number of Khmer also inhabited the southern part of Ubon Ratchathani, mixed with Mon–Khmer tribal people, the so-called "Suai" or "Kui."<sup>23</sup> By 1904, 250–300,000 people of the Khmer race lived in the Thai Kingdom. This number does not include the more than 200,000 Khmer who lived in the Cambodian provinces of Battambang and Siem Reap, territories that until 1907 were part of Thailand under the name "*monthon* Burapha."<sup>24</sup>

**Mon.** The Mon living in Thailand are the descendants of immigrants from lower Burma, not of the Mon of Dvaravati who appear to have vanished completely.<sup>25</sup> According to Suphan Ocharoen, three different categories of Mon have come to Thailand since the late sixteenth century. The first were war captives (as in 1595, after the conquest of Pegu by King Naresuan). The second were deserters from the Burmese armies (as in 1662, when the Burmese recruited Mon soldiers in a war against China). The third were political refugees (especially after the destruction of Pegu by the Burmese in 1757 and in 1815). "The number of Mon who were refugees and came voluntarily was larger than those who were expatriated as war captives." (Suphan 1984, 17)<sup>26</sup>

Mon refugees settled in different places and regions of Thailand. However, there were two main concentrations of Mon communities—one along the banks

of the Mae Klong (*monthon* Ratchaburi), and the other to the north, south and west of Bangkok (*monthon* Krung Thep and *monthon* Nakhon Chaisi). The exact number of Mon refugees and war captives who had come to Thailand in the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries probably runs between 50,000 and 100,000.<sup>27</sup> The Mon intermarried with ethnic Thai more often than most other non-Thai people. By 1904, their integration into the Thai mainstream had proceeded rather far. Slightly more than 29,000 Mon were counted in the twelve inner *monthon*. In northern and north-eastern Thailand, there lived almost no Mon. One might expect the existence of a sizeable Mon community in *monthon* Krung Thep, but the census there in 1909 did not even recognize the Mon as a separate "race" (*chat*). Thus, the census in 1899 of *müang* Samut Prakan, Nakhon Khüan Khan, Nonthaburi and Pathum Thani, each known as areas of preferred Mon resettlement, has to fill the gap. Some 21,302 Mon were counted in these four *müang*, making up almost 15% of the total of 143,825 inhabitants. As to other parts of *monthon* Krung Thep, and the capital in particular, no data are available. By 1904, the total number of Mon living in Thailand certainly exceeded 50,000.

### The Thai Race

The various Thai speaking people, like central Thai (Siamese), Lao, northern Thai (Yuan) etc., are not differentiated in the 1904 census. The "Explanations of the Census Figures" gives the following reason:

But there does exist the case where a separation into different races is not feasible. That is how to separate Lao from Thai.... If we speak about languages, Lao and Thai languages are of the same stock. Only the accent and some vocabulary... are different.... Furthermore, the Lao regard themselves as Thai (see §7, below).

The tendency to deny the existence of Thai groups other than the central Thai had gained momentum some years before the census. In 1899/1900, the newly established *monthon* in the north and the north-east were renamed. Whereas the old names of these *monthon* bore ethnic designations like "Lao" or "Khmer," their new (P;li derived) names were based on the compass points. *Monthon* Lao Phuan became *monthon* Udon (North), *monthon* Lao Chiang changed to *monthon* Phayap (North–West), the former *monthon* Khamen was now *monthon* Burapha (East), etc.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the government in Bangkok had acknowledged the diversity among the Thai / Tai speaking people. Large numbers



of Lao lived in many central Thai provinces, such as Suphan Buri, Saraburi, Ratchaburi and Chanthaburi. Most of them had been prisoners of war who had been resettled there after the two great wars between Bangkok / Thonburi and Vientiane (1778 and 1877 / 78). The Lao commoners were recognized as such and organized in special divisions (*kong*, กอง). It appears that the challenge of the western imperialist powers, namely the French and the British, forced the Thai authorities to change their ethnic policy. The French, after 1893 the overlords of Laos, had to be prevented from using the Lao in Thailand as a tool for further expansion. Lao ethnicity was henceforth negated, sometimes with silly arguments, as in the following: "There are still people of real Lao race, i.e. (those people) we call 'Lawa' or whom we call in *monthon* Phayap 'Lua.' They are the original inhabitants of Northern Siam, before the Thai came to rule the country. Today these aborigines are still living in small areas scattered all over the country." Once having identified the Thai speaking Lao—on the basis of superficial linguistic considerations—with the Mon–Khmer speaking Lawa / Lua, the nearly extinct remnants of the autochthonous population of Northern Thailand,<sup>28</sup> one could declare, "Since it was not reasonable to distinguish them, it made no sense to divide the Thai by taking the Lao as a separate group as explained above. Therefore, in the detailed census the Lao had to be registered as Thai" (See "Explanations," §7 below).

The heartland of the Lao, divided into several sub-groups and dialects, was on both sides of the Mekong—the left bank belonging, after 1893, to the French Protectorate of Laos—and the Khorat Plateau. It comprised *monthon* Udon and Isan. Both *monthon* were not covered by the 1904 census. *Monthon* Phayap, also lying outside the census area, was predominantly inhabited by the Yuan (or *khon müang*, คนเมือง), a Thai speaking people closely related to the Lao. Yet, this does not mean that the Lao living in the twelve inner *monthon* should have been neglected. The comparative census count of *monthon* Prachin Buri (1905–7) reveals that Lao made up almost 30% of the population in that *monthon*.<sup>29</sup> Similar data for other inner *monthon*, especially for the *monthon* Chanthaburi, Krung Kao, Nakhon Chaisi and Ratchaburi would help ascertain what the planners of the 1904 census tried to conceal—the relatively high number of Lao and Yuan in central Thailand.<sup>30</sup>

### Reliability of the Census Figures

"Explanations of the Census Figures" describes the preparations for the census and the obstacles government officials met in conducting the census (§1 and 2).

The idea of taking the census was obviously related to the reorganization of the provincial administration under Prince Damrong Rachanuphap, Thailand's first Minister of the Interior. Under the *thesaphiban* (เทศาภิบาล) system created by Prince Damrong in 1892, Thailand's numerous *huamüang* (หัวเมือง) were, step by step, amalgamated into various circles (*monthon* or *monthon thesaphiban*).<sup>31</sup>

The new *monthon* were put under the authority of the *krasuang mahatthai* (กระทรวงมหาดไทย), which had been restructured in 1892 to emulate a western-style "Ministry of the Interior." Before that time various authorities were responsible for the *huamiang* of Thailand. The (old) *krasuang mahatthai* controlled the northern provinces, the *krasuang kalahom* (กระทรวงกลาโหม) (Ministry of Defence) the southern provinces, and the *krom tha* (กรมท่า) (Harbour Department) the coastal provinces. Only after the government and its ministries had been reorganized along functional lines could reasonable statistical data be collected. Preparations for a nation-wide census had already been undertaken some years before 1904. The detailed counting began in January 1904 and was accomplished in five months. However, in six *monthon* the census could not be undertaken, due to administrative shortcomings. As to the twelve *monthon* where the census had been conducted, the results were described as "satisfactory."

Two or three months after the administrative staff of the districts had completed the census, the officials were ordered to make a post-enumeration survey in some [selected] communes in order to find out whether the original census was correct or not. According to our surveys, the administrative staff of the districts carried out very good work. The number of persons that were counted incorrectly did not exceed, on the average, 2% of the counted number. Thus we can see that the number of people registered in the census is quite reliable ("Explanations", §3 below).

Were the figures really reliable and satisfying? Table 3 compares the results of the 1904 census with those of the first nation-wide census in 1910/11. As to the number of people living in the twelve inner *monthon*, there was an increase of 16.8% between 1904 and 1910/11. This seems to be too high, because even an unrealistic annual maximum growth rate of 2.0% would result in an increase of just 12.6% during that six year period. If we assume a more realistic annual increase of 1.5%, the population would have grown by 9.3%. Considering the undercounting of the population in the census of 1910/11 (as high as 5%), it seems evident that the assumed margin of error of 2% for 1904 is unrealistic. Thus, I suggest correcting the 1904 figures by adding at least 6.9%.

As to the areas outside the twelve inner *monthon*, the census officials were obviously wrong in adding 25% to the figures obtained in preliminary surveys, in order to get "realistic figures" ("Explanations," §22 below). This is evident from Table 3. The 576,947 persons estimated for *monthon* Udon in 1904 are only reasonable when compared with the 630,681 persons counted six years later (an increase of 9.3%). But the increases for *monthon* Phayap<sup>32</sup> and *monthon* Isan, 150.6% and 54.4% respectively, are too high to be explained other than by extreme underestimation for 1904.

If we adjust the figures of 1910/11 for the whole kingdom to apply to 1904 by assuming a growth rate of 1.5% per annum, we would arrive at 7.44 million inhabitants in 1904. The population of Thailand at the turn of the century would have been 7 million. This figure should be a reasonable starting point for an evaluation the demographic development of Thailand during the nineteenth century in particular.

