

*Ecclesiastical devolution and union in China:
The emergence of the first native Protestant church in
South Fujian, 1842-1863*

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by

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ABSTRACT

This study of the history of earliest Protestantism in South Fujian covers the period from the arrival of the first missionaries to the ordination of the first Chinese pastors. The two missions concerned were the Reformed Church of America and the English Presbyterian Mission.

Established by the RCA at Amoy in 1856, the first organised church also happened to be a 'self-governing' native church. This study demonstrates that the oldest RCA blueprint for church formation was consciously pro-devolution; that the RCA mission methods succeeded in producing a body of converts whose general Christian quality was found satisfactory by the missionaries; that the RCA methods were adopted wholeheartedly by the EPM; that various limitations on the part of the missionaries allowed the Chinese to further prove their Christian worth by way of both paid and voluntary involvement in the religious enterprise; that the Chinese inland initiatives of 1853 onwards which constituted virtual self-propagation brought about a major change in missionary thinking; and that all these factors interacted in an interesting fashion so as to result in the emergence of the first Chinese church in Fujian as well as in the whole of China during the spring of 1856.

In 1862 the churches connected with the EPM joined with those associated with the RCA to form the Tionglo Taihoey. As the first union church in China, this body was regarded a devolutionary necessity for the pastoral ordinations of 1863. This progress of events was nothing but the continued pursuit of the native church ideal first expressed in the 1840s. For the Missions, the union was made possible and desirable by their historical cooperation, common vision of the native church, denominational compatibility and methodological similarity. Thus while devolution was part of the earliest church theory, union was triggered mainly by historical happenstances.

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DC

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 723CM/Bx1 | 723 China Mission, Box 1 (RCAA) |
| ABCFM | American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions |
| AEM | American Episcopal Mission |
| AER | Amoy Ecclesiastical Relations: Correspondence 1861-1864 [more accurately 1856-63] folder. RCAA, 724 China Mission, Papers (1856-1951), Box 1. See Note in Bibliography. |
| AMEM | American Methodist Episcopal Mission |
| AP | American Presbyterian |
| APGS | <i>Acts and Proceedings of General Synod</i> (RCA); including the early volumes titled <i>Minutes of General Synod</i> |
| APM | American Presbyterian Mission |
| AR-AB | <i>Annual Report of the ABCFM</i> |
| AR-BFM | <i>Annual report of the BFM</i> (RCA) |
| AR-FMC | <i>Annual report of the FMC</i> (PCE) |
| AR-SA | Annual report of the Scottish Auxiliary/Association (more exactly e.g. <i>Second Annual Report of the China Mission at Amoy</i>) |
| BFM | Board of Foreign Missions (RCA) |
| BFMMin | Minutes BFM |
| BL | Burke Library (UTS) |
| Bx118/F4 | SOAS, PCE, FMC, Series I, Box 118, File 4 |
| Bx119/F5 | SOAS, PCE, FMC, Series I, Box 119, File 5 |
| CAF | <i>China and Formosa</i> , by Johnston |
| CCC | Church of Christ in China |
| CF | <i>Ching Feng</i> |
| CFM | Committee on Foreign Missions (RCA General Synod) |
| ChronLMS | <i>Chronicle of the LMS</i> |
| CI | <i>Christian Intelligencer</i> (RCA). Note: CI/25Sep1856/p50c3 = <i>Christian Intelligencer</i> (25 September 1856) page 50, column 3; etc. |
| CMS | Church Missionary Society |
| CR | <i>Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal</i> |
| CRep | <i>Chinese Repository</i> |
| CSSH | <i>Comparative Studies in Society and History</i> |
| CWML | Council for World Mission Library (SOAS) |
| DCSA | Dutch Colonial Studies Archives (Sage Library) |
| env | envelope |
| EP | English Presbyterian |
| EPM | English Presbyterian Mission |
| EPMF | English Presbyterian Missionary Fasti (URCHS) |
| ECMin | Minutes, Executive Committee (BFM) |
| FMC | Foreign Missions Committee (PCE) |
| FMCMin | FMC Minutes |
| FYA | <i>Fifty years in Amoy</i> , by Pitcher |
| FYC | <i>Forty years in south China</i> , by Fagg |
| HK | Hong Kong |
| IA | <i>In and about Amoy</i> , by Pitcher |

