PRELUDE TO IRONY THE PRINCETON THEOLOGY AND THE PRACTICE OF AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN MISSIONS IN NORTHERN SIAM, 1867-1880

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CHAPTER FIVE
Theology, Ideology, and the Church

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Introduction

Even before the mission baptized its first convert, it turned its attention to the establishment of a church, and, in the process, confronted two major crises, in 1869 and 1878. Each crisis involved a political confrontation between the mission and the Chiang Mai state government that reflected, at a deeper level, a conflict between systems of meaning. Conservative political forces feared the missionaries' new religion because it seemed bent on overturning the religion of the people, thus undermining one of the pillars of social and political stability. State repression of the early Christian community represented one of northern Thai society's most important responses to missionary evangelism. State-church tensions also highlighted the Laos Mission's attempt to introduce its own system of doctrines and meanings into Chiang Mai while eschewing any contextualization of that system. As we will see in what follows, the group most immediately affected by that attempt was the first generation of northern Thai Christians.

This chapter focuses on the crises of 1869 and 1878 as well as key events in the founding of the church in the intervening years. In 1869, Chao Kawilorot, the Prince of Chiang Mai, successfully interrupted the initial formation of a northern Thai church and delayed its effective establishment for nearly a decade; in 1878, his ideological heirs failed to halt the church's permanent emergence. By 1880, thus, the Laos Mission successfully instituted a stable, growing northern Thai church, but at great cost and in ways that ultimately precluded any large migration from traditional religion to the "Jesus religion."

Martyrs' Blood

Introduction

Apart from the arrival of the McGilvarys in Chiang Mai in 1867 and the conversion of Nan Inta in 1868, Chao Kawilorot's brutal suppression of the first community of northern Thai converts in September 1869 stands as the most important single event in the history of the Laos Mission and its churches. It halted the foundation and formation of the church for several years and, consequently, fundamentally altered the mission's relationship to its converts. In the course of events, it also exemplified the impact of the mission's Princeton-like system of doctrines and meanings on the course of northern Thai mission and church history. Although grim and bloody in its consequences, the persecution of September 1869 was in part a cognitive event, a clash of meanings that had severe consequences for the Laos Mission and its churches.

Events Leading Up to the Persecution of 1869

From the very first, the Laos Mission lived in the shadow of Chao Kawilorot's reputation as a man best not trifled with, a man with a keen sense of his own prerogatives. Although not present when the McGilvarys arrived in Chiang Mai in April 1867, his reputation was such that as soon as they began to preach their new religion, a rumor spread among the people that anyone employed by the McGilvarys would be punished in some unknown but severe way. Their language teacher immediately quit. Chao Kawilorot, on his return, however, showed them nothing but kindness and everything seemed fine between him and the mission; but as time passed, Kawilorot quietly grew more suspicious and resentful of the missionaries. For a time he even employed a foreign advisor who sought to undermine the McGilvarys' standing with the ruling class and the people.[1] The Laos Mission, in the meantime, went about the task of establishing its first church, made possible by the visit of Dr. Samuel R. House of the Siam Mission in early 1868. The minutes of the church, written by McGilvary, record that,

> The committee appointed by the Presbytery of Siam to organize a church in Chiengmai met at the house of Rev. J. Wilson on the evening of Saturday April 18th 1868. Prayer was offered by Rev. D. McGilvary, chairman of the committee. Rev. J. Wilson was appointed secretary. Mrs. Sophia Bradley McGilvary presented a letter of dismission from the church in Petchaburi. And as Mrs. Kate M. Wilson is known to be a member of the church in good standing and though the letter of dismission for which she applied to the church of Bethlehem Pa. has failed to reach her, on motion She and Mrs. McGilvary were received as members of the newly constituted church, to be known as The First Presbyterian of Chiengmai. It was resolved that the government and discipline of this church be for the present committed to the ordained members of the Chiengmai Mission.[2]

The new church worshipped officially for the first time the next day, April 19th, when it administered the sacrament of baptism to the Wilsons' and McGilvarys' newly born infants, Margaret Wilson and Cornelia McGilvary. Dr. House, himself a clergyman, then conducted communion, "it being the first time the sacraments of the church were ever administered in this land."[3]

The founding of the Chiang Mai Church surely appeared to the Wilsons and McGilvarys to be a normal, expected event that required no elaborate explanation, such as McGilvary gave for the importance of missionary medicine (See Chapter Four). It does strike one as odd, however, that the new church's only officers were the missionary men, its only members the missionary women, and its only baptisms were of missionary children. Further reflection uncovers additional oddities, particularly in the context of nineteenth-century Chiang Mai, such as the fact that the ecclesiastical forms, structures, and procedures involved were all American Presbyterian and the first language of the church was English. The formation of the Chiang Mai Church, that is, took place at a substantial cultural distance from its northern Thai social context and poses questions

not unlike those we began with in the Introduction. Why did the mission establish a church in such a blatantly foreign way? Why did it show so little interest in drawing on religious resources from its cultural context in order to fit its infant church to its social and cultural setting? As far as we can tell, these questions never even occurred to the McGilvarys and Wilsons, a point that reinforces the impression that they operated from a set of assumptions that grew out of their own system of doctrines and meanings. They simply took Presbyterian polity as a given, a system of church order based on Scripture that required no adaptation to the different situation in Chiang Mai. In Chiang Mai's "heathen" context, indeed, their system of meanings and doctrines precluded any idea of adapting Presbyterian forms to northern Thai sensibilities, which they believed to be "benighted" and "enslaved" to the forces of evil. Commonsense thinking would have also encouraged them to ignore the fact that American Presbyterianism was historically and culturally conditioned and to assume that they could use Presbyterian forms in Chiang Mai as well as American churches used them in Pennsylvania or North Carolina. Missionary ideology and theology, we will recall, was a closed, reified system with a keen sense of sharply defined boundaries. Such a system virtually dictated an American ecclesiastical order for the churches of the Laos Mission. Closed systems do not adapt their forms and structures to cultural contexts believed to stand beyond the doctrinal and ideological pale of the system itself.

The writings of Alexander T. McGill, one of McGilvary and Wilson's professors at Princeton, reinforce our sense that his former students took a closed system of meanings and doctrines to Chiang Mai that automatically rejected the contextualization of ecclesiastical structures and procedures. McGill particularly compares the democratic institutions of the Presbyterian Church to the American government, writing, "The Church begins in heaven; the State begins on earth. The Church begins with unity, the State with multiplicity. The Church is founded on one divine 'Rock'; the State is founded on many minute constituencies of men."[4] He implicitly identifies, that is, the Presbyterian Church with the true Church and the Church with Heaven, the sacred realm of everything that is eternal and unchanging. The church stands thus far above the state and culture even in America. It is difficult to believe that McGill's two former students in Chiang Mai would have thought any differently about the relationship between church and state in that context.

The decision to found the Chiang Mai Church at some social and cultural distance from the city's people, however, did not initially intrude on the development of a northern Thai church; things went generally well for the rest of 1868 and into 1869. We have already told the tale of Nan Inta's conversion and admission into the church as its first northern Thai member. McGilvary later claimed that Nan Inta's "…defection from Buddhism produced a profound impression among all classes. Emboldened by his example, secret believers became more open. Not the number alone, but the character of the enquirers attracted attention."[5] He reported that prospective converts included at least one member of the extended royal family, another member of the rural petty ruling class, and several commoners. Interest in Christianity also spread to the neighboring state of Lamphun. The early months of 1869, thus, represented a time of great hope for the McGilvarys and Wilsons, the one dark cloud on the horizon being Chao Kawilorot. No one knew how he would react to the growing interest in Christianity of a number of his subjects. McGilvary took some comfort in the fact that during these months the Prince treated the missionaries kindly and threw up no hindrances to their work, but he still felt that matters would come to a head in 1869.[6] The increased interest in Christianity soon began to bear visible results as six more men joined the church between January and September 1869. On 2 May 1869 Boonma and Noi Sunya received baptism, followed by Saan Ya Wichai on June 27th and Nan Chai, Noi Kanta, and Poo Sang on August 1st. McGilvary claimed that many others were considering conversion and watching to see what Chao Kawilorot would do.[7] McGilvary and Wilson felt they stood on the verge of a "people’s movement," and many people assured them that if Chao Kawilorot did not move against the incipient Christian community, there would be

many more conversions. The audiences they addressed impressed the missionaries as being attentive and thoughtful. They felt the presence of God in their work, and McGilvary, at one point, declared enthusiastically that northern Siam was possibly the most promising Presbyterian mission field in the world. By September 1869, they had asked Siam Presbytery for permission to establish new churches at their own discretion, an act that showed they were preparing to receive many new converts.[8] Whether or not McGilvary and Wilson were correct in that assessment, Chao Kawilorot evidently agreed that "something" was indeed happening—something he did not like and wanted to halt as quickly as possible.

The Persecution

Both Nan Inta and Nan Chai, as we have already seen in Chapter Four, originally wished to "ease into" their new religious affiliation by undergoing a private rather than public baptism, but McGilvary and Wilson insisted in the strongest terms that duty required them to make a clear, public profession of their Christian faith. In northern Thai culture, an act conducted in private can be considered "unofficial" even though everyone knows it has taken place. It would appear that Nan Inta and Nan Chai were not asking to be "secret" Christians so much as private, unofficial ones. People would know that they had become Christians, so there was nothing secret in their conversion. Yet, by refraining from making a public break with Buddhist-animistic practices they would not offend the sensibilities of their neighbors, thereby also avoiding the official notice of the authorities. McGilvary and Wilson would not have made a distinction between a secret and an unofficial follower of Christ; the converts were forbidden from making any compromise with their former beliefs. Nan Inta and Nan Chai had proposed to their foreign mentors a northern Thai process for conversion that sought to avoid an abrupt break with society and confrontation with political authority. In their general social and immediate political context, such an approach seemed eminently sensible to them, but it did not fit the missionaries' ideological and theological understanding of what it meant to convert—to cross over, that is, a clear boundary from superstition to truth. In this particular case, the missionaries' insistence on their approach led to grievous consequences for the converts.