### Concluding Remarks

My analysis and subsequent translation of the "Explanations of the (1904) Census Figures" have to be seen as a first step in more serious research in the field of Thai population history. What is still needed, but has not yet been accomplished, is a systematic and thoroughgoing evaluation of all provincial records available from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, insofar as they deal with population. Although the figures obtained thereby might often be incomplete, and even incoherent due to what Norman G. Owen calls "administrative migration" (i.e., "the extension of central power—including the power to enumerate—over more and more people)" (Owen 1987, 48), I believe this is the only feasible method to get a better understanding of Thai demography in the nineteenth century.<sup>33</sup>

## Translation of "Explanations of Tha Census Figures"<sup>34</sup>

1. The idea of making the census goes back a long way. But it could not be successfully implemented until now because the provincial administration had not yet been organized. There were not enough district officials (*krommakan amphoe*, กรมการอำเภอ), commune chiefs (*kamnan*, กำนัน) and village headmen (*phu yai ban*, ผู้ใหญ่บ้าน) available who could help to arrange a census in a proper way. Thus, we had to postpone the census and wait first for a successful reorganization of the provincial administration. The provincial administration was set up step by step by bringing [various] *huamüang* (หัวเมือง) together into *monthon thesaphiban* (มณฑลเทศาภิบาล). When a system of provincial administration had already been created in a certain *monthon* (มณฑล), a survey was made starting with the total number of inhabitants in that very *monthon* as a first step in making a population survey (*banchi samruat*, บัญชีสำรวจ).

2. After the population survey had been completed, we started organizing the census in detail, that means by putting the names of all persons on the census roll. In the beginning, we tried to use registers arranged in a tabulated form. These registers were distributed to commune chiefs and village headmen who were to put all people under their administration on the roll and send it back. But [this method] failed because of a really strange matter. Although our commune chiefs, village headmen and citizens in their majority were able to read, only a very few could write. And even much fewer could correctly fill in the register. For that reason the detailed census could not be realized in the beginning. We had to wait and look for a new method, until the year 1903/4 when we tried again.

3. As to the method for conducting a census in 1903/4, we used a tabulated register for the census list which was distributed as one sheet for each house. Or, if one sheet was not enough, two or three for each household, adequate to its size, were distributed. But never two houses were registered on one sheet of paper. These tabulated registers were compiled into books, each of them comprising roughly 100 households.

The Ministry of the Interior distributed tabulated registers to the administrative staffs in the districts in sufficient quantity to register the households in all districts. In each district one administrative official and one clerk were explained the methods for registration. Afterwards, they became officials in charge of the census. They took the sheets of tabulated registers to the various administrative areas and, being led by the village headmen, they took a census of every single household. The householder was asked to give a list of those people living in his

household. Then all household members were called up to register on the tabulated register.

The officials had to take the census according to households of citizens until all households in those districts had been counted completely. Only the people living near forests and in mountainous areas were not taken into consideration. Two or three months after the administrative staff of the districts had completed the census, the officials were ordered to make a post-numeration survey in some communes (*tambon*, ตำบล) in order to find out whether the original census was correct or not. According to our surveys, the administrative staff of the districts carried out very good work. The number of persons that were counted incorrectly did not exceed, on the average, 2% of the counted number. Thus, we can see that the number of people registered in the census is quite reliable and should satisfy us.

4. The count of monks and novices was taken by the same method as used in the count of non-clericals. But we took for each monastery only one tabular register, in which all monks, novices and non-clericals belonging to that monastery were registered.

5. In the detailed census registration it was necessary to note which person belonged to which race (*chat*, ชาต). That was a very complicated issue, for most people living in the kingdom are of mixed national origin. It is very difficult to classify them clearly into distinctive races. For example, the Chinese who immigrated into our kingdom have, in most cases, taken Thai women as their wives and then have got children and grandchildren. If their descendants are male, they usually wear pigtailed like Chinese men. After several generations they are no longer able to speak Chinese. As to the female Chinese descendants, they usually dress or wear their hair in the Thai style like their mothers. It is hard to determine to what extent they are Thai and to what extent Chinese. As to the count of [ethnic] Chinese in this census, the style of clothing of the sexes, their normal dress decides on [their race]. It means that all men wearing pigtailed were counted as real Chinese. Even men of partly Chinese origin would have been regarded as Chinese, provided they wore pigtailed. All women wearing Thai style clothes were counted as Thai. Therefore, only the women wearing Chinese clothes, i.e., those quite numerous women who immigrated from China, were regarded as Chinese.

6. There were still some other categories, i.e., Khmer and Mon for example. Those people who immigrated into the kingdom hundreds of years ago have

intermarried [with the local Thai population]. They usually preserved only their ethnic origin, and dressed in the same fashion as the Thai. These [nationalities] cannot be determined by other criteria. If persons belonging to those groups spoke with each other in a certain language they would be registered as [members of] that respective "language race" (*chat haeng phasa*, ชาติแห่งภาษา). Races which could not be determined with certainty by other criteria had to be classified in general by the dress of those races, and then by the language their members speak.

7. But there does exist a case where a separation [into different races] is not feasible. That is how to separate Lao from Thai, for even among the general population itself there are no discernible traits which can be used to differentiate Thai from Lao. If we speak about languages, Lao and Thai languages are of the same stock. Only the accent and some vocabulary—both of the old and the new languages—are different. If one stipulates that a person speaking an accent other than Bangkok Thai is Lao, the Lakhon people should not be Thai, because they speak a dialect more distant from Bangkok Thai than those people called Lao. If we base our supposition on well-known facts, then the people we call presently Lao were actually Thai and not Lao. Furthermore, the Lao regard themselves as Thai.

There are still people of real Lao race, i.e., [those people] we call "Lawa" or whom we call in *monthon* Phayap, "Lua." They are the original inhabitants of Northern Siam, before the Thai came to rule the country. Today these aborigines are still living in small areas scattered all over the country. Since it was not reasonable to distinguish them, it made no sense to divide the Thai by taking the Lao as a separate group, as explained above. Therefore, in the detailed census the Lao had to be registered as Thai.

8. The detailed census started in January 1904 and was accomplished after five months. But it could only be conducted in 12 *monthon*, i.e., *monthon* Nakhon Si Thammarat, *monthon* Nakhon Ratchasima, *monthon* Nakhon Sawan, *monthon* Krung Kao (Ayutthaya), *monthon* Ratchaburi, *monthon* Nakhon Chaisi, *monthon* Phitsanulok, *monthon* Chumphon, *monthon* Prachin Buri, *monthon* Phuket, *monthon* Phetchabun, *monthon* Chanthaburi.

The six *monthon* [where a detailed census] has not yet been taken, are *monthon* Krung Thep, which has not been under the Ministry of the Interior, *monthon* Phayap, *monthon* Udon, *monthon* Isan, *monthon* Burapha, where the provincial administration had not yet established districts in a proper way. Here we have to wait for just one further year until carrying [the census] out successfully.

*monthon* Saiburi, müang Kelantan (Kalantan) and müang Trengganu (Tranganu) use the provincial administration of Malaya.<sup>35</sup> The officials there were not capable of carrying out [the census]. But in two years they can succeed in accomplishing this task, too. As the census count could not be realized in all *monthon*, the various figures of the census count now following are from those 12 *monthon* where a detailed census had been taken.

9. The population figures of the 12 *monthon*, where a detailed census had already been taken, give 1,624,462 male, 1,683,570 female, altogether 3,308,032 persons. The figures can be arranged according to *monthon* as follows:

<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Si Thammarat	645,545 persons
<i>monthon</i> Krung Kao	484,236 persons
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Ratchasima	402,068 persons
<i>monthon</i> Ratchaburi	344,402 persons
<i>monthon</i> Prachin Buri	282,053 persons
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Chaisi	246,734 persons
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Sawan	228,497 persons
<i>monthon</i> Phitsanulok	196,739 persons
<i>monthon</i> Phuket	178,599 persons
<i>monthon</i> Chumphon	129,901 persons
<i>monthon</i> Chanthaburi	94,977 persons
<i>monthon</i> Phetchabun	74,281 persons

10. The number of persons in all 12 *monthon* as listed in paragraph 9 belong to following races:

Thai	2,677,987 persons
Malay <sup>36</sup>	289,423 persons
Chinese	195,498 persons
Khmer	78,704 persons
Mon	29,156 persons
Karen	19,257 persons
Vietnamese	4,757 persons
Cham	1,601 persons
Shan	944 persons
Burmese	607 persons
Indian	518 persons
Javanese	371 persons
Whites	178 persons
Tavoys <sup>37</sup>	45 persons
Others	8,936 persons

People in religious service (*banphachit*, บรรพชิต) were not included in the number of races, because people who enter monkhood share all the same characteristics, and it is difficult to classify them into different races, such as Chinese, Mon or Khmer.