| | |
|------------------|--|
| IBMR | <i>International Bulletin of Missionary Research</i> |
| IRM | <i>International Review of Missions</i> |
| JAH | Joint Archives of Holland (Michigan) |
| JHCMC | <i>Journal of the History of Christianity in modern China</i> |
| Johnston/Rev1854 | Johnston, Review of 1854 (Mess/1855/pp143-146) |
| LMS | London Missionary Society |
| LMSReport | <i>[Annual] Report of the London Missionary Society</i> |
| Mess | <i>English Presbyterian Messenger</i> |
| MF | Minister's File (RCAA) |
| MH | <i>Missionary Herald</i> (ABCFM) |
| ML | Montgomery (Memorial) Library (Westminster Theological Seminary, Glenside, Pennsylvania) |
| NBTS | New Brunswick Theological Seminary |
| NJ | New Jersey |
| NY | New York |
| NYMS | New York Missionary Society |
| PCE | Presbyterian Church of England |
| PFS1/Bx94/F1/I53 | PCE, FMC, Series I, Box 94, File 1, Item 53. Note: PFS2 = Series II, etc. |
| PRC | People's Republic of China |
| RCA | Reformed Church in America |
| RCAA | Reformed Church [in America] Archives |
| RCC | <i>The Reformed Church in China, 1842-1951</i> , by De Jong |
| SA | Scottish Auxiliary/Association |
| SL | Gardner A. Sage Library (NBTS) |
| SOAS | School of Oriental and African Studies (London) |
| UPC | United Presbyterian Church |
| URCHS | United Reformed Church History Society |
| UTS | Union Theological Seminary (NY) |
| WHP | <i>Working His Purpose Out</i> , by Band |
| WR | <i>The Weekly Review</i> |

NOTES on Chinese Romanisation, documentation, etc.

Romanisation

The *pinyin* system is observed with the following exceptions:

(1) For Chinese personal names (including present-day authors), we retain the original Romanised form and refrain from converting into *pinyin*. E.g. because *Fuk-tsang Ying* is the proper English name of a person living in Hong Kong in 2001, we try not to 'rename' him *Xing Fuzhen*.

(2) Following the usage in the missionary records, Amoy Romanisation is followed for names and terms connected with Banlam. In so doing we do away with hyphenation and Amoy oralisms as much as possible; thus *Sin-koe-a* appears as *Sinkoe*, *Chioh-be*¹ as *Chiohbe*, *Peh-chui-ia* as *Pechuia*, etc.² Exceptions are:

(a) when non-hyphenation results in confusion, thus e.g. *hap-it* is not rendered *hapit*.

(b) when dealing with personal nicknames, thus *Kwai-a* or *Kow-a* remains unaltered.

(c) Following the more common missionary usage, we use *Anhai* (instead of *Wa-hai*), *Maping* (instead of *Bay-pay* or *Beh-pih/Be-pi*) and *Tong-an* (instead of *Tang-wa*).

Another reason for using Amoy names is our uncertainty about the exact Chinese characters. Where our knowledge is certain, the *pinyin* equivalent of the Amoy term is given in the Glossary.

(3) The provincial name appears as *Fujian* unless constituting part of a proper name (e.g. in connection with some Banlam ecclesiastical unit).

Documentation and abbreviations

(1) Where an extended bibliography is given in a footnote, we cite only the name of the author and publication year. Full details are in the Bibliography.

(2) In footnotes, call numbers are given only for *unpublished* items. For rare publications, call numbers are in the Bibliography. During my visits to Sage Library (New Brunswick Theological Seminary, New Jersey) and Montgomery Library (Westminster Theological Seminary, Pennsylvania) in 1998-99, the old cataloguing systems were in the process of conversion (not in the missionary sense!) into the Library of Congress system. Where applicable, call numbers in both systems are given in the Bibliography.

(3) Where dates appear in parentheses or footnotes, abbreviated form is used (e.g. 24Feb1842).

(4) Correspondence documentation appears in the form of *writer/provenance/date* followed by its archival location or publication details. E.g. Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1845, CI/2Apr1846/p150c2-3; Joralmon/Amoy/30Jul1856, RCAA/723CM/Bx1. Where provenance is unknown, the form is simply *writer/date*. E.g. Abeel/3Jun1843, CI/23Dec1843/p90c4.

Americanisms

In direct quotations, we remain true to the original sources and refrain from Anglicising Americanisms; thus, e.g., *evangelize* is not converted into *evangelise* nor *favor* into *favour*. As we are undertaking a historical study, forced uniformisation in such details should perhaps give way to a more accurate pluralism.

Church names

Until 1867 (inclusive), the American Church was officially known as the *Reformed Protestant Dutch Church*; thereafter it became the *Reformed Church in America* (RCA). For convenience, we use the latter name throughout.

From 1844 to 1876, the English Church was known as the *Presbyterian Church in England*; in the latter year, it became the *Presbyterian Church of England*. For consistency we use only the latter.

¹ Sometimes, 'Chioh-bay' (Johnston/7Dec1854) or 'Chioh-bey' (Johnston/Rev1854, p. 145; Matheson, *Narrative*, p. 9).