Hodge addresses the question of "soft" conversions in *The Way of Life*, a popular evangelical treatise that we may presume several pioneer members of the Laos Mission had read at one time or another. His strictures against such conversions help us to understand Wilson and McGilvary's handling of the matter in Chiang Mai. Realizing that some Christians may want to hide their conversion for various reasons, Hodge rejects that option out of hand. Christians, he argues, have public obligations that require an open confession. Hodge condemns those who try to escape those obligations for their weak faith and claims that a large portion of converts must face the pain of ridicule and chastisement. Christianity, he states flatly, cannot remain hidden. The Bible, if nothing else, demands public profession. In words that take on a particular force in light of the Laos Mission's context in Chiang Mai, he insists that converts take Christ as their King and profess their allegiance publicly. They take Christ as their father and must give him public honor and obedience. He states,

> But what kind of worshipper is he who is ashamed or afraid to acknowledge his God? All the relations, therefore, in which a Christian stands to Christ, as his king, as the head of the family of God and as the object of divine worship, involve the necessity of confessing him before men; and we practically reject him in all these relations by neglecting or refusing this public profession of him and his religion.

Being a Christian, Hodge argues further, cannot be hidden in any event because Christians have to behave in ways utterly alien to general social conventions. He writes, "This is one of the reasons why the people of God are called saints. They are distinguished, separated from others and consecrated to God. When they cease to be distinguished from those around them, they cease

to be saints."[9] Hodge concludes with the unequivocal statement concerning every convert's confession of faith that, "This confession must be made public; it must be made before men; it must be made with the mouth, and not left to be inferred from the conduct."[10]

McGilvary and Wilson never elaborated on their refusal to entertain the notion of a "back door" or "soft" conversion. It took Hodge, a man with the theological training and time, to work out precisely why a convert must confess her or his faith publicly; but whether in Chiang Mai or Princeton, the system of doctrines and meanings was the same. We see that similarity in Hodge's words and the Laos Mission's actions—both of which were premised on an inviolable principle, rooted in an absolute, dualistic distinction between the heathen and the saved, and envisioned conversion as walking publicly across a pencil-thin boundary between the two.

There is no evidence that Wilson and McGilvary, however, intended to challenge Chao Kawilorot's political authority. They came from a secular state where religion legally was largely a personal matter, one that did not normally impinge upon one's loyalty to the state itself. Dr. A. A. Hodge summed up the American Presbyterian doctrine on the question of church-state relations by asserting that the two are entirely independent from each other and have quite different purposes. He writes, "But neither the officers nor the laws of either have any authority within the sphere of the other."[11] Chao Kawilorot and the earliest converts came from a very different polity, one in which ritual and religion played an official role in the affairs of state. It was impossible that Chao Kawilorot would see things as the missionaries (or the Hodges) did, and he watched the expanding interest in the new religion with close attention and growing alarm. He felt threatened. He had not, we must surmise, expected his people to pay any more attention to Christianity than had the people of Bangkok, and he must have been taken aback when men of the quality of Nan Inta and Nan Chai decided to convert. He must also have been aware that others, including some members of the ruling classes, claimed an interest in the new religion, and he surely felt that their interest challenged his power in a number of ways. First, it threatened to remove Christian converts from the influence of the rituals that legitimized his political power. Second, the missionaries' insistence that converts not work on Sundays undermined the social control and status of the whole ruling class, not least of all his own. Third, in light of these first two points, it must have appeared to Chao Kawilorot that the missionaries were setting themselves up as a new patron class. Ratanaphorn observes,

> The rulers of the Northern States, therefore, claimed legitimacy by serving the ritual function of mediating between peasant communities and the state spirits. They were the only ones who could perform the worship of state spirits from which common people were excluded. In this manner, they were able to establish a patronage relationship with the peasants. Their ceremonial function, in return for tribute and respect from the peasants, guaranteed crop fertility and protection from misfortune.[12]

Vachara argues that the Prince's role as benefactor of Buddhist temples "provided him with the most significant legitimizing force to his rule, ensuring his power and enabling him to be more effective in ruling the kingdom."[13] The conversion of hundreds, rather than a mere handful, to Christianity could have seriously undermined Chao Kawilorot's authority, or so he had to believe, since the people would no longer depend on him for protecting them from the powers of the spirits.

There was more at stake than just the power of a single ruler. Davis points out that historically Buddhism united the *chao* and the *phrai*, the rulers and the people, in a single socio-religious system that provided society with a rich literature, cosmology, philosophy, and social ethic. Buddhism comprised the most dynamic factor in the creation of northern Thai ritual, and the ruling class, especially the Prince, functioned as the protectors of this whole way of life.[14]

Christianity, in the light of all of this, threatened social and political chaos by loosening the bonds of the authority of the state.

The mission and the state entered into a profound conflict based on incompatible religious and ideological differences that neither side felt it could compromise. McGilvary and Wilson insisted that their converts make a clean and complete break with Buddhism as a precondition to conversion. They did not see the act of conversion as a political one. Chao Kawilorot insisted with equal single-mindedness that religion and state were one. Conversion constituted rebellion. Matters were bound to come to a head, but when they did, it was over what would appear to have been one of the finer points of missionary thought, the keeping of the Sabbath.

Once Nan Inta converted, both he and the mission had to decide how to deal with Christian strictures against working on Sunday in a society where the patron classes felt free to call on the labor of their clients at almost any time. Only two weeks after his baptism, Nan Inta's patron, Chao Tepawong, called him to work on a Sunday. McGilvary writes,

> He [Nan Inta] sent word back that if his master insisted on the work he might hire a man in his place for which he would pay, or if he would wait he would work any number of days afterwards; but he begged his Sabbath. On Monday morning he went in and found his master in good humor, and he asked him about the change in his views, with all pleasantness, which gave him an opportunity of explaining it himself. Since then he has called very pleasantly on me, when we both had a long talk on the same subject. It was a noble sight to see such a stand taken the first time for God and the Sabbath[15]

Nan Inta's behavior constituted a gross violation of the principle of corvée. Chao Tepawong, however, reacted with patience, even though at one point he did express some displeasure at the limitations Sabbath observance placed on his right to Nan Inta’s labor. He also discussed the whole matter very carefully with Nan Inta and with the missionaries. McGilvary seems to have felt that Chao Tepawong’s interest was a positive thing, but one wonders whether, as a senior member of the government and confidant of Chao Kawilorot and other known opponents of the missionaries, he was not actually gathering information for Chao Kawilorot.[16]

Tampering with Chiang Mai's corvee system of labor was a dangerous enterprise. McGilvary and Wilson understood the significance of that system quite clearly and knew they took a risk in insisting upon Sabbath observance; they willingly took that risk, however, because of the crucial significance of the day to their religious system. Charles Hodge, their >mentor at Princeton, provides important insights into why the Laos Mission felt so strongly about not working on Sundays that it was willing to risk Chao Kawilorot's displeasure over the issue. Hodge argues that the keeping of the Sabbath is a matter of fundamental importance, first, because the Sabbath is a divinely given institution commanded in the Bible. Those who believe in the Bible must observe it. Second, keeping the Sabbath provides a time for the study of the Bible and other sacred literature, as well as time for worship. Knowledge of and a meaningful relationship with God, thus, both depend on it. Third, God designed the Sabbath to fit the spiritual, social, and physical needs of the human race, and any people who fail to take advantage of it soon degenerates into an ignorant, idolatrous, and superstitious mob, hopeless of any good in this life or of salvation in the life to come.[17] In his 1859 article in the *Princeton Review* urging the need for Sunday closing laws, Hodge lays down a series of injunctions concerning the Sabbath, including, "Christianity is a law of life; a law of Divine authority; it binds the conscience, it must therefore be obeyed by those who profess to be Christians." He continues, "They cannot deliberately violate any of its injunctions without doing violence to their own consciences, and forfeiting their allegiance to God." Again, "If a set of men believe in God and

the moral law, it is self-evident that they must obey that law, not only as individuals, but in all the associations into which they may enter." He goes on, "Christians are bound to recognize the authority of Christianity in their government acts. They must do it." Hodge continues, furthermore, by arguing that, "It is expedient to obey God. If he has enjoined the observance of the Sabbath, all who recognize his authority, will feel that it is expedient, best for the interests of society, that the day should be observed." And, finally, he states, "…Christians, in all their relations and associations, should have reverence to the law of God as revealed in his word, as their rule of action."[18] Hodge returned to his emphasis on the necessity of Christians observing the Sabbath in his *Systematic Theology*, where he states flatly, "Any community or class of men who ignore the Sabbath and absent themselves from the sanctuary, as a general thing, become heathen. They have little more true religious knowledge than pagans. But without such knowledge morality is impossible." [19]

Hodge lodged his concern for the Sabbath squarely within his system of doctrines and meanings, arguing that observing the Sabbath is biblical, necessary to the knowledge of God and evangelical piety, in accord with human nature, and a divine command. Faithful >Christians have no choice in the matter. They must observe the Sabbath. Wilson and McGilvary's insistence that their converts refrain from working on the Sabbath thus represented a central theological and moral concern for Princeton as well as for them. McGilvary writes of Nan Inta's refusal to perform corvée labor on the Sabbath that, "It was a spectacle over which angels must have stooped with interest to see the first stand that had ever been taken by a native Laos in favor of God and the Sabbath." Wilson writes of Chao Tepawong's patient response to Nan Inta, "And here again the hand of the Lord was visible in causing the Sabbath question to pass its first test under such favorable circumstances."[20] They believed that God intervened to give the mission a victory in the question of keeping the Sabbath and that the whole matter had a cosmic dimension, the very angels of heaven giving their attention to the event. Equally to the point, they felt that when Nan Inta refused to work on Sunday, he was taking a stand, not just for a doctrine, but also for God.

The mission chose a poor time, however, to insist on the strict observance of the Christian Sabbath. By the 1860s, Chao Kawilorot found himself embroiled in conflict with British teak companies over logging rights in his forests, a confrontation that threatened his political power and economic security to the extent that at one point he attacked a logging camp, killing four loggers and wounding four others.[21] The mission, by the same token, appeared to him to be setting itself up as a new, alternative system of patronage by controlling the labor of its converts—representing still another attack on his authority and the economic well-being and stability of his state. McGilvary later noted that,

> In the light of subsequent events we now know that the most dangerous element in the gathering storm was the angry surprise of the Prince himself at the discovery that the old order seemed actually passing away under his very eyes; that his will was no longer supreme in men's minds, nor always consulted in their actions.[22]

Whatever his particular thoughts, Kawilorot acted decisively, forcefully, and effectively to put a halt to the new religion, and when he had finished, two men were dead and the Christian community was broken, its remnant in hiding.