11. The total number of **Chinese** is 195,498 persons as we see from paragraph 10. This number, if divided into *monthon*, can be arranged in the following order:

<i>monthon</i> Ratchaburi	38,767 persons
<i>monthon</i> Prachin Buri	35,912 persons
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Chaisi	33,992 persons
<i>monthon</i> Phuket	32,408 persons
<i>monthon</i> Krung Kao	18,615 persons
<i>monthon</i> Chanthaburi	10,080 persons
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Si Thammarat	9,303 persons
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Sawan	6,283 persons
<i>monthon</i> Phitsanulok	4,442 persons
<i>monthon</i> Chumphon	3,129 persons
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Ratchasima	2,431 persons
<i>monthon</i> Phetchabun	136 persons

12. **Malay**: Their number divided according to *monthon* is as follows:

<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Si Thammarat	240,642 persons
<i>monthon</i> Phuket	34,903 persons
<i>monthon</i> Krung Kao	5,235 persons
<i>monthon</i> Prachin Buri	5,137 persons
<i>monthon</i> Chumphon	1,986 persons
<i>monthon</i> Ratchaburi	1,380 persons

Furthermore, there are *monthon* with only a few people of [Malay race].

13. **Khmer**: Their number divided into *monthon* is as follows:

<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Ratchasima	41,038 persons
<i>monthon</i> Ratchaburi	19,886 persons
<i>monthon</i> Prachin Buri	10,732 persons
<i>monthon</i> Chanthaburi	3,296 persons
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Chaisi	3,135 persons

Furthermore, there are *monthon* with only a few people of [Khmer race]. We have even *monthon* with not a single Khmer living there.



14. **Mon:** Their number divided according to *monthon* as is follows:

<i>monthon</i> Ratchaburi	12,806 persons
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Chaisi	6,822 persons
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Sawan	2,943 persons
<i>monthon</i> Krung Kao	2,532 persons
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Ratchasima	2,259 persons
<i>monthon</i> Prachin Buri	1,715 persons

15. **Karen:** Their number divided according to *monthon* as is follows:

<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Sawan	10,819 persons
<i>monthon</i> Ratchaburi	6,288 persons
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Chaisi	1,232 persons
<i>monthon</i> Prachin Buri	523 persons
<i>monthon</i> Phetchabun	288 persons
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Ratchasima	65 persons

In other *monthon* there are living only very few Karen.

16. The number of persons in religious service (*banphachit*) in all 12 *monthon*. As to the Buddhist religion, there were 51,724 monks and 10,411 novices. Priests of other religions counted 2,939 persons.

The number of **monks** divided according to *monthon* as is follows:

<i>monthon</i> Krung Kao	11,401 persons
<i>monthon</i> Ratchaburi	7,948 persons
<i>monthon</i> Prachin Buri	5,211 persons
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Ratchasima	5,048 persons
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Si Thammarat	4,755 persons
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Sawan	4,510 persons
<i>monthon</i> Phitsanulok	4,171 persons
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Chaisi	3,092 persons
<i>monthon</i> Chanthaburi	1,666 persons
<i>monthon</i> Chumphon	1,607 persons
<i>monthon</i> Phuket	1,005 persons
<i>monthon</i> Phetchabun	650 persons

The number of **novices** divided according to *monthon* as is follows:

<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Ratchasima	3,820 persons
<i>monthon</i> Krung Kao	1,304 persons
<i>monthon</i> Phitsanulok	1,216 persons

<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Sawan	1,097 persons
<i>monthon</i> Phetchabun	566 persons
<i>monthon</i> Prachin Buri	504 persons
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Si Thammarat	433 persons
<i>monthon</i> Ratchaburi	421 persons
<i>monthon</i> Phuket	377 persons
<i>monthon</i> Chumphon	344 persons
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Chaisi	295 persons
<i>monthon</i> Chanthaburi	34 persons

The number of **priests**<sup>38</sup> divided according to *monthon* as is follows:

<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Si Thammarat	2,402 persons
<i>monthon</i> Krung Kao	304 persons
<i>monthon</i> Prachin Buri	102 persons
<i>monthon</i> Ratchaburi	22 persons
<i>monthon</i> Phuket	46 persons
<i>monthon</i> Chumphon	39 persons
<i>monthon</i> Chanthaburi	19 persons
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Chaisi	4 persons
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Sawan	1 person

The persons counted as priests are mostly Muslim priests (*hayi*). Thus, there are more priests in *monthon* Nakhon Si Thammarat than in any other *monthon*.

17. As to the number of **monasteries** (or churches) in those 12 *monthon* where a census has been taken, there are 5,699 Buddhist monasteries and 354 churches of other religions. The number of Buddhist monasteries is divided according to *monthon* as follows:

<i>monthon</i> Krung Kao	1,128 monasteries
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Si Thammarat	843 monasteries
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Ratchasima	642 monasteries
<i>monthon</i> Prachin Buri	602 monasteries
<i>monthon</i> Ratchaburi	524 monasteries
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Sawan	455 monasteries
<i>monthon</i> Phitsanulok	428 monasteries
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Chaisi	333 monasteries
<i>monthon</i> Chumphon	203 monasteries
<i>monthon</i> Chanthaburi	201 monasteries
<i>monthon</i> Phuket	174 monasteries
<i>monthon</i> Phetchabun	166 monasteries

18. The **houses** of our citizens in all 12 *monthon* totals to 1,053,781. This number divided according to *monthon* as is follows:

<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Si Thammarat	192,220 houses
<i>monthon</i> Krung Kao	183,147 houses
<i>monthon</i> Ratchaburi	118,885 houses
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Ratchasima	107,013 houses
<i>monthon</i> Prachin Buri	97,806 houses
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Sawan	85,170 houses
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Chaisi	81,646 houses
<i>monthon</i> Phitsanulok	52,712 houses
<i>monthon</i> Phuket	45,453 houses
<i>monthon</i> Chumphon	36,797 houses
<i>monthon</i> Chanthaburi	33,142 houses
<i>monthon</i> Phetchabun	19,789 houses

19. The number of **beasts of burden** in all 12 *monthon* is 2,036 elephants, 35,812 horses, 1,104,751 cows and 1,144,478 buffaloes.

The number of **elephants** divided according to *monthon* as is follows:

<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Si Thammarat	567 animals
<i>monthon</i> Chumphon	416 animals
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Sawan	249 animals
<i>monthon</i> Phuket	234 animals
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Ratchasima	215 animals
<i>monthon</i> Phitsanulok	202 animals
<i>monthon</i> Ratchaburi	97 animals
<i>monthon</i> Krung Kao	20 animals
<i>monthon</i> Prachin Buri	15 animals
<i>monthon</i> Phetchabun	13 animals
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Chaisi	8 animals

The number of **horses** divided according to *monthon* is as follows:

<i>monthon</i> Krung Kao	11,120 animals
<i>monthon</i> Prachin Buri	5,290 animals
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Ratchasima	4,869 animals
<i>monthon</i> Ratchaburi	2,855 animals
<i>monthon</i> Phitsanulok	2,572 animals
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Sawan	2,470 animals
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Chaisi	2,298 animals

<i>monthon</i> Chanthaburi	2,192 animals
<i>monthon</i> Phetchabun	1,032 animals
<i>monthon</i> Chumphon	686 animals
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Si Thammarat	243 animals
<i>monthon</i> Phuket	185 animals

The number of **cows** divided according to *monthon* is as follows:

<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Si Thammarat	339,952 animals
<i>monthon</i> Ratchaburi	292,393 animals
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Ratchasima	243,219 animals
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Chaisi	116,384 animals
<i>monthon</i> Krung Kao	52,323 animals
<i>monthon</i> Prachin Buri	24,288 animals
<i>monthon</i> Phetchabun	15,470 animals
<i>monthon</i> Phuket	6,509 animals
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Sawan	5,628 animals
<i>monthon</i> Phitsanulok	5,581 animals
<i>monthon</i> Chanthaburi	1,908 animals
<i>monthon</i> Chumphon	1,096 animals

The number of **buffaloes** divided according to *monthon* is as follows:

<i>monthon</i> Krung Kao	149,216 animals
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Sawan	136,317 animals
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Si Thammarat	134,956 animals
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Ratchasima	106,510 animals
<i>monthon</i> Phuket	135,468 animals
<i>monthon</i> Prachin Buri	128,307 animals
<i>monthon</i> Phitsanulok	103,866 animals
<i>monthon</i> Chumphon	96,671 animals
<i>monthon</i> Nakhon Chaisi	68,912 animals
<i>monthon</i> Chanthaburi	42,635 animals
<i>monthon</i> Phetchabun	23,648 animals
<i>monthon</i> Ratchaburi	17,972 animals

20. The number of **vehicles** in all 12 *monthon* totals 113,920 for ox-carts and 293,519 for ships.

21. The various counts recorded in this census report are not claimed to be absolutely correct and should not be regarded as such. But it seems justified to

consider them accurately organized counts. The figures seem to be closer to reality than any figures obtained from previous censuses.