² Fortunately this can be done with some confidence as the researcher reads Chinese and speaks both Mandarin and Amoy.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. The subject

In early post-imperial China, a Chinese man returned from America preaching with great excitement ‘the idea of a Chinese independent Church’. At Amoy, his public proposal of a church ‘absolutely free from foreign name or domination’ was applauded heartily by the local Christians. But when he urged them to join such a church, they replied, ‘All the freedom which you have held up before us we have already enjoyed for more than forty years.’¹ What appeared as a novel and radical idea to one man turned out to be the normal state of affairs to one community for more than a generation. The contrast is all the more striking considering that the zealous propagator confidently thought himself to be ‘progressive’ and his audience ‘backward’ whereas something approaching the opposite turned out to be the case. How this remarkable state of affairs came about at Amoy is surely a subject warranting serious investigation.

The present study intends to look into the historical causes and circumstances which allowed certain Protestant churches in Banlam (South Fujian) to undertake the first ‘successful’ indigenisation experiment in nineteenth century China. In particular we focus on the churches connected with the missions of the Reformed Church in America (RCA) and the Presbyterian Church of England (PCE).

Before defining the thesis and its parameters, we shall first situate our place in the world of current scholarship in mission/church studies (1.2) and indigenisation studies (1.3). Then we explain why our study includes the twin phenomena of devolution and union as well as how our time period was defined (1.4). Next we discuss our choice of a local case study (1.5) and the limits set by our material sources (1.6). With the parameters clarified, we then look at the value of this study (1.7). Finally we state our thesis and give an overview of Chapters 2-7 (1.8).

1.2. Current scholarship

Much has transpired after the late Stephen Neill complained about the history of Christian missions being a subject unjustly ignored by secular historians.² Since then the missionary has been more often the *central* subject of study in anthropology, ethnography³ and also history.

¹ Mess/1915/pp. 140-141.

² See Neill, ‘Preface’, in B.H. Anderson (ed), *Studies in Philippine church history* (1969).

³ Leading the pioneering contributions were Miller (1970) and Beidelmann (1974). Cf. the theme of the American Anthropological Association symposium in 1979: ‘Theoretical and ethnographic attention on missionaries’.

Although research activity was not entirely absent in earlier times,⁴ it was in the 1970s-1980s that a new era in mission studies began. Thus the remarkable negligence of the 14-volume *Cambridge Modern History* (1902-12)⁵ was somewhat corrected when the *New Cambridge Modern History* (1957-79) incorporated the missionary aspect at various points even if treating that presence as more intrusive, rather than inclusive, to mainline history.⁶

What is just said of mission studies in general applies as well to China missions. While academic studies existed earlier⁷, it was in the early 1970s that the late doyen of American sinology, J.K. Fairbank, began to attend keenly to the subject.⁸ In 1968, Fairbank outlined the agenda for the study of American-East Asian relations for the upcoming decade especially mentioning the need to tackle the 'invisible man' in American history, i.e. the oversea missionary who had been sparsely studied even by historians of religion.⁹ Soon the output of literature greatly accelerated.¹⁰ Reflecting the contemporary interest are projects such as the *Currents in World Christianity* (Cambridge-based) and the *Missionary Collections in the UK* (London-based).

It was not long before the Chinese side of the story of Christianity in China became a subject of interest. Just as the telling of colonial epics inevitably requires eventually that of the sequel of decolonisation and political independence, an anticipated element connected with the missionary narrative is the account of the formation, development and establishment of the native church. What Latourette had done for the history of Christian missions in China unfortunately yet challengingly has thus far not been duplicated in the case of the Chinese Protestant Church. However there is no question that the new 'invisible' party in mission history research is no longer the missionaries but the Chinese Christians.¹¹ Riding upon the emphasis on China-centred historiography,¹² the renewed interest in Chinese social history¹³ and the globalisation/de-Westernisation of Christian history,¹⁴ mission history has glided smoothly into church history. The

⁴ See D.L. Robert, 'From Missions to Mission to Beyond Missions: The historiography of American Protestant foreign missions since World War II', *IBMR*/1994/pp. 146-162. Consider also unpublished university doctoral dissertations which reveal the on-going academic study of missions more than indicated by the publication index. E.g. see the 'dissertation notices' in *IBMR*/1977ff which include works (some from the 1920s!) from North America, continental Europe, Britain and South Africa.

⁵ The closest reference to Christian missions was the singular mention of one missionary. Even so there is one caveat which made for consistency: David Livingstone was itemised not as an agent of religion but as a Western explorer of Africa. Neill, 'Preface'.

⁶ Cf. the complaints of Neill (p.vi) and Shapiro (1981) p. 130.

⁷ Latourette (1929) remains the standard reference volume, its breadth and comprehensiveness still unsurpassed. E.g. Cohen (1957), Fairbank (1957), Carlson (1965), Kirby (1966), Liu (1966), Varg (1958), Cohen (1963) and Thomson (1969).

⁸ Cf. Evans (1988) pp. 171,319-320.

⁹ 'Assignment for the 1970s: The study of American-East Asian relations', in Fairbank (1976) pp. 207-233.

