

กำเนิดและพัฒนารของเทศกาลกินเจจังหวัดภูเก็ต



นางสาว แก้วกาญจน์ ศิลพัฒน์

# สถาบันวิทยบริการ จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

วิทยานิพนธ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต

สาขาวิชาเอเชียตะวันออกเฉียงใต้ศึกษา (สหสาขาวิชา)

บัณฑิตวิทยาลัย จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

ปีการศึกษา 2549

ลิขสิทธิ์ของจุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PHUKET VEGETARIAN FESTIVAL

Miss Kaewkarn Silphiphat

สถาบันวิทยบริการ  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Arts Program in Southeast Asian Studies

(Interdisciplinary Program)

Graduate School

Chulalongkorn University

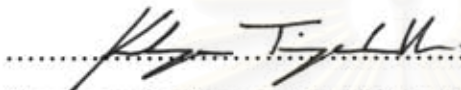
Academic Year 2006

Copyright of Chulalongkorn University


Thesis Title THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PHUKET  
VEGETARIAN FESTIVAL  
By Ms. Kaewkarn Silphiphat  
Field of Study Southeast Asian Studies  
Thesis Advisor Sunait Chutintaranond, Ph.D.


---

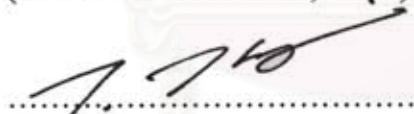
Accepted by the Graduate School, Chulalongkorn University in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master's Degree

..... Dean of the Graduate School  
(Assistant Professor M.R. Kalaya Tingsabadh, Ph.D.)

THESIS COMMITTEE

..... Chairman  
(Klairung Amratisha, Ph.D.)

..... Thesis Advisor  
(Sunait Chutintaranond, Ph.D.)

..... Member  
(Thavi Theerawongseri, Ph.D.)

สถาบันวิทยบริการ  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

แก้วกาญจน์ ศิลพิพัฒน์ : กำเนิดและพัฒนาการของเทศกาลกินเจจังหวัดภูเก็ต (THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PHUKET VEVGETARIAN FESTIVAL) อ. ที่ปรึกษา : อ. ดร. สุเนตร ชุตินธรานนท์, 95 หน้า.

การศึกษาเรื่องกำเนิดและพัฒนาการของเทศกาลกินเจจังหวัดภูเก็ตเพื่อที่จะค้นหาถึงต้นกำเนิดของประเพณีกินเจ และศึกษาถึงสาเหตุการเจริญเติบโตและพัฒนาการของประเพณีในระดับชาติและระดับนานาชาติ โดยศึกษาจากการวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพ

ผลการศึกษาพบว่าเทศกาลกินเจจังหวัดภูเก็ตมีต้นกำเนิดมาจากชาวจีนอพยพซึ่งตั้งถิ่นฐานและทำงานในเมืองแร่จังหวัดภูเก็ต เนื่องจากลักษณะนิสัยที่โดดเด่นของชาวจีนเป็นผลให้พวกเขานำประเพณีนี้ติดมาด้วย การศึกษาพบว่าเทศกาลกินเจมีต้นกำเนิดมาจากพิธีกรรมทางศาสนาภายในกลุ่มแรงงานจีนอพยพซึ่งเข้ามาทำงานในเมืองแร่เป็นจำนวนมากตั้งแต่ปี 2398 (สนธิสัญญาเบาว์ริง) ตลอดจนสงครามโลกครั้งที่ 1 และต่อมาภายหลังคนท้องถิ่นของภูเก็ตได้เข้าร่วมพิธีด้วย โดยเฉพาะอย่างยิ่งชุมชนชาวจีนซึ่งผสมผสานกลมกลืนเข้ากับชุมชนภูเก็ต อีกทั้งกระแสอาหารเพื่อสุขภาพได้เกิดขึ้นในประเทศไทยซึ่งสอดคล้องกับประเพณีกินเจ ส่งผลให้คนไทยยอมรับและถือศีล กินเจมากขึ้น และผลจากการเปลี่ยนแปลงเศรษฐกิจของภูเก็ตที่เปลี่ยนจากการส่งออกแร่ดีบุกเป็นการท่องเที่ยว ภูเก็ตจึงได้พัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวขึ้นมาเป็นเมืองในระดับนานาชาติ ทำให้เทศกาลกินเจจังหวัดภูเก็ตได้รับการสนับสนุน และถูกขยายการยอมรับจากระดับท้องถิ่นเป็นระดับชาติ และระดับนานาชาติ อาจกล่าวได้ว่าการท่องเที่ยวแห่งประเทศไทยเป็นองค์กรที่มีบทบาทสำคัญที่เข้ามามีส่วนผลักดันและส่งเสริมเทศกาลกินเจจังหวัดภูเก็ต โดยผนวกประเพณีเข้าเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของเทศกาลและงานประเพณีประจำปีของท้องถิ่นและประเทศในการท่องเที่ยวเชิงวัฒนธรรม

สาขาวิชา เอเชียตะวันออกเฉียงใต้ศึกษา  
ปีการศึกษา 2549

ลายมือชื่อนิสิต.....แก้วกาญจน์.....ศิลพิพัฒน์.....  
ลายมือชื่ออาจารย์ที่ปรึกษา.....*[Signature]*.....

# #4789524020 : MAJOR SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDY

KEY WORD: CHINESE IMMIGRANT/ PHUKET VEGETARIAN FESTIVAL/ TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

KAEWKARN SILPHIPHAT : THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PHUKET VEGETARIAN FESTIVAL. THESIS ADVISOR : SUNAIT CHUTINTARANOND, Ph.D., 95 pp.

A study of the Origin and Development of the Phuket Vegetarian Festival in order to trace the origin of the ritual and also to find the causes of the growth and development of the ritual at the national and international level. The study was conducted by qualitative research.

The findings indicated that the Phuket Vegetarian Festival originated from Chinese immigrants who settled down in Phuket owing to working for tin mines. Besides their outstanding characteristics they brought this custom with them. The study traces the Vegetarian festival from its original religious ritualistic practices by only Chinese immigrant laborers for tin mining who had come in large of numbers since 1855 (following the Bowring treaty) through the First World War. It then expanded to include increasing participation from local Phuketians especially as the Chinese community assimilated into the Phuket community. In addition, the risen of healthy food trends in Thailand that related to the Vegetarian festival. It also attributed to increasing non-Chinese Thais recognition and practice. Finally, as a result of Phuket's economy having shifted from dependency on tin exports to tourism and its emergence as a world-class tourist destination, the Phuket Vegetarian Festival has been promoted as a major tourist attraction, expanding its recognition from the local to the national and even international level. In the other words, the Tourism Authority of Thailand has played a key role in this promotion, with its inclusion of the Phuket Vegetarian Festival in its calendar of major events being key in establishing it as an annual cultural highlight.

Field of study Southeast Asian Studies  
Academic year 2006

Student's signature... *Kaewkarn Silphiphat* .....  
Advisor's... *Sunait Chutintaranond* .....

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I would like to express my sincere thanks to my advisor, Dr. Sunait Chutintaranond, Director of Southeast Asian Studies Center, for his valuable guidance and comments with kindness.

Secondly, the thesis could not be possible without the assistance of many people involved. I would like to thank my parents for the support that they have given me. I also would like to thank my colleagues, class friends, friends, and staffs at the Southeast Asian Studies Center with helpfulness and encouragement to me.

Finally, I also wish to thank Professor Mary Doerflein for editing English and nice comments to my thesis. She is my respectful Ajarn and wonderful friend.



สถาบันวิทยบริการ  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract (Thai).....	iv
Abstract (Eng).....	v
Acknowledgements.....	vi
Table of Contents.....	vii
List of Photographs.....	ix
List of Tables.....	x
<b>Chapter I Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1. Objectives.....	1
2. Major arguments.....	2
3. Significance and usefulness of research.....	2
4. Research Methodology.....	3
<b>Chapter II The Chinese immigrant Period.....</b>	<b>5</b>
1. A Brief history of Chinese immigrant influx to Thailand.....	5
2. Cause of Chinese immigrant emigrate to Thailand.....	8
3. Chinese immigrant society in Thailand and their characteristic..	13
4. Chinese immigrants in Phuket.....	22
<b>Chapter III The Phuket vegetarian ritual.....</b>	<b>27</b>
1. Religion and Chinese belief.....	27
2. Myths of Vegetarian ritual.....	32
3. Nine days and nights of Phuket Vegetarian Festival.....	37
4. The spirit medium.....	62
5. The Vegetarian Food or Che Food.....	65
6. The Healthy Food Trend to Thailand.....	66

	Page
<b>Chapter IV Phuket Tourism Development</b> .....	70
1. Phuket as tourist destination.....	70
2. The Vegetarian Festival as tourist event.....	72
<b>Chapter V Conclusions</b> .....	79
<b>References</b> .....	83
<b>Appendices</b> .....	88
<b>Biography</b> .....	95



สถาบันวิทยบริการ  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย



## LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

	Page
Picture 1: The room of the Nine Emperor Gods.....	43
Picture 2: Two incense urns, Yok Ong and Kiu Ong, with ceremonial umbrellas....	43
Picture 3: Tek Hu presents the territory of the vegetarian ritual.....	44
Picture 4: The food offering to the warrior ritual.....	45
Picture 5: The piercer is piecing to the spirit medium.....	47
Picture 6: A tool for piecing the spirit mediums cheek before put the object.....	48
Picture 7: The family god altar.....	49
Picture 8: The spirit medium is blessing to the family god.....	50
Picture 9: The spirit medium is showing body harming to revere the family god.....	50
Picture 10: The street processions.....	51
Picture 11: The Bladed-ladder at Bang Niao Shrine.....	53
Picture 12: The spirit medium is touching the yellow incantation with his blood.....	53
Picture 13: The spirit medium is cutting tongue slightly for getting blood to touch with the eyes and forehead of new images of gods.....	54
Picture 14: The spirit mediums are running on the hot coals.....	55
Picture 15: Paper cut for bridge crossing.....	56
Picture 16: The public has queue for crossing the bridge in order to good luck in the future.....	57
Picture 17: After crossed the bridge, the devotees will be stamped on the cloth.....	57
Picture 18: Street altar, on the way to Saphan Hin, Phuket town.....	58
Picture 19: Huat Kua is reading Taoist prayer to send Kiu Ong back to the heaven...59	59
Picture 20: Gold paper heap, it will burn after brought the incense urn of Kiu Ong and Yok Ong to the sea.....	60
Picture 21: Spirit medium is exit of trance after farewell.....	60
Picture 22: The spirit medium and <i>Phi liang</i> . Look at apron of god statue and spirit medium are the same.....	63
Picture 23: The spirit medium with skewers.....	64

## LIST OF TABLES

Page

Table 1: Guest Arrivals at Accommodation Establishments in Phuket 2004.....75

Table 2: Guest Arrivals at Accommodation Establishments in Phuket 2005.....75



สถาบันวิทยบริการ  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Historical evidence which establishes the emergence of the Chinese in Siam during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries it was a beginning of Chinese immigrant in Thailand. Later, several factors helped Chinese to expand their roles in the early Rattanakosin era: the expansion of Southeast Asian maritime trade, the greater significance of Penang and Singapore as main ports of the region, the discovery of lodes and the continuous flow of Chinese laborers, as well as a close relationship between the founder of the Chakri Dynasty and Fujian merchants in South and the Malay Peninsula.

In the nineteenth century, the Chinese immigrant influx were tin mine operators. Chinese immigrant laborers continually came to Phuket. According to the outstanding of Chinese characteristic that they also brought their customs with them, namely, a famous Chinese immigrant custom in Phuket is the vegetarian ritual The custom has long practice more than a hundred years in Phuket but it was a wonder because the ritual has grown from Chinese immigrant workers in tin mines to nation recognition and attract the international tourist draw to Phuket. It is a foreign ritual has grown in foreign land.

### 1. Objectives

- 1.1 To trace the origin of the vegetarian ritual in Phuket.
- 1.2 To explain why the Vegetarian Festival has spread to non-Chinese Thais, and grown from a local to a national practice. Further, this thesis will explain

the attraction of the vegetarian festival to international tourists, many of whom actively participate in the festival activities.

## **2. Major arguments**

The ritual of eating only vegetables for a set number of days has been observed and practiced in Phuket by a large number of Chinese immigrants who settled there in order to work in tin mines. Historically, the vegetarian ritual was practiced in the Chinese immigrants' homeland. The custom was imported with them when they moved to Phuket. Later the ritual was not limited to Chinese immigrants only, but also shared among Phuket natives and then naturally to other areas of Thailand.

The changing status of Phuket as a destination for overseas tourists resulted in the growth and development of the ritual at the international level. Public consciousness regarding the cultural significance of ancient practices in contemporary settings is also relevant. In particular, the importing of the traditionally Chinese ritual is highly relevant to the increasing number of tourists from China as well as to people interested in China in general. Therefore, it would be logical for the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) to provide marketing and logistical support for the festival.

## **3. Significance and usefulness of research**

3.1 The study will serve as a reference for students and researchers of homegrown rituals, in particular, the Phuket Vegetarian Festival.

3.2 It will offer a model for the origin and progression of ritualistic practices.

3.3 It will provide an example for tourism providers on how to successfully integrate a traditional cultural event into a tourist attraction.

#### **4. Research methodology**

This research will conduct a qualitative research. A literature review is employed as the research method in this thesis.

##### **Documentary Research**

This study is an attempt to analytically search for information history of Chinese immigrants influx to Thailand so as to link with a presently of the Phuket vegetarian festival.

At the start, a brief of history of the route of Chinese immigration into Thailand is reviewed. This review will describe the various reasons for emigration out of China as well as also explaining the outstanding characteristics of the Chinese people. These immigrants to Thailand brought the vegetarian ritual historically practiced among Chinese immigrants, and then ultimately extended to be a local festival of Phuket for both Chinese and non-Chinese Thais as the Chinese assimilated into Phuket and Phuket natives also began to participate in the ritual.

Then, the study will provide an examination of the remarkable process of the nine days and nights of the Phuket Vegetarian Festival. Practices from Chinese religion and beliefs which were customarily practiced in the Chinese immigrants' homeland before they moved to Phuket are reviewed. Moreover, it will explain the significance of vegetarian food or '*Che*' food, which contemporaneously harmonizes with the trend to eat good and healthy food in Thailand. This is a trend that lead to non-Chinese Thai recognition that eating vegetarian food is good for health, therefore, they take part of the Vegetarian festival practice such as eating vegetarian, wearing

white during the festival, abstaining of alcohol and sex that attributed the Vegetarian festival has expanded recognize from local practice to be a national practice.

The study will review the changing status of Phuket from a prosperous tin mining province to the development of Phuket as tourism destination for both domestic and international clients. One result of the changing status of Phuket is the growth of the Chinese vegetarian ritual at an international level.

Finally, the study will conclude with a complete overview of all the origin and development of the Phuket vegetarian ritual in order to support and persuade thesis argument.

### **Fieldwork research**

The researcher will use the way of participant observation in the Phuket vegetarian festival during 22 – 30 October 2006. Moreover, the research will inquire, talk and interview to the key informants who related and played important duty to the festival. The information from field research will apply on the Chapter III, the Phuket vegetarian ritual.

### **The research site**

The research site will be conducted in Phuket, Thailand. The researcher will observe the area of Phuket town and 4 Chinese Shrine in Phuket. There are Kathu Shrine in Kathu, Jui Tui Shrine in Phuket town, Sam Kong Shrine in Phuket town and Bang Niao Shrine in Phuket town.

## CHAPTER II

### THE CHINESE IMMIGRANT PERIOD

This Chapter will describe the history of Chinese immigrant influx to Thailand briefly and give a short explanation of the reasons that persuaded the Chinese to come to Thailand. After that it will analyze the Chinese characteristics that brought about the outstanding Chinese traditions and customs. Finally, this chapter will study the case of Phuket culture that relates to how changes in the Chinese Vegetarian Festival begat the Phuket Vegetarian Festival instead.

#### 1. A Brief History of Chinese immigration influx to Thailand.

Thailand and China have had a continuous relationship for a long long time. Evidence exists in Khmer art to be found in the Bayon, the temple at the center Jayavarman VII's city, Angkor Thom, which was completed not later than the first decade of the thirteenth century. One of the tableaux of the outer gallery of that temple depicts in minute detail a Chinese junk, manned by an obviously non-Khmer crew. The junk resembles in almost every structural particular detail the type built by the Chinese in Siam and used by them for trade within the Gulf of Siam in recent centuries. This discovery lends strong support to the belief of several scholars that Chinese traders were already established in the markets and ports of the Gulf of Siam when the Thai reached the Chaophraya Delta and the Malay Peninsula in the thirteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> George William Skinner, Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History. (New York: Cornell University Press, 1957), p. 1.