The martyrdom of Nan Chai and Noi Sunya in September 1869 can be summarized briefly here.[23] Lulled into a false sense of security by the assurances of members of the royal family, the McGilvarys and Wilsons believed that Chao Kawilorot had decided to allow the new religion to grow unmolested, where, in fact, the Prince was simply waiting for an appropriate moment to act.[24] On Monday morning, 13 September 1869, a party of armed men collected two of the Christians, Nan Chai and Noi Sunya, and brought them before a local official, who accused

them, on trumped up charges, of having committed certain crimes. The two men were beaten. Based on information the missionaries obtained later, Wilson relates that after they had been beaten,

> The arms of the prisoners were tied behind their backs. Their necks were compressed between two pieces of timber (the death-yoke) tied before and behind so tightly as painfully to impede both respiration and the circulation of the blood. They were thus placed in a sitting posture near a wall, and cords were passed through the holes in their ears and tied to a beam above. In this constrained and painful position—not able to turn their heads or bow them in slumber—they remained from Monday afternoon till Tuesday morning about ten o-clock, when they were led out into the jungle and executed.[25]

Their families had been helpless to intervene. Although Nan Chai's wife did stay with him for a time, the authorities prevented her from going to Wilson and McGilvary. On the evening of 13 September 1869, the servants of both mission families suddenly left without a word of explanation. All they would say was that if Nan Chai did not turn up in a few days, the missionaries should be concerned. Having been quietly warned, Nan Inta fled Chiang Mai and wandered about the countryside for some months. One other convert, San Ya Wichai, was hauled before the *chao muang,* or Prince, of Lamphun, condemned to death for being a Christian, and saved only by the timely intervention of his own patron, the son of the Prince.[26]

With these events, the two mission families, the Wilsons and the McGilvarys, entered into a period of intense anxiety, made only worse by a lack of information, the large number of rumors abroad in Chiang Mai, and their inability to communicate with Bangkok. They responded to all of this as calmly and passively as possible; all they could do was to wait on events.[27] News of their situation did reach the Bangkok government and the Siam Mission, and after worried consultations, the King dispatched an official representative with vice-regal powers *(kha luang*) in November; the mission sent along two of its own members with the Siamese government party.[28] They finally reached Chiang Mai on Monday, 27 December 1869, and the next day had an audience with Chao Kawilorot, at which time McGilvary stood before the Prince and charged him with the murder of two Christians. At first, Kawilorot angrily denied that they had been executed on religious grounds, but,

> When pressed a little closely on that point, so that he found he could not deny it, he declared before us all, in the most defiant manner, that he had done it and would kill every man that should dare to become a Christian—that he regarded every man who rebelled against his god as a rebel against himself.[29]

In the wake of this bitter confrontation, both the *kha luang* and the Bangkok mission representatives urged the McGilvarys and Wilsons to leave Chiang Mai, fearing for their lives, but over the next few months matters settled down into something of a routine. Chao Kawilorot comported himself in a relatively friendly manner, although he made it clear that he would eventually expel the two families.[30] Officials in Chiang Mai later informed the missionaries that Kawilorot might be willing to have them remain if they would only engage in medicine and refrain from teaching religion. They rejected this offer out of hand, as we have seen, and McGilvary affirmed that, "…all the king's money would not have induced us to come here for any other purpose than to teach Christianity—that is now and must always be our principal business here."[31] As it turned out, the Siamese government called Chao Kawilorot down to Bangkok on other business. While there he became seriously ill, and although he hurried back to Chiang Mai, he failed to reach the city and died on 29 June 1870. Within some 24 hours of Chao Kawilorot's death, Chao Inthawichaiyanon ("Chao Intanon" to the missionaries), his son-in-law and successor, assured McGilvary that the missionaries were free to remain and carry out their

work without hindrance.[32]

It required months and then years before the Laos Mission's situation returned to a semblance of normality, particularly with respect to the development of a stable, growing Christian community. The four surviving converts kept their distance from the missionaries, and by mid-year 1870, two of them, Noi Kanta and Boonma, permanently withdrew from the church. The missionaries themselves, meanwhile, continued to receive numerous visitors and McGilvary went about his medical work, much as before. Kawilorot's death, however, fundamentally changed the mission's situation, and at some point during July 1870 Nan Inta quietly renewed his relationship with the Wilsons and McGilvarys; the mission, nonetheless, had powerful enemies, and the people of Chiang Mai continued to refrain from displays of interest in the Christian religion.[33]

Conclusion

Coleman, we will recall, complained that the nineteenth-century American Presbyterian missionaries he studied articulated only a rudimentary version of the Princeton Theology. Missionary behavior, methods, and activities up to 1870, however, make it clear that the Laos Mission founded its work on a complex, interlocking cognitive system much richer than Coleman suggests. That the mission's written records reveal only the tip of that theological and ideological system does not mean the system did not exist. It is notable, for example, that before the events of September 1869, the mission based its decisions on clear and non-negotiable principles, namely, that conversion to Christianity had to be public and Christians must keep the Sabbath. The converts, that is, had to "cross over" the boundary from traditional northern Thai religion to Christianity in a single, visible step, and they must thereafter act according to a foreign behavioral pattern mandated by the mission's foreign system of doctrines and meanings. From these principles, it is not difficult to work back to the mission's closed, Old School, and evangelical system of meanings and doctrines as exemplified by and, to a degree, taken directly from the Princeton Theology—a system characterized by its dualistic world view, Enlightenment epistemology, universal understanding of truth, and profound concern for defining and defending doctrinal boundaries.

During the agonizing months after September 1869, McGilvary and Wilson both wrote letters to the Board reaffirming the importance of their system of doctrines and meanings and avowing that they relied heavily on their theological beliefs to comfort them and help them make sense of Chao Kawilorot's actions. Wilson avowed that God would lead them through their time of trouble and, more broadly, that all hearts are in God's hands. The murder of Nan Chai and Noi Sunya only confirmed for him the "fact" that northern Siam was a "benighted land." He called on people in the United States to "Pray for this persecuting king. Pray for these benighted & down trodden Laos." In the face of the possibility of having to leave Chiang Mai, Wilson felt that their decision to stay or go amounted to nothing less than discerning God's will in the matter.[34] With Chao Kawilorot away in Bangkok and the fate of the Laos Mission still uncertain, McGilvary wrote in mid-February 1870 that, "…we are just waiting to see what God will have us to do and we cannot tell till the King's return. But present duty is still as plain as ever. We can trust God's love to us and his people and the Laos for the future." [35] God is sovereign. God leads. God has a will. The faithful can discern that will. God has a people. God is love. God is trustworthy. McGilvary and Wilson's statements were not merely formal expressions of dogma; they stood as operating principles that provided the two Presbyterian families with the patience and endurance to persevere under profoundly trying circumstances. In that sense, they recall McGilvary's affirmation that the fundamental doctrines of Calvinism both strengthened missionaries and helped them to understand the situations they faced.

Apart from their system of meanings and doctrines, Wilson and McGilvary's refusal to

allow private conversions and their insistence that the converts must refuse their patrons' lawful calls for service on Sundays make little sense. Everyone, including the missionaries themselves, understood that Kawilorot was a dangerous man, zealous in the protection of his rights and power. The mission played with fire when it challenged the state religion and the fundamental social and political structure of Kawilorot's patronage, and it paid a substantial price as a consequence. The persecution of September 1869 effectively halted the emergence of the church in northern Siam for nearly a decade, nipped in the bud a potential "people's movement" towards Christianity, severely reduced interest in Christianity among people of all classes, and led to the total domination of the weakened northern Thai church by the mission.[36] According to the constraints of missionary ideology and theology, however, Wilson and McGilvary behaved in an entirely reasonable and correct manner; as dangerous as Kawilorot might have been, they believed that rebellion against God was vastly more perilous than challenging the power of a mere prince.

Interregnum

Introduction

The Laos Mission, with the death of Chao Kawilorot in June 1870, entered a peculiar period in its history. It had no Christian community to speak of, the authorities remained discreetly aloof, and the mission's members could only lay plans for the future and try out various strategies that had few immediate results. Things went on like this for some six years, until the mission began to experience a renewal of its work and hopes in 1875 and 1876.

In the months after June 1870, meanwhile, an event took place that symbolized the cultural differences between the mission and the people of Chiang Mai. Upon the accession of the new Prince, Chao Intanon, the mission immediately approached him concerning the problem of the status of its property. Chao Kawilorot had given the mission a site as a gift, with the understanding that they could not own the land legally since, according to the law, the Prince owned all land. The piece of property he gave the mission, however, was land he had taken away from others without compensation. He left the mission thus with neighbors who bitterly resented them, and the missionaries wanted Chao Intanon to allow them to pay for the property, expand it, and hold legal title to it. Chao Intanon, however, publicly sided with the mission's enemies, refusing it permission to buy land, hold title, and expand its site. Quietly and on the sly, however, he let it be known that the missionaries could give their neighbors compensation in the form of "gifts" and even expand their property by the same stratagem, just so long as no one spoke of buying and selling property. By December 1870, McGilvary could write, "We have since the accession of the new prince remunerated [the previous owners] for their places so that we have now a place that we can feel is by right as well as in fact our own." [37]

Chao Intanon's solution to the mission's property problems, in a strictly legal sense, changed nothing. The mission's enemies could lodge no accusations against the new Prince because he maintained his traditional rights over all property and did not allow the missionaries to purchase any land. Yet, he managed to accommodate the mission's desires by employing the principle that reality can be described in different ways using different words; buying and selling property is not *really* buying and selling unless we *say* it is. The contrast between this event and those related to the persecution of 1869 is striking. In this instance Wilson and McGilvary went along with the game and came away satisfied because, whatever they called it or did not call it, the mission had exchanged money for land. They refused, however, to consider Nan Inta's and Nan Chai's desire to follow a similar stratagem concerning conversion, that is to convert without calling the act "conversion." The purchase of property, apparently, did not involve theological or ideological principles while keeping the Sabbath and making public declarations of faith did. The missionaries, that is, could accept culturally appropriate ways of solving problems just so long as

those decisions did not impinge upon their system of doctrines and meanings.