¹⁰ See the bibliographic reviews of Fukazawa Hideo (1998), Gu (1998), Lee (1998), Leung (1997), Lutz (1998), Lutz (1996), Ng (1998), Tao (1998) and Ying (1998). Cf. Neils (1990) pp. 283-289. To these we may add Bohr (2000), Brown (1997), Chao and Chong (1997), Cui (1998), Eber (1999), Flynt and Berkley (1997), Gibbard (1998), Grayson (1999), Gu (1996), Hunt (1991), Lam (1982), Lambert (1994), Ling (1999), Lutz (2000), Putney (2001), Rubinstein (1996), Schmoll (1990), Sharpe (1984), Smyth (1994), Standaert (2001), Tiedemann (2000), Tiedemann (forthcoming), Walmsley (1974) and Wiest (1999).

¹¹ Cf. Lutz and Lutz (1995); Lutz, *China Review International* 4/1997/p. 366.

¹² E.g. Cohen (1984); D.H. Bays (ed), *Christianity in China* (1996).

¹³ E.g. Rowe (1985); Huang (1991).

¹⁴ Walls (1991); *idem* (2000); Leung (1997).

growing interest in Chinese Protestant indigenisation is shared by secular academics as well as confessionalist circles.¹⁵ Recently the North Atlantic Missiology Project played a catalytic role by devoting a whole consultation to the theme 'Indigenous agents and indigenous interests: Mission theories and experience in the nineteenth century' (3-5 September 1997, Edinburgh). Along this direction has been chosen our research topic. As the value of our study within the matrix of current scholarship is best appreciated upon a clarification of its subject and parameters, these we now proceed to explain.

1.3. Ecclesiastical devolution

In contemporary scholarly literature, the varied usage of the term *indigenisation* requires some comment. For sure the terminologic ambiguity intensifies when one crosses disciplines from mission theory/theology to mission history or vice-versa. The rise of interdisciplinary studies generates a new demand for greater precision in communicative exchanges. More so with the recent interest of historians in mission theory.¹⁶ In our study, *indigenisation* is not used primarily with reference to the cultural/theological task, i.e. recasting the Christian message into Chinese terms/forms. Illustrative of this are the accommodationism of the Ming Jesuits, the Protestant apologetical formulations of the 1920s and the lively discussion of a 'Chinese theology' in the 1970s.¹⁷ Generally Roman Catholic theologians speak of *inculturation* while Protestants prefer *contextualisation*.¹⁸

Rather by indigenisation we mean *ecclesiastical devolution*. Within Chinese Protestantism, one may discern two strands in the emergence of indigenous churches. First were the churches organised by Chinese Christians outside of the missionary institutional structure.¹⁹ Then there were the churches that devolved from Western missions. The phenomenon of institutional indigenisation has to do with the second strand. Devolution consists of the transition from missionary to native leadership within an organised Christian community involving the attainment of structural independence and sovereign self-determination on the part of the Chinese party. As transfer of power and control is involved, to call this *political indigenisation* is not entirely inappropriate. By this definition, a *Chinese church* does not consist in the mere presence of Chinese church members or workers, for Christianity in China from the very start had always been a Sino-Western cooperative enterprise.²⁰ Neither is a majority Chinese membership or workforce acceptable. Rather, nothing less than full Chinese autonomous *ownership* of the *ecclesia* must be in place; in other words, a Chinese Church which is self-governing, self-

¹⁵ See Lutz (1996) p. 105; Ying (1998) pp. 85ff. Also, e.g., San Mu Ch'eng Tzu (1972), Lam (1982), Lam (1994), Towery (1994), Ying (1995), Dunch (1996), So (1996).

¹⁶ E.g. Forman (in Beaver, 1977, pp. 69-140); Christensen and Hutchison (1983); Hutchison (1987).

¹⁷ Lam (1983); *Ching Feng* (1970-74). Also e.g. Schineller (1992) pp. 50-53; Z.X. Wang, *Zhongguo Jidujiao shi gang* (1959) p. 274; *The life of Christ by Chinese artists* (London, 1945).

¹⁸ E.g. Schineller (1992); Schineller (1996); Hiebert (1987); Haleblan (1983). Cf. Bevans (1985).

¹⁹ E.g. China Evangelisation Society of Chen Mengnan; the churches of Xi Shengmo; Bays, 'The growth of independent Christianity in China, 1900-1937' in Bays (1996) pp. 307-316.

²⁰ S.W. Barnett and J.K. Fairbank (eds), *Christianity in China* (1985) pp. 7ff.

supporting and self-propagating. This was the indigenous church ideal which occupied people like Rufus Anderson, Henry Venn, John Nevius and Roland Allen.²¹

The object of our investigation falls within the category of institutional indigenisation but is not co-extensive with it. We limit our focus only to the individual churches and congregations; in other words, the organised worshipping communities scattered over the Banlam region. Excluded are the medical, educational and other institutions which were turned over to the Chinese at a later period. Yet inasmuch as the lives of these institutions are sometimes relevant to our study, they shall be taken into regard albeit merely on an incidental basis. Our study, in short, is concerned only with *ecclesiastical* devolution. Hereon when unqualified we shall mean by *indigenisation* this devolutionary signification.