Furthermore, old Thai records noted that the Malay Peninsula was the first part of Siam to which Chinese and other foreign traders were attracted. Every year a fleet of junks from China called at the various ports and settlements on the east side of the peninsula. There is some evidence that in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries Chinese traders with goods destined for India and further west may have gone, with the northeast monsoon, only as far as Chumphon, Suratthani (Baandon), or Nakhonsithammarat, where their cargoes were unloaded for transshipment overland in time for the traders to return to China with the opening southwest monsoon.<sup>2</sup> The commodities exported were Chinese silks, lace, and Chinese pottery, and imported back to China were copper, ivory, horns and/or forest goods.<sup>3</sup>

This evidence describes what were informal relationships as foreign traders. The formal relationship between China and Thai occurred obviously during the Sukhothai period in the mid-thirteenth century. The Mongol court sought in the latter part of that century to enroll the kingdom, called Hsien (Sukhothai kingdom). Therefore, Chinese emissaries were sent in 1282, 1293, and 1294, in the last case bearing a summons to the Sukhothai king, Ramkamhaeng, to go to the imperial court. Ramkamhaeng finally sent tributary missions to Peking in 1296, 1297, and 1299. China and Thai trade still continued their commerce and Chinese traders still increased in number. The collapse of Mongol power in China, however, brought about internal disorder concerning foreign commerce for several decades after 1368, and there is no evidence that Chinese trade with Siam flourished to any degree during the first few decades of the Ming dynasty. It is at just this period, however, that regular tributary missions began from Ayutthaya to the Ming capital.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 1-2.

<sup>3</sup> Pholkul Ungkinun, The Chinese Role in Thailand During the Reign of King Rama V. (Bangkok: Srinakarinwiroj University Press, 1972), p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Skinner, Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History, p. 2.



Further, evidence from the Ayutthaya period, especially of King Prasat Thong and King Narai, that the two of them hired some Chinese because they perceived that Chinese as the best factors, traders and sailors. Moreover, some Chinese were appointed to high positions and offices. Mandelslo, writing of 1639, stated specifically that the king's factor, warehousemen, and accountants abroad were Chinese. Also, van Vliet summed up the situation in 1638 stating that "In the kingdom of Siam many Chinese are still living who enjoy reasonable freedom in trade throughout the whole country."<sup>5</sup> In summary, the Chinese had been visiting and dwelling in Siam (Thailand) for centuries, but their immigration in large numbers is a matter of only the last century. In the time of King Narai there were only about 3,000 Chinese permanently settled in the country.<sup>6</sup> And the Chinese in Thailand increased to about 6,000 in late Ayutthaya period.<sup>7</sup>

In the Thonburi period in the reign of King Taksin, because King Taksin is half Chinese and half Thai (his father is Chinese and his mother is Thai) the immigration pattern of the Chinese changed. A result of his nationality led to increasing Chinese settlement in Thailand and to increasing trust by the Thai government. It was equally natural that Taksin should have especially favored Chinese of his own speech group, the Teochiew. During his reign they were known as chin-luang, "royal Chinese." Taksin's policies doubtless attracted many Teochiew to Siam.<sup>8</sup> This period has reminded that it was a first period for influx of Chinese immigrants to Thailand.

---

<sup>5</sup> Skinner, Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History, p. 10.

<sup>6</sup> Victor Purcell, The Chinese in Southeast Asia (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 83.

<sup>7</sup> Vallapha Burutphat, "Khan Pen Ma Khong Chao Chin Nai Prathetthai (Course of Chinese in Thailand)," in Chao Chin Nai Prathetthai (Chinese in Thailand), ed. Kajadphai Burutphat (Bangkok: Phrae Pittaya International, 1974), p. 23.

<sup>8</sup> Skinner, Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History, p. 21.

Although the evidence above indicated the Chinese were in Thailand in many occupations such as merchants, handicrafts, craftsman, accountants, government officers, warehousemen, there is no mention of any manual laborers in Thai society until the Rattanakosin period during reign of King Rama IV.

During the Rattanakosin period, Chinese immigrants increased in numbers in Thailand because of the revolutionary changes in Thai society and economy during the reigns of King Rama IV and V. This period saw open free trade through the Bowring Treaty in 1855 with Great Britain. The treaty provided for extraterritorial consular jurisdiction for British subjects and it included commercial regulations which were to transform Siamese trade. Some of these were to affect the Chinese merchants and revenue farmers directly.<sup>9</sup> Due to the Bowring Treaty, a tremendous expansion in rice cultivation occurred during the following half century absorbing almost entirely the increase in the Thai population as well as the Thai labor and energy freed by the abolition of the old semi feudal system. Therefore, there was a great demand for manual workers.

The Thai, then, not only had no inclination to see a life divorced from villages and rice cultivation; the wealth of unused land which was theirs for the clearing coupled with the world demand for rice meant that they also had no necessity to consider any shift from the traditional livelihood. Meanwhile, the government came to rely on Chinese labor for the public works. The result of the treaty was the social reform and economic expansion during the reigns of King Rama IV and V in rice cultivation and subsistence farming and the strengthening of the Chinese hold on commerce, industry, mining, and wage labor.<sup>10</sup> The Chinese played a major role in the construction of the main lines of The Thai railway system also. This was the second period for influx of Chinese immigrants

---

<sup>9</sup> Purcell, The Chinese in Southeast Asia, p. 102.

<sup>10</sup> Skinner, Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History, p. 98.

The growth over the years of the Chinese population of Thailand was difficult to estimate because much of it way very unstable. Large numbers came to Thailand every year, but many also left Thailand every year to return to their home villages in China. And the last time of Chinese immigrants' boom period to Thailand was the reign of Rama VII; it was a time after the First World War particularly in 1918-1930.<sup>11</sup>

To conclude, since early centuries of Thailand until the first half of the nineteenth century, the most excellent occupation of Chinese immigrants was merchant entrepreneur. Most of the tonnage was carried in Chinese junks, many of which were built by Chinese in Siam. The Chinese also closely co-operated with Thai state trading. They commanded, navigated, and manned most of the king's ship and served as royal factors and warehouseman particularly during King Rama III reign, certain of the royal trading monopolies were farmed out to Chinese merchants.<sup>12</sup>

However, the expansion of the Thai economy after 1855 greatly increased the demand for manual workers and eventually led to the recruitment of Chinese peasants for "coolie" labor in Siam and to the mass migration which began in the 1880's. Even before these developments, there was a steady need for manual labor in mining and agriculture, and Chinese immigrants supplied the bulk of recruits.<sup>13</sup> Then, after the First World War was the period of Chinese immigrant increase rapidly. After 1931 Chinese immigrant still arrival to Thailand gradually but it was not influx period.

---

<sup>11</sup> Suchada Tantasurareuk, Phoi Kuan : Kan Song Ngoen Klap Prathet Doi Chao Chin Phon Thale Nai Prathetthai (Financial by The Oversea Chinese in Thailand).(Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University press, 1989) p. 3.

<sup>12</sup> Skinner, Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History, p. 99.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 109.

## 2. Causes of Chinese immigrant emigrate to Thailand.

There were various reasons for the Chinese to immigrate to Thailand; but two words, push and pull, explain most. Push factor means the problems among the emigrant country: China. The pull factor in Thailand was the need for labor and the attractive chance for the Chinese immigrants to work for eventual wealth.

2.1 Push factor or internal reasons in China. Firstly, in 17<sup>th</sup> century south China recurred several natural disasters like floods and droughts which could only result in famine and death. These caused a strong impetus to emigrate.<sup>14</sup> By the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries political disorder and over crowding in the villages of south China were driving adventurous men, without past experience of the sea, out of their homes.

Politically there was constant trouble in the south. Bandits and pirates flourished, and villages, at any rate in the more recent decades, suffered at least equally from the looting of legitimate, but unpaid, armies. The last resistance to the 17<sup>th</sup> century conquest of China by the Manchus was in the south, and the adherents of the fallen Ming dynasty had either to emigrate or join the local bandits.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was the south that suffered particularly from the Opium War and the other western attempts to open up China, and especially the geographically convenient south Chinese ports, to foreign trade. Because of local distress, the south provide many recruits to the 19<sup>th</sup> century Taiping rebellion, with its background of peasant grievances and half-understood Christianity; and the families of the rebels, faced with savage imperial reprisals, escaped when they could, either to the emigrant ships or into banditry.

---

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 30.

In the early part of this century the south, particularly Dr. Sun Yat-sen's own city of Canton, had become the centre of early nationalist risings and plots. Even after the First World War southern Chinese, still driven by the famine, banditry and civil wars the Nationalist governments had been unable to suppress, continued to emigrate when they could. Emigration stopped only after the communists had firmly established their new government in the south in the early 1950s.

Moreover, by the 19<sup>th</sup> century southern villagers increasingly expected that able young men should add to family and village fortunes by at least a period overseas. In the 1920s an American researcher found that Teochiew villagers called the young immigrants 'galloping guest' while stay-at-homes were known insultingly as 'rice pot-keeping turtles'. Successful emigrants sent money home both to support their own family and for village good works like schools and new roads. Sometimes money was sent to be distributed to all villagers as a holiday gift; or sometimes as a gift to those villagers who, even if they were not relations, had the same surname as the emigrant's family.<sup>15</sup> These are internal causes in the emigrant country.

2.2 Pull factor or external factor are the factors that persuaded the Chinese to move to Thailand. The first Chinese to settle in Thailand and other countries in Southeast Asia were often ships' crews who stayed, with or without imperial permission, to rebuild their junks in cheap, local wood, or to take advantage of particularly favorable trading conditions and local demands for Chinese skills.<sup>16</sup>

In addition, in Thailand, economically side, the period from 1855 through the First World War, was one not only of peace but of unparalleled economic activity and development. The era of free trade ushered in by the Bowring treaty offered Chinese as well as Europeans new opportunities. While perhaps the most basic aspect of the

---

<sup>15</sup> Lois Mitchison, *The Overseas Chinese*. (London: The Bodley Head, 1961), pp. 15-17.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

country's economic development during the period - the tremendous expansion of paddy cultivation - was undertaken by the Thai people, they were reluctant to provide most of the other labor and services also essential to the economic progress of the period. Thus, labor was in great demand for the prospering tin mines of Southern Thailand, for expanding steam rice mills and power sawmills, for the lighters and docks in the booming port of Bangkok, and for the construction of canals and railroads; wages became higher in Bangkok than in any other part of the Far East.

The growth of the country led to increasing of demand for the services which Chinese could best provide such as for the production of pork and vegetables, the provision of artisan and personal services, and the performance of retailing and middlemen's functions. The development of trade opened new opportunities in shipping and wholesaling and created a growing demand for Chinese tradesmen, compradors, and clerks. During the period 1850-1917, Thailand entered the stream of modern world trade; in fact Thailand entered the modern world. Indeed, the development of the economy of Thailand attracted a large number of Chinese immigrants from south China.

Another reason was that between 1865 and 1866 steamships gradually took over the bulk of passenger traffic between south China and Thailand. The development of steamship was increased safety and reduced fares.<sup>17</sup> This is a reason which persuaded Chinese immigrants to come to Thailand easily.

### **3. Chinese immigrant society in Thailand and their characteristic**

3.1 Chinese speech group in Thailand. Nearly all Chinese immigrants who settled in Thailand had come from a quite small area of south China: the four provinces of Guangdong, Guangxi, Fujian and Hainan Island. According to the

---

<sup>17</sup> Skinner, Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History, p. 32.

southeast coastal totality of Chinese immigrants, this area is occupied by five main speech groups which account for the main divisions in Oversea Chinese communities in China and abroad: Teochiew, Hakkas, Cantonese, Hainanese, and Hokkien.<sup>18</sup> The Chinese immigrant people are physically alike, but they speak different dialects, according to which province and which towns and villages they come from; and to some extent each dialect group had tended to emigrate to its own particular country, and to specialize in particular jobs.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, Chinese immigrants in Thailand can be divided into 5 dialects with different careers.

3.1.1. Teochiew. This speech group in China is centered in the cities of Swatow and Chaozhou (hence the name given to this group), and the surrounding rural areas of the Han River delta in northeastern Guangdong Province. In Southeast Asia they are sometimes referred to as the 'Swatow people'. Teochiew compose the majority of the large wholesalers in the commercial field; middle to small businesses, industry, banking, etc. This speech group is the majority group in Thailand and is mostly located in Central Thailand.<sup>20</sup>

3.1.2. Hakka. Unlike Teochiew this speech group in China is concentrated in no urban centre of its own. Hakka-speaking people occupy a band of country stretching east and west from Fujian to Guangxi and compressed between the two parallel mountain ranges running to the north of Guangdong Province. However, Hakka farming villages are scattered through South China, around the British Crown Colony of Hong Kong and on Hainan Island. Most of careers for Hakka are craftsman, i.e, dressmaker, leather maker, and goldsmith.

---

<sup>18</sup> Jacques Amyot, The Chinese and the National Integration in Southeast Asia. (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Institute of Asian Studies, 1972) p. 76.

<sup>19</sup> Mitchison, The Overseas Chinese, p. 13.

<sup>20</sup> Suchada Tantasurareuk, Phoi Kuan : Kan Song Ngoen Klap Prathet Doi Chao Chin Phon Thale Nai Prathetthai (Financial by The Oversea Chinese in Thailand), p. 3.

3.1.3. Hainanese (or Hailam). This group forms the major population (but not the aboriginal inhabitants) of Hainan Island, which is part of Guangdong Province. The Hainanese in Southeast Asia appears to have originated in two rural districts in the northeast part of the Island. This group's occupations are chiefly engaged in domestic service and form the staff of many European households, clubs and Chinese restaurants.

3.1.4. Cantonese. The most numerous language group in South China (estimated at more than 30 million), is the Cantonese; it forms the major population of Guangdong and parts of southern Guangxi province. The city of Canton is the center of settlement. Most of jobs for Cantonese are pressman, ironsmith, engine mechanics, carpenters, and doctor or dentist.<sup>21</sup>

3.1.5. Hokkien (or Fujianese). The Hokkien speech group in China occupies the southern section of Fujian Province with the city of Amoy<sup>\*</sup> as its center. Spoken Hokkien is similar to Teochiew (Swatow) but it differs so considerably from the speech of other Fujianese that it can be regarded as a distinct language. They work for tin mines, rubber plantation, and as merchants, etc. Especially during the decades prior to 1890, immigration to South Siam was high. Hokkien were the dominant speech group among the immigrants to the Straits Settlements, and this was reflected in the immigrant population of Phuket, Trang, Ranong and other centers in the Siamese part of the peninsula.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup> Coughlin, Double Identity: The Chinese in Modern Thailand, p. 7.

<sup>\*</sup> It is Xiamen in presently, refers to “Kan Chai Sap Pha Sa Chin (Chinese Vocabulary Handbook), Chinese Studies Center, Asian Institute, Chulalongkorn University. Bangkok, Thailand, 2005.

<sup>22</sup> Skinner, Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History, p. 51.



3.2 Chinese outstanding characteristics. The Chinese immigrant forms the great majority foreign ethnic group in Thailand. The overseas Chinese definition is a person of some Chinese ancestry who views residence abroad as compatible with Chinese cultural identity and less certainly with some remote Chinese political orientation.<sup>23</sup> This group not only emigrated to work and settle down out of their country but also brought culture, custom and tradition with them.

As you to know, typically, the Chinese has often a sense of his own cultural superiority over the alien people among whom he lives. Many of the traditional values regarding the family particularly which are associated with classical China by Western scholars are exemplified by the Chinese. Yet other values are conspicuously absent. The typical Chinese immigrant is more likely than not to be illiterate, uncouth in his manners even by traditional Chinese standards, ignorant about Chinese history, geography, literature, philosophy and the arts; a simple spirit worshipper in his religious beliefs; unappreciative of scholarship, and interested chiefly in getting rich. Undoubtedly, much of the unfavorable reaction to his minority stems from the fact that many immigrants are coarse and rough, often lacking in personal cleanliness, and are, unsanitary about their living conditions.<sup>24</sup>

For a Chinese of any education the idea of stopping being Chinese, or of his descendants doing so, is rather worse than for a Frenchman to stop being French, much worse than for a Britain, with centuries of emigration behind him, to stop being British. The Chinese is conscious that he is the heir of thousands of years of history, tradition and social refinement. He knows that when the west was lived in by a handful of caveman China was an ordered empire. Like the Frenchman he believes not only in the past superiority of his country but also in its present superiority.