Dormancy

After Chao Kawilorot died, as we have seen, Nan Inta quietly renewed his relationship with the missionaries, who presumed that San Ya Wichai also remained a Christian although they heard nothing from him. Two other Christians, Noi Kanta and Boonma, continued to absent themselves from any relationship with the missionaries. McGilvary hinted at some continuing discrete interest in Christianity among the people, but until April 1872, no one dared make a public profession of faith. There were no converts.[38] One person interested in Christianity told Wilson "an open profession of Christianity would cost him his head." This individual and several others asked to become what we have called "back door disciples," but the missionaries again adamantly refused to consider such an option, although they took comfort in the fact that some people were still attracted to Christianity.[39] Even Nan Inta's status is not entirely clear. In a letter written on 24 April 1872, Wilson indicates that Nan Inta was keeping his distance from the missionaries and not participating in mission activities. Wilson writes, "Whether his heart has become indifferent to the gospel, or whether the fear of his master keeps him away from our worship, we know not. We have long hoped for his return, but disappointment & sorrow are all that his present course brings us."[40] As of March 1872, then, the mission had no active converts.

During the month of April 1872, however, the situation changed somewhat for the better. On 7 April 1872, the mission received its first convert since September 1869. Then, on Sunday, April 21st, McGilvary and Vrooman, who were on their tour of the far north, unexpectedly met San Ya Wichai, who was traveling on a Sunday. Although the missionaries considered travel on the Sabbath sinful and instructed him to that affect, they were still glad to see him. He affirmed that he continued to consider himself a Christian. After this meeting, he went on to Chiang Mai, arriving Saturday evening, April 27th. He met Wilson, who heard for the first time how the Prince of Lamphun hauled San Ya Wichai into his presence and nearly had him executed. Sunday morning San Ya Wichai joined in worship and then Sunday evening Wilson held a special worship service. A few of San Ya Wichai’s traveling companions attended this service, and so, interestingly enough, did Nan Inta. It was a black, stormy evening with only a few persons present. They sat on the floor, and San Ya Wichai avowed his intention to remain a faithful Christian. He prostrated himself and prayed that God would provide him with food, the Holy Spirit would touch his friends, and that Jesus would come and set up his throne in the land. Wilson observed that San Ya Wichai prayed simply and in such a child-like manner that, "The Spirit of God must have been in that prayer." Nan Inta also prayed a moving prayer, and they closed the prayer meeting with hymns and injunctions to San Ya Wichai to lead a faithful Christian life. He left the next day.[41] From this time, Nan Inta evidently resumed his full place in the life of the church and the Laos Mission. He was again employed as a language teacher and Bible translator. Later in the year, McGilvary described him as meek, humble, faithful, and a good scholar who was "our brightest trophy of the power of the gospel."[42]

The closing days of 1872 brought a further modest increase in the number of members belonging to the Chiang Mai Church. Three men received baptism on 29 December 1872. They were Lung (Uncle) In, Lung Dang, and Noi Choi. Lung In had lived with the McGilvarys for about two years, for reasons unknown. Lung Dang had come to Vrooman’s hospital seeking cure for a disease the spirit doctors could not heal. At this same time, the church Session, meaning Wilson and McGilvary, dropped the three "old" members who had long ceased to participate in church life. These additions and subtractions left northern Thai membership standing at six, including Nan Inta, San Ya Wichai, and Nan Ta as well as the three baptized in December.[43] McGilvary, however, did not seem particularly enthusiastic about these converts and acknowledged that the years 1871 and 1872 had been filled with discouragement. The

McGilvarys and Wilsons had put a great deal of effort into their work, but they had little to show in return. Drawing once again on his system of doctrines and meanings, McGilvary stated that only his belief in biblical promise that Christianity must triumph throughout the world, including in Chiang Mai, sustained him.[44]

Early in January 1873, the McGilvary family left Chiang Mai for a long-awaited furlough, leaving the Wilsons and Dr. Vrooman behind in Chiang Mai. By June 1873, as we have seen, Vrooman left Chiang Mai and the Wilsons were entirely on their own. They felt lonely and pressured, and their situation became particularly difficult in September 1873 when the city experienced a great deal of illness and Wilson had to fill McGilvary's shoes by treating over a thousand people with quinine. There were no converts during 1873 or 1874, and two of the six active northern Thai members—Nan Ta and Lung Dang—died during Wilson's tenure. Nan Ta's death especially troubled Wilson because during his search for a cure Nan Ta allowed spirit doctors to perform their rites over him. In Wilson's eyes, Nan Ta had virtually rejected his Christian faith.[45] The year 1874, in any event, belonged entirely to the Wilsons, and by and large it went along much as the previous year had. Wilson described his tasks as "varied." He had to oversee the work of the mission compound. He visited people in their homes. He provided medicines to the ill. He spent some time most days teaching theology to Nan Inta. In June, Wilson wrote, "The people come as of old, and many an hour is given up to receiving their desultory visits."[46]

It was at the end of 1874, we will remember, that Wilson discovered Noi Choi also engaged in what Wilson took to be anti-Christian rites for the healing of his grandson (see Chapter Four). The mission time and again had to face the question of the boundaries between the insipient Christian community and Chiang Mai's larger cultural and social world as the northern Thai converts and potential converts repeatedly attempted to redraw those boundaries along lines that made more sense to them. More people, as we have already seen, would have converted if the mission had allowed "unofficial" conversions. It refused. Nan Ta, on his deathbed, went back to indigenous medical treatments, as did Noi Choi for his grandson's illness. They saw nothing "un-Christian" in doing so, but the mission did. The ideological and doctrinal "dialogue" between the mission and church, thus, took place over matters of life, health, risk, and death. The mission remained closed to all options but its own, an attitude made clear in its annual report for 1873. In that report, Wilson told the story of an elderly widow, from a village near the city, whose interest in Christianity led her to decided to convert. Her relatives, however, warned her concerning the dangerous consequences of abandoning spirit propitiation, and in the face of their threats, she abandoned her intention and returned to temple worship. She told Wilson that she still paid homage to Jesus every day. She, that is, opted for the soft, private conversion originally advocated by Nan Inta and Nan Chai in 1868. Wilson, of course, did not accept the validity of her decision. Her family, on the other hand, evidently did not care where she gave her personal religious loyalty so long as she participated in communal religious life, which life insured the safety of her family and community from evil spirits.[47]

The widow's personal decision to worship Jesus and her family's willingness to allow her to hold a private faith other than theirs so long as she remained a secure part of its ritual life calls to mind yet again Tongchai's description of the traditional Southeast Asian conception of political boundaries as overlapping power centers involving large swatches of territory rather than razor thin boundary lines. Her family would not allow the mission to lay down a boundary that destroyed its unity and ritual integrity. Where Wilson and his colleagues in the Laos Mission refused to permit any participation in Buddhist or animistic ritual, the northern Thai sense of communal unity demanded such participation. Those rites and practices tied community members to their ancestors and their past, allowed the community to live in harmony with the spiritual powers that inhabited their world, and provided an avenue for reconciliation when disputes arose.

They also provided for the well being of the community and the salvation of individuals through communal merit-making activities. Northern Thai communities, thus, rejected the Laos Mission's intention to create a second, religiously independent social structure in the North and refused to accept willingly the introduction into their midst of an alternative, exclusive ritual. They could not abide, in short, the thought of two mutually antagonistic religions in one community.[48] Potential converts to Christianity, as a consequence, faced two choices: they had to decide whether or not they found meaning in Christian teachings and faith, and they had to decide if they would divorce themselves from the religious life of their family and community, a life that lay at the heart of northern Thai society. After 1869, the great majority of individuals who faced this choice decided not to withdraw from the practices of their neighbors and ancestors; it is now impossible to know how many of them felt as the widow did.

Kosuke Koyama, we will remember, wondered if the northern Thai of McGilvary's time understood his message because he observed "how thoroughly strange and unrealistic—how 'western'—is the Christian vocabulary to the ears of my Thai neighbors!" If this case is any measure, the people of Chiang Mai understood a great deal of what they heard. The widow found meaning in Jesus and wanted to become a Christian. Her family understood the dangers her conversion posed for it and angrily opposed her taking that step. The widow and her family surely did not understand the mission's underlying system of meanings and doctrines, but they did understand something of both the positive and negative implications of that system for their own lives.

In mid-March 1875 and at the end of the Wilsons' difficult months alone in Chiang Mai, in the meantime, Wilson wrote a letter to the Board describing the Laos Mission's situation. It was a discouraging time, in spite of the return of the McGilvarys and the arrival of Dr. Cheek. He depicted the pervasive influence of animism in northern Thai life and society and how it insinuated itself into every part of daily life; and he enumerated the numerous hindrances the mission faced. Wilson concluded, however, on a more positive note by praying for a stronger faith and affirming his trust in God. He wrote, " [God] has good in store for this land. He will gather his chosen ones unto himself. Not one shall be lost."[49] Like McGilvary, Wilson found strength and comfort in the doctrines of Reformed confessionalism, doctrines such as divine grace and divine election.

Church life continued to languish. One important event did take place, however, when the church held its first congregational meeting on 10 April 1875, to elect Nan Inta as its first northern Thai elder. Presbyterian polity recognized two ordained offices, clergy and elders. Elders were members of the local church's governing body, known as a "session" in Presbyterian parlance, along with the church's pastor, who moderated the meetings of the session. Prior to this time, the Chiang Mai Church session was made up of only ordained missionary clergy, an irregular situation according to American Presbyterian ecclesiastical practices. Nan Inta's election, thus, regularized and normalized the church's government, giving it a "proper" session for the first time.[50] There were some other stirrings of life in the church. By October, it appeared that Nan Inta's wife was considering conversion. Dr. Cheek's language teacher, Nan Chai, also seemed ready to become a Christian. In November, McGilvary reported that Dr. Cheek's patient, Boon Ruen, might also convert.[51]

The events of 1875 reinforce the impression that the missionaries' system of meanings and doctrines took their power partly from the fact that they silently embedded themselves in the assumptions on which the missionaries acted. They apparently never stopped to consider the question of how best to organize a northern Thai church. In 1868, they established a typically American Presbyterian congregation composed entirely of the missionary families themselves. In 1875, they reconstituted that church's organizational structure by the election of a northern Thai elder, while maintaining it along those same Presbyterian lines. One hears bubbling quietly in the

background of these discrete actions the ideological assumption that Christianity alone represented truth, morality, and God's will for humanity. Its structures were best. Its representatives were the ones best suited to lead. Cementing this unconsciously ideological approach to the formation of the church into place was the equally unconscious commonsense assumption that the Presbyterian Church's organizational structure was essentially universal and timeless, equally relevant to any time, any place.