1.4. Church union

Basically three Protestant missions were at Banlam during our period, namely: RCA (arrived 1842), London Missionary Society (LMS, 1844) and the English Presbyterian Mission (EPM, 1850). The American Episcopal (AE) and American Presbyterian (AP) missions were at Amoy but only in the early period; so too one missionary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM).²² By the decision to study the RCA and EPM we are in fact focusing on the parties who played the lead role in ecclesiastical devolution and union at Banlam.

The earliest devolutionary actions were heavily flavoured by the ecumenical spirit. The emergence of the first local church government (Sinkoe event, 1856), the union Classis/Presbytery (Taihoey event, 1862) and the first pastoral ordinations (1863) were all joint activities of RCA and EP missionaries. At the Sinkoe event the EPM representation took on guest status but at the others it became a full partner in the transaction. While the LMS churches did not unite with the Taihoey in the nineteenth century, cordial relations among the three Missions were maintained. Into the intertwining lives of the Taihoey churches was to merge the native Congregational Church in the twentieth century. The ecclesiastical union of 1920 brought about the emergence of a 'post-denominational' church in Amoy,²³ the first of its kind in Chinese Protestant history. Therefore we study both devolution and union because in Banlam both were largely an integrated experience.

Just as history sets the agenda in interlocking devolution and union, it also specifies our time frame. We study the period which begins with the arrival of Protestantism and ends with the 'realisation' of the *Talmage ideal* in 1863.

1.5. A local study

In the missionary literature the designation of our geographical area is subsumed under the term *Amoy Mission*. This was in fact a missionary category which remained unaltered even after

²¹ See e.g., Harris (1999); Beaver (1956); Williams (1990) ch1; Warren (1971); J. Nevius (1872) pp. 352ff, *idem* (1899); Clark (1937); Allen (1925); Long and Rowthorn (1989); Wickeri (1988) pp. 36ff.

²² See Ch2.

²³ Cf. 7.5.

the work had spread beyond Amoy town and Amoy Island or the mission headquarters had moved to Kolongsu, a small island southwestward. Therefore *Amoy Mission* was not an internal Chinese designation, nor does *Amoy* exhaust the physical space of missionary operations (except during their earliest times). Rather *Amoy Mission* was a missionary administrative category, identifying a work first started in *Amoy town* but eventually spreading beyond it. For this reason and the sake of clarity, we shall speak of the geographical space of the work as *Banlam*, reserving *Amoy* for the town (present-day Xiamen, 26.24 N, 118.07 E), *Amoy Island* for that island and *Amoy Mission* for the RCA/EPM operational unit.

Beyond the normal limits imposed on a doctoral research project, our choice of a local study finds justification in certain developments within Chinese and general historiographical studies. Recent decades saw a shift of attention from exogenous to endogenous factors in the study of Chinese history.²⁴ Parallel with this is the move away from simplistic pictures of a monolithic China to one of unfiltered complexity. Accumulated research up to the early 1990s revealed many 'empirical paradoxes' which effectively challenged the presuppositions behind Western analytical constructs applied to the study of Chinese social and economic history.²⁵ Early attempts to apply quantitative historical analysis to the study of Chinese social history were weakened by (among other things) uncertainties about generalisations on an empire-wide level.²⁶ In the early 1980s Western scholarship was calling for the reconsideration of the use of social science quantification methodology while Chinese scholarship was questioning the actual implementation of such on a China-wide scale.²⁷ By that decade the shift of emphasis had moved to a gradualism that favours long-term and local case studies.²⁸ Doubtlessly contributing to the revival of micro studies was the re-opening of research doors in China, especially the local archives.

The change of perspective from uniformity to diversity is by no means unique to Chinese studies.²⁹ The impact of the Edward Said controversy³⁰ should not be underestimated. Despite criticisms by professional historians,³¹ the theory of 'othering' and Said's own guiltiness of what he condemns in others have value, even if only for the warning they give to the obsessed/would-be generaliser. That subsequent testing conducted by researchers in other disciplines revealed greater diversity in reality than Said concedes³² merely intensifies the warning. Likewise the

²⁴ E.g. Cohen (1984); Rowe (1985).

²⁵ Huang (1991). Cf. Hamilton (1985) pp. 65-89.

²⁶ I.e., P.T. Ho, *The ladder of success in imperial China: Aspects of social mobility, 1368-1911* (1962); C.L. Chang, *The Chinese gentry: Studies on their role in nineteenth-century Chinese society* (1955).

²⁷ G. Rozman, *Population and marketing settlements in Ch'ing China* (1982); Y.C. Liu, 'Qingdai qianqi de nongye zudian guanxi (Agrarian tenancy relations in early Qing times)', *Qingshi lunzong* 2/1980/pp. 57-88.