---

<sup>23</sup> Lea E. Williams, The Future of the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia. (United States of America: McGraw-Hill, 1996), p. 6.

<sup>24</sup> Coughlin, Double Identity: The Chinese in Modern Thailand, p. 10.

For many Chinese China is still ‘the middle kingdom’, the center of the world, with outside it only the barbarians: Chinese food is best, Chinese looks are best, Chinese social customs are best. Added to all this for a traditional Chinese family, an on his male descendants regularly worshipping his tables in the family’s ancestral hall.<sup>25</sup>

Moreover, the Chinese were characterized as displaying extreme industriousness, willingness to labor long and hard, steadiness of purpose, ambition, desire for wealth and economic advancement, innovativeness, venturesomeness, and independence. One primary importance perhaps is the fact that south Chinese peasant lived in a grimly Malthusian setting where thrift and industry were essential for survival. Characteristics that may have arisen from necessity through the centuries came, in time, to be cultural imperatives.

But this is only part of the picture, for the industriousness and thrift of the Chinese peasant served cultural goals absent in Thai rural culture. The Chinese peasant had a definite place in a temporal continuum of kin. Within the extended kin groups—dead, living, and yet to be born—he looked to the past as well as to the future: he was not only grateful and respectful to his ancestors for what his immediate family had, but was responsible to them for what he did to further the fortune of his family and lineage. His world view was, thus, historical and kin centered, and in his context his industriousness and thrift served ends transcending his individual life. His primary goal was not individual salvation, but lineage survival and advancement. Protracted labor and extreme thrift were the means to these strongly sanctioned ends.<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> Mitchison, The Overseas Chinese, trans. Kamol Juntrarasorn (Bangkok: Odean Stores, 1966), pp. 86-87.

<sup>26</sup> Skinner, Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History, p. 92.

Certainly the outstanding characteristic of Chinese immigrants were attribute to such personal qualities as perseverance, capacity for hard work, and business acumen which is the most important for the tight social and economic organization development. Whenever they moved to anywhere, Chinese will bring their habits with them. On the other hand, Chinese persist of certain Chinese social customs among the immigrants as signs of their political and economic loyalty to China. Local Chinese communities certainly organize themselves in to Chinese societies. It is partly loyalty to the memory of ‘the old country’: a memory that is based on social conditions when the immigrant as a very young man left his Chinese home; and partly insulation from political and other changes affecting social and religious life in China.<sup>27</sup> According to Chinese characteristic and tradition among their community, they have carried on association of the oversea Chinese. Analytically, all the Chinese associations separated into 3 major aspects; social and cultural, economic, and political.

3.2.1 Social and cultural. They are able to divide into 4 associations, namely, surname associations, regional and dialect associations, religion and belief associations, and sport associations and social clubs.<sup>28</sup>

3.2.1.1 Surname associations are formed by persons bearing the same family name, a kind of quasi-kinship organization. This kind of association leads to performances of the Chinese tradition because of their attitude and belief respects and worship to the ancestors.

Therefore, these surnames association often maintain a large common burial site or memorial at a Chinese cemetery for burial of members too poor to afford an

---

<sup>27</sup> Mitchison, The Overseas Chinese, p. 31.

<sup>28</sup> Sawang Rattanamongkolmart, “Anakhot Khong Samakhom Chin Nai Prathetthai (The Future of Chinese Associations in Thailand).” in Chao Chin Nai Prathetthai (Chinese in Thailand), ed. Kajadphai Burutphat (Bangkok:Phrae Pittaya International, 1974), p. 236.

individual grave, and where memorial services are held on certain Chinese festival days, known as Ch'ing-ming.\* The association also extends help to any indigent persons of the same surname and dialect group, even though they may not actually belong to the association.

3.2.1.2 A second type is regional or dialect associations. The major dialect groups—the Teochiew, Hakka, Cantonese, Hainanese and Hokkien (Fujianese) have formed an association for persons speaking that dialect as a native language. These are among the most influential organizations in the Chinese community because of the large membership lists—several thousand in the case of some—and the even greater numbers who, although not formal members, can be counted on to support their own dialect associations. These groups have a great variety of activities. Most maintain cemeteries—these are probably the oldest establishments of the Chinese in Thailand.

Yet these activities by themselves can scarcely account for the strength of the dialect associations among the Chinese and their persistence as active organizations in some instances for more than half century. The place of the dialect association can be better evaluated if it is seen, first, as a typical immigrant institution providing general social welfare services to ease the shock of the immigrant's initial adjustment; and, secondly, as a local variation of protective and mutual-aid institutions found in China.

---

\* The spring festival of Ch'ing Ming is generally observed on April. Chinese all over Thailand go to the cemeteries on this day. Many of them start cleaning up the graves of relatives and ancestors several days in advance. Offerings of rice, certain prepared foods, fruit, joss and incense are placed on the graves on the chief day of the festival. The occasion is also one for visiting and picnicking. (Kenneth Perry Landon 1973: 103)

Fortunately, everyone with the same surname and family origin was considered a member of the clan in China and therefore entitled to assistance from other members; so in Thailand all persons of a certain dialect group are considered to be a member of the dialect association and thereby entitled to its full assistance.<sup>29</sup>

To conclude, there are two reasons for establishing dialect and regional associations. First the dialect association was created in order to give information, namely, communication among the Chinese community to help each other in more understanding at the right point. Second, for regional association, they formed associations so as to love their old place and their country.

3.2.1.3 Association of religion and belief. Mostly Chinese religions and beliefs is Mahayana Buddhism go along with Taoism and Confucianism beliefs that persuade Chinese to set up association in order to protect their ceremony and customs. For instance, establishing associations to built Chinese temples and perform and organize when ritual occurrences.

3.2.2 Economic. Occupational and business associations covering practically every type of economic activity in which Chinese are engaged were formed. The occupational and business associations of the Chinese community make a fundamental separation between capital and labor. Labor has their own association such as the Central Labor Unions which was formed in the early postwar period.

Furthermore, the capital side saw such associations as the Chinese Rice Merchants Associations, the Chinese Press Guild, and the Vegetable Merchants Association, etc. These trade guilds are principally business groupings, and their

---

<sup>29</sup> Coughlin, Double Identity: The Chinese in Modern Thailand, pp. 40-45.

activities ordinarily are confined to the commercial field. Their importance lies in the assistance they render in the economic adjustment of the Chinese immigrants and in the continuing services of an economic nature they perform for members—circulating trade information, advising on economic trends and policies, hindering the development of unwanted competition. They also serve as a buffer between the lone merchant and the Thai government.<sup>30</sup>

3.2.3 Political. Obviously, for political purposes the Chinese formed secret societies although the associations are unclear or blurry in the way of organizing. Chinese immigrants firstly organized secret society related to politics in China, following the slogan ‘overthrow the Qing, restore the Ming’. A less acceptable importation from China has been the secret societies that now terrorize many overseas Chinese communities. Then, secret societies are set for security protection and economic advantage for members by extralegal if not illegal means.<sup>31</sup>

Furthermore, Chinese secret societies also related indirect outcome traditions, for example, the vegetarian festival. As a result, Chinese secret societies received Mahayana Buddhism and Taoism influences.<sup>32</sup> Therefore, the Chinese immigrant is convinced to join in Chinese secret societies by passing through the Chinese vegetarian ritual. They used spirit mediums to perform supernatural feats that make people believe and have faith in the ritual. This strategy was used most extensively in Phuket, Pattani, Takua-Pa, and Hadyai. Especially at Kathu district in Phuket, it is

---

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., pp. 48-49.

<sup>31</sup> Mitchison, *The Overseas Chinese*, p. 34.

<sup>32</sup> Suparat Lertpanichkul, “Triad societies in Thailand 1824-1910,” (Master’s thesis, Graduate School, Chulalongkorn University, 1981), p. 69.

called the “*Tong Yong Su*”<sup>\*</sup> Shrine: the shrine built in order to respect Triad society ancestors.<sup>33</sup>

Each of these associations is a distinct unit, each one pursues its own goals, but taken in their totality these associations direct the life of the community. The association control business competition, regulate prices, mediate disputes, provide a system of social security, and act as intermediaries between the individual and the Thai government. They provide the Chinese population with schools, community centers, hospitals, clinics, temples, cemeteries and recreational facilities.

All of Chinese associations are separated in 4 major focuses according to the objective of each association. The Chinese associations indicate that every type of association there is have the same purpose; it is to say that they form associations in order to help and keep benefits for Chinese in Thai society but different only in associate qualification. The setting of Chinese associations divided into Chinese characteristics due to Chinese behavior that was brought with them to Thai society.

3.3 Intermarriage. Almost without exception Chinese male immigrants prefer to marry Chinese females when it is at all possible. More, a Cantonese prefers to marry a Cantonese, and a Hainanese (Hailam). The second choice is a Chinese girl whose family originated in another province from that of the man. Most immigrants, however, must marry Thai or Sino-Thai women both because of the shortage of Chinese girls and because of the lesser expense involved.

---

\* See Appendics 1, p. 89.

<sup>33</sup> Sutivong Phongphaiboon, Dilok Wutthipanich and Prasit Chinnakarn, Southern Chinese: Ways and Dynamics, (Bangkok: The Thailand Research Fund, 1997), p.45.

As a result, the Chinese rapidly become citizens of a more heterogeneous social group.<sup>34</sup> Whenever, Chinese men and women married with Thai people, their social life and culture still are Chinese. King Rama VI has written a book named “The Jews of The East”, this book gives ideas that Chinese is “The Yellow Peril”.

The observing reader has probably already traced likenesses as he has compared those traits of the Jews which he has discussed with the characteristic of the Chinese. As for the argument that Chinese intermarry with the people of other races, in this they are also like the Jews. To be specific, when a Chinese man marries a Thai woman, that woman becomes a Chinese and adopts Chinese customs in every detail. Their children become Chinese also.

But, if a Thai man marries a Chinese woman, the woman continues to be Chinese, while the man finds himself adopting Chinese ways and performing such acts as fit into the accepted Chinese pattern of life. As for the children, even though they are Thai in name they are psychologically Chinese. There are exceptions, of course, but they are few.<sup>35</sup> While whole large families do not migrate from China, a traditional large family is sometimes set up in Thailand whenever there is enough money and business opportunity to make it possible. No doubt this is why Thai half Chinese are still Chinese even when they live in Thailand

#### **4. Chinese immigrants in Phuket.**

Chinese immigrants in Phuket estimated to have settled down before eighteenth century. According to report of Captain Hamilton visited Phuket early in the eighteenth century. He said that the governors of the island were “generally

---

<sup>34</sup> Kenneth Perry Landon, The Chinese in Thailand. (USA: Russell & Russell, 1973), p. 55.

<sup>35</sup> Purcell, The Chinese in Southeast Asia, p. 120.



Chinese who buy their places at the court of Siam and, to reimburse themselves, oppress the people...” The situation had greatly improved by 1779, when another visitor, Dr. Koenig, found numerous Chinese tin miners, who, incidentally, did their own smelting, as well as Chinese merchants residing in the thriving port of Tharuea.<sup>36</sup>

Particularly, the period from 1855 through the First World War, according to G. Williams Skinner attitude, he said that this country was one not only of peace but of unparalleled economic activity and development. The era of free trade ushered in by the Bowring treaty offered Chinese as well as Europeans new opportunities. While perhaps the most basic aspect of the country’s economic development during this period--the tremendous expansion of paddy cultivation—was undertaken by the Thai people, they were reluctant to provide most of the other labor and services also essential to the economic progress of the period. Thus, labor was in great demand for the prospering tin mines of South Siam, for the expanding steam rice mills and power sawmills, and for the construction of canals and railroad.<sup>37</sup>

Their migration to Southern Thailand, however, continued at a moderate level on into the twentieth century. Prior the establishment of good overland communication between Bangkok and South Siam, Chinese immigrants to the lower peninsula came either directly to such southern ports as Songkla or indirectly via Singapore and Penang.

The Chinese of southern Thailand are at the extreme end of a sea-borne migration stream into Southeast Asia from the maritime provinces of China, most especially Fujian Province. After arriving first in Singapore and Malaya, they moved gradually up the Malay Peninsula into the southern provinces of Thailand, where tin

---

<sup>36</sup> Skinner, *Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History*, p. 19.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 31-32.

mining became one of their principal occupations especially on the west coast of Thailand starting from Satun, to Krabi, Pang-nga, Phuket, and Ranong. This is why their family, traditions and customs have related and changed according to Hokkien in Singapore and Malaya where they are the oversea Chinese center of all over Hokkien in Southeast Asia.<sup>38</sup> Namely, there were 2 route of Chinese immigrant to reach Southern Thailand. The first way was from Bangkok to Songkla port and the other way was from Penang or Malay and Singapore ports. Especially, between Penang and Phuket whence arrived thousands and thousands of Chinese laborers for the rubber plantations and the tin mines.

No doubt, Hokkiens were the dominant speech group among the Chinese immigrants to the Straits Settlements, and this was reflected in the immigrant population at Phuket, Trang, Ranong, and other southern towns which were until recently primarily Chinese communities; and even at present their Sino-Thai descendants still dominate the local economy and constitute the bulk of the business elite. Sino-Thai form another category of persons who may play a vital role in the breakdown of traditional standards. The offspring Chinese-Thai unions are only slightly distinguished from the general population, as are the comparable groups of *peranakan* Chinese in Indonesia, or the Anglo-Indians of India.<sup>39</sup>

Peranakan are local born Chinese descendants whose fathers or ancestors married to local women and settled in the Malay Peninsula which includes Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, particularly in the south. This community has adapted their cultures and lives in harmony with locals and call themselves 'Baba – Peranakan'. On the other hands, Sino-Thai was analogous with that which created the Baba Chinese of Malacca and Penang. This community was the product of the intermarriage of Chinese men with Malay and other Indonesian females, and in

---

<sup>38</sup> Phuwadol Songprasert, Akekaphap: Tham Klang Kham Taek Yaek Nai Pak Tai (Identity: Among Oversea Chinese in Southern Thailand). (Bangkok, Higher, 2005), p. 28.

<sup>39</sup> Coughlin, Double Identity: The Chinese in Modern Thailand, pp. 89-90.

Penang there was also an Indian element, and of the intermarriage of the offspring of the mixed blood.<sup>40</sup> Baba culture is obvious in the case of architecture and traditional clothing with belief and customs such as language, religions, ceremony, and tradition still being Chinese. However, the Chinese culture was the dominant and influential - more than the Thai or Malay culture.

One researcher who studies the southern Chinese in Thailand, Phuwadol Songprasert, said that the Chinese in southern Thailand remain and preserve 'Chineseness' more than Chinese of other parts in Thailand. Other Chinese in Thailand was assimilated with Thai culture. This argument towards Phuket culture is distinguished. It indicated that Chinese immigrant were a large number to work in tin mines. As a consequence that they also have brought their custom to the Phuket Island that is Chinese Vegetarian Festival.

In conclusion, the Chinese of Phuket – predominantly the members of the Hokkien sub-community – developed the tin mining industry on the island in the nineteenth century and established its urban economy. Over the generations they became isolated from their cultural sources and integrated into the island society. The great majority of the local Sino-Thai community, including the organizers and ritual leaders of the Vegetarian Festival, the third or fourth generation descendants of Chinese immigrants are unable to read, and mostly even to speak, Chinese. Even their knowledge of Hokkien custom, inclusive of those relating to the Vegetarian Festival, is often fairly limited.<sup>41</sup>

However, at the very period during which the Chinese in Phuket increasingly lost many of their distinguishing cultural marks and integrated into local society, the

---

<sup>40</sup> Purcell, The Chinese in Southeast Asia, p. 125.

<sup>41</sup> Erik Cohen, The Chinese Vegetarian Festival in Phuket: Religion, Ethnicity and Tourism on a Southern Thai Island. (Thailand, White Lotus, 2001), p.10.

Vegetarian Festival grew enormously in scope and popularity. Also, because of the Chinese characteristic of associating among Chinese society even if intermarried with locals, they still perform Chinese rituals and strongly preserve Hokkien culture even if it is as part of the island culture as a whole.

Therefore, it may be found that the character of Chinese led to cultural distinctiveness in Phuket, and an example, the festival would become ever less the ‘*Chinese Vegetarian Festival*’ in Phuket, being turned increasingly into ‘the *Phuket Vegetarian Festival*,’ celebrated by the island people as a whole. Indeed, the Phuket Vegetarian Festival has grown dramatically and evolved considerably from the original form practiced by local Chinese descendants.