Resurrection

For some six years after September 1869, the Laos Mission struggled to resurrect the Chiang Mai Church and only began to see some glimmers of hope towards the end of 1875. The church's first communion service in 1876, held on the first Sunday of the New Year, marked an important turning point in the history of the northern Thai church. On that Sunday, Chiang Mai Church received its first two women members, Pa (Aunt) Kamun, the widow of Noi Sunya, the martyr, and Mae (Mother) Noo, the wife of Lung In. These two women were the first northern Thai women to convert to Christianity, and Mae Noo and Lung In became the first Christian couple.[52] From this point on, the number of conversions began to accelerate. In September 1876, the mission baptized three more women including Yai (Grandmother) Peng, the wife of Nan Inta and two daughters of Pa Kamun, meaning that for the first time the church numbered more members than it had at the time of the persecution seven years earlier.[53]

Kate Wilson, recuperating in the United States, hailed the conversion of the five women as being good news indeed and wrote of the Laos Mission that, "The missionaries seem to be very much encouraged, and I think have great occasion to be, as the people seem anxious to hear the gospel." She went on to observe, nonetheless, that it cost northern Thai women a great deal to convert.[54] She may have had Yai Peng in mind. According to McGilvary, Yai Peng suffered for her interest in Christianity even before she was baptized. In July 1876 her brother, the family patriarch, called on her to assist in certain family animistic ceremonies, and she refused. Her brother then summoned both Yai Peng and her husband, Nan Inta, to a family conference at which he became abusive and threatening. McGilvary recounts,

> [Yai Peng] told him that as to that he might do as he pleased but that she was never going to worship the spirits. She was willing to redeem herself for life by paying to the <u>family</u> a small sum, but that she could not again join the family directly or indirectly in their worship. The brother somewhat calmed down and said he would consider that proposition, though insisting still that his sister should be an alien to the family.[55]

Those words, "an alien to the family," as we have already seen, could well serve as the title of a social history of early northern Thai Christianity. Yai Peng and most of her Christian compatriots, men as well as women, had to step beyond the normal boundaries of their society and culture in order to become Christians in the face of considerable social pressure. Even so, Yai Peng resorted to a strategy not unlike the one used by Chao Intanon to solve the problem of the mission's property. She agreed to pay a sum of money to the family as long as no one called it a payment to the *spirits*. McGilvary seems to have acquiesced to her way of calming the waters, perhaps in recognition of the fact that the mission had to give its converts some leeway in solving the problem of their relationship with their relatives and with their former religion. As we will see in the following section of this chapter, however, there were still definite limits to missionary toleration of the northern Thai inclination to rely on convenient definitions as a way out of conflict.

Mae Noo had her own problems, once she converted. In early December 1876, the session of the church suspended her from communion on charges of "complicity in spirit worship" and failure to exhibit "consistent Christian conduct."[56] McGilvary blamed a foolish,

worthless son who was her only child for getting her into trouble; Mae Noo could refuse him almost nothing he wanted. McGilvary expressed some remorse at having to suspend Mae Noo but felt the mission had no choice. "We were compelled to do so," he writes, "for the purity and discipline of the church, though we feel that great charity is due to her."[57]

When Wilson suspended Noi Choi from the church for participating in "heathen" rites, he did not express any remorse, however he may have felt about the matter. When the church suspended Mae Noo, McGilvary did express regret and sympathy, but he justified the act as necessary for the sake of the purity and discipline of the church. Smith argues that in the early decades of the nineteenth century, Old School Presbyterians staked out more and more of a "position of defense" doctrinally, and in the process found it necessary to focus considerable attention on church discipline "lest wolves infiltrate the flock or clergyman of good standing and high reputation begin to entertain dangerous thoughts." The seminaries taught their students to defend the faith and to preach sermons that would enable local church members to identify false philosophies.[58] The same doctrinal and ideological dynamic was at work in Chiang Mai, urgently reinforced by the Laos Mission's need to replace northern Thai traditional religion with Christianity. In the case of the mission's sister Presbyterian mission to the south, the Siam Mission, church discipline issues dominated its relationship with its churches throughout the last decades of the nineteenth century to the extent that the Siam Mission seriously jeopardized church growth by alienating converts and potential converts for the sake of maintaining moral and doctrinal purity. The Siam Mission particularly worried that most central Thai Christians converted out of a desire for "temporal" benefits rather than from a "pure" faith in the Christian message.[59] Although somewhat more patient with its church members, the Laos Mission took the same ideological stance, exercising especial care to prevent participation in Buddhist rites and animistic ritual.

The Laos Mission, in spite of Mae Noo's lapses, could look back on 1876 with some satisfaction. The rate of conversions had picked up. Its political relationships had also improved and stabilized. McGilvary writes, "The whole year has probably been one of greater labor and greater success than any one year of my mission life."[60] The year 1877 marked yet another quiet advance in the life of the small, but growing Christian community. On the first Sunday of that year, McGilvary baptized three of Nan Inta's grandchildren, the first children to receive baptism. Eventually, it became common practice to baptize entire families as units, a practice McGilvary later termed "household baptism."[61] The following May, Nan Suwan, from the village of Mae Dok Daeng, received baptism. He was the son of Nan Panya, an elderly convert who had been baptized in December 1876 and died shortly thereafter.[62] Nan Suwan demonstrated qualities of leadership, and he thereafter emerged as one of the Laos Mission's most capable local church leaders. The process of family conversion, meanwhile, became clearly apparent at the Chiang Mai Church's monthly communion of 7 October 1877. Among the four adults and two infants baptized that day were the mother-in-law and two infant daughters of converts. Another convert's wife would also be baptized in less than a year. It is notable, furthermore, that three of these six new Christians came from Nan Suwan's village, one of them being his own infant daughter.[63] By October 1877, the converts were thus beginning to create a distinct, viable community of their own, an augury of the Christian counter society that the mission sought to create. At the same time, Christians showed the first signs of clustering together in larger groups, to the extent that an identifiable Christian group began to take shape in Mae Dok Daeng, a village near Doi Saket some twenty kilometers east of Chiang Mai. The slow, steady accretion of new members that began in January 1876 continued in 1878, with the church baptizing a total of ten adults and five children during the year.[64] Among these, as before, were several more wives and children of Christians. Most notable among the new Christians who received baptism in 1878 was one of the highest-ranking converts in the history of the northern Thai church, a government official from Lampang, named Chao Phya Sihanot, who was baptized

on 5 May 1878.[65]

Conclusion

In Chapter Four, we found that the Laos Mission, particularly in the person of Daniel McGilvary, rooted its evangelism and the practice of medicine in its system of meanings and doctrines. It emphasized the dissemination of knowledge as the gateway to faith, engaged the learned classes in cosmological and theological debate, and pressed Western science into its service—all of this after the manner of its mixed Reformed confessional and Scottish common sense heritage. The mission maintained a closed, dualistic attitude at all points, taking nothing from northern Thai culture that might fit its message to that context. In the first section of this chapter, we rediscovered many of the same theological and ideological themes. They came most sharply into focus in the mission's absolute insistence on keeping the Sabbath, an insistence that gained the ultimately fatal attention of the ruling powers of Chiang Mai. In spite of the initial success of the mission in gaining converts in 1868 and 1869, then, the experience of the first years of the Laos Mission did not bode well for its future. It preached a richly textured Western religious message grounded in Western scientific data and a cosmology that convinced almost no one to convert to Christianity. Some people who came into contact with missionary thinking accepted the new world view more or less readily enough; some even accepted Christian theological ideas to one degree or another, but only one person, Nan Inta, converted because of the mission's Baconian evangelistic strategy. The political establishment eventually intervened effectively to disrupt the mission's evangelistic program, postponing for years any hope of a significant number of conversions or the establishment of strong churches. McGilvary and Wilson themselves, in the years following September 1869, knew that things were not going well and both of them admitted discouragement to the Board, and yet they also both avowed a continued reliance on the Princeton-like system of doctrines and meanings they took with them to the field. McGilvary preached his Baconian message for years after the deaths of Nan Chai and Noi Sunya, while both he and Wilson long retained their confidence in Western medicine as a means for undermining northern Thai Buddhism. Both of them took comfort from their system of meanings and doctrines and relied on it for strength to persevere through the hard years between 1869 and 1876.

Nowhere did McGilvary and Wilson give clearer evidence to their unstinting, unchanging allegiance to confessional, commonsense evangelicalism, and the ideological principles of dualism and exclusivism than in their relations with the small band of Christian converts. They expected the converts to reject Buddhism, cease spirit propitiation, withdraw from many aspects of daily life, and accept the mission's conception of the clearly defined boundary between their former and new faiths. The great majority of the citizens of Chiang Mai rejected the idea of conversion, and even those who joined the new religion found their decision fraught with difficulties and tensions. Nan Inta had to flee for his life and then absent himself from the missionaries for several years. Nan Chai and Noi Sunya were killed. Yai Peng suffered serious tensions with her family. Noi Choi and Mae Noo went through the humiliation of being suspended from communion. The unnamed widow could not withstand the pressure of her family and refrained from converting at all, although she retained her personal allegiance to Jesus. The convert community, that is, lived on the boundary between their old society and the new one the mission wanted to create, and they found it a difficult place to reside. When they tried to redefine the boundary in ways more in keeping with their own culture and society, the mission usually refused to go along. The Chiang Mai Church, in sum, embodied the mission's system of meanings and doctrines, preserving that system through the exercise of discipline to the end that it would remain free of religious influence from the surrounding culture.

The Laos Mission intended nothing less than a cultural and social revolution, one that necessarily began with the converts themselves. Chao Kawilorot understood the nature of the

challenge the mission posed his state and people, and he took steps to thwart it. After his death, other politically powerful figures stepped in to carry on that defense of traditional structures. Even as the mission experienced tension with its own converts, it continued to experience political opposition. Matters came to a head in 1878.