22. After having summed up the census and presented it in this way or after whosoever having read the explanation of the census count until this point, there is certainly the same feeling of regret that figures for the whole kingdom could not yet be obtained. That is true, but we will have to wait only a very few years until we will know the total figures. The predominant issue which concerns most people is the total number of people living in the kingdom. As to this question, we could obtain preliminary census figures. Since we have obtained a survey count in those *monthon* where a detailed census had proved unfeasible, only Müang Trangkanu (Trengganu) being an exception, we should now be able to take a preliminary census.

Concerning those survey counts, when we compare them with the already presented detailed census count of the 12 *monthon*, it is evident that the [preliminary] survey count figures are in all *monthon* about 25% less than those figures derived from the later census. Therefore, it seemed reasonable to add these 25% to the various survey figures in those *monthon* where a detailed census had not yet been taken. Thus we got a much more realistic figure.

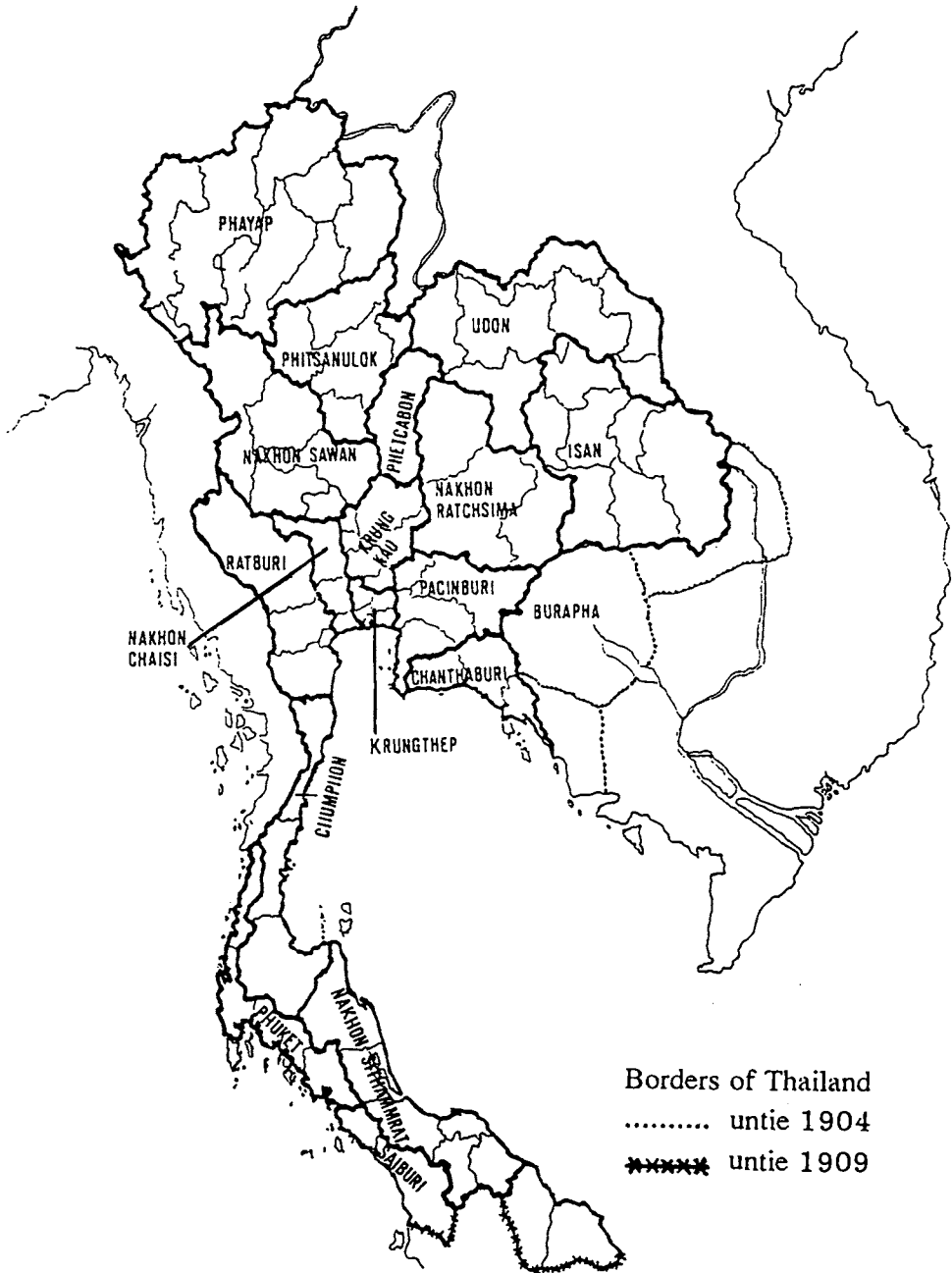
The number of people has been calculated by taking the figures from the detailed census count in the 12 *monthon* and adding to these figures those from the survey counts raised by 25%. The figures divided according to *monthon* are as follows:

The <i>monthon</i> where a census has already been taken	3,372,146 persons <sup>39</sup>
<i>monthon</i> Isan	915,750 persons
<i>monthon</i> Udon	576,947 persons
<i>monthon</i> Krung Thep	493,677 persons
<i>monthon</i> Phayap	485,563 persons
<i>müang</i> Kalantan (Kelantan)	300,000 persons
<i>monthon</i> Saiburi	219,000 persons
<i>monthon</i> Burapha	208,868 persons
<i>müang</i> Trangkanu (Trengganu)	114,895 persons

Altogether, following the figures presented here, we can conclude that the number of inhabitants in the Kingdom of Siam is roughly 6,686,846. This figure should be considered quite close to reality. If there are any mistakes, the real figure should be higher and certainly not less than the figure derived from this census.

MAP 1

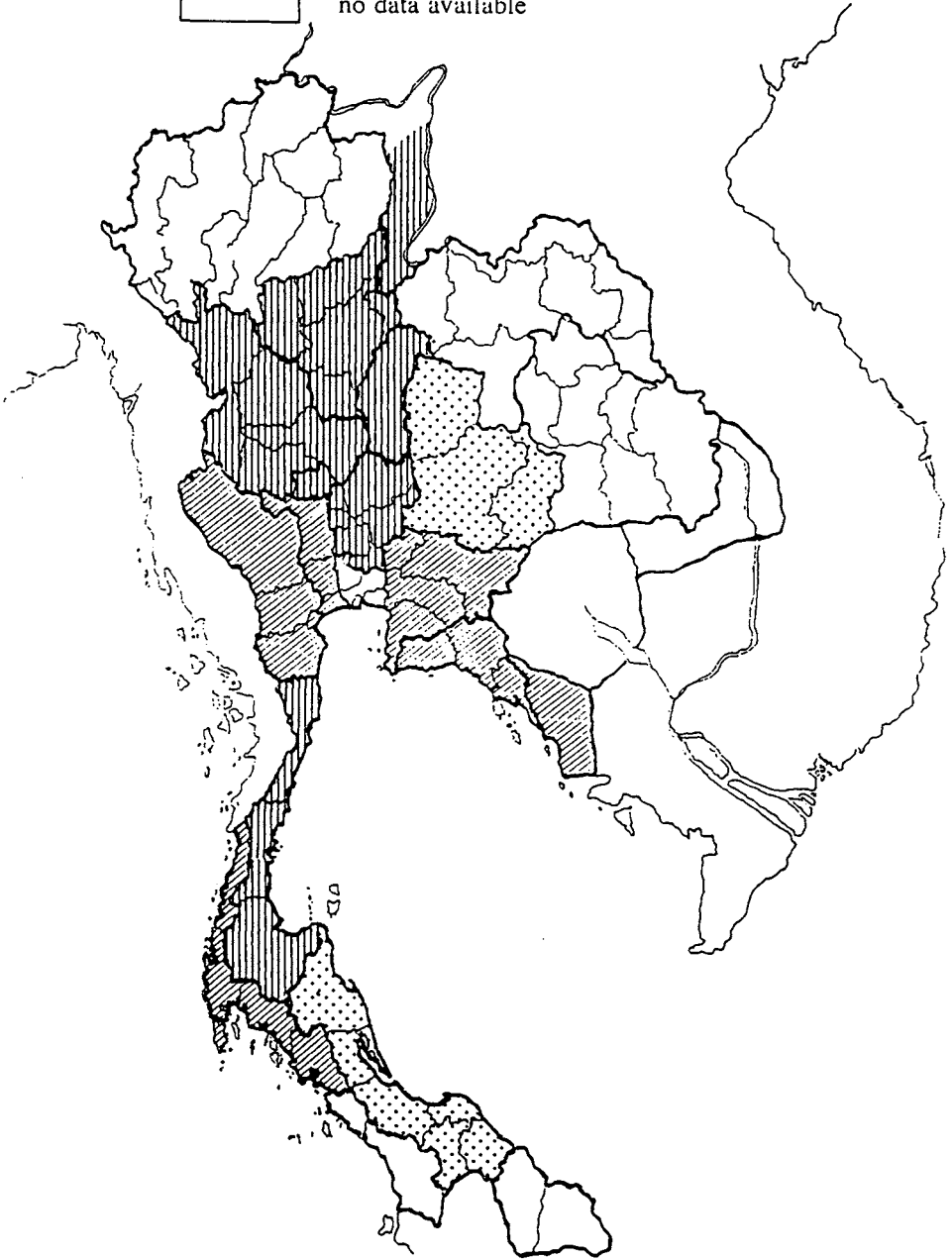
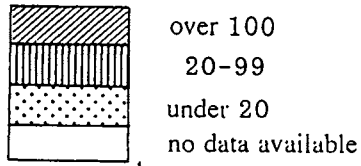
Thai monthon 1907/8