สถาบันวิทยบริการ  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

## CHAPTER III

### THE PHUKET VEGETARIAN RITUAL

This chapter is started with religion and Chinese belief that has influence to the vegetarian ritual in Phuket. Then it will give information about the myth of vegetarian ritual, it is a crew of vegetarian ritual history. After that it will describe the Phuket vegetarian festival in nine days and nights that the data brought from the documents, observation and interview by the researcher who participated in the Phuket vegetarian festival in 2006. Moreover, this chapter explains the meaning of vegetarian food or Che food that related to the ritual. Finally, the healthy food trend has come to Thailand such a vegetarianism has influence to the Vegetarian festival. As a result of the trend has motivated non-Chinese Thais, particularly in Bangkok involve in meat abstinence and practice the general participants of the Vegetarian ritual- vegetarianism, wearing white. So as to the Vegetarian ritual has grown continuously to the national recognition and practice.

#### 1. Religion and Chinese belief

The root of Chinese religious beliefs comes from Taoism, Mahayana Buddhism, and Confucianism. These three become the beginning of the concept of God in Chinese beliefs and rituals. Chinese religion and beliefs are represented in both Chinese customs and symbols and some these are incorporated in the Vegetarian Festival.

1.1 Taoism. In the Chinese language the word Tao or Dao means "way," indicating a way of thought or life.<sup>1</sup> The philosopher **Lao Tzu** (or 'Old Sage' -- born

---

<sup>1</sup> Taoism: All in one and one in all?[Online]. (n.d.). Available from: <http://www.exposingsatanism.org/taoism.htm> [2007, February 14]

Li Erh) first wrote of the 'Tao' in the sixth century B.C. It is then that the philosophy of Taoism really began.<sup>2</sup>

Taoists believe that people are by nature good, and that one should be kind to others simply because such treatment will probably be reciprocated. Therefore, Taoism has a symbol in order to represent Taoist theology, which is **Yin Yang** figure. **Yin** (dark side or negative) and **Yang** (light side or positive) symbolize pairs of opposites which are seen through the universe, such as good and evil, light and dark, male and female. The impact of human civilization upsets the balance of Yin and Yang.<sup>3</sup> This symbol appears in every Chinese Shrine in Phuket. It refers to the Taoist origin of the Phuket vegetarian festival.

Examples of Taoist teachings are as follows:

*Humans model themselves on earth,  
Earth on heaven,  
Heaven on the Way,  
And the way on that which is naturally so.*

-- Laozi (Lao Tzu)

Daodejing (Tao te ching), #251<sup>4</sup>

Communal religious Taoism is quite distinct from its philosophical counterpart. It emphasizes moral teachings and collective ceremonies. Good moral conduct is rewarded with health and long life, while bad conduct results in disease,

---

<sup>2</sup> Taoism and the Philosophy of Tai Chi Chuan[Online]. (n.d.). Available from: <http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/Philosophy/Taichi/lao.html> [2007, February 14]

<sup>3</sup> Dominquez, J. 2006. Taoism[Online]. Available from: <http://www.religion-cults.com/Eastern/Taoism/taoism.htm#TAOISM>[2007, February 14]

<sup>4</sup> Berlin, J. A. 2005. Dao/Taoism[Online]. Available from: <http://askasia.org/teachers/essays/essays.php?no=40&era=&grade=&geo=> [2007, February 14]

death, and suffering in the afterlife. All types of Taoism have in common the quest for a harmonious, well-ordered universe. They emphasize the individual's and the group's need for unity through mysticism, magic, and ceremony.<sup>5</sup> This example of Taoism ritual is called dislodging ghost. Tao priests attend the ritual with five priests carrying five colors of flags that are green, red, yellow, white and black for each direction (north, south, east, west, and central). Besides, the priests bring Tao deity statue while sprinkling holy water, chanting, playing music, using whisk, sword and water in order to dislodge ghosts. This is one example of the Taoism worship practice.<sup>6</sup>

Presently, Taoism has spread to Southeast Asia where Chinese immigrants live such as in Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore. However, most of Taoists live in China. Until the arrival of Buddhism in China, Taoism was the chief religion and philosophical system of the population. Confucianism, the other major Chinese tradition, is more a philosophical system than a religion.<sup>7</sup>

1.2 Mahayana Buddhism. Buddhism appeared in China during the first century C.E., by which time it had already reached areas far beyond India. As the "Greater Vehicle", Mahayana is a path available to people from all walks of life - not just monks and ascetics. The most distinctive feature of Mahayana is the role played by "wisdom beings," or *bodhisattvas*. A *bodhisattva* is a particularly devout follower of Buddhism who conscientiously vows to aid all other beings in becoming enlightened. *Bodhisattvas* share their merit with all beings.

---

<sup>5</sup>Taoism: All in one and one in all?[Online]. (n.d.). Available from:  
<http://www.exposingsatanism.org/taoism.htm> [2007, February 14]

<sup>6</sup> Fuean Dokbua, Srtsanapiaptiap (Comparative World Religion), (Bangkok: Burapasarn, 1996) p. 114.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 117.

For followers of Mahayana, the *bodhisattva* becomes the spiritual ideal. To emphasize this high ideal, Mahayana encourages all Buddhists, male or female, monastic or lay, to take *bodhisattva* vows.

Far and away the most popular bodhisattva, however, is Avalokiteshvara (the Lord who Looks Down [from above]), perhaps the most venerated figure in all of Buddhism. His image is found in India and Southeast Asia, particularly Borobudur, Indonesia. Avolokiteshvara undergoes an intriguing shift in China, where he manifests in female form as the *bodhisattva* Guanyin. In the guise of Guanyin, this bodhisattva can be found throughout East Asia, and because of her great tenderness, she is a particular favorite among women seeking children or who have had children die in infancy.<sup>8</sup>

According to the above, Guanyin is one of the deities who appear in the vegetarian ritual. It is indicative of the Mahayana Buddhism influence in the vegetarian ritual. Moreover, Mahayana Buddhism integrates with the vegetarian ritual for namely Buddhist to vow to follow the Five Precepts (to abstain from intentionally harming life, to abstain from taking things not explicitly given, to abstain from illicit sexual activity, to abstain from harmful speech (lying, gossip, etc.), to abstain from indulging in intoxicants (liquor or other drugs) that Mahayana Buddhists may follow as an expanded version of the Five Precepts known as the Ten Good Actions. In addition to abstaining from harming, stealing, and illicit sexual activity (covered by three of the Five Precepts), the ten Good Actions include prohibitions on certain types of speech (lying, using harsh words, using words designed to cause enmity, engaging in idle talk) as well as prohibition on being greedy, becoming enraged, and holding

---

<sup>8</sup> John M. Thompson, Introduction to the World's Major Religions (London: Greenwood, 2006) p. 16.



“wrong views.”<sup>9</sup> The Ten Good Actions in Mahayana were applied to the Ten Rules for the Phuket Vegetarian Festival.

1.3 Confucianism. Confucianism is a philosophy of a way of life, although many people also consider it a religion. The tradition derives its name from Kung Fu Tzu, or Confucius (551-479 BCE), who is renowned as a philosopher and educator. He is less known for his roles as a researcher, statesman, social planner, social innovator, and advocate. Confucius was a generalist with a universal vision. The philosophical method he developed offers a means to transform individuals, families, communities, and nations into a harmonious international society. The overall goal of Confucianism is to educate people to be self-motivated, self-controlled and able to assume responsibilities; it has the dual aims of cultivating the individual self and contributing to the attainment of an ideal, harmonious society. Confucius based his method on the assumption that lawlessness and social problems result from the combination of unenlightened individuals and a social structure without norms.<sup>10</sup>

Confucianism is something of a derivative. As a matter of fact, Confucius insisted on close adherence to Tao. However, he was pragmatic and concerned with the existential problems of man, hence he deals less with generalities and more with the practical matters of daily and personal relationships. The essence of his system of relationships is fivefold and fundamental to his social order: ruler and subject; father and son; husband and wife; older brother and younger brother; older friend and younger friend. The ideal of conduct, ordering all human relationships and resulting in an ideal social structure and harmony is: li. A famous Confucian maxim is: "Never do to others, what you would not like them to do to you."

---

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 96.

<sup>10</sup> Chung, D.K. Confucianism [Online]. (n.d.). Available from: <http://www.thespiritualsanctuary.org/Confucianism/Confucianism.html>[2007, March 1]

His disciples later on developed ten attitudes that are to govern the five relationships: love in father and filial piety in the son; gentility in the oldest brother and humility and respect in the younger; righteous behavior in the husband and obedience in the wife; humane consideration in elders and deference in juniors; benevolence in rulers and loyalty in subjects.<sup>11</sup> His teaching is influenced to shape thought and behavior of the Chinese.

## 2. Myths of Vegetarian ritual

The origin of Vegetarian ritual is mentioned in the Chinese sources, many of it appears in form of myth or oral tradition more than historical documents. Mostly myths of the vegetarian ritual refer to the Nine Emperor Gods that appear to have been of little significance in mainland China; however, the Nine Emperor Gods do appear in mainland mythology.<sup>12</sup> But the Nine Emperor Gods do appear importance role in Phuket vegetarian ritual. There are several versions of myth in mainland China about the Nine Emperor Gods. Besides, some of myth mentions that the Vegetarian festival originated from mourning or dedicates one's acquired merits to the dead.

Firstly, the myth called the "Classic Version" said, "...the Nine Emperor Gods are reincarnates of the Nine Human Sovereigns [*Jiurenhuang*] believed to have lived in China many thousands of years ago." The Nine Human Sovereigns, in turn, "were identified as the sons of Doumu." Doumu herself "...is said to have gained enlightenment after many years of meditation and intensive study of the occult and, later, imparted this knowledge to her sons". According to this version, Doumu's mystical power moved the Primordial Heaven to place her and her husband, the King of Zhouyu, "...in control of the pivot of the north pole, around which the nine stars

---

<sup>11</sup> Cohen, F.G. [A Synopsis of the Ethics of Confucianism](http://www.thespiritualsanctuary.org/Confucianism.html) [Online]. (n.d.). Available from: <http://www.thespiritualsanctuary.org/Confucianism.html>[2007, March 1]

<sup>12</sup> Erik Cohen, [The Chinese Vegetarian Festival in Phuket: Religion, Ethnicity and Tourism on a Southern Thai Island](#) (Thailand: White Lotus Press, 2001), p. 25.

[the Big Dipper and the two invisible stars] revolved under the surveillance of their nine sons”. Though this version of the myth is theologically the most important one, linking as it does the Nine Emperor Gods’ myth to mainstream Chinese mythology, this myth does not appear to be commonly known on Phuket Island.

Another written version of the myth, originating at the end of the Han period, is said to be “...equally hazy among devotees... but contains several motifs that form the basic structure of many Nine Emperor Gods’ legends...” in Southeast Asia. It tells of a powerful Taoist magician, Zhang Tianshi (Zhang Daoling), who accumulated much wealth and influence, and became powerful enough to be able to evade paying his taxes to the Emperor. The Emperor, trying to humiliate the magician, installed nine musicians in a secret compartment and instructed them to play “crazy music”, he then asked the magician to exorcise the “spirits” allegedly haunting the palace, in the expectation that he will fail to do so. However, the magician succeeded in outwitting the Emperor and beheaded the nine musicians with his magic sword. Fearing that their spirits might haunt the palace, the Emperor ordered that their heads be sealed in an earthenware vase and thrown into the sea; but the nine scholar musicians kept appearing as apparitions in the Emperor’s dreams, demanding to be canonized as the Nine Emperor Gods, until he eventually succumbed to their demand. The important point of this version of the myth seems to be that it links the Nine Emperor Gods with the sea – a connection which plays a significant role in the festival rituals as performed by the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia.

Another version of the myth, the “Ming Version” is also important, because it links the Nine Emperor Gods to both the sea as well as the Ming Dynasty. According to one account of the myth by Qui Xinmin, the Nine Emperor Gods are “...a representation of the nine generations of the ninth prince of the Ming emperor,” who bore the title of Lu Wang, but is also known as Jiuhuang. Retreating from the invading Qing forces, the prince is said to have led his army to Taiwan, but drowned in the sea. This version explains why maritime merchants of Fujian province worship

Lu Wang as *Jiuhuangye* [the Nine Emperor Gods] in the form of an incense urn rather than an idol or a portrait”.<sup>13</sup>

Some said that in the past, China was separated into many provinces where vegetarian faith occurred. There were divided into nine provinces, but the governors of each provinces would like to became King in order to govern all provinces. Therefore, each province has fought occasionally to be called “The War of Nine King” that caused a number of deaths as a result of War.

In war time people were rough and the lack of consumer goods in all of nine provinces caused a Chinese scholar to think that if war has not given up, it would have made people to be trouble endlessly. Hence, he tried to negotiate in order to stop the war with the nine governors with the same condition that was to stop the war for nine days and also to refrain from killing animals and consuming meat. All nine emperors agreed with this condition because they had fought each other for long time. They met together at the center of Vegetarian ceremony for nine days by switching to be the President of the ceremony. In the Vegetarian ceremony, there are nine lights becoming representative of nine governors. At the time of ceremony for nine days, people could have a rest and relax. For the nine days everybody wore all white clothes symbolizing pure minds. Accordingly, this ceremony immediately decreased the number of animals being consumed. The Vegetarian festival traditionally lights up nine lamps to be the symbols of the Nine Emperors and the nine lamps are located on the highest of pillar called “Kiu Ong Tai Tae” (Hokkien language) meaning “The Nine Emperor Gods”.

Another version of the origin of Vegetarian ritual myth dates back to the time of a rebellion of a certain group of nine persons against the injustice of the Qing dynasty. Their plot was discovered, and they escaped into the deep forest, where they

---

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., pp. 25-27.

died from overexposure. The Kin Che celebration is a mourning commemoration of these nine men who died for country's freedom. Each day represents a person's life. This is also the reason for the nine Buddhas on the central altar.

Another explanation of the origin comes from the time when a Chinese Emperor's ninth son died. The emperor ordered that the whole nation observe nine days of fasting and mourning. This is also given as the reason for the nine Buddhas on the altar.<sup>14</sup> These are two myths which inform the aspect of the vegetarian celebration for mourning.

Another myth has said that while the Song dynasty was at war with Mongol, the King of the Song dynasty was too young and he had to escape with warriors. But the Mongol overtook them and they had no way to run so the young king with three warriors had to jump-off a cliff in order to flee from the enemy. According to Chinese history, one of gods that Chinese people respect is the young king of Song dynasty (Tam-gong). Mostly fishermen believe in him and the three warriors (Sa Tong Gong). In the ninth month local Hokkien and Teochiew people who used to help Song dynasty fight with Mongol have eat vegetarian food in order to make merit to the young King.<sup>15</sup> The point of this myth is that the beginning of the vegetarian ritual was to make a merit to dead warriors and also commemorate the young King.

Finally, the well-known myth that was published and disseminated as the introduction of the Vegetarian Festival on Phuket Island is that ...the Vegetarian Festival is said to have started at Kathu district about a hundred and fifty years ago [i.e., about 1840; other sources give an earlier date – the middle 1820's]. At that time

---

<sup>14</sup> Gove G. Elder, "Ritual and Chinese ethnicity in Mahachai, Thailand," (Doctoral dissertation Philosophy Department of Anthropology University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1982), pp. 22-23.

<sup>15</sup> Chittra Kornantakiatti, Rueang Chin Lai Rueang Nueng Rueang Mi Lai Tam Ra (Chinese Myths). (Bangkok: Chittra Publisher, 2004), p. 18.

Kathu was famous for tin mining and was populated fully with Chinese tin mine laborers until there became a large Chinese community there. The Chinese in Kathu believed in the gods of family, land and ancestors. Whenever they got into trouble, they would invite their respective gods to help them. This belief still holds true up to the present time.<sup>16</sup>

Once, a Chinese opera from China came to perform in order to entertain the mineworkers. They were able to perform over the years, which meant that there were a lot of Chinese immigrants and also a good economy at that time. While the Chinese drama troupe was in Phuket an epidemic was spreading and many people died. The Chinese performers also became ill and could not play any performances. Suddenly, they realized that it was the Chinese ninth lunar month and they did not fast and they did not pay respect to the Nine Emperor Gods as they did when they lived in China. Therefore the Chinese opera organized the Vegetarian ritual, although an incomplete version at Kathu in order to apologize to the Nine Emperor Gods. Fortunately, the epidemic decreased. This fact surprised the Chinese drama troupe as well as the local Chinese and Chinese workers there.