The Edict of Religious Toleration

Introduction

Chao Kawilorot's death in June 1870 created a new situation in Chiang Mai. The accession of Chao Intanon brought to prominence a pro-Bangkok and pro-Westernization party led by Intanon and his wife, Chao Mae Tip Keson. As would be expected of the daughter of Chao Kawilorot, Chao Mae Tip Keson was the stronger personality and true leader of this faction that was friendly to the missionaries. Opposing Intanon and Tip Keson was the *chao ho na* ("Second King"), Chao Bunthawong, a strong personality who succeeded in usurping much of Intanon's authority to the point that little could be done in Chiang Mai without his permission. He sought to maintain the traditional structures of a semi-independent Chiang Mai, resisted change, and firmly opposed the Laos Mission. Chao Bunthawong, however, had neither the strength of personality nor the prestige of Kawilorot and consequently could not deal with the Laos Mission as forcefully and effectively as had Kawilorot. He applied what pressure he could, but he failed to prevent the emergence of a northern Thai church, just as he could not, finally, preserve the political integrity of the Chiang Mai state.[66] McGilvary diligently played upon this situation to maintain the missionaries' situation by spending considerable time visiting the city's important political figures; he worked particularly hard at developing a close relationship with Chao Intanon and Chao Mae Tip Keson. McGilvary noted that in the early years after Chao Kawilorot's death Chao Bunthawong did not openly act against the Laos Mission.[67]

We have already noted that by 1878 the small band of Christian converts was growing in numbers and beginning to take the shape of a true community. In the course of things, two young Christians, Noi Intachak, who was studying theology privately with McGilvary, and Kam Tip, the daughter of Nan Inta, who was studying with Sophia McGilvary, caught each other's eye and decided to get married. The mission planned a big affair, as this would be the first marriage between two baptized northern Thai Christians. It should have been a happy event, but politics intruded to transform a simple wedding into a serious political crisis, providing Chao Bunthawong with an opportunity to jeopardize the Laos Mission's prospects in Chiang Mai. In the process, the northern Thai converts found themselves yet again caught between missionary theologies on the one hand and the conservative political ideology of the mission's enemies on the other.

The Event

Plans for the wedding progressed nicely until the very morning of the wedding when the family patriarch of Nan Inta and Kam Tip's extended family objected to it. He demanded payment of the proper "spirit fee," as McGilvary called it, in order to show regard to the spirits and legalize the marriage according to northern Thai custom and law. The mission refused to allow its adherents to pay because, as McGilvary writes, "In fact, the payment may be regarded as a distinctively religious act, since it recognizes the spirits as the guardians and protectors of the family. When one becomes a Christian, that allegiance is cast off."[68] After hastily consulting with Nan Inta's patron, the missionaries called a halt to the wedding and began to come to grips with the ideological and legal tangle facing them. They refused to have anything to do with what appeared to them to be animistic practices, but at the same time, they wanted the marriage to be legal. Their efforts to resolve the dilemma began with a visit to the Siamese *kha luang* (Commissioner), who had been appointed Bangkok's permanent representative in the North under the Chiang Mai Treaty of 1874 between Siam and Britain. He sympathized with the missionaries'

situation but had no power to act in this case. The mission next turned to Chao Intanon and Chao Mae Tip Keson, but they felt they dared not take an open stand because they were already the objects of some criticism for their pro-missionary attitudes. In desperation, Cheek and McGilvary went to see Chao Bunthawong and the Chao Rachabut, another key figure in the Chiang Mai government. As political rivals of the mission, they both found the situation hopeful and satisfying, reasoning as they did that if Christians could not marry, the Christian religion obviously would not survive in Chiang Mai. They refused to help.[69]

This dispute over the legalization of Christian marriages recalls the events leading up to the persecution of the church in September 1869. The issue at stake in both cases, as Ratanaphorn points out, involved the place and authority of Chiang Mai's ruling powers as against the social and political status of the missionaries themselves. By forbidding their converts to participate in traditional religious rites, the missionaries attacked the political status of the ruling elite, which drew its authority and power from the rituals of spirit propitiation. The right to perform such rituals also functioned as a means for social control and helped designate who would be at the top of the social hierarchy. Ratanaphorn states,

> The *chao ho na* [Chao Bunthawong] realized that this intervention by missionaries into the traditional system posed yet another threat to the *chao*. He was concerned that the converts would seek shelter under the missionaries from corvee requirements. Besides their actions exacerbating the problems of labor scarcity prevailing in the Northern States since the time of Kawila, the missionaries came to take the role of patrons that formerly had been the exclusive preserve of the *chao* and other local elites. The widespread propagation of Christianity and its potential adoption by many in the population, threatened the traditional social order of the Northern States.[70]

The stakes were high. The traditional hierarchy, on the one side, felt that the Laos Mission was attacking the religious and ceremonial pillars of its authority. The Laos Mission, for its part, desired nothing less than the right of Christians to conduct their own rituals unmolested by outside authorities. The heart of the matter, as we have already said, lay in a confrontation between the political ideology of a ruling elite and the system of meanings and doctrines of the mission itself.

On further consultation with the Siamese Commissioner, Phraya Thep Prachun, McGilvary and Cheek finally decided to petition King Chulalongkorn in Bangkok, and Phraya Thep Prachun promised that he would write the King a letter supporting the mission's petition. The mission sent its petition to the American Consul in Bangkok for him to present to the King; in it, they appealed for general religious toleration rather than simply the right of Christians to marry. The mission's petition reminded the King that it was founded with the official permission both from the King himself and from Chao Kawilorot, specified Chao Bunthawong as the culprit in this case, and requested that northern Thai Christians receive the same civil and religious rights given to other Siamese citizens. The mission knew that this petition could cause trouble in Chiang Mai, but McGilvary felt they had little choice and could rely on political supporters in the Siamese government to assist them.[71]

While the Laos Mission's petition found its way to Bangkok and through the capital's bureaucracy, tensions mounted in Chiang Mai. Chao Bunthawong ordered that Nan Inta be detained and threatened his entire family with slavery if they did not renounce Christianity. He threatened Nan Inta personally with banishment to the far north and then had him held in physical confinement, which lasted for three months and resulted in such a serious deterioration of Nan Inta's health that McGilvary felt constrained to intervene. After some further dispute, Cheek gained permission to look after him, and Nan Inta began to recover his health.[72]

The King's reply to the mission's petition finally arrived in late September 1878. It gave Phraya Thep Prachun authority to proceed in the matter of the mission's complaint in any way he saw fit and specifically gave him permission to issue an edict, at his discretion, guaranteeing toleration of the Christian religion. After some further discussions with the different sides in the marriage dispute, the Commissioner issued an "Edict of Religious Toleration" that went beyond what even the missionaries had asked for.[73]

The edict (See Appendix I) opens with a statement of the Commissioner's intention to issue a proclamation to the princes and people of Chiang Mai, Lamphun, and Lampang states. It mentions briefly the origins of the edict and makes it clear that it rests on the full authority of the King of Siam. It then provides a general statement of a concept of religious toleration that affirms the right of individuals to worship as they choose without governmental interference. The edict affirms the right of citizens to become Christians and enjoins the princes, relatives, and friends of converts to throw up no obstacles to conversion and the practice of the Christian religion. It frees Christians from participation in non-Christian rituals and affirms the right of Christians to observe their Sabbath unmolested, excepting only in times of war or genuine pressing need. The edict also confirms that American citizens living in Chiang Mai, Lamphun, and Lampang (i.e. the missionaries) had the right given to them by international treaties to employ anyone they chose. No one could impinge on that right.

Although McGilvary realized from the beginning that the anti-missionary faction among the ruling elite would resist the implementation of the "Edict of Religious Toleration," he was elated. The edict had the immediate affect of lessening the pressure on the convert community, particularly Nan Inta. Chao Bunthawong, it seems, backed off and assumed a publicly less threatening, more gracious attitude towards the missionaries.[74] Nan Inta shared McGilvary's feelings of elation and wrote to the McGilvarys' daughter, Emilie, in the United States that, "…[God] inclined the heart of the great King of Siam to send a royal decree forbidding the princes and masters in Chiengmai to oppose those who wish to become believers and forbidding any oppression of those who have or will become such in the future."[75]

Impact of the Edict

In the events of September 1869, as we have seen, the Laos Mission's systems of meanings and doctrines guided missionary behavior and played a key role in sparking the religious persecution and political repression that followed. Virtually the same dynamic played itself out in the marriage crisis of 1878, but in the midst of all of the political maneuvering involved, one can easily lose track of the simple theological principle and subsequent ideological chain of reasoning that set off the crisis. Stated most simply, the missionaries adhered to the principle that the payment of "spirit fees" by converts to legalize marriages would amount to a denial of their allegiance to God. After the manner of Princeton, this principle closed the door on compromise by turning the payment of spirit fees into an absolute, clearly defined boundary issue between Christianity and heathenism. The principle had to be defended. The missionaries believed that any violation of it put the converts and mission at risk of complicity in devil worship, idolatry, and superstition that threatened the converts with eternal damnation. If pressed on the matter, McGilvary and Cheek could have pointed to numerous passages in Scripture as the source of their principle and would have argued that such principles are as timeless as the Bible itself. Fundamental to the question of spirit fees was the doctrine of God's sovereignty; paying them denied divine sovereignty. The missionaries approached these questions and principles with a Scottish-like commonsensical attitude that gave them confidence in their ability to know God's truths and a reified self-assurance that the thought-ways of their American Presbyterian religious consciousness were immediately relevant to the situation they faced in Chiang Mai.

In the light of their theological and ideological habits of mind, it never occurred to Cheek

and McGilvary that they could have appropriated Chao Intanon's strategy for allowing them to purchase property without buying it (see Chapter Four). They could have easily enough argued that the fee in question was a "legal fee" rather than a "spirit fee," employing a line of thinking similar to that of Yai Peng in a similar situation, an approach they seem to have tolerated in her case. The point here is not whether or not a northern Thai approach would have been "better" or "worse" in this particular case; the point is, rather, that all possibility of compromise was made impossible after McGilvary laid down his theological principle that the payment of the fees was an anti-Christian act. He grounded his actions in his system of meanings and values, irrespective of alternatives available through drawing on the thought-ways of northern Thai culture.

The "Edict of Toleration" marked an important step in the permanent establishment of the northern Thai church, although later commentators have at times considerably over-stated its long-term consequences.[76] The most important immediate result of the Edict, perhaps, was its impact on the Christian community. That small band joined McGilvary and Nan Inta in rejoicing, and the rate of conversion did increase, although at a still very modest rate in comparison to the size of the population. Early in 1879, moreover, McGilvary used the Edict to protect a family accused of causing demon possession (*phi ka*) from further persecution.[77] Beyond these immediate benefits of the Edict, McGilvary also argues that the event offered Bangkok an opportunity to increase its influence in the North at the expense of the northern Thai ruling class. The northern states, as McGilvary observed many years later, quietly and slowly became, "an integral portion of the consolidated Kingdom of Siam."[78] Ratanaphorn agrees, noting that the Edict of Toleration not only reduced the power of the patrons of Christian coverts over them, but it also undercut the role of religion as a pillar of the state and helped to transform religion into a matter of personal choice rather than a tool for state control.[79] The Laos Mission's system of doctrines and meanings, in other words, became a factor of some consequence in the secularization of northern Thai social and political life. Consideration of that larger historical role lies beyond the scope of this study, but it does suggest the significance missionary theology and ideology had for every phase of the mission's work and the breadth of the impact missionary thinking had in the North.