1903/4  
Census

MAP 2

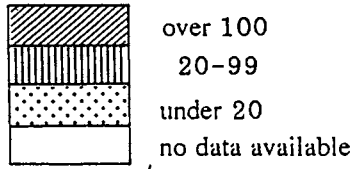
Chinese per 1,000 of the total population in monthon



1903/4  
Census

MAP 3

Malay per 1,000 of the total population in monthon



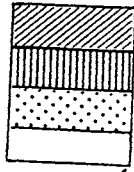


1903/4  
Census

MAP 4

**Khmer**

per 1,000 of the total population in monthon

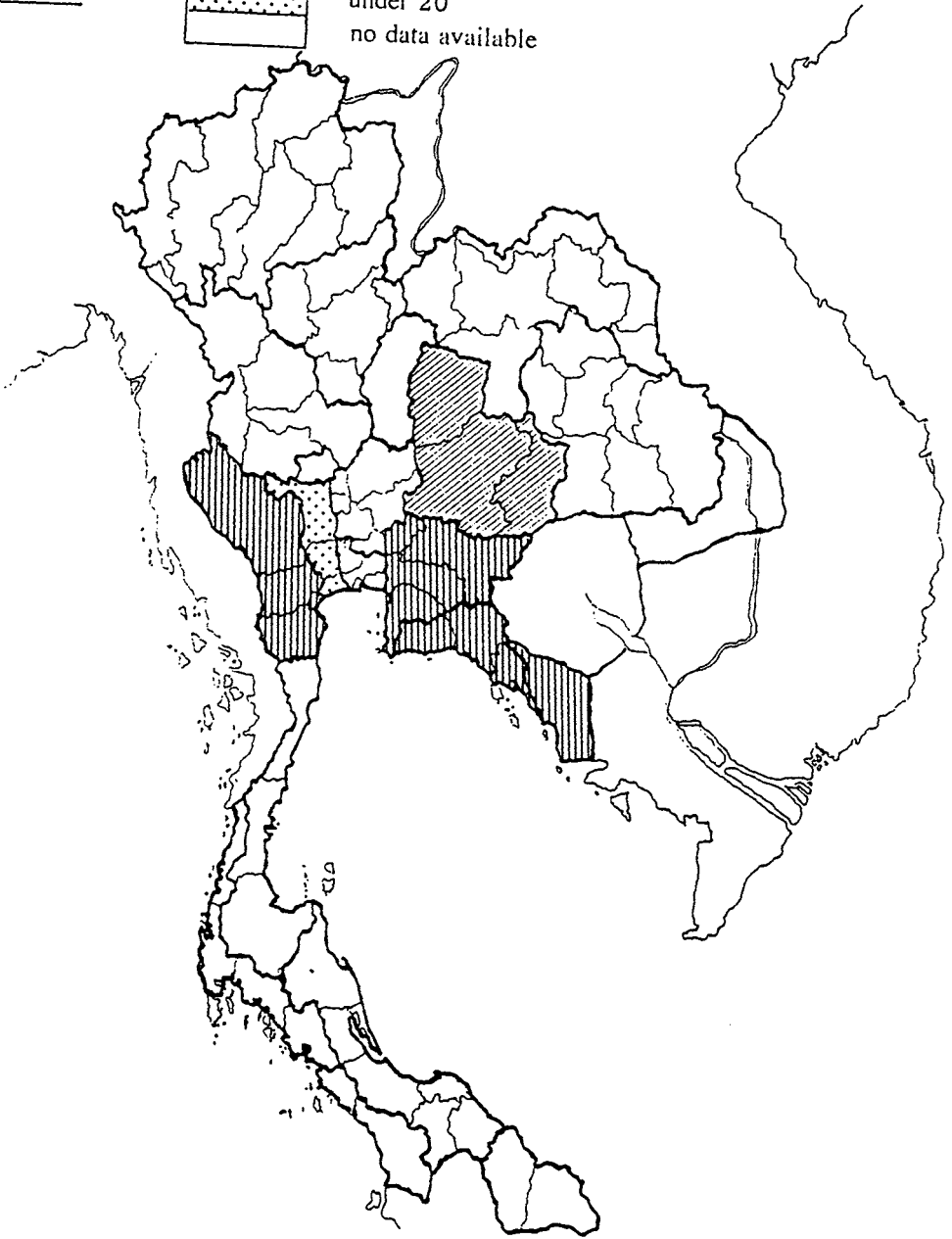


over 100

20-99

under 20

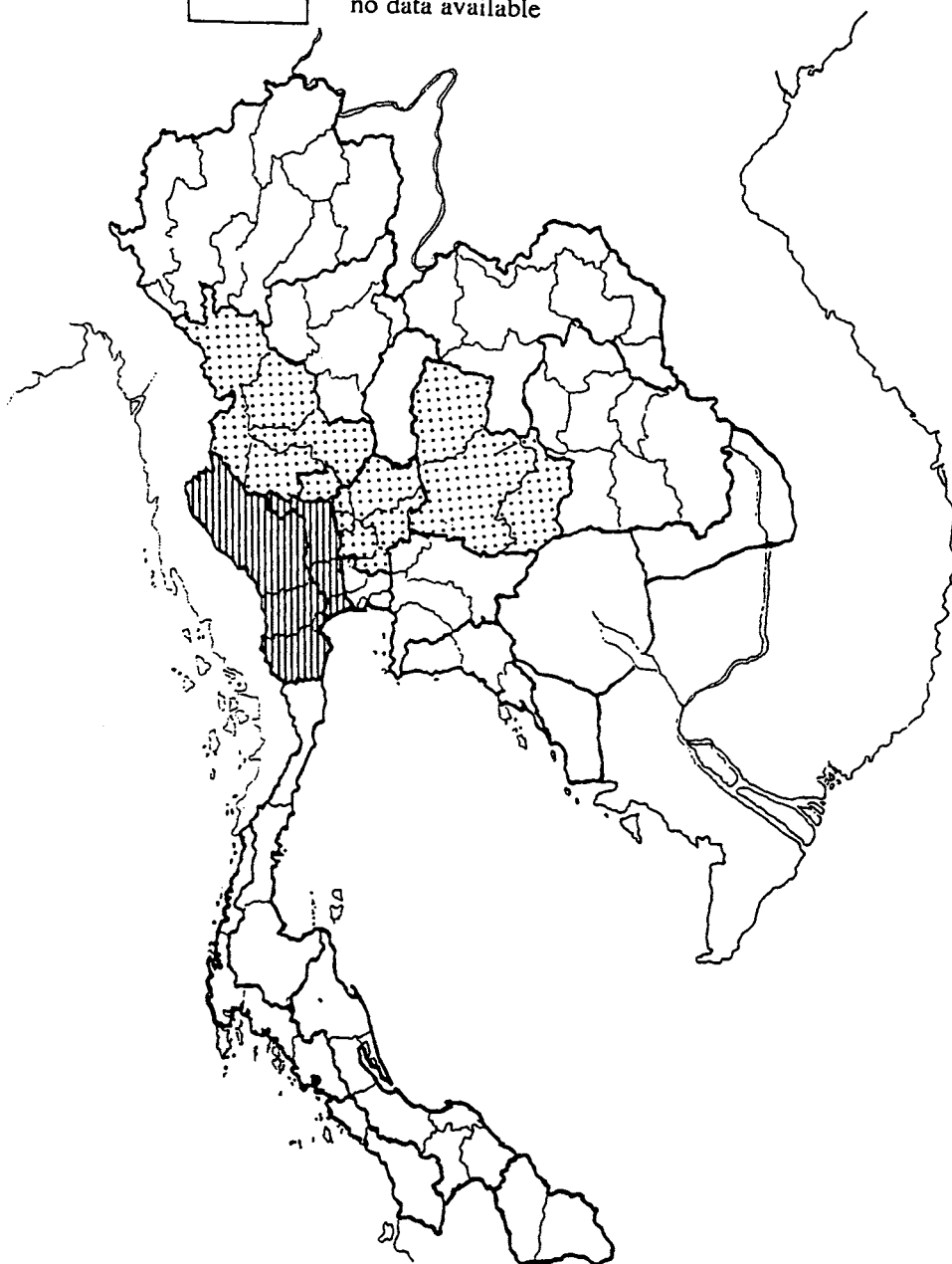
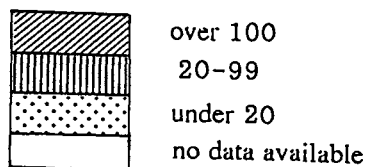
no data available



1903/4  
Census

MAP 5

Mon per 1,000 of the total population in monthon



**Table 1.**

Year	Source	Siamese	Lao	Chinese	Malay	Khmer	Mon	Karen	Other	Total
1822	Crawford	4,200		700	15	50	42			5,007
1835	Roberts, from Malcolm	1,600	1,200	500	320					3,620
1839	Malcolm	1,500	800	450	195					2,945
1854	Pallegoix	1,900	1,000	1,500	1,000	500	50	50		6,000
1864	Mouhot	2,000	1,000	1,500	1,000	350	50			5,900
1885a	de Rosny	1,600	1,000	1,500	1,000	600	40	160		5,900
1885b	de Rosny	3,500	1,000	1,520	1,200	620	40	35		7,915
1890	Rautier, from Hallet	3,000	1,300	3,000	1,000	1,000		400		9,700
1899	v.Hesse- Wartegg	3,000	1,500	3,000	1,000	1,000		500		10,000
1901	Aymonier	3,000	1,000	2,000	1,000	800	100	100		8,000
1903	Little	1,700	2,000	700	600					5,000
1904	Lunet de Lajonquiere	1,766	1,354	523	753	490	130	130	51	5,197

Note: figures in 1,000.