In the following year, the vegetarian ritual was started on the Chinese ninth lunar month at Kathu for the first place. Because the ritual was not perfect, after two or three years the epidemic stopped and a Chinese man was sent to China in order to perform a ceremony to symbolically invite the Nine Emperor Gods from a temple in China to Phuket. He brought back an urn containing a large incense stick, which had been lit since the invitation ceremony he performed when he was in China. The symbolic items were incense in a container that must be lighted all the time from China, bibles, manuals and a sign to be posted in front of the shrine. From that time on, people in Phuket have celebrated this festival. This practice strengthened Chinese belief that every person has spirits to protect and take care of them. So, every house

---

<sup>16</sup> Chaiyuth Pinradap, Kathu Vegetarian Festival in Phuket (Phuket: Kathu shrine, 1996), p. 10. (Mimeographed)

must have statutes to worship and public worship was set for every shrine as an annual event. The event is to recall the kindness of spirits and gods in taking care of human beings. In return, people should at least once a year stop doing any sins and to purify their bodies and minds.<sup>17</sup>

Myths are oral histories. Therefore, the narratives above imply that the origin of vegetarian ritual occurred in China before becoming established in Phuket. The vegetarian ritual is not popular and well known in mainland China presently but there are myths about the Nine Emperor Gods to inform that the Chinese have been eating vegetarian in the past. Although, the vegetarian ritual in mainland China originated differently from Phuket, namely; the goal of fasting in China was mourning or dedicates one's acquired merits to the dead who to do good for community. On the other hand, the objective for the origin of the Phuket Vegetarian ritual is health in order to cure a sickness.

### **3. Nine days and nights of Phuket Vegetarian Festival**

The Vegetarian Festival is called “Jea Cai” in Phuket. The festival originated from the Taoism belief that worships gods, heroes and ancestor. Then, Mahayana Buddhism and Confucianism have assimilated to the festival among Chinese immigrants. The vegetarian festival falls on the first nine days of the ninth lunar month in the Chinese calendar. At this time, members of old shrines organize a festival for the Nine Emperor Gods including various gods in the immortal world. It is a time of memorial for the goodness that each god carried out. As a result of their good intention throughout their lives, they became the Nine Emperors of China.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> Chaiyuth Pinradap, Prapenee kin pak (The Custom of Eating Vegetables), (Phuket: Visate, 1997), p. 18.

<sup>18</sup> Chaiyuth Pinradap, Kathu Vegetarian Festival in Phuket (Phuket: Kathu shrine, 1996), p. 8. (Mineographed)

The First Vegetarian ritual in Phuket took place at Ban Kathu after Phraya Thalang (Choem) moved the town of Thalang to be relocated at Kathu where there were a lot of Chinese miners in 1825.<sup>19</sup>

Following is an example the vegetarian festival program on 22-30 October 2006 of “Jui Tui”<sup>\*</sup>, one of the famous Chinese shrines in Phuket. The Brochure has Thai, English and Chinese language. The principal of the ritual is the same while the program to perform is different only in times.

October 16, 2006

7:00 a.m. Set up and clean the temple in preparation for the Vegetarian Festival.

8:09 p.m. Warriors propitiation [Pung-Eiew].

October 21, 2006

5:09 p.m. Set and raise up Lantern Pole [Ko-Teng].

11:09 p.m. Invite the “Yok-Ong-Song-Tae” to the temple.

October 22, 2006

05:00/18:00 Chanting ceremony and read the name list attending the Vegetarian ritual.

October 23, 2006

9:30 a.m. Chanting ceremony to honor the spirit of departed devotees [Pai-Lao-Chay-Eiw].

---

<sup>19</sup> History of Phuket Vegetarian Festival at Kathu shrine board.

<sup>\*</sup> See Appendices 2, pp. 90-91.



October 24, 2006

- 3:09 p.m. Ceremony of Food Offering to the spirit of the soldiers (Ko-Khun) and inviting other spirits (Cha-Thek- Tiem) to indicate the vegetarian territory.
- 8:45 p.m. Ceremony of Welcoming “Lum-Tao-Puk-Tao). This spirit is invited from Saphan Hin Cape and brought into Jui Tui Tao Bo Keang Chinese Shrine by a parade.

October 25, 2006

- 9:30 a.m. Chanting ceremony to honor the spirit of departed devotees (Pai-Lao-Chay-Eiw)

October 26, 2006

Chanting ceremony

October 27, 2006

- 9:30 a.m. Chanting ceremony to honor the spirit of departed devotees (Pai-Lao-Chay-Eiw)
- 3:09 p.m. Ceremony of Food Offering to the spirit of the soldiers (Ko-Khun).
- 8:00 p.m. Ceremony of Walking Barefoot on fire at Saphan Hin Cape.

October 28, 2006

- 8:00 a.m. The Eiew-Keng Ceremony is the procession of taking “Kiew-Ong-Tai-Tae” and other deities to give their blessing to the people.
- 9:09 p.m. Worship seven zodiac signs for good luck and long life( Pai-Chid-Chaw).

October 29, 2006

- 9:30 a.m. Chanting ceremony to honor the spirit of departed devotees (Pai-Lao-Chay-Eiw)
- 8:30 p.m. Koy-Harn ceremony is held to drive away misfortune and bad luck.

October 30, 2006

- 3:09 p.m. Ceremony of Food Offering to the spirit of the soldiers (Ko-Khun).  
 11:09 p.m. Send “Yok-Ong-Song-Tae” back to heaven.  
 11:45 p.m. Send “Kiew-Ong-Tai-Tae” back to heaven at Saphan Hin Cape.

October 31, 2006

- 5:09 p.m. Take down the Lantern Pole (Ko-Teng) to signify the end of the Vegetarian Festival

### 3.1 Preparation for Kin Che

While the Phuket Vegetarian Festival is practiced in the ninth month for nine days, the preparation starts two or three days before the beginning of the actual celebration. This time is spent in the temple in order to clean floors, walls, and the special carriers for the deities. Namely, to clean the Chinese Shrines where places of the event will be held and also to set up things that will be uses in the ritual.

During these two days, the individuals who are going to prepare the food have to refrain from eating meat and having sexual intercourse. The purpose of such abstinence is to cleanse the body of impurities and to purify the mind and heart. Some volunteer cooks commented that to purify the food that was to cause purification in the lives of those participating in vegetarian ritual was such an important task that they themselves go through a preparatory cleansing beforehand.<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> Gove G. Elder, “Ritual and Chinese ethnicity in Mahachai, Thailand,” (Doctoral dissertation Philosophy Department of Anthropology University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1982), pp. 69-70.

### 3.2 The Tall Lantern Pole Raising and Invitation Rituals (Ko-Teng)

The raising of the Tall Lantern Pole (Ko-Teng) and the invitation ceremonies for the Kiu Ong (the Nine Emperor Gods) and Yok Ong (the head of the Taoist popular pantheon) to the temple is representative of Kiu Ong and Yok Ong takes place in the afternoon and evening of the day preceding those nine days – namely on the last day of the ninth lunar month of the Chinese calendar. It is a symbol that Phuket Vegetarian Festival has begun. The lantern pole is made from bamboo. It consists of nine lamps with wicks- in – oil. The light will be bright during the vegetarian ritual. The pole raising ritual is performed in all the shrines which invite the Nine Emperor Gods.

In the afternoon of the opening ceremony two poles are positioned horizontally in the yard of the shrine. The main long pole, made from the trunk of a tree, has a long leafy bamboo branch fastened onto its top; it will be raised in the course of the ritual and inserted vertically into its base in the yard. The small pole- another bamboo branch with leaves on its top- will be fastened subsequently horizontally across the larger pole and the Tall Lantern, consisting of nine wicks-in-oil lamps, will be attached to it. A flag is attached to the small lantern pole means Kiu Ong in Chinese characters.

I observed in Jui Tui shrine, one of biggest and most popular shrine on Phuket Island. The lantern pole raising ceremony the time is set 5:09 p.m. but the ceremony started an hour before that time, some spirit mediums quietly into trance. Soon the music bands start to beat drums after follow with growing numbers of spirit mediums, both men and women, gradually enter into trance. After that the principal medium of the shrine purifies the base of the lantern pole by waving his flag, cracking his whip, throwing on it salt and rice grains, and passing burning gold paper over it. Some of mediums cut his back and tongue slightly by sword then proceeds to purify the poles in the yard. At the same time a large number of priest's assistants, whose task is to

help raise the poles, enter the yards and others climb the roof of the shrine building in order to hoist the lantern pole on ropes.

When set of the time of Lantern pole the principal medium signals that the moment as arrived. The men on the roof pull the ropes, while the men below push the heavy pole. During the ceremony other spirit mediums shouting and waving flag at the same time will hear fire crackers sound and the public get down on their knees. Most devotees and people who attend to the ceremony are dress in white clothes. At the end of raising lantern pole the spirit mediums gradually come out of their trance.

At night of the same day, it is an invitation ritual of Jade Emperor and Nine Emperor Gods. In Jui Tui shrine, two altars are set up in the yard: one at the lantern pole for the Kiu Ong (the Nine Emperor Gods) and the other it is set in the center of the yard for Yok Ong (Jade Emperor God). The Kiu Ong's and Yok Ong's altars are covered with Chinese tablecloth. On the altars are set with a brazen incense urn, accompanied by a tablet with its name in Chinese characters.

At 10:49 p.m., the Taoist prayer leader (*huat kua*) prays invite the gods and the principal spirit mediums in trance around him. He waves a medium's flag, cracks his whip and offers nine big, burning incense sticks with drums, wooden instrument and metal instrument. When Yok Ong and Kiu Ong has descended from heaven and arrived at the temple, their spirit will be put in their incense urn. The ritual accomplished with gold paper is placed to form a path from the yard to the main shrine building and accompanied by the noises of string fire-crackers, loud of drums.

The incense urns are brought from the yard to the main building of shrine by a group of priest's assistants with their ceremonial umbrella. The incense urn of Yok Ong is placed at the center altar of the shrine at the main hall. For Kiu Ong is place back room of the main shrine hall namely the room that is built behind Yok Ong's altar and there is no door but every shrines in Phuket cover the Kiu Ong Room with

yellow Chinese curtain. After that the spirit mediums come out of their trance, closing the event.



Picture 1: The room of the Nine Emperor Gods.



Picture 2: Two incense urns, Yok Ong and Kiu Ong, with ceremonial umbrellas.

### 3.3 The Food Offering to Warriors Ritual

The ceremony of food offerings to the spirit of the warriors, the spirits of soldier and their horses consist of rice liquor, grains, rice, and grass. The principal medium hands five flags in the symbolic colors of the five cosmic directions to the five devotees in order to protect and indicate the Vegetarian territory. These are a green flag for East, red flag for South, white flag for West, black flag for North and yellow flag for Central. During the ritual drum playing and other Chinese music instruments is ongoing. It is indicative that the flags that used in the vegetarian ritual are a symbol of spirit warriors who protect the vegetarian ritual. The territory of the ritual is the place of Lantern Pole, kitchen of the shrine, and the place for burning paper. The symbolic of territory is called *Tek Hu*, it is made from bamboo and put the name of deities.



Picture 3: Tek Hu presents the territory of the vegetarian ritual.

I observed at Kathu shrine. The ritual is conducted by the *huat kua* (Taoist prayer leader), an elderly Chinese in white attire, and by four spirit mediums in trance. The elderly Chinese picks up a pair of triangular flags, purifies them by squirting water, throwing rice grains and passing burning gold paper over them and dances with the flags. After that Chinese elderly hands flags to the mediums and the mediums dance with flags and drum and metal instrument sound. This process is repeated five times, it means five directions namely East, South, West, North and Central. Then, process is conducted by the elderly Chinese kneels at the offering table to the Gods and pray in order to invite the spirits of the warriors to have a meal. Finally, the spirits mediums exit from the trance at the altar of Yok Ong.

The participants are not crowded for this day at Kathu shrine. I expected that it is possible that the food offering to warrior ritual conducted on working time and also the shrine far from Phuket city. The mostly devotees at Kathu live around the shrine.



Picture 4: The food offering to the warrior ritual.

### 3.4 Invitation Ritual for Lam Tao and Pak Tao – The Gods of Birth and Death

On the night of the third day of the festival, devotees invoke the gods Lam Tao who watches over the Living and "Pak Tao" the keeper of the Dead. This day influences people to do good deeds.<sup>21</sup> For example, in a ceremony at Jui Tui Tao Bo Keang Chinese Shrine, the effigies of the two gods are brought to the sea shore at Saphan Hin to welcome and invite spirits from there to be brought into Jui Tui Tao Bo Kean Chinese Shrine by parade. The procession consists of a temporary altar with small ceremonial umbrellas as are the incense urns of Kiu Ong and Yok Ong, with their sedan chairs and umbrellas.

When arriving at Saphan Hin, nine flags are struck in the sand. A dozen spirit mediums enter into trance on the shore. A *huat kua*, who can read Taoist prayer, kneels with incense stick in his hand, inviting the gods; one of his assistants offers a tea pot, while a medium draws a line in the sand, as if to show the gods the way. A prayer is read by the *huat kua* upon which divining blocks are thrown. Then, trucks carrying the gods and spirit mediums start on its way back to the Jiu Tui shrine. When they arrived to the Jui Tui shrine, the mediums form two lines between which the effigies of Lam Tao and Pak Tao are conducted to their place on the right-hand altar of the main shrine hall, accompanied by the explosion of several strings of firecrackers. While a few mediums depart to bless the vegetarian food stalls around the shrine, the others exit from trance, and the public disperses.<sup>22</sup>

### 3.5 Street Processions (Eiew-Keng)

Street Procession of the gods' images namely the Eiew-Keng ceremony is the precession that taking Kiew Ong Tai Tae (the Nine Emperor Gods) image and other

---

<sup>21</sup> Jui Tui Tao Bo Keang Chinese Temple, Phuket 22- 30 October, 2006 (Brochure)

<sup>22</sup> Cohen, The Chinese Vegetarian Festival in Phuket: Religion, Ethnicity and Tourism on a Southern Thai Island, p. 87.



deities give opportunity to bestow their blessing to the people. The street processions attracted a large number of local people and others such as Thai tourist and western tourist.

In Sam Kong shrine, where I observed the process of street procession, in the early morning hours preceding the procession, the spirit mediums and their companions or assistants [pi liang], as well as other participants, assemble at the shrine. The mediums gradually enter into trance and are pierced with a variety of skewers and other objects. From my observed at Chinese shrine in Phuket, most of piercer who pierced objects through cheek of the spirit mediums are professional piercing. They also have tattoos and piercing objects on their body. After that all of the spirit mediums gradually follow the street processions.



Picture 5: The piercer is piecing to the spirit medium.



Picture 6: A tool for piecing the spirit mediums cheek before put the object.

Then the processions of each Chinese shrine consist of Kiu Ong and Yok Ong incense urn with the ceremonial umbrella. The person who holds the incense urn is a priest's assistant [lochu], deities' statue with the sedan chair have four holders for each, lots of spirits medium and follow a vehicle of the shrine association followed by school children carrying banners with the name of the shrine, and flags and banners with the written names of the goddesses in Chinese characters. During the way, the public will throw fire-cracker to deities' statue in order to celebrate and represent happiness of the devotees.

On the way, some spirits mediums carry axes or swords and move in small groups, cutting their backs at street crossings. The spirit medium has both men and women. The women who are a spirit medium almost always act like Guan Yin or Nazha [Lo Chia] and some of them ride on trucks or pick-ups towards the end of the procession, distributing a yellow string [sai sin], pieces of yellow paper or cloth and sprinkling worshippers with holy water. The procession concludes with the Chinese lion along with the breathing rhythm.

During the street processions to Saphan Hin, the Sino-Thai peoples set a table for the gods of their family in front of their houses in the hope that when the procession passes some of spirit mediums will bless the family god and also some spirit mediums show body harming in order to revere the family god. This practice strengthens Chinese belief that every person has spirits to protect and take care of them. So, every house must have a statue to worship and public worship was set for every shrine as an annual event.<sup>23</sup>



Picture 7: The family god altar.

---

<sup>23</sup> Chaiyuth Pinradap, Kathu Vegetarian Festival in Phuket (Phuket: Kathu shrine, 1996), p. 8. (Mimeographed)



Picture 8: The spirit medium is blessing to the family god.



Picture 9: The spirit medium is showing body harming to revere the family god.