²⁸ Rowe (1985) pp. 236ff.

²⁹ E.g. the study of Spanish Philippines (see Anderson, *Studies*).

³⁰ E.W. Said, *Orientalism: Western conceptions of the Orient* (1978; 1995).

³¹ E.g., J. M. MacKenzie, 'Edward Said and the historians', *Nineteenth-century contexts* 18/1994/pp. 9-25.

³² E.g. S. Jewitt, 'Europe's "Others"?: Forestry policy and practices in colonial and postcolonial India', *Environment and planning D: Society and space* 13/1995/pp. 67-90. Cf. also K. Sivaramakrishnan, 'Colonialism and forestry in India: Imagining the past in present politics', *CSSH/1995/pp.* 3-40.

contemporary rejection of totalistic concepts, such as the 'spirit of the age',³³ favours historical specificity as against periodistic generality. The impressionistic-imaginary element which ordains upon the 'big picture' the illusion of compositional completeness is quickly being discarded as an overstaying Romanticist intruder.

The methodological implications of the perspectival shifts are the need to recognise the 'theoretical autonomy of Chinese studies'³⁴ and, more importantly for our present concern, the need for micro-level research rather than macro-studies which tend notoriously to over-rely on analytical constructs. The diversity of local conditions advises less ambitious geographical parameters on the part of researchers. Yet it is equally important to remember that in the realms of both the natural and the social sciences, concrete situations are simple only to the imaginative selectivity of the reductionist perception.³⁵

After having explained the relationship of our methodology with recent scholarship, we may cite one more reason for our choice of a local study of Banlam. It is commonly conceived that 'within the mission-related structures there was only slight movement toward an authentically autonomous or indigenous Chinese church before 1937'.³⁶ Indeed in the nineteenth century, Chinese Christians generally played a subordinate role under missionary leadership.³⁷ Yet much research has been done on the 'big picture' of the May Fourth era especially on theoretical discussions and policy-level developments.³⁸ Local studies have yet to catch up. As part of the 'slight movement' antedating 1937, Banlam as the pioneer in devolution and union becomes doubly significant.

1.6. Sources and limitation

As devolution and union were essentially internal ecclesiastical affairs, our primary sources are mission and church records. Held in the Reformed Church Archives and Sage Library are the extensive (mostly unpublished) China Mission papers and records (correspondence, field reports, etc), the Borneo Mission correspondence and papers, the Minister Files (on individual missionaries), the David Abeel papers, Board of Foreign Missions (BFM) and Executive Committee minutes, the weekly *Christian Intelligencer* (1830-1934), the monthly *Sower and Missionary Recorder*, the *Annual Reports* of the BFM (AR-BFM)³⁹ and *Acts and Proceedings of*

³³ E.g., K.R. Popper, *The poverty of historicism*, 2nd ed. (1960) pp. 147-152; E. Eisenstein, *The printing press as an agent of change* (1979).

³⁴ Huang (1991) pp. 316-317, 335-336. Cf. the 'middle-range' approach of Y.S. Yu, in Kao (1982) pp. 7-26; the Chinese conception of modernisation in K. Yu (1994).

³⁵ Cf. See Popper, pp. 139-142.

³⁶ Bays, *Christianity in China*, p. 309.

³⁷ D. Cheung, 'The growth of Protestantism in China: The role of the Chinese Christians, 1860-1900' (M.A. diss., London, 1997) ch12.

³⁸ E.g. San Mu, 'Movement'; J. Chao, 'The Chinese indigenous church movement, 1919-1927' (Ph.D. diss., Pennsylvania, 1986).

³⁹ Until 1868 (inclusive), the reports on home affairs were for BFM year (1May-30Apr) while those on the Amoy Mission for the calendar year preceding publication (except that Chinese contributions were calculated on the Chinese year). AR-BFM/1868/pp. 7,9.

the General Synod (APGS). A secondary collection is at the Joint Archives of Holland (JAH) in Michigan which consolidate the former holdings of Hope College, Western Seminary and Holland Museum. In addition, ABCFM's *Missionary Herald* (MH) and *Annual Reports* (AR-AB) contain regular news on Amoy until 1857. For the EPM we consulted the PCE archives held in the SOAS Library and the holdings of the United Reformed Church History Society (Cambridge). These include the Foreign Missions Committee (FMC) correspondence and papers, EP Missionary Fasti's, FMC minutes, *Actings and Proceedings of Synod*, *EP Messenger* (Mess) containing also the FMC's *Annual Reports* (AR-FMC), *Weekly Review* and *Annual Reports* of the Scottish Auxiliary/Association (AR-SA). It is unfortunate little EP materials survive from pre-1900 times.