**Table 2.**

Monthon	Thai	Malay	Chinese	Khmer	Mon	Karen	Other	Total of details	Total from Census
Nakhon Si Thammarat		240,642	9,303					249,945	645,545
Krung Kao		5,235	18,615		2,532			26,382	484,236
Nakhon Ratchasima			2,431	41,038	2,259	65		45,793	402,068
Ratchaburi		1,380	38,767	19,886	12,806	6,288		79,127	344,402
Prachin Buri		5,137	35,912	10,732	1,715	523		54,019	282,053
Nakhon Chaisi			33,992	3,135	6,822	1,232		45,181	246,734
Nakhorn Sawan			6,283		2,943	10,819			
Phitsanulok			4,442						
Phuket		34,903	32,408					67,311	178,599
Chumphon		1,986	3,129					5,115	129,901
Chanthaburi			10,080	3,296				13,376	94,977
Petchabun			136			228		364	74,281
Total of details above		289,283	195,498	78,087	29,077	19,155		611,100	
Total from Census	2,677,987	289,423	195,498	78,704	29,257	19,257	18,007		3,308,032

Table 2a.

Monthon	Total from Census	Monks		Novices	Priests	Monks & Novices*
		number	%			
Nakhon Si Thammarat	645,545	4,755	9	433	2,402	5,188
Krung Kao	484,236	11,401	22	1,304	303	12,705
Nakhon Ratchasima	402,068	5,048	10	3,820		8,368
Ratchaburi	344,402	7,948	16	421	22	8,868
Prachin Buri	282,053	5,211	10	504	102	5,715
Nakon Chaisi	246,734	3,092	6	295	4	3,387
Nakon Sawan	228,497	4,510	9	1,097	1	5,607
Phitsanulok	196,739	4,171	8	1,216		5,387
Phuket	178,599	1,005	2	377	46	1,382
Chumphon	129,901	1,607	3	344	39	1,951
Chanthaburi	94,977	1,666	3	34	19	1,700
Petchabun	74,281	650	1	566		1,216
Total of Data	3,308,032	51,064	99	10,411	2,939	61,475
Total from Census	3,308,032	51,724		10,411	2,939	

Note: data of this column calculated by the author.

Table 2c.

continue &gt;

Monthon	Total from Census population	Elephants		Horses		Cows	
		person/elephant number		person/horse number		person/cow number	
Nakhon Si Thammarat	645,545	567	1,139	243	2,657	339,952	1.9
Krung Kao	484,236	20	24,212	11,120	44	52,323	9.3
Nakhon Ratchasima	402,068	215	1,870	4,869	83	243,219	1.7
Ratchaburi	344,402	97	3,551	2,855	123	292,393	1.2
Prachin Buri	282,053	15	18,804	5,290	58	24,288	11.6
Nakhon Chaisi	246,734	8	30,842	2,298	122	116,384	2.1
Nakhon Sawan	228,497	249	918	2,470	94	5,628	40.6
Phitsanulok	196,739	202	974	2,572	78	5,581	35.3
Phuket	178,599	234	763	185	972	6,509	27.4
Chumphon	129,901	416	312	686	191	1,096	118.5
Chanthaburi	94,977			2,192	79	1,908	49.8
Petchabun	74,281	13	5,714	1,032	79	15,470	4.8
Total of Data	3,308,032	2,036	1,625	35,812	93	1,104,751	3.0
Total from Census	3,308,032	2,036		35,812		1,104,751	

Table 2b.

Monthon	Total from Census			Monks Novices	monasteries	Monks & novices per monastery
	population	houses	person/hh			
Nakhon Si Thammarat	645,545	192,226	3.36	5,188	843	6.15
Krung Kao	484,236	183,147	2.64	12,705	1,128	11.26
Nakhon Ratchasima	402,068	107,013	3.76	8,868	642	13.81
Ratchaburi	344,402	118,885	2.90	8,369	524	15.97
Prachin Buri	282,053	97,806	2.88	5,715	602	9.49
Nakhon Chaisi	246,734	81,647	3.02	3,387	333	10.17
Nakhon Sawan	228,497	85,170	2.68	5,607	455	12.32
Phitsanulok	196,739	52,712	3.73	5,387	428	12.59
Phuket	178,599	45,453	3.93	1,382	174	7.94
Chumphon	129,901	36,797	3.53	1,951	203	9.61
Chanthaburi	94,977	33,142	2.87	1,700	201	8.46
Petchabun	74,281	19,789	3.75	1,216	166	7.33
Total of Data	3,308,032	1,053,781		61,475	5,699	
Total from Census	3,308,032	1,053,781			5,699	

&lt; continue Table 2c.

Buffaloes person/buffalo		Cows & Buffaloes person/C&B	
number		number	
134,956	4.8	474,908	1.4
149,216	3.2	201,539	2.4
106,510	3.8	349,729	1.1
17,972	19.2	310,365	1.1
128,307	2.2	152,595	1.8
68,912	3.6	185,296	1.3
136,317	1.7	141,945	1.6
103,866	1.9	109,447	1.8
135,468	1.3	141,977	1.3
96,671	1.3	97,767	1.3
42,635	2.2	44,543	2.1
23,648	3.1	39,118	1.9
1,144,478	2.9	2,249,229	1.5
1,144,478			

**Table 3.** Comparison of census counts in 1904 and 1910/11

Name of <i>mothon</i>	Number of Population		Difference	
	1904 <sup>a</sup>	1910/11 <sup>b</sup>	Absolute <sup>c</sup>	In% <sup>d</sup>
Nakhon Si Thammarat <sup>1</sup>	645,545	472,449		
Pattani		269,817	96,721	15.0
Krung Kao	484,236	553,976	69,740	14.4
Nakhon Ratchasima	402,068	488,131	86,063	21.4
Ratchaburi	344,402	419,714	86,063	21.4
Prachin Buri	282,053	325,681	43,628	15.5
Nakhon Chaisi	246,734	281,079	34,345	13.9
Nakhon Sawan	228,497	287,000	58,503	25.6
Phitsanulok	196,739	248,050	51,311	26.1
Phuket <sup>2</sup>	178,599 (205,974)**	220,953	14,974	7.3
Chumphon	129,901	164,154	34,253	26.4
Chanthaburi <sup>3</sup>	94,977	134,691	39,714	41.8
Phetchabun	74,281	72,668	-1,613	-2.2
Isan	915,750	1,414,073	498,323	54.4
Ubon	576,947	630,681	53,734	9.3
Krung Thep	493,677	931,319*	437,642	88.6
Kalantan ( <i>muang</i> ) <sup>4</sup>	300,000	—	—	—
Saiburi (Kedah)	219,000	—	—	—
Burapha <sup>6</sup>	208,868	—	—	—
Tranganu ( <i>muang</i> ) <sup>7</sup>	114,895	—	—	—
Total	6,622,732			
Excluding 4, 6, 7 and 7/8 of 5 (Saiburi minus Satun)	5,807,344 <sup>8</sup>	8,131,253	2,323,909	40.0

(c) = (b) – (a); (d) = (c)/(a) × 100.

1 1904: including Pattani ("*boriwen Khet huamuang*").

2 1909: including Satun.

3 1907: return of Trat to Thailand.

4 1909: to British Malaya.

5 comprising Kedah, Perlis (1909 to British Malaya) and Satun.

6 1907: to Cambodia (French – Indochina).

7 1909: to British Malaya.

8 Excluding clerical people (*banphachit*).

\* Overestimation; 1919/20: 666 719 persons.

\*\* Including Satun, at that time still part of *mothon* Saiburi (Kedah).