Picture 10: The street processions

### 3.6 The Propitiation of the Seven Stars (Pai-Chid-Chaw)

Several of the principal shrines on Phuket Island perform on the fifth or sixth day of the festival a ritual of propitiation of the “Seven Stars.” In fact, the ritual is performed for the seven planets, as well as for the sun and the moon, the “nine stars of astrology.” Though these stars are identified with separate deities, in some traditions they are also related to, or identified with, the Nine Emperor Gods and through them with the goddess Doumu. This is apparently the reason for the inclusion of this ritual into the liturgy of the Vegetarian Festival.<sup>24</sup> I observed at Bang Niao Shrine, starting with *huat kua*, Taoist prayer, prays to the stars, at the same time the public is kneeling and some of mediums bring up a burning stick to the heaven. Before end of the propitiation of the seven stars ritual, some spirit mediums throw pieces of incantation cloth (*Hu*) to the public. The principal medium then touches the eyes and forehead of new images of gods with red ink for inviting the gods to the shrine and he also touch other objects for good luck. Moreover, other spirit mediums are performing in front of

---

<sup>24</sup> Cohen, The Chinese Vegetarian Festival in Phuket: Religion, Ethnicity and Tourism on a Southern Thai Island, p. 94.

the main hall, cutting their backs with swords or axes, and cutting their tongue slightly. The end of the ritual is spirit mediums out of trance. The public wear white garments attend the ritual.

### 3.7 The Bladed-Ladder Climbing Ritual

This ritual is held in order to drive out misfortune and bad luck. It is held on the evening of the sixth or seventh day of the festival. Cohen claims that it is the great attraction of these events for both the locals as well as visitors due less to their religious significance than to the spectacular and astonishing feasts of the spirit mediums.<sup>25</sup>

According to my observed at Bang Niao shrine, the ritual begins with *Huat kua* is Taoist prayer to the heaven and the gods, however, the spirit mediums are trance before the ritual occurs. Later, the spirit mediums are climbing, they thrown a piece of sacred cloth with a magic spell used to ward off a devil or a bad spirit, an incantation cloth or paper [Hu] to devotees. The spirit mediums are climbing the ladder more than ten at Bang Niao. I saw that some spirit mediums are old but they can climb the ladder. While the spirit medium climbing, drum player are playing. At the end of climbing ladder, some spirit mediums perform by using axe cutting their backs and tongues then used their blood write on the big yellow of incantation cloth, and touch the eyes and forehead of new images of gods with blood. Finally, it ends with devotees' fire-crackers.

The ladder climbing ritual attracts a fair number of Westerners, especially Photographer both western and Asian.

---

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 96.



Picture 11: The Bladed-ladder at Bang Niao Shrine.



Picture 12: The spirit medium is touching the yellow incantation with his blood.



Picture 13: The spirit medium is cutting tongue slightly for getting blood to touch with the eyes and forehead of new images of gods.

### 3.8 The Fire-Walking Ritual

The fire-walking is considered of greater importance than the bladed – ladder climbing, because this ritual is usually done by ordinary believers, all these perilous acts are performed by or to mediums who are in an hypnotic state. They can purify themselves. Some said that the devotees can do fire-walking with hot coals if they eat vegetables and follow the rules of vegetarian ritual. According to interview with Mr. Chaiyuth Pinradap, he said that the fire walking ritual attract western tourist and domestic tourist. Some years there is a westerner visitor attend to fire walking ritual. Before starting ritual, the *huat kua* (Taoist prayer leader) and spirit mediums prepared to in trance perform. The former lights candles and incense stick at the altar, pours tea into the cups, sticks a sword in front of it and digs a little hole in the ground in which he buries some gold paper. The mediums perform dance and cuts his back. Then the spirit mediums purify by walking on the hot coals.





Picture 14: The spirit mediums are running on the hot coals.

### 3.9 Bridge Crossing for Purification ( Koi Han)

This is one of the most important ceremonies. It is in fact to self-purifying ceremony. If the participants of the Vegetarian ritual do not do the fire walking, they have to cut paper of themselves in order to be a representative of them and then bring 25 satang\* and Chinese parsley (Kui-Cai) or onion to give to the spirit medium. Chinese parsley has a strong smell that represents bad manners inside us and is easy to find. Then they have to cross imitation bridge in order to cross a bad luck in the past and to meet a good thing for the future. From I observed and attended the bridge crossing at Jui Tui shrine, on the two sides of the bridge, possessed mediums wave their personal flags to chase away the impurity that may be in the devotees' bodies, sprinkle them with holy water to clean them and give them blessing. The devotees are also stamped on their back to signify that they have passed the ceremony and are thus purified from sins. And it also indicted that they have participated in the ritual for that year.

---

\* A satang is one hundredth of one baht: money.

After that a spirit medium will stamp at the back of shirt, it indicated that this participant has passed the bridge crossing (Koi Han) to get rid of bad luck already. This ritual does not attract a large public and few westerners observed it. After cross the bridge, other spirit mediums around the shrine has bless to the devotees.



Picture 15: Paper cut for bridge crossing

สถาบันวิทยบริการ  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย



Picture 16: The public has queue for crossing the bridge in order to good luck in the future.



Picture 17: After crossed the bridge, the devotees will be stamped on the cloth.

### 3.10 The Yok Ong and Kiu Ong Farewell Rituals

On the evening of the ninth day or the last day of the Vegetarian Festival close to midnight, this ritual takes place and is divided into two parts: first send the Yok Ong back to heaven at the lantern pole in the shrines and then Kiu Ong is sent back to heaven at the sea shore. For the Kiu Ong, there is the procession to the sea shore (Saphan Hin) on the way to the seashore people will throw firecrackers to the statue of deities and gods. On the way of the procession to the sea local people set family god altar to offering the food for the god and they hope that the spirit medium will bless to the family. The period is nearly the end of eating Che food. The Vegetarian Festival will end when the nine lamps of Lantern Pole are lowered down. This is symbolic of the end of the Vegetarian Festival.

In the evening descends, I heard the sounds of fire crackers throw around town. In Phuket town all the shrines conduct the ritual at the sea-shore of Saphan Hin. I interview with Mr. Chaiyuth Pinpradap, the former committee of Kathu shrine, said that the ritual of inviting and farewell of gods has to perform at Saphan Hin because first time of inviting vegetarian ritual from China has reached at Saphan Hin sea shore.



Picture 18: Street altar, on the way to Saphan Hin, Phuket town.

When the processions reach the Saphan Hin sea shore, the *huat kua* reads a Taoist prayer and then the sedan chairs of the gods and the incense urn of Kiu Ong and Yok Ong are brought to the water. At the same time, the public are waiting for the processions. While Taoist prayer is praying they lights the incense sticks. Then they burn gold paper that they prepare. After that all the spirit mediums come out of the mediums bodies. On the shore, the pile of gold paper is burned. This ritual that I observe there is no western visitor come. Most of participants are local; they wear white clothes and come with their family or their group of friends.



Picture 19: Huat Kua is reading Taoist prayer to send Kiu Ong back to the heaven.

จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย



Picture 20: Gold paper heap, it will burn after brought the incense urn of Kiu Ong and Yok Ong to the sea.



Picture 21: Spirit medium is exit of trance after farewell.

### 3.11 The Lantern Pole Lowering Ritual

The ritual is conducted with the last food offering to the warriors. Then the spirit mediums enter into trance and purify the base of the lantern pole. The *huat kua* and the principle medium of the shrine pray in the direction of the gate, and write on charm paper with white ink. After that, the lantern pole is lowered and the nine lamps with wicks-in-oil are extinguished. It informs everyone that the vegetarian ritual has ended. The ritual conducts with *huat kua* and the principal of spirit mediums of the shrine. The devotees wear white clothes.

After preparations are accomplished, the horizontal pole- the bamboo branch on which the Tall Lantern is fastened and lowered and the nine lamps with wick-in-oil extinguished. Then, the public runs to grab it and tears off the small bamboo leaf from the Tall Lantern.

In summary of nine days and nights, it seems that *huat kua* as Taoist prayer and the spirit medium are conduct a process of the Phuket vegetarian festival. They play important role to everyday of the ritual. Throughout the festival, the public wore white clothes and heard the sound of drums and fireworks, especially, during ceremonies. It is held that the louder they are the better, because noise drives away evil spirits. From my observation, the most famous are the street processions of spirit mediums who pierce their faces with a variety of objects and carry them through the town. Moreover, according to interview with Mr. Chaiyuth Pinradap as former committee at Kathu shrine and Mr. Thirawuth Sritularak as committee at Jui Tui shrine, they said that the vegetarian festival transfers to encourage students by participating in parades to join at the street processions. I observed the street processions, students carry flag it is the name of god in Chinese characters and some male students can beat drums too. Family and school has inspired through their mind since they was young. This is the way to reserve the ritual to the future.

From my observation of the Phuket vegetarian festival, activities in the ritual such as street procession, climbing blade ladders, or walk on hot coal. These extreme or exotic activities are attract to the western visitors especially photographers and a group of piece body and tattoo. All of them just take a look but they are not pay respect to the gods and some of them were white some of them are not. The Chinese visitors Sino-Thai and Thai have participated and played respect to the Gods during the ritual.

#### 4. The spirit medium

The spirit mediums, who may be of either sex, deliberately induce a trance state during which they tremble, shudder, speak in strange voices and are certainly unconscious of what they do and say. Taking the god or spirit invoked to be actually present in the medium's body, suppliants bow to the earth to ask questions that are answered usually by the god speaking through the medium's mouth; but sometimes by means of trance writing, which is really puzzling for one can see it performed by mediums known to be illiterate. From time to time, mediums and other devotees give demonstrations of invulnerability to injury by walking over burning coals without as much as blistering their skin, or piercing their flesh with skewers, hooks, axes or knives.<sup>26</sup> To add up from my observation the spirit mediums wear the dress like the god that they performed. Actually, the spirit mediums before they are trance they wear white clothes after trance Phi liang, the assistance of spirit mediums, will put apron the same as god wear. I saw *Phi liang*, an assistance of spirit medium, carry god statue follow spirit mediums when they attend to the street processions.

---

<sup>26</sup> John Blofeld, *Taoism: The Quest for Immortality* (London: Unwin Paperbacks, 1979), pp. 99-100.





Picture 22: The spirit medium and *Phi liang* (the spirit medium's assistance).

Look at apron of god statue and spirit medium is the same.

The mediums play the leading ritual roles in the festival. They are representatives for the gods and spirits to conduct the ritual. According to the “master narrative” of Chinese folk theology, people who suffer the misfortune of a weak astrological configuration or one which bodes ill, and are therefore destined to die young, will tend to become spirit mediums. However, informants on Phuket Island put this relationship in more concrete terms; they claim that people who have been sick and in danger of dying, would become mediums of a deity, and thereby save or extend their life.

However, the standard version on Phuket of the actual process of becoming a medium is that the deity initiates the contact with a sick individual threatened by death and proposes to become its medium; in exchange the deity will prolong his or her life. The spirit mediums on Phuket Island are usually of a different range of ages. They are young spirit mediums until old mediums both male and female. In aspect of social class, it is wondering that most of spirit mediums come from lower social strata of the local Sino-Thai community: market stall-keepers, laborers, service personnel, and shop assistants. White-collar employees are rare exceptions.



Picture 23: The spirit medium with skewers.

In addition, the spirit mediums play an important role for the vegetarian ritual because they also are most focused on by outsiders. Outsiders are more interested in the piercing objects worn by the spirit mediums in order to show the supernatural of the gods and spirits. Over the years, new kinds of piercing objects have been introduced at the festival, some of which reflect the changing social and cultural circumstances under which the festival is conducted, including the influence of the rapidly expanding tourism industry on the island.<sup>27</sup> Pictures of the spirit mediums were also advertised in brochures, magazines, newspaper, tourist guide books, etc. to attract outsiders and tourists to come to the vegetarian festival. Namely, the spirit mediums activities of purify are outstanding and special for the Phuket vegetarian festival. It is different form other parts of Thailand such as Bangkok.

---

<sup>27</sup> Cohen, The Chinese Vegetarian Festival in Phuket: Religion, Ethnicity and Tourism on a Southern Thai Island, pp. 122-134.

## 5. The Vegetarian Food or Che Food

What does Che mean? Generally people understand that Che food means to only eat vegetables but actually, the word “Che” in Taichew language or “Cai” in Mandarin is widely known to mean Kin Che or vegetarian. The Chinese have eaten vegetarian food for a long time. Eating vegetarian, cleaning body, wearing clean cloths is called “Cai Che” Afterwards, Taoism has used “Cai Che” for one of the important doctrine that “Cai” means to adjust or improve and “Che” means stop, to quit and to abstain. According to Taoism, devotees abstain from eating meat and eat only vegetable except vegetables that with very strong smells such as garlic, onions, and Chinese parsley. When Buddhism spread to China, there were two meanings of “Che”. First, Che means to not allowed eating after noon. Secondly, it means to eat vegetarian food.<sup>28</sup>

10 things do not do during the vegetarian festival

1. Killing is prohibited.
2. Eating any kind of meat is not allowed.
3. Do not steal or take anyone’s belongings.
4. Do not hurt or cause any trouble to anyone.
5. Telling lies, being rude or cursing are not allowed.
6. No physical contact with the opposite sex.
7. No alcoholic beverages are allowed.
8. Gambling is prohibited.
9. Do not wear any fashion accessories with metal or leather.
10. Do not use any kitchen utensils and containers from nor have meals with people who do not attend the vegetarian ceremony.

---

<sup>28</sup> Taotong Seamlor, “Vegetarianism,” Sinlapa-Wathanatham 12, No. 12 (September-October 1991): 63-64.

People observing the festival should abstain from eating meat and animal oil for at least one day. They can have their vegetarian meals either at home or, preferably, at one of the Chinese temples in and around Phuket town. The meals at the temples are provided free, but most people make a donation and have their names registered first.<sup>29</sup> For example, the vegetarian menu provided at Jui Tui Tao Bo Keang Shrine was mixed vegetable with tamarind flavored soup, coconut milk curry, red curry, green curry, stir-fried red curry paste, stir-fried bean vermicelli with cabbage, stir – fried tofu with ginger and mushroom, clear soup with seaweed, clear soup with taro and dried Chinese mushroom, tamarind flavored soup, pumpkin soup etc.

## **6. The Healthy Food Trend to Thailand.**

The trend of healthy food extended to Thailand about 10 years ago. This trend introduced people in Thailand to eat good food for body such a vegetable. There are various factors that make the Thai people interested in vegetarian food; it was called “Back to the basic”. Most Thais have begun to look at nature. At the same time the vegetarian festival persuades the people attending the festival to eat vegetarian more and more. Thai people thought that they attend to eat vegetarian during the festival in order to make a merit, not eat meat that means they are not supporting killing animals, at least they have kindness to the animal once a year. Also, eating vegetarian benefits their health. Moreover, one medical way considers that meat is not food for humans because of dissection theory that humans do not have canine teeth like animals and the physical mouth is not suitable to be carnivore. Therefore, the medical confirms that the natural human is not a carnivore. This is one of the reasons attracting people to eat vegetarian.<sup>30</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup> Saranya Suksawat. 2003. Phuket Vegetarian Festival [Online]. Available from: [http://www.thaiwaysmagazine.com/thai\\_article/2012\\_phuket\\_vegetarian/phuket\\_vegetarian.html](http://www.thaiwaysmagazine.com/thai_article/2012_phuket_vegetarian/phuket_vegetarian.html)[2007, February 21]

<sup>30</sup> “Ar-han Che Peur Sukaphap (Che Food for Helth),” Daily News (21 October 1998): 5.

Another reason motivating people to eat vegetarian food is economic problems. In B.E. 2541, the Thai economy turned down significantly and as a result people turned to eat more vegetarian food because it was cheaper. According to statistic of Thai Farmer Bank Research Center found that in B.E. 2541 Bangkok people about 40 percents determined to attend to eat vegetarian during the festival and use only 90 baht per day. Moreover, the vegetarian food also made a new impact in the economy in the form of more canned vegetarian food. This kind of vegetarian product has grown by 20 to 25 percent each year.<sup>31</sup>

As Thais became more interested in food for health, they realized that eating vegetarian food for a healthy body also saved money, and also makes merit for religion beliefs. However, anyone can attend the Vegetarian Festival; it is not necessary that what is their religion; it is not limited to just Thai-Chinese who only originated the festival and not limited to just Buddhists either.