Whatever the long-term impact of the Edict of Toleration, McGilvary believed that it did improve the mission's situation considerably. He states,

> Our work is, of course, more hopeful though we of course do not anticipate a rush into the church as the princes and people seemed to fear to take off <u>all</u> restraint till the proclamation comes from the Laos princes themselves. The one from the king secures exemption from punishment, but all the moral influence is still on the side of Satan as far as the princes can make it so. But still the people are less fearful to talk than they were. Even the priests and <u>princes</u> themselves talk more freely than before. And there is, no doubt, a spirit of inquiry among the people such as has probably never been before.[80]

The central problem concerning the Edict, as McGilvary noted, was that it came from Bangkok; and even then, we might add, not directly from King Chulalongkorn but through his agent in Chiang Mai. Those powers arrayed against the Laos Mission remained in opposition. McGilvary returned to this thought in 1881 when he noted that it would have been a distinct advantage to gain the same sanction from the northern Thai rulers as the Mission had gained from Bangkok.[81]

Persecution of Christians and tension between them and their neighbors, however, did not end with the Edict. In a long letter to the Board written in July 1880, Wilson cited three cases of evident persecution in which the Edict proved of no value. In one case, having to do with the Prince of Lamphun, the mission dared not intervene by citing the Edict for fear that it would only

make matters worse. In the two other cases, including one involving Chao Bunthawong, the mission could not prove that converts were being treated unjustly because of their religion even though they were sure such was the case. The Edict could not be brought into play to protect them. Wilson summarized these cases by stating, "The proclamation for Christian toleration was a great thing. It stands as a significant precedent in favor of the native Christian & his cause. But it will not meet every difficulty. It should not be expected to do so."[82] Missionary Christianity, in sum, remained in tension with the conservative powers of the northern states. While one suspects that the mere fact of the missionaries' purpose of introducing a new religious faith—apart from any theological or ideological considerations—sparked that tension, the Laos Mission's confrontational, closed ideological stance only added fuel to the fire.

Conclusion

At the close of the pioneer era of the Laos Mission, the mission remained in tension with a substantial conservative, anti-Christian political faction led by the singly most powerful figure in Chiang Mai, Chao Bunthawong. Its converts still experienced various forms of petty persecution, personal threats, and tests of loyalty by their patrons. The Edict of Toleration itself testifies to the level of local opposition the mission's message had conjured, a level of intensity it could overcome only through reliance on the still greater power of the King in Bangkok. The mission, to be sure, had also won some influential friends in the Chiang Mai court, but even so, it had become a symbol of social change and instability that seems to have overlaid any "simple" preaching of the Christian message with a blanket of controversial political, religious, and cosmological ramifications. While the Edict was certainly of some short-term benefit, it is doubtful that in the long run it represented a victory for the Christian cause, in spite of what the missionaries thought at the time.

Conclusion

The Laos Mission's system of meanings and doctrines shaped its evangelistic message, its use of Western medicine, the way in which it configured the Chiang Mai Church, and its expectations of how individual converts should behave. That system put it in considerable tension with conservative political forces and its converts in comparable tension with their neighbors and even families. It also prevented almost any consideration of tactical compromises or a judicious softening of the system's rigid, Western conception of cognitive and religious boundaries.

The original question that opened this study asked after the reasons for the apparent failure of Presbyterian missions to gain a large constituency in northern Siam; it cited the work of several scholars who argue, variously, that the Laos Mission failed to understand the religion of the people and failed to communicate effectively with the people. In light of actual events, however, the issue of the missionaries and their message seems more complex. The statements that the missionaries misunderstood the northern Thai people and communicated their message poorly are themselves premised on the critics own system of doctrines and meanings, ones quite different from those of nineteenth-century American Old School Presbyterians. It is difficult to write off a man as intellectually competent and theologically perceptive as Daniel McGilvary by simply saying that he did not understand northern Thai Buddhism or, again, to claim that he failed to communicate with his northern Thai contemporaries. What such statements mean is that McGilvary and his colleagues failed to understand or communicate in a way that would have been more culturally appropriate and, arguably, won the Christian faith a larger northern Thai constituency. McGilvary and Wilson would themselves immediately respond that it is their latter-day critics who fail to understand the depths of northern Thai idolatry, superstition, and heathenism. It is their twentieth-century liberal critics who fail to realize that the importance of preserving the purity of the gospel in such a context necessarily determined how one would communicate the Christian message. Only the pure gospel, they would argue, could save

individual northern Thais or offer hope for the future salvation of the whole northern Thai nation. If we grant the Laos Mission the integrity of its system of doctrines and meanings, that is, it is misleading to state either that they misunderstood northern Thai Buddhism or failed to communicate their message to the northern Thai people. We have to grant that, within the confines of their system of meanings and doctrines, they may well have understood the northern Thai situation clearly and communicated quite effectively.

If, however, we stand beyond the precincts of missionary ideology and theology, it must also be granted that other interpretations of northern Thai religious consciousness were possible and other strategies for reaching them with the Christian message available. The missionaries' own converts tried, by word and deed, to tell them they could do things differently—that conversion need not be confrontational and that not all indigenous ceremonies were objectionable. The very nature of missionary thinking prevented the mission from learning these lessons. Breward's insight, cited in Chapter Three, that William Perkins' sixteenth-century Puritanism used its belief in the unity of an infallible truth to deny all other viewpoints applies with equal force to the Laos Mission. The mission simply would not and, evidently, could not learn to approach its tasks in ways that meshed with northern Thai society when it perceived that matters of theological principles were at stake. It could accept Intanon's redefinition of buying as gift-giving since no such principles were involved, but it absolutely refused to redefine its understanding of conversion, the Sabbath, participation in non-Christian rituals, or the payment of certain fees because the mission believed that all of these instances involved fundamental religious principles. Its system of meanings and doctrines thus constrained its understanding and its ways of communicating.

With these observations, we now turn to the third key set of activities engaged in by the Laos Mission up to 1880, educational activities. For a mission born of Reformed confessionalism and a scholastic heritage, we have in a sense saved the best for last, although the study of missionary educational strategies will only serve to confirm the patterns we have already identified in Chapters Four and Five. The variety of its educational activities, however, adds texture and further understanding to those patterns and, thus, helps explain why the Laos Mission behaved as it did in its pioneer era.

Notes

Abbreviations:

AHR	*American Historical Review*
AP	*American Presbyterians*
AQ	*American Quarterly*
BRPR	*Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review*
CH	*Church History*
JAH	*Journal of American History*
JER	*Journal of the Early Republic*
JPH	*Journal of Presbyterian History*
JSH	*Journal of Social History*
NCP	*North Carolina Presbyterian*
NCP NS	*North Carolina Presbyterian New Series*
LN	*Laos News*
PQPR	*Presbyterian Quarterly and Princeton Review*
SCJ	*Sixteenth Century Journal*
WJT	*Westminster Journal of Theology*
WWW	*Women's Work for Women*

[1] McGilvary, "Laos Mission," *FM* 26, 10 (March 1868): 234-36; Bradley Journal, 29 March 1868;

McGilvary to Dear Brethren, 20 November 1867, v. 3, BFM; and McGilvary, *Half Century,* 102-04.

[2] Sessional Records, 1-2.

[3] Sessional Records, 4-5.

[4] Alexander T. McGill, "American Presbyterianism: From the Founding of the Presbyterian Church to the War of the Revolution," in *A Short History of American Presbyterianism* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work, 1903), 35.

[5] McGilvary, *Half Century,* 99.

[6] McGilvary, undated letter in *FM,* 28, 3 (August 1869): 58-63; McGilvary, undated letter in *FM* 28, 4 (September 1869): 80-8; and McGilvary to Irving, 1 March 1869, v. 3, BFM.

[7] Sessional Records, 10, 12, 15; and McGilvary, "For the Little Folks," *NCP* New Series 3, 109 (2 February 1870): 4.

[8] McGilvary, "For the Little Folks," *NCP* New Series 3, 109 (2 February 1870): 4; McGilvary, undated letter, *FM* 28, 9 (February 1870): 212-17; and *Siam Repository* 2, 1 (1870): 124.

[9] Hodge, *Way of Life,* 180-83. The quotations are from page 183.

[10] Hodge, *Way of Life,* 185.

[11] Hodge, *Outlines of Theology,* 433.

[12] Ratanaphorn, "Chiang Mai Treaties," 22-3. Vella noted a similar relationship between the state and religious ritual in Bangkok. He writes," The performance of many Hindu and Buddhist ceremonies was one of the most important services of the Siamese government in its estimation and in the estimation of the Siamese people. These ceremonies, rituals, and acts of religious merit that were conducted by the king and his government were regarded as efficacious in bringing the people material benefits as well as spiritual benefits. Although the principal function of the state ceremonies was realized through the king's activities as religious intermediary, the ceremonies and other displays of power and wealth by the government also made it possible for the people to see in their king the apex of the hierarchy of respect that was operative in the Siamese family and throughout Siamese society." Walter F. Vella, *Siam Under Rama III 1824-1851* (Locust Valley, New York: J. J. Augustin, 1957), 16.

[13] Vachara Sindhuprama, "Modern Education and Socio-Cultural Change in Northern Thailand" (Ph.D. diss., University of Hawaii, 1988), 35-6.

[14] Richard Davis, *Muang Metaphysics: A Study of Northern Thai Myth and Ritual* (Bangkok: Pandora, 1984), 37.

[15] McGilvary, "Our First Convert," *NCP* New Series 2, 85 (18 August 1869): 4.

[16] McGilvary, undated letter in *FM* 28, 4 (September 1869): 80-4; and McGilvary, undated letter, *FM* 28, 9 (February 1870): 212-17.

[17] See, Hodge, “Sabbath Sanctified”; and Hodge, “Sunday Laws.”

[18] Hodge, “Sunday Laws,” 760-65. During the Antebellum years, Princeton and the Old School supported various campaigns to prevent the Sunday delivery of the mail, hence this emphasis on *the Sabbath*in Hodge. See, Charles Elliott, The Sabbath (Philadelphia: Board of Publication, 1867); Bertram Wyatt-Brown, “Prelude to Abolitionism: Sabbatarian Politics and the Rise of the Second Party System,” *JAH* 58, 2 (September 1971): 316-41; and Richard R. John, “Taking Sabbatarianism Seriously: The Postal System, the Sabbath, and the Transformation of American Political Culture,” *JER* 10, 4 (Winter 1990): 517-67. It was more than coincidental that Jonathan Wilson refused to go to the post office on Sundays. His colleagues praised this trait as symbolic of his strict observance of the Sabbath. See “Personal and Otherwise,” *LN* 8, 3 (July 1911): 77.

[19] Hodge, *Systematic Theology,* vol. 3, 331.

[20] McGilvary “For the Little Folks,” *NCP* New Series 3, 106 (12 January 1870): 4; and Wilson to Irving, 27 January 1869, v. 3, BFM.

[21] Ratanaphorn, “Chiang Mai Treaties,” 123ff, 156ff, esp. 157, 160-61.

[22] McGilvary, *Half Century,* 102.

[23] For fuller accounts, see, McGilvary, *Half Century,* 104-117; and Swanson, *Khrischak Muang Nua,* 12-20. The key sources are, Wilson, letter dated 3 January 1870, FM 28, 12 (May 1870): 281-84; Wilson to Irving, 3 January 1870, v. 3, BFM; Sessional Records, 16-21; McGilvary, “For the Little Folks,” *NCP* New Series 3, 120 (20 April 1870): 4; and McGilvary,”Latest News From Chieng-Mai,” *FM* 28, 10 (March 1870) 227-29.

[24] McGilvary, undated letter, *FM* 28, 9 (February 1870): 216-17; and Wilson, letter dated 3 January 1870, *FM* 28, 12 (May 1870): 281.

[25] Wilson, letter dated 3 January 1870, FM 28, 12 (May 1870): 283, quoted in McGilvary, *Half Century*, 114-17.

[26] Wilson to Irving, 31 August 1872, v. 4, BFM; and Wilson, letter dated 30 April 1872, *FM* 31, 5 (October 1872): 151-53.

[27] For the aftermath of the events of September 1869, see, McGilvary, *Half Century*, 107ff; McGilvary to Irving, 1 November 1869, v. 3, BFM; McGilvary, “For the Little Folks,” *NCP* New Series 3, 120 (20 April 1870): 4; McGilvary, “For the Little Folks,” *NCP* New Series 3, 121 (27 April 1870): 4; S. R. House, “Sad and Unexpected News from Chieng-Mai,” *FM* 28, 9 (February 1870): 202-04; and McGilvary, “Latest News From Chieng-Mai,” *FM* 28, 10 (March 1870): 227-29.

[28] McGilvary, *Half Century*, 112; McGilvary, “For the Little Folks,” *NCP* New Series 3, 121 (27 April 1870): 4; and McDonald to Irving, 2 February 1870, v. 3, BFM.

[29] McGilvary, “For the Little Folks,” *NCP* New Series 3, 121 (27 April 1870): 4. See also McGilvary, *Half Century*, 118-26.

[30] McGilvary, “Shall Chieng-Mai be Given Up?” *FM* 28, 12 (May 1870): 274; McGilvary, “For the Little Folks,” dated 4 January 1870, *NCP* New Series 3, 121 (27 April 1870): 4; and McGilvary, *Half Century*, 126-29.

[31] McGilvary to Irving, 17 February 1870, v. 3, BFM.

[32] McGilvary, *Half Century*, 133-39; and Wilson, letter dated 28 July 1870, *FM* 29, 7 (December 1870): 182-88.

[33] Wilson, “Fourth Annual Report of the Laos Mission,” 18 July 1870, v. 3, BFM; and Wilson, letter dated 28 July 1870, *FM* 29, 7 (December 1870): 182-88. See also McGilvary to Irving, 17 February 1870, 4 March 1870, and 30 May 1870, v. 3, BFM.

[34] The quotation is from, Wilson to Irving, 3 January 1870, v. 3, FM. See also, Wilson to Irving, 15 October 1869, v. 3, BFM; and Wilson to Irving, 24 January 1870, v. 3, BFM.

[35] McGilvary to Irving, 17 February 1870, v. 3, BFM.

[36] Swanson, *Khrischak Muang Nua*, 18-9.

[37] McGilvary to Irving, 31 December 1870, v. 3, BFM. See also, McGilvary, “For the Little Folks,” *NCP* New Series 5, 266 (5 February 1873): 4; McGilvary to Irving, 22 August 1870, v. 3, BFM; and Wilson to Irving, 1 October 1870, v. 3, BFM.

[38] McGilvary to Irving, 22 August 1870, v. 3, BFM; and McGilvary to Irving, 11 March 1871, v. 3, BFM.

[39] Wilson to Irving, 24 October 1871, v. 3, BFM.

[40] Wilson to Irving, 24 April 1872, v. 3, BFM

[41] Wilson to Irving, 24 April 1872 [and 30 April 1872], v. 3, BFM. Emphasis in the original. See also Vrooman, undated letter, *FM* 32, 2 (July 1873): 53-7.

[42] McGilvary, “For the Little Folks,” *NCP* New Series 5, 266 (5 February 1873): 4; and McGilvary, letter

dated 10 April 1872, *FM* 31, 5 (October 1872): 150-51.

[43] Sessional Records, 27-9; and McGilvary to Irving, 4 December 1872, v. 3, BFM.

[44] McGilvary to Irving, 4 December 1872, v. 3, BFM.

[45] Wilson to Irving, 9 December 1872, 1 September 1873, and 30 September 1873, v. 3. BFM; and Wilson, "Annual Report of the North Laos Mission, 30 September 1873, v. 3. BFM.

[46] Wilson, letter dated 5 June 1874, *FM* 33, 7 (December 1874): 214-18.

[47] Wilson to Executive Committee [annual report], 30 September 1874, v. 3, BFM.

[48] See Kummool Chinawong and Herbert R. Swanson, "Religion and the Formation of Community in Northern Thailand: The Case of Christianity in Nan Province" (Paper delivered at the Fifth International Conference on Thai Studies, London, July 1993); and , S. J. Tambiah, *Buddhism and the Spirit Cults in North-east Thailand* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1970), 54-7.

[49] Wilson to Irving, 15 March 1875, v. 3, BFM.

[50] Sessional Records, 35-6. See also McGilvary, "For the Family," *NCP* New Series 9, 417 (7 January 1876): 4. Note that McGilvary, *Half Century*, 169, incorrectly dates Nan Inta's ordination as 1876.

[51] McGilvary, "For the Family," letter dated 1 October 1875, *NCP* New Series 9, 417 (7 January 1876): 4; and McGilvary to Irving, 1 November 1875, v. 3, BFM.

[52] McGilvary, *Half Century*, 170; Sessional Records, 38-40; McGilvary to Irving, 22 February 1876, v. 3, BFM.; and McGilvary, "For the Family," letter dated 1 October 1875, *NCP* New Series 9, 417 (7 January 1876): 4.

[53] Sessional Records, 42-4.

[54] Kate Wilson, undated letter, *WWW* 7, 7 (September 1877): 243.

[55] McGilvary to Irving, 12 August 1876, v. 3, BFM. Emphasis in original.

[56] Sessional Records, 46-7.

[57] McGilvary, "The Laos Mission," *NCP* New Series 10, 485 (25 April 1877): 1. See also McGilvary to Irving, 4 December 1876, v. 3, BFM.

[58] Smith, *Presbyterian Ministry*, 143-44.

[59] See Herbert R. Swanson, *Towards a Clean Church: A Case Study in 19th Century Thai Church History* (Chiang Mai, Office of History, Church of Christ in Thailand, 1991).

[60] McGilvary, "The Laos Mission," *NCP* New Series 10, 485 (25 April 1877): 1.

[61] McGilvary to Mitchel, 3 July 1885, v. 5, BFM.

[62] Sessional Records, 59-61; and McGilvary, letter dated 10 August 1877, *NCP* New Series 10, 521 (2 January 1878): 4.

[63] Sessional Records, 69-71, 81.

[64] Sessional Records, 72-6; and McGilvary, "For the Little Folks," *NCP* New Series 12, 579 (12 February 1879): 1.

[65] Sessional Records, 78-80; and McGilvary, *Half Century*, 199-201.

[66] Ratanaphorn, "Chiang Mai Treaties," 175-78; and McGilvary, *Half Century*, 141-44.

[67] McGilvary, *Half Century,* 144-45. See also McGilvary to Irving, 22 August 1870, v. 3, BFM.

[68] McGilvary, *Half Century*, 208.

[69] McGilvary, *Half Century*, 207-09; and Sessional Records, 82.

[70] Ratanaphorn, "Chiang Mai Treaties," 209, 210.

[71] McGilvary, *Half Century*, 210-12.

[72] Sophia McGilvary, undated letter, *WWW* 8, 11 (November 1878): 309-10; McGilvary, “For the Little Folks,” *NCP* New Series 12, 579 (12 February 1879): 1; and McGilvary, *Half Century*, 210, 211.

[73] McGilvary, “For the Little Folks,” *NCP* New Series 12, 579 (12 February 1879): 1.

[74] McGilvary, “For the Little Folks,” *NCP* New Series 12, 579 (12 February 1879): 1.

[75] Loong Nan Inta to Emelie McGilvary, in McGilvary, “Letter from Siam,” *NCP* New Series 12, 617 (5 November 1879): 1.

[76] See Swanson, *Khrischak Muang Nua*, 28-9.

[77] McGilvary, “For the Little Folks,” *NCP* New Series 12, 579 (12 February 1879): 1; and McGilvary, “Letter from Siam,” *NCP* New Series 12. 617 (5 November 1879): 1.

[78] McGilvary, *Half Century*, 217-20.

[79] Ratanaphorn, “Chiang Mai Treaties,” 209-10.

[80] McGilvary to Mother [Sarah Bradley], 28 October 1878, McGilvary Papers. Emphasis in the original.

[81] McGilvary to Irving, 11 February 1881, v. 4, BFM.

[82] Wilson to Lowrie, 23 July 1880, v. 4, BFM,