Aside from primary sources, there are the published secondary sources. In addition, we occasionally consulted the LMS (CWML) collection (SOAS) for background data and corroborative or comparative purposes. On the China side, communication with Chinese historians and other knowledgeable individuals has revealed the non-usefulness of the Fuzhou-based materials and the seeming absence of church records in Xiamen. The suspicion is that the latter likely perished during the destructive Cultural Revolution. With this we settled for post-period Chinese sources available in certain British and American libraries. Details of all secondary sources are in the Bibliography.

The limitation of this study is dictated by the range of source materials mentioned above. Basically we are looking at the RCA-EP missionary side of the story albeit with occasional confirmation, clarification or correction from other sources. Since both devolution and union were largely spearheaded by the missionaries (as we shall see later), their writings become our foremost sources for understanding their thoughts and designs. While it is somewhat regrettable we are unable to investigate more fully the Chinese view of things, yet the missionary account does have independent historical value and thus also requires to be told. But not only does our study possess inherent significance, it is of preliminary value for that day (should it come) when the resources should become available for the telling of the Chinese account.

1.7. The value of this study

The nature of our study is by now obvious. It is neither simply a study of the history of Western Protestant missions *only* nor of the history of a Chinese church *only* but a study of the crossroads of the two, thus a study of *both at once* or a mission/church historical examination. While knowledge of the *fact* of Banlam devolution-union became more widespread from 1907,⁴⁰ ignorance about the *story* itself persisted.⁴¹ In the major denominational missionary histories,⁴² one finds only brief discussions as the larger concerns of these writings precluded a sustained narrative

⁴⁰ Showing no knowledge of this were, e.g., Leonard (1895) and Warneck (1901).

⁴¹ E.g., note the many erroneous details in McNeill and Nichols (1974) pp. 204-205.

⁴² P.W. Pitcher, *Fifty years in Amoy* (1893); G.F. De Jong, *The Reformed Church in China, 1842-1951* (1992); J. Johnston, *China and Formosa* (1897); E. Band, *Working out His purpose* (1948). Hereon FYA, RCC, CAF, WHP, respectively.

of the devolution-union story. Lesser hopes may be entertained for any comprehensive in-depth analysis of causation and historical significance. Furthermore among the writers, only Pitcher had some working knowledge of the Amoy dialect. This general lack of secondary literature implies great reliance upon primary sources on our part.

Moreover it also implies the need for a meticulous and detailed study, supplying the many hitherto unknown historical facts as well as a pioneer in-depth analysis of a story yet largely untold. In trying to do so, we do not neglect to address the larger issues in China mission/church research at pertinent points in our discussion, thereby situating our rather exhaustive study of one narrow area within the context of current missiological debates. Likewise it is significant to point out that our grassroots study, with its sustained and intensive focus on things as they happened on the ground level, complements the generalised (sometimes deceptively over-simplistic) pictures of reality often presented at missionary conferences and in general survey-type studies. To such pictures, our close-up examination of Banlam missionary operations, the inner life of the churches and the role of the Chinese Christians offers the much needed dual service of revision and refinement.

Despite the significance of Banlam as far as the devolution and union is concerned, no large scale work has yet been done on the subject. As the first major study, we try to fill this gap, thereby also adding to the literature on Christianity in south China, especially the less-studied South Fujian region. Furthermore there is the extra value of being useful in providing some background understanding for the study of the diasporal Amoy-speaking Chinese communities in southeast Asia, in particular those with some connection to Banlam Protestantism. From an even larger viewpoint, this study contributes to the wider scholarship on the indigenisation of Christianity outside the Western world. With the coming of age of churches in Asia, Africa and Latin America, we have entered the 'beyond missions' era.⁴³ Toward a history of global Christianity,⁴⁴ our study strives to locate another piece in the puzzle.

1.8. The thesis

Our subject therefore embraces the historical causes and circumstances which enabled the effective making of ecclesiastical devolution and union in Banlam among the churches connected with the RCA and the EPM from 1842 to 1863. Under this main heading, we focus especially upon three aspects, viz. leadership (who made it happen), motivation (why it happened) and accomplishment (what exactly happened).

Leadership. The question is basically: Who was *primarily* responsible for making devolution and union happen? The matter concerns the respective roles played by the missionaries and the Chinese in key moments of decision-making and in translating decision into action. Of relevance here is the general notion that the nineteenth century was, with little exception, an era of

⁴³ Robert, 'From Missions', pp. 154-157.

⁴⁴ W.R. Shenk, 'Toward a global church history', IBMR/20/1996/pp. 50-57.

missionary leadership and Chinese followership.⁴⁵ We shall argue that (a) the missionaries took the lead in *initiating* devolution in 1856 and that (b) the RCA was ahead of the EPM in the matter of devolution.