Further, another aspect of healthy food as vegetarianism and holistic (Chivajit) particularly in Bangkok became trendy that their practice is abstain from meat like Chinese vegetarian ritual. There are 2 important persons about leading trend “back to the basic” in Bangkok, Dr. Sathit Intharakhamhaeng said in Thairat (Daily Newspaper) on October 2005 that he supported to eat real vegetarian food (Che food). And also Major Jamlong Srimuang was founded the vegetarian society in Thailand. They are encouraging Thai people to eat vegetarian food much more. I argue that the healthy food trend related to the Vegetarian festival in Thailand spread to all over nation recognition. For example, in 2005 Thai Farmer Bank Research Center has been estimated that Bangkokians will intend to eating vegetarian increase 10 to 20 percent during the Vegetarian festival because of the healthy food trend. They believe that eating the vegetarian food it will be healthy.<sup>32</sup> In addition, the Vegetarian festival in

---

<sup>31</sup> “Kin Che Lang Guy – Lang Jai Su Phai Settakit (Eating Che Pure Body – Mind with Economic).”, Khaosod (20 October B.E. 2541): 6.

<sup>32</sup> “Kin Che Pi 48 (Eating Che 2005)”, Post Today (29 September B.E. 2548) : 9.

Bangkok China town (Yaowarat), one source suggested that fully three-quarters of Bangkok's population took part in the festival in one way or another in 2001.<sup>33</sup> In 2004, there was the information about Vegetarian Festival in Yaowarat (Bangkok China town) that the Road to close for the Vegetarian Festival for ten days.<sup>34</sup> It seems the Vegetarian Festival was huge and more people attend to the festival. Although, one sourced argue that people who attended to eat vegetarian because they were concern their health rather than respect to the Chinese deities.<sup>35</sup> They emphasize a level of personal asceticism on the part of general participants- vegetarianism, wearing white, abstaining from alcohol and sex-characterize the manner which it is practiced there. Namely, indeed, vegetarianism itself, rather than the worship to the Chinese deities has become the primary mode by which people take part in the Vegetarian Festival, with hotels, restaurants, and now even fast food chains like Burger King and Chester's Grill. They are providing special dishes that meet the appropriate dietary requirements. Thus, Bangkok become vegetarianism trendy rather than emphasized to the event's original cosmological significance. However, the healthy food trend has conformed to increase the recognition of Vegetarian festival through the national practice.

In conclusion, the Vegetarian ritual on Phuket Island has incorporated religions and Chinese beliefs, namely, Taoism, Mahayana Buddhism and Confucianism. Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism are sometimes called the three "great traditions" of China. They shared and interacted with many elements of popular religion. They were combined in the daily reality of Chinese life.<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> "Cited in Strenghs", Nation (16 October 2002) : 4.

<sup>34</sup> "Pit thanon Yaowarat Kin Che Sip Wan". Bangkok Post Online edition (October 19, 2004)

<sup>35</sup> "Thet Sa Kan Thuea Sin Kin Che". Manager Online edition (October 4, 2002)

<sup>36</sup> Welch, H., and Seidel, A. "Introduction," in Facets of Taoism: Essays in Chinese Religion, eds. H. Welch and A. Seidel (United States of America: Yale University, 1979), p. I.

The myth of Vegetarian ritual, according to the myth of Nine Emperor Gods, on the other hand, states that the tradition Chinese ritual of eating vegetarian and worship to the gods for a set number of days was practiced in China before Chinese immigrants moved to Phuket Island. No doubt, they also have brought the custom to the Island. However, it could be argued that they had to invent the tradition of Vegetarian ritual in order to observe and keep the solidarity among Chinese immigrants (ethnic group) and also created Chinese identity in foreign land to display a cultural distinctiveness.

In the beginning, eating vegetarian during the festival was practiced among Chinese immigrants only, but nowadays the Vegetarian festival is growing and expanding to the national practice. The vegetarian ritual emerged by Chinese immigrants expanding to all parts of the nation. A growing health trend in Thailand was also spreads the popularity of the ritual over the years and the nation. This aspect makes non-Chinese attendees to eat vegetarian. Although the healthy food trend has a part of influenced to Thai behavior, they emphasize on manner of primary mode namely people take part in the Vegetarian Festival – eat vegetarian food, wearing white garments, abstain alcohol and sex. Thai is the nation recognition of the Vegetarian ritual and practice more and more.

Another reason that the vegetarian ritual is expanding is because there are no rules for attending the ritual. Everybody who decides to eat vegetarian is able to join the ritual no matter what his or her religion.

จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **PHUKET TOURISM DEVELOPMENT**

This Chapter will describe the background of Phuket Island in general while focusing on why Phuket has the potential to be a tourist destination for both Thai and international tourists. Then, the chapter will lay out the process by which the Chinese Vegetarian Festival became a major festival in Thailand with the support of and promotion by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT). It will also describe why the festival grew to the international level. Finally, to conclude with Phuket vegetarian festival towards international level as a result of Phuket is a tourist destination in order to support argument of the study.

#### **1. Phuket as tourist destination**

Phuket has in the distant past years maintained its position as one of the most affluent provinces in Thailand, owing greatly to the tin mining industry, both inland and offshore, and to the cash crop agriculture, with rubber as a main crop. However, in the more recent past, inland tin mining resources have largely been exhausted and a bright future in this industry cannot be foreseen. The expansion of the agriculture sector in rubber industry also does not offer a bright prospect due to the limited land area of the province. Tourism, which is a relative new industry to Phuket, will therefore provide an important financial diversion from the industrial and agricultural activities in the province. Tourism development of Phuket is considered the most important opportunity for the continued and future prosperity of the province.

Presently, Phuket is the hub of the southern Thai tourist industry. Foreign tourism expanded especially rapidly after the opening of an international airport on the island in the 1980s. By 1999 the number of tourist arrivals on the island reached



the three million mark, with foreigners constituting about three quarters of the total. The physical character of the island itself is mountainous in feature with long valleys. On the west coast there are many attractive beaches with clear water and white sand. The features of the beaches differ which enhances the coastal scenic setting. The eastern coast does not have many swimmable beaches but is blessed with lovely offshore mountainous islands densely covered with tropical vegetations. Some of these islands offer sandy beaches. In general, the province is blessed with beautiful nature and environment. It is marketed as “The Pearl of the Andaman Sea.”

Phuket also boasts highly interesting attractions and is widely known among visitors, not only the domestic holiday makers, but also the international traveler. As well as being accessible by air, Phuket can be reached by bus in approximately 13 hours from Bangkok, and thanks to a deep water port is also accessible by sea.

There are only two seasons in a year - the rainy season (May to October) and the hot season (November to April). The low season of Phuket is between August and October as these are the wettest months. The high tourist season is from November to February, when the sky is blue, there is often a lovely sea breeze and the water is a crystal clear azure blue/green color. Lying close to shore and at easily reachable off shore islands are many world renowned diving sites. The full range of water sports is naturally available. The tropical forests also offer natural adventures to trekkers and climbers alike.

Phuket has a lot more to offer its visitors in addition to its abundant natural beauty. The culturally interested traveler starts in Phuket town which boasts well maintained or beautifully refurbished traditional Sino-Portuguese architecture. Many are owned by the descendants of the original Chinese immigrants. If one listens closely, one can hear Chinese spoken as well as Thai. Even some newer buildings have begun to adopt this architectural style adding dimension to the classic look. This architecture is specifically promoted during the “Old Town Festival” every year.

Several “fresh markets” are open year round and offer the freshest fruits, vegetables and flowers as well as any number of grains and off course a fish and meat market. These are working markets where a night-owl might see deliveries of freshly picked pineapples arrive at three in the morning.

Phuket also offers several entertainment facilities the most well known being Phuket FantaSea which is home to dozens of elephants who actively participate in the entertainment. The island also boasts several international class golf courses including the Blue Canyon course which has twice hosted the Johnnie Walker Classic where Tiger Woods won his first major tournament a few years back.

Finally, Phuket offers accommodations ranging from world-class resorts to boutique style hotels to bungalows all of which cater to the different needs of travelers. Naturally these accommodations are supported by a rich variety of cuisine choices again ranging from world-class restaurants to tiny mom and pop beach hut seafood specialists. Altogether, these characteristics have made Phuket a truly unique destination.<sup>1</sup>

## **2. The Vegetarian Festival as tourist event.**

The now famous Vegetarian festival in Phuket was not created to attract tourists. Instead, Chinese immigrants into Phuket originated the practice. It was a religious ritual and traditional gathering of families more than a festival at its origin. Today, the descendants of the original immigrants carefully maintain the religious rituals even as they manage what is now a huge festival. The original practices

---

<sup>1</sup> Tourism Authority of Thailand, [Destination Guide: General Information in Phuket](http://tourismthailand.org)[Online]. (n.d.). Available from: <http://tourismthailand.org> [2007, March 15]

experienced a huge increase in popularity and underwent the transition to a huge festival because of Phuket's increasing popularity as a tourist destination. As stated earlier in this thesis, the festival takes place in the ninth lunar month of the Chinese calendar. This is the beginning of high season. Tourists arriving early in the high season and venturing into Phuket town were greeted by the amazing practices of the festival. It is natural to assume that word of mouth spread news of the festival.

Phuket vegetarian festival was also promoted by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT). At least initially, the southern office of the TAT in Phuket took a cautious approach to the presentation and promotion of the festival. They put the vegetarian festival as major event of annual calendar festival at TAT website and Phuket province website. The tourist as well as locals could see an occasional poster for the festival around Phuket. The office printed information and promotional material for the festival. For example, brochures outlining the programs of each Chinese Shrine were printed in Thai and English. Brochures also provide a suggested tour program during the festival. On Thailand television, TAT has promoted the Phuket vegetarian festival on Channel 11 including film clips of its street processions. The use of media to present the Phuket Vegetarian Festival to the nation was effective particularly the street processions and the more "exotic" aspects. The spread of modern mass media, including print and especially television, has acted as a "supplement" to the process of emergence of these practices into a space of public culture.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, TAT applied a marketing strategy to attract more Asian tourists to Phuket's yearly Vegetarian Festival. The 'Phuket Gazette' an English newspaper for Phuket, reported that in August 23, 2005, TAT Phuket Office, Phuket Provincial Administration Authority, Phuket City Municipality and representatives from Phuket's Chinese shrines will bring a specially-made "Ruby Goddess" or Mazhofu statue from its original home in Meizhou Island in Fujian Province. The devotees

---

<sup>2</sup> Annette Hamilton, Kuan Im, Nine Emperor Gods, and Chinese "Spirit" in Southern Thailand. Paper presented at 7<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Thai Studies. (July 1999): 10.

believe that the Ruby Goddess protects people from the dangers of the sea. The director of the Phuket office of the TAT said, “We have launched a strong public relations campaign with the cooperation of the Taiwanese authority and the Taiwan Taoism Association. The campaign includes placing Chinese-language posters promoting the Phuket vegetarian festival at every Mazhofu in Taiwan.” She further explained that the Mazhofu will be the main attraction of this year’s festival, which is to be held from October 3 to 11, and that the Taiwan Taoism Association will also bring 30 mediums that can be possessed by gods from Taiwan.<sup>3</sup> This is just one example where TAT promoted the festival in order to attract Asian tourists to participate in the Phuket Vegetarian Festival. Although, it was promoting the festival to Asian tourists, especially Chinese, it can be stated that the festival led to international level of participants.

In Phuket and Trang, the “home” of the festival in Thailand, where it has been practiced for at least a century, the process of expansion has essentially changed a local Chinese migrant activity into a major event. The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has actively taken a role in promoting the festival. Indeed, the festival has become big business. In the years 2002 and 2001, it has been estimated that the festival generated around 3 billion baht and 2.7 billion baht (U.S. \$66 million and U.S. \$60 million) respectively, eighty percent of which can be attributed to foreign (mostly Chinese) visitors (Thai Farmers Research Center 2000, 2001).<sup>4</sup> Moreover,

---

<sup>3</sup> Phuket Gazette. 2005. ‘Mazhofu’ to allay tourists’ worries [Online]. Available from: <http://www.phuketgazette.com/news/index.asp?fromsearch=yes&Id=4476>[2005, October, 10]

<sup>4</sup> Jovan Maud. The Nine Emperor Gods at the Border: Transnational Culture, Alternate Modes of Practice, and the Expansion of the Vegetarian Festival in Hat Yai. In Wattana Sugunnasil (ed.), *Dynamic Diversity in Southern Thailand*, p. 164. Prince of Songkla University, Pattani Campus: Silkworm Books, 2005.

Suwalai Pinpradab, the director of the Phuket office of the TAT has estimated in 2006 during the Phuket vegetarian festival generated around 500 million baht.<sup>5</sup>

Table 1: Guest Arrivals at Accommodation Establishments in Phuket 2004

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
330,594	309,245	319,066	349,685	374,692	350,242	384,378	412,927	344,405	354,380	336,792	368,576

Source: Tourism Authority of Thailand: Region 4

According to Table of Guest Arrivals in Phuket 2004 can analyzed that tourist in October as low season of Phuket (The Phuket vegetarian festival) has tourist more than high season of Phuket (Nov.-Apr.) on this year.

Table 2: Guest Arrivals at Accommodation Establishments in Phuket 2005

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
112,609	106,440	150,355	161,624	136,851	119,300	167,890	188,619	165,248	225,494	209,650	227,100

Source: Tourism Authority of Thailand: Region 4

From above table, it informs that in October, the Phuket vegetarian festival took place. There were a number of tourist arrivals more than tourist year round and more than high season of Phuket except December. It was obviously clear that the Phuket vegetarian Festival had attributed tourist draw. Moreover, it also indicated that that Phuket Vegetarian Festival was attractive to both Thai and international tourist.\*

---

<sup>5</sup> Fucuspaktai. 2006. "Kin Che Thua Tai Khuek Khak Hat Yai – Phuket Fan Phan Lan" [Online]. Available from: [http://www.focuspaktai.com/index.php?file=news&obj=news.view\(id=8588\)](http://www.focuspaktai.com/index.php?file=news&obj=news.view(id=8588))[2007, May, 8]

\* See Appendices 3, pp. 92-93.

Erik Cohen, who is Professor of Sociology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem has done research regarding the Phuket Vegetarian Festival and specifically concerning the differentiation between the Chinese and Western tourists attraction to the festival. He noted that for Chinese visitors from other Southeast Asian countries, notably Taiwan but also increasingly from mainland China, most arrive in group tours, whether specifically for the festival or by chance as part of a tour of Thailand. The majority could be characterized as 'religious tourists,' in that they visit the shrines. They do not put on white garb and many do not eat only the vegetarian cuisine. For many the chief attraction of their visit is the opportunity to be present at a major Chinese religious event which is no longer celebrated in their own country or at least not at the same proportions either in their own immigrant Chinese communities or even in the Chinese homeland. The Chinese are the principal foreign visitors to the festival. However, most come only for brief visits, often only for a night or two; nevertheless, their numbers increase in the course of the festival period and reach a peak during the last three days.<sup>6</sup>

For the western tourist to the festival, most simply happen to be vacationing in one of the resorts along the island's beaches during the festival period. They take brief excursions to some of the principal festival events or visit a shrine on their trip to town. Though the promotional material on the festival is principally oriented to Western tourists, the majority of the tourists merely observe the festival; only a minority of the vacationers participate in any of the festival events. Only a few Western tourists come to Phuket specifically for the festival, mostly those with a special professional interest in it, as for example, photographers, stay throughout the full nine-day festival period.

According to my participant observation during Phuket Vegetarian Festival, 2006, the western tourist especially photographers and western who has tattoo or

---

<sup>6</sup>Erik Cohen, The Chinese Vegetarian Festival in Phuket: Religion, Ethnicity and Tourism on a Southern Thai land. (Bangkok: White Lotus, 2001), pp.155-156.

piecing body also came to visit for exotic ceremony only. When chanting ceremony, there were not any western visitors.

From my study implied that the Phuket vegetarian festival became internationally dynamic because of Chinese and western tourist visited the festival, albeit for different reasons. Chinese tourists and western tourist have different objectives to attend the festival but both would agree that the festival provides a unique opportunity to understand one aspect of the cultural side of Phuket Island.

In summary, tourism has replaced tin mining and agriculture as the main force driving the economy of Phuket at the present time. The tourism industry has taken full advantage of the flourishing natural resources and sight-seeing attractions of the island. The government, specifically, TAT, also encouraged and facilitated tourism development of Phuket. As a result of their tourism development, Phuket Island became an international tourist destination.

Although, Phuket is basically an ocean resort, the fulfillment of intellectual curiosity would also be a key factor to a successful development. Intellectual curiosity comes from appreciation and experience of natural resources, local culture, arts, festivals and others.<sup>7</sup> Naturally, the beaches function as main important attraction of Phuket, but cultural and fact-finding tourism assets would be supplementary attractions in strengthening the overall Phuket development. Since Phuket province is rich in all types of tourist attractions, careful planning and proper development of these areas will be greatly appreciated by all tourists.