## Notes

1. In the Ayutthaya period, all *phrai som* (ไพร่สม) were obliged to work six alternate months a year for the Crown. They could be employed on public works or in military service. During the time the *phrai som* worked for the Crown, they were supervised by government administrators whom they called *nai* (นาย), or "master." The *phrai luang* (ไพร่หลวง) were the king's personal retainers. They served the king throughout the year, such as by helping look after the elephants, doing guard duty, or portage. For details see Terwiel (1983, 17 f.).
2. Bishop Pallegoix estimated that in the mid-nineteenth century one quarter to one third of a population of some six million were slaves, of which the majority were redeemable debt slaves (Turton 1979, 275).
3. Shortly after Rama II had ascended to the throne (1810), he ordered a complete census of manpower. Terwiel summarizes one important measure the King decided on: "The general announcement to reach all the run-away *phrai*, prisoners of war and debt-slaves who were in hiding, to return to their old patrons. If they gave themselves up they would not be punished. If the *phrai luang* and redeemable slaves felt unable to return to their old patrons, on this one occasion they could choose themselves a new patron. However, once they had chosen, they could not use this right again" (1983, 100).
4. Indeed, with very few exceptions, Western travellers had little personal experience with regions outside Bangkok, the coastal zones and the provinces of the Chao Phraya River delta. Irrational fears were raised that in the long run the Chinese might gain the upper hand and turn Thailand into a "Chinese province."

This fear was most dramatically expressed in 1897 by Ernst von Hesse-Wartegg, a famous German traveller and writer of the Wilhelmenian era.

"According to most recent estimates I got in Bangkok, Siam has roughly ten million inhabitants. Of these are one and a half million Lao, one million Malay, one million Cambodian, half a million Mon, Karen, Burmese, and three million Siamese. These three million are outweighed by the same number of Chinese. If Chinese immigration remains as high as it is [now], the Chinese will outnumber the pure Siamese within one decade" (Hesse-Wartegg 1986, 140).

5. Birth and death registration have been compulsory throughout the entire kingdom only since 1917.
6. Thai statistics distinguish between "nationality" or "citizenship" (*sanchat* สัญชาติ) and "race" or "ethnic origin" (*chiüachat* เชื้อชาติ). The Thai Nationality Act of 1913/14, which was in effect until 1953, stated that any person born in Thailand was to be considered a Thai national. Thus, local-born Chinese were ordinarily recorded as Thai nationals. The Nationality Act, on the other hand, also provided that "a Siamese woman who marries an alien loses her Siamese nationality if by his national law she has acquired the nationality of her husband" (quoted from Skinner 1957, 185/6).
7. In Thai: *chat-satsana-phramahakasat* ชาติ ศาสนา พระมหากษัตริย์.
8. ทูลถวายบัญชีสำมะโนครัวพลเมืองซึ่งได้สำรวจเมื่อศก ๑๒๓ [Presenting the Results of the Population Census Carried out in the Year A.D. 1904], 22.11.1905, in: สำมะโนครัวพลเมือง [Population Census], National Archives, Bangkok, R.5, Mahatthai 2.19/4.  
A short English summary of the Thai memorandum on the 1904 census was published in *Directory for Bangkok and Siam 1907*, p. 110; see also Skinner (1957, 74).

## 9. The additional documents are:

- a. บัญชีสำมะโนครัวเมืองสมุทรปราการ นครเขื่อนขันธ์ นนทบุรี ปทุมธานี [Census Count of Müang Samut Prakan, Nakhon Khüan Khan, Nonthaburi and Pathum Thani] (13.3.–26.8.1899). Source: National Archives, File: R.5 Nakhonban 30/4.
- b. บัญชีเทียบชาติพลเมืองมณฑลปราจีนบุรี ศก ๑๒๕ [Comparative Census Count of Races and Population in *monthon* Prachinburi (1906/7)]. Source: National Archives, File: R.5 Mahatthai 2.19/5.
- c. สำมะโนครัวพลเมือง [Population Census] (1909). Source: National Archives, R.5 Mahatthai 2.19/4.
- d. รายงานเมืองลำพูน ปีรัตนโกสินทร์ศก ๑๑๙ [Report on Müang Lamphun, A.D: 1900]. Source: National Archives, R.5 Mahatthai 58/187.

## 10. Skinner (1957, p. 3f) writes:

“According to Thai traditions, Pho Khun Ramkhamhaeng's mission to China brought Chinese potters to Sukhothai in 1300. The new type of pottery manufactured shortly thereafter at Sukhothai, and the celadon wares later produced at the Sawankhalok kilns, are of Chinese design and technique. Le May has demonstrated that the Chinese influence in Sawankhalok pottery decoration died out by the first half of the fifteenth century, which suggests that the descendants of the immigrant potters had by that time been assimilated.”

11. Taksin was born in 1734 of a Chinese father and a Thai mother. During his short reign he favoured Chinese of his own speech group, the Teochiu (see Skinner 1957, 20 ff).
12. See below § 5 of the "Explanations of the Census Figures".
13. These results are more or less in accordance with those of the 1904 census. 33,880 male Chinese lived in *monthon* Prachin Buri in 1905/6, but only 1,242 female Chinese. One year later, the figures were 34,021 and 1,272 respectively.
14. In Samut Prakan and Nonthaburi, virtually no Chinese women were counted in 1899, whereas in Pathum Thani 42.7% of the Chinese population were female (762 out of 1,784). In Nakhon Khüan Khan women even formed the majority (53.5%) of the Chinese minority (1,785 out of 3,337). These significant differences cannot be explained as accidental circumstances.
15. In 1904 Chachoengsao was part of *monthon* Prachin Buri.
16. After 1919 the assimilation of Malay Muslims living outside the Pattani core region accelerated. Or at least the Thai authorities did not accept them any longer as Malay, although still as Muslims. The respective figures of the censuses of 1919 and 1929 reveal that the absolute number of Malay outside *monthon* Pattani declined from 172,000 to 107,000, while at the same time the Malay of the Pattani core region grew from 250,000 to 272,000.  
In the censuses of 1937 and 1947 only Malayan born Malay were counted as members of the "Malay race" (*chüachat malayu* เชื้อชาติมลายู); otherwise ethnic Malay were labeled "Thai Muslims" (*thai mutsalim* ไทยมุสลิม or *thai itsalam* ไทยอิสลาม).  
Sources: Statistical Year Book of the Kingdom of Siam 1918; Statistical Year Book of the Kingdom of Siam 1930/31, การสำรวจสำมะโนครัวทั่วราชอาณาจักรไทย [Census, Whole Kingdom] Vol. 5, 1947.
17. Assuming an annual growth rate of 1.5% between 1904 and 1909, the 20,764 *khaek* who lived in *monthon* Krung Thep in 1909 would have been 19,300 persons in 1904. As the designation *khaek* refers to all brown-skinned Muslim people of Asia, including Indians, Persians, Indonesians and Cham, the number of Malay should be somewhat lower. I assumed that 80% of *khaek* living in Bangkok and surroundings were ethnic Malay.



18. *Changwat Satun* had 34,095 inhabitants in 1919. The extrapolated figure for 1904 is 27,000. By then roughly 80% of the population had been Malay Muslims. Source: *Statistical Year Book of the Kingdom of Siam 1918*, p. 24f.
19. This figure does not include the Malay population of Kelantan, Trengganu, Kedah and Perlis.
20. See ประชุมพงศาวดาร [Collected Chronicles], Part 1, Vol. 1, Bangkok 1963, p. 134.
21. Chao Phraya Thiphakorawong, (1988, 22). The influx of Khmer war captives throughout the centuries was most significant. Chai Rüangsin (1974, 31) is probably right in saying: "If we analyse the history in the Ayutthaya and Bangkok periods, we would see that Thailand received a large number of people by that method [i.e. resettlement of war captives]. Most came from Cambodia, followed by those from Lan Na (ล้านนา). Those from the Mon areas of Burma, and from Lan Chang were placed on the third and fourth positions respectively."
- However, Bowring (1857/1969, 190) provides a list of prisoners of war in Siam at the time of his writing, i.e. in the middle of the nineteenth century. He estimates the number of Lao war captives (only *chai chakan* ชายฉกรรจ์, able-bodied men) at 20,000, followed by Mon/"Peguans" (10,000), Vietnamese/"Cochin Chinese" (10,000), Malay (5,000) and Burmese (1,000). Prisoners of war of Khmer race are missing.
22. In 1919 Buri Ram had a population of 110,515. Between 1904 and 1919 the population of *monthon* Nakhon Ratchasima increased 2.5% per year. In the decade following the 1919 census, the population of *changwat* Buri Ram grew much faster than in the rest of the *monthon* (annual increases of 4.4% and 2.5% respectively). Therefore, we should assume an annual increase of at least 3.0% for *changwat* Buri Ram during 1904–19. Roughly 60% of Buri Ram's population of 70,000 in 1904 were ethnic Khmer. A recent linguistic study estimates that in the early 1980s still 50% of the people in Buri Ram were Khmer (see Rüangdet 1988, 218).
23. Sisaket had 261,948 and Surin 200,567 inhabitants in 1919. We assume that between 1904 and 1919 the population of both provinces increased 1.5% per annum. Thus, in 1904, Sisaket probably numbered 209,500 inhabitants of which 62,900 were Khmer. The figures for Surin are 160,400 and 112,300 respectively.
- Lunet de Lajonquière, who made extensive journeys in Isan during the 1904/5 dry season, writes: "Les Khmers... occupent toute la région en bordure des monts Dang-rek, c'est-a-dire une grande partie de la circonscription de Sourin et de celle de Koukan [southern part of Sisaket], mélangés dans la première à quelques Kouys et à des Laotiens... Dans la circonscription de Sisaket, en partie composée de Laotiens, au Nord en bordure de la Se Moun, et de Kouys, au Sud, la siamisation en également très avancée" (1907, 282).
24. The Kui, also known as *khamen pa dong* เขมรป่าดง ("Forest Khmer") were the dominant people in the southern part of Isan until the eighteenth century. During the last two centuries many Kui were assimilated by either the Lao or the Khmer. An estimated 150,000 Kui speaking people are still living in Surin, Sisaket and Ubon Ratchathani (Rüangdet 1988, 220).
25. A French census in 1911 of the "new province" of Battambang (then including Siem Reap) showed a total of 242,813. This figure is consistent with the rough estimate of 200,000 people who lived in *monthon* Burapha according to the 1904 census count (see Forest 1980, 182). As to further information on the population of Battambang and Siem Reap compare Brien (1887 and 1906); Benoist (1914).

26. It is a mute point whether a few thousand Nyakur, a small people of Monic stock living in remote villages in *changwat* Chaiyaphum and *changwat* Phetchabun descend from the Dvaravati period. Concerning Ban Nong Du, a Mon village in *changwat* Lamphun, the ancestors of roughly 800 Mon speaking villagers (80% of the total village population) are not the Mon of Hariphunchai (a pre-Thai Kingdom centered in present-day Lamphun). Instead they immigrated from Burma during the reign of Rama II or later.
27. For a detailed count of the immigration of the Mon into Thailand, see also Foster (1972).
28. Chaiyon (1992, 4) estimates that in 1815 more than 40,000 Mon fled to Thailand. It was the largest single exodus of Mon from Burma to Thailand.
29. The Lawa, also called Wa or Lua, once inhabited large parts of northern mainland Southeast Asia, including the historical region of Lan Na. Northern Thai (Yuan) chronicles, like *Tamnan Suwannakhamdaeng* (ตำนานสุวรรณคำแดง) mention the strong Lawa influence in pre-Yuan Chiang Mai. According to recent estimates, fewer than 10,000 Lawa are now living in forty-three villages, scattered in the provinces of Chiang Mai, Mae Hong Son and Chiang Rai (Rüangdet 1988, 220 f.; compare also Young 1969, 85).
- As some Lawa groups speak languages partly unintelligible by other groups, it appears that "Lawa" designates not a specific race, but diverse ethnic groups of Mon-Khmer extraction. There are no data available concerning the numerical strength of the Lawa at the turn of the twentieth century. Michel Hoàng (1976, 69) states that around 1885 the Lawa numbered 85,000 (i.e. one-tenth of the total population of Lan Na at that time!); unfortunately he does not mention the source of this astonishing estimate.
30. The percentages of the various ethnic groups in *monthon* Prachin Buri (1906/7) were: Thai: 50.9%; Lao: 30.2%; Chinese: 11.9%; Khmer: 3.8%; others: 3.2%.
31. According to Chao Phraya Thiphakorawong (1988, 94), more than 23,000 inhabitants of Chiang Saen were made prisoners of war, when the city, the last Burmese stronghold in Northern Thailand, was captured by Siamese, Yuan and Lao forces in 1804. The captives, ethnic Yuan, were divided among the armies of Chiang Mai, Lampang, Nan, Vientiane (Wiang Chan) and Bangkok. The Siamese army, probably receiving the largest share, settled the Yuan war captives in Saraburi and Ratchaburi. When I visited Ratchaburi with a group of local historians from Chiang Mai (*chromrom lannakhadi chiang mai*, ชมรมล้านนาคดีเชียงใหม่) in April 1992, I was told by Acharn Udom Somphon of Ratchaburi Teachers' College that 60,000 people of Yuan origin are still living in *changwat* Ratchaburi (1980: 625,000 inhabitants), of whom 40,000 are still able to speak or understand the Yuan language (*kham müang*, คำเมือง).
32. The pioneering book on the administrative reforms under the supervision of Prince Damrong is by Tej Bunnag (1977).
33. Concerning the population of various *müang* (later *changwat*, จังหวัด) in *monthon* Phayap, see also Tables 9 and 10 and 10a.
34. Concerning a general evaluation of population growth in pre-colonial South East Asia, see Reid (1987, 35) who emphasizes as regards to Thailand: "The Cakri dynasty in Siam was also able to preserve relative internal peace from about 1800 onwards, which is probably the reason that Siamese numbers also grew rapidly in the nineteenth century, though not as rapidly as those of the colonially ruled areas."
35. Source: ทูลถวายบัญชีสำมะโนครัวพลเมืองซึ่งได้สำรวจเมื่อศก ๑๒๓ [Presenting the Results of the Population Census Carried out in the Year A.D. 1904], 22.11.1905, in: สำมะโนครัวพลเมือง [Population Census], National Archives, Bangkok, R.5, Mahatthai 2.19/4.

36. There is no major Siamese *müang* (เมือง) with the name "Lakhon" for which the term "Lakhon people" (*chao lakhon*) might refer to. "Lakhon" might be the Siamese spelling of "Lakon" which is the corrupt name of "Khelang Nakhon," as the northern Thai (*khon müang*, คนเมือง) used to call present-day Lampang at the beginning of this century. Moreover, the linguistic argument that the language of "Lakhon"/"Lakon" (i.e. Lampang) was more distant from central Thai than Lao Isan seems to hold true. On the other hand, at the eve of the twentieth century, Lan Na was, in the eyes of the Bangkok government, not more "Thai" than the North East. Both regions were considered "Lao" by the central Thai ruling elite.

One could also argue that "Lakhon" (ลคร) is a misspelling of "Nakhon" (นคร). In this case it should be the abbreviated form of Müang Nakhon Si Thammarat. But then it should have been written with a *paiyan noi* (๔) which is missing in the Thai text. However, at one point the equation of *chao lakhon* (ชาวลคร) with the people of Müang Nakhon Si Thammarat would make sense. Since the early Ayutthya period Nakhon Si Thammarat had been a *müang* of the first grade under the uninterrupted rule of a local dynasty, and not a *prathetsarat* (ประเทศราช) like the Lao and Northern Thai principalities. Although the people of the region around Nakhon Si Thammarat speak their own distinctive dialect, they were regarded by the central Thai as "Thai" or "Siamese", unlike the *lao wiang* (ลาวเวียง) in the North-East and the *lao Chiang* (ลาวเฉียง) in Lan Na. From a linguistic point of view the dialect of Nakhon Si Thammarat has much more in common with Bangkok Thai than is the case with many of the "Lao" dialects. In conclusion, the arguments in support of Lampang seem more convincing than those in support of Nakhon Si Thammarat.

37. *Monthon* Saiburi comprised three *müang*: Kedah, Perlis and Satun. At the beginning of the twentieth century Kelantan and Trengganu were still semi-independent *prathetsarat* associated with *Monthon* Nakhon Si Thammarat. By 1904, the government in Bangkok had plans under way to extend the *thesaphiban* (เทศาภิบาล) provincial administration to these two Malay *müang*. A Thai map from 1903, that gives the names of various *müang* and *amphoe* (อำเภอ) belonging to each of the nineteen *monthon* (มณฑล) at that time, already placed Kelantan and Trengganu under the supremacy of *Monthon* Nakhon Si Thammarat. See National Archives, R.5, Mahatthai 2.1/9: map of the territorial division of Siam in Rattanakosin Era 122 (AD. 1903/4).

38. The Thai term is *khaek malayu* (แขกมลายู). *Khaek* (แขก) is a designation for all South and Southeast Asian people of brown skin believing in Islam or Hinduism]. Apart from *khaek malayu* (Malay), Thai sources mention *khaek chawa* (แขกชวา, Javanese), *khaek cam* (แขกจาม, Cham), *khaek thet* (แขกเทศ, Muslim Indians), etc.

39. Thai: *thawai* (ทวาย), the Burmese speaking population of Tennaserim. This province, situated in the south-eastern corner of Burma, had over centuries been contested by Burma and Siam. During the late Ayutthaya period it was a Siamese second-class province ceded to Burma in 1793.

40. I.e. Muslim *iman* and Christian priests (*batluang*, บาทหลวง).

41. The total figure for the 12 *monthon*, where the detailed census count had been taken, is 3,308,032 people. This figure does not include clerical people (*banphachit*, บรรพชิต). Thus we should add 51,724 Buddhist monks, 10,411 novices and 2,939 priests from other religions to the figure above raising it to a grand total of 3,373,106. This makes a difference of c. 1,000 to the figure given in the census count.

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