Motivation. What actually motivated or caused the Banlam phenomenon? The matter relates to missionary objectives and methods. Of relevance is the conventional argument that the indigenisation movement *within* the missionary structure was able to take off only as a *reaction* to the Chinese anti-Christianism of the 1920s.⁴⁶ In the matter of devolution, we shall argue that (c) the *Talmage ideal* provided the long-term theoretical motivation for the major devolutionary events of 1856 (the *Sinkoe event*), 1862 (the *Taihoey event*) and 1863 (first pastoral ordinations); (d) the *immediate* causes were, qualitatively speaking, the Christian quality and labours of the Chinese (especially in self-propagation), and quantitatively speaking, the numerical growth of Amoy church membership (1856) and later of local churches (1862). Also we argue that (e) the organic union of 1862 was *primarily* motivated by the peculiar nature of the relationship of the RCA and their churches with the EPM and their churches. Therefore we see the intertwining of missiological principles (devolution) and historical happenstances (union) in the making of the Banlam phenomenon.

Accomplishment. The query is: What exactly was accomplished? Here we deal with the merits and limits of Banlam devolution and union. For a contextual perspective, we also compare Banlam with some 19th-20th century ideals and accomplishments. We shall argue that (f) the Banlam accomplishment deserved good merits but also contained many limits, and that (g) while it had generally outdone other nineteenth century Protestant missions, it fell short of twentieth century ideals.

To sum up, our thesis is this: The *Talmage ideal* constituted the long-term theoretical motivation of Banlam devolution (1856-63). In the latter task, the RCA missionaries preceded the EPM. Both the *Sinkoe event* and the *Taihoey event* found their immediate motivation in the qualitative and quantitative progresses of the Chinese Christian community. In contrast, the organic union of 1862 was *primarily* motivated by the spontaneous cooperative experiences of the two Missions. Thus Banlam devolution and union exhibit the character of both design (*Talmage ideal*) and circumstance (union). Finally, although it had its merits and was in advance of its times, the Banlam accomplishment had many limitations and fell short of twentieth century ideals.

1.9. Chapters overview

Chapter 2 argues the RCA was ahead of the EPM in having a church formation objective, which explains the American leadership at the Sinkoe event in 1856. Providing the theoretical

⁴⁵ See Cheung, 'Growth'.

⁴⁶ E.g. Chao (1986). Cf. Bays, *Christianity in China*, p. 309; T. Brook, 'Toward independence: Christianity in China under the Japanese occupation, 1937-1945', in Bays (1996) pp. 317-337.

motivation for RCA devolution was the *Talmage ideal* which contains the elements of self-government, self-support and self-propagation.

The larger argument in Chapters 3-5 is that by their conduct (Ch3) and labours (Ch4-Ch5), the Chinese church members were able to win the confidence of the missionaries in their readiness and suitability for self-government.

Chapter 3 argues that by their Christian quality, the converts were able to win the high regard of the missionaries, thereby qualifying them to be the electorate at the Sinkoe event. Making this possible was the RCA mission methodology which aimed at granting church membership only to quality converts.

Chapter 4 argues that various limitations upon the missionary workforce helped to create and enlarge a Chinese work space, and that the latter was ably filled up by the converts, thereby resulting in the increase of the high regard of the missionaries for the Christians.

Chapter 5 argues that by their initiatives in extending the work inland, the Chinese demonstrated self-propagation ability which eventually led to the inauguration of self-governmental devolution in 1856.

Chapter 6 argues that the Taihoey (1862) was regarded a devolutionary necessity, it being preliminary to pastoral ordinations, the latter believed to be the final step to complete the devolutionary process on the local church level. The union element of the Taihoey was mainly motivated by the historical cooperation of the two Missions and facilitated by their common church vision, denominational heritage and work methodology.

Chapter 7 assesses the Banlam phenomenon in terms of self-propagation, self-government, self-support and union; offers some comparative perspectives; and closes with a few suggestions for future research. The argument is that the Banlam achievement has its strengths and limits, surpassing certain nineteenth century Protestant missions but failing to match twentieth century ideals; and that both Chinese and missionaries properly share the honours for devolution and union but comparatively the RCA deserved more credit than the EPM.

Chapter 2

Defining the envisaged church: Missionary objectives

2.1. Introduction

The Sinkoe event. When the membership at the two places of worship at Amoy had reached ‘over one hundred and ten’, it was considered an ‘urgent need’ that the church be formally organised via the appointment of office-bearers.¹ Thus on the Sabbaths of 6th and 13th April 1856, the congregations at the Sinkoe and Tekchhiukha chapels were notified about a special meeting of all male members in the afternoon of the 14th. Great care was taken to make the solemn agenda clear to all, i.e. to consider ‘the propriety of electing elders and deacons; and, if deemed proper and expedient, to proceed with said election’.² Following ‘a season of prayer’ on Monday morning at Sinkoe, the afternoon saw the election of Li Kahin, Loa Phanliong, Gui Chiongjin and Chhoa Giiausioek as elders as well as of Ng Chekcheng, Ongkau, Lau Pihu and