---

<sup>7</sup> Tourist Organization of Thailand, Masterplan & Feasibility Study Tourism Development of Phuket. Bangkok: Tourist Organization of Thailand, 1979. (Mimeographed)

There are many places to conduct Vegetarian Festival in Thailand. However, TAT has promoted the Phuket Vegetarian Festival as a major event on their annual calendar of festivals and created special packages for the festival. They also started staging a program of various activities around the festival to entice tourists, both domestic and foreign, to visit Phuket during the event.

But, through calendar serendipity and an increasing interest in cultural heritage on the part of certain tourist groups, the Phuket Vegetarian Festival has become a major attraction for tourists to the island. This argument supports the thesis that the Phuket Vegetarian Festival is more than supplementary to other attractions. It has grown out of its local shell of core devotees to an international level cultural attraction and has contributed to the increased character of Phuket as a destination of international interest.



สถาบันวิทยบริการ  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS

There is a long history of Chinese immigration into Thailand. The Chinese often brought their religions and rituals with them upon immigrating into a new country. In Thailand Chinese immigrants came to work in many fields of occupations such as traders, merchants, doctor, physicians, artisans, actors and pig breeders. When Thailand opened up the economy because of the Bowring Treaty, Chinese immigrants entered Thailand as labor in large numbers. Emigration to Phuket where prosperous tin mines were in need of labor was significant. Nevertheless, the origin of the Chinese Vegetarian Festival was not immediate upon the influx of Chinese immigrants.

This thesis has reviewed several myths and more recent oral histories of how the Vegetarian Festival came to be prominent in Phuket Province in Thailand. One thing is clear, no matter where the Chinese have emigrated; they have brought their customs with them. In Thailand, even when they have married with Thai, they have kept preserving Chinese culture until the present.

This is an outstanding characteristic of Chinese, and likewise, in Phuket they brought the vegetarian ritual that was practiced in mainland China before. After its introduction into Phuket the ritual has extended beyond the Chinese to non-Chinese and even non-Thai in Phuket. The strong Chinese culture was kept generation to generation in the case of 'Hokkien' Chinese. Scholars who have studied Chinese culture in the southern part of Thailand consider that 'Hokkien' Chinese preserved in scope the Chinese identity and especially culture.

The ritual has also expanded to other areas of Thailand not just in Phuket because of good health trends in Thai society. These trends helped the vegetarian festival grow from the local to a national recognition and primary practice. During the vegetarian festival period most of daily newspapers and magazines of Thailand are writing about vegetarian food or Che food which increasingly influences Thai people to join in the vegetarian festival. Also, the 'back to the basics trend' directly relates to the vegetarian festival. That is to say, everybody can eat Che food and also attend the vegetarian festival. The trend has encouraged Thai people take part of the general participant in the Vegetarian festival and primary practice during the festival – eat vegetarian dishes, abstaining from alcohol and sex, wearing white much more especially Bangkok. They believe and recognition that eat vegetarian is good for their health. The vegetarian festival has shown that it was not limited to Chinese only. Everyone is invited. Moreover, the objective to eat Che food can be a merit making one because animals are not killed. The history coupled with current interest in culture and in good health explain why the Vegetarian Festival has expanded all over the country and grown from local to national practice.

This study found that the remarkable expansion of the Vegetarian Festival on Phuket Island and increasing number of attendances has developed from Thai tourists and international tourists becoming aware of the festival because of the changing status of Phuket Island itself. It has changed from mainly an economy based on tin mines and agriculture to an international tourist destination. Phuket is the biggest island of Thailand and the richness in marine tourism resources have appealed to Thai and foreign visitors. It also provides international chain hotels and resorts, an international airport, and a deep-sea port for international cruise lines. Phuket also offers various types of ocean sports, shopping, eateries, and entertainment. The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has developed and promoted tourism of Phuket Island until it is highly and widely known to offer interesting attractions for both domestic and the international travelers.

The Phuket Vegetarian Festival was not created as a tourist attraction. Rather, it is cultural festival brought with Chinese immigrant who worked in tin mines in the

last century and carried on until present. However, because Phuket itself is a tourist destination for domestic and international, the participants of the ritual increased from Chinese and non-Chinese Thai to international tourists. Most of the tourists just have a look or a special interest such as photography and or cultural research. Others attend to the ceremony especially for its cultural and religious significance to them, mainly the Chinese tourists from Southeast Asian countries, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Singapore as well as increasing numbers of tourists from mainland China. In addition, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has promoted the Phuket vegetarian festival as a major event in their annual calendar. They promoted the festival as a highlighted cultural event in order to facilitate and encourage the tourist travel at Phuket in October, a non-peak period weather-wise. By all these means, the Phuket Vegetarian festival as a primarily Chinese custom has developed and grown to include international participants.

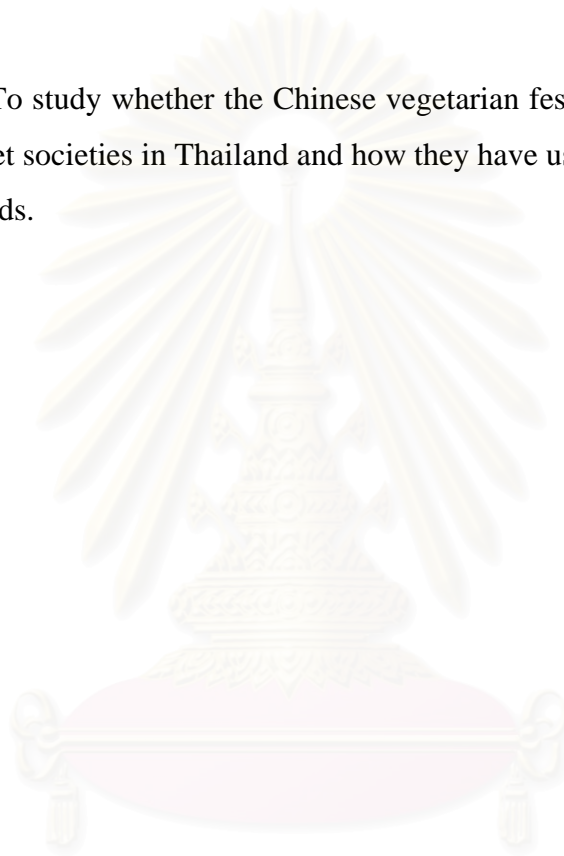
In conclusion, this thesis traces the origin of the Phuket Vegetarian Festival from ancient Chinese myths, through customs brought by Chinese immigrant labor, to attempts to maintain strong ties to China while assimilating with Thais on Phuket Island and in answer to stressful situations such as epidemics prior to the common availability of antibiotics, and finally to the modern day interest in both the cultural heritage of the island and in the healthy living that eating vegetarian promotes.

This is a conclusion to trace the origin of the vegetarian festival in Phuket and also explain that why the Vegetarian Festival has spread to non-Chinese Thais, and grown from a local to nation recognition and practiced then the ceremony attracted to the international tourist.

### **Further research recommendations**

1. To study the difference of the Chinese characteristics between Chinese dialect groups and how they preserved their ‘Chineseness’ and how they assimilated into Thai culture. These groups might include the Teochiu, Hakka, Hainanese, Cantonese and Hokkien.

2. To study whether the Chinese vegetarian festival is and or was related to Chinese secret societies in Thailand and how they have used the festival as a tool to achieve their ends.



สถาบันวิทยบริการ  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

## REFERENCES

### Thai

Ar-han Che Peur Sukaphap (Che Food for Health). Daily News (21 October B.E. 2541): 5.

Chaiyuth Pinradap. Kathu Vegetarian Festival in Phuket. Phuket: Kathu shrine, 1996. (Mimeographed)

Chaiyuth Pinradap. The Custom of Eating Vegetables. Phuket: Visate, 1997.

Chittra Kornantakiatti, Rueang Chin Lai Rueang Nueng Rueang Mi Lai Tam Ra (Chinese Myths). Bangkok: Chittra Publisher, 2004.

Fuean Dokbua, Satsanapiaptiap (Comparative World Religion). Bangkok: Burapasarn, 1996.

Fucuspaktai. 2006. "Kin Che Thua Tai Khuek Khak Hat Yai – Phuket Fan Phan Lan" [Online]. Available from: [http://www.focuspaktai.com/index.php?file=news&obj=news.view\(id=8588\)\[2007, May, 8\]](http://www.focuspaktai.com/index.php?file=news&obj=news.view(id=8588)[2007, May, 8])

Jui Tui Tao Bo Keang Chinese Temple, Phuket 22- 30 October, 2006 (Brochure)

Kin Che Pi 48 (Eating Che 2005), Post Today (29 September B.E. 2548): 9.

Kin Che Lang Guy – Lang Jai Su Phai Settakit (Eating Che Pure Body – Mind with Economic). Khaosod (20 October B.E. 2541): 6.

Lois Mitchison, The Overseas Chinese. Translated by Kamol Juntrarasorn. Bangkok: Odean Stores, 1966.

Pholkul Ungkinun. The Chinese Role in Thailand During the Reign of King Rama V.  
Bangkok: Srinakarinwiroj University Press, 1972.

Phuwadol Songprasert. Akekaphap: Tham Klang Kham Taek Yaek Nai Pak Tai  
(Identity: Among Oversea Chinese in Southern Thailand). Bangkok: Higher,  
2005.

Pit thanon Yaowarat Kin Che Sip Wan. Bangkok Post Online edition (October 19,  
2004)

Sawang Rattanamongkolmart. Anaxhot Khong Samakhom Chin Nai Prathetthai (The  
Future of Chinese Associations in Thailand). In Kajadphai Burutphat (ed.),  
Chinese in Thailand, p.236. Bangkok: Phrae Pittaya International, 1974.

Suchada Tantasurareuk. Phoi Kuan: Kan Song Ngoen Klap Prathet Doi Chao Chin  
Phon Thale Nai Prathetthai (Financial of The Oversea Chinese in Thailand).  
Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University press, 1989.

Suparat Lertpanichkul, Triad societies in Thailand 1824-1910. Master's thesis,  
Department of Arts, Graduate School, Chulalongkorn University, 1981.

Sutivong Phongphaiboon, Dilok Wutthipanich and Prasit Chinnakarn. Southern  
Chinese: Ways and Dynamics. Bangkok: The Thailand Research Fund, 1997.

Thet Sa Kan Thuea Sin Kin Che. Manager Online edition (October 4, 2002)

Vallapha Burutphat, Khan Pen Ma Khong Chao Chin Nai Prathetthai (Causes of  
Chinese in Thailand). In Kajadphai Burutphat (ed.), Chinese in Thailand,  
p. 23. Bangkok: Phrae Pittaya International, 1974.

## English

Annette Hamilton, Kuan Im, Nine Emperor Gods, and Chinese “Spirit” in Southern Thailand. Paper presented at 7<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Thai Studies. (July 1999): 10.

Berlin, J. A. 2005. Dao/Taoism[Online]. Available from:

<http://askasia.org/teachers/essays/essays.php?no=40&era=&grade=&geo=>  
[2007, February 14]

Chung, D.K. Confucianism [Online]. (n.d.). Available from:

<http://www.thespiritualsanctuary.org/Confucianism/Confucianism.html>[2007,  
March 1]

“Cited in Strenghs”, Nation (16 October 2002): 4.

Cohen, F.G. A Synopsis of the Ethics of Confucianism [Online]. (n.d.). Available from: <http://www.thespiritualsanctuary.org/Confucianism.html>[2007, March 1]

Dominquez, J. 2006. Taoism[Online]. Available from: <http://www.religion-cults.com/Eastern/Taoism/taoism.htm#TAOISM>[2007, February 14]

Erik Cohen. The Chinese Vegetarian Festival in Phuket: Religion, Ethnicity and Tourism on a Southern Thai Island. Thailand: White Lotus, 2001.

George William Skinner. Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History. New York: Cornell University Press, 1957.

Gove G. Elder. Ritual and Chinese ethnicity in Mahachai, Thailand. Doctoral dissertation, Philosophy Department of Anthropology University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.1982.

- Jacques Amyot, The Chinese and the National Integration in Southeast Asia. Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Institute of Asian Studies, 1972.
- John Blofeld. Taoism: The Quest for Immortality. London: Unwin Paperbacks, 1979.
- John M. Thompson. Introduction to the World's Major Religions. London: Greenwood, 2006.
- Jovan Maud. The Nine Emperor Gods at the Border: Transnational Culture, Alternate Modes of Practice, and the Expansion of the Vegetarian Festival in Hat Yai. In Wattana Sugunnasil (ed.), Dynamic Diversity in Southern Thailand, pp. 164-165. Prince of Songkla University, Pattani Campus: Silkworm Books, 2005.
- Kenneth Perry Landon. The Chinese in Thailand. USA: Russell & Russell, 1973.
- Lea E. Williams. The Future of the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia. United States of America: McGraw-Hill, 1996.
- Lois Mitchison, The Overseas Chinese. London: The Bodley Head, 1961.
- Phuket Gazette. 2005. 'Mazhofu' to allay tourists' worries [Online]. Available from: <http://www.phuketgazette.com/news/index.asp?fromsearch=yes&Id=4476>[2005, October, 10]
- Saranya Suksawat. 2003. Phuket Vegetarian Festival [Online]. Available from: [http://www.thaiwaysmagazine.com/thai\\_article/2012\\_phuket\\_vegetarian/phuket\\_vegetarian.html](http://www.thaiwaysmagazine.com/thai_article/2012_phuket_vegetarian/phuket_vegetarian.html)[2007, February 21]
- Taoism: All in one and one in all?[Online]. (n.d.). Available from: <http://www.exposingsatanism.org/taoism.htm> [2007, February 14]



Taoism and the Philosophy of Tai Chi Chuan[Online]. (n.d.). Available from:  
<http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/Philosophy/Taichi/lao.html> [2007, February 14]

Taotong Seamlor. Vegetarianism. Sinlapa-Wathanatham 12(September-October  
1991: 63-64.

Tourism Authority of Thailand, Destination Guide: General Information in  
Phuket[Online]. (n.d.). Available from: <http://tourismthailand.org> [2007,  
March 15]

Tourist Organization of Thailand. Masterplan & Feasibility Study Tourism  
Development of Phuket. Bangkok: Tourist Organization of Thailand, 1979.  
(Mimeographed)

Victor Purcell. The Chinese in Southeast Asia. London: Oxford University Press,  
1965.

Welch, H., and Seidel, A. Introduction, H. Welch and A. Seidel (eds.). Facets of  
Taoism: Essays in Chinese Religion. United States of America: Yale  
University, 1979.

สถาบันวิทยบริการ  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย



**APPENDICES**

สถาบันวิทยบริการ  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

Appendices 1: Tong Youg Su Shrine in Kathu, Phuket, Thailand.



จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

**Appendices 2: The Vegetarian festival program on 22- 30 October 2006, Jui Tui Shrine, Phuket, Thailand. It was translated in 3 languages – Thai, English, and Chinese.**



สถาบันวิทยบริการ  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย



สถาบันวิทยบริการ  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

**Appendices 3: Guest Arrivals at Accommodation Establishment in Phuket 2004 and 2005.**



สถาบันวิทยบริการ  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

Source: Tourism Authority of Thailand: Region 4



Source: Tourism Authority of Thailand: Region 4  
ศาลาชั้นวิหิตยประภคกร  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

## Glossary

Cai	Mandarin Chinese: “vegetables”
Che	Teochiew Chinese: “vegetables”
hu	Hokkien Chinese: “a yellow incantation cloth or paper”
huat kua	Hokkien Chinese: “ Taoist prayer leader”
Kiu Ong Tai Tae	Hokkien Chinese: “Nine Emperor Gods”
Ko Teng	Chinese: “tall lantern pole” made from bamboo and consists of nine lamps.
Lam Tao	Hokkien Chinese: “God of Brith”
lochu	Hokkien Chinese: “priest’s assistant”
ma song	Thai: “spirit medium”
Pak Tao	Hokkien Chinese: “God of Death”
phi liang	Thai: “the spirit medium’s assistance”
sai Sin	Thai: “holy yellow string”
Tek Hu	Chinese: “symbolic of territory” made from bamboo with the name of deities”
Yok Ong Song Tae	Hokkien Chinese: “Jade Emperor”



## BIOGRAPHY

Kaewkarn Silhiphat was born in Bangkok, Thailand. She graduated from Prince of Songkla University, Phuket, Thailand with a bachelor degree in Hotel and Tourism Management in 2004. In the same year, she enrolled in the Master program in Southeast Asian Studies at Chulalongkorn University, Thailand.



สถาบันวิทยบริการ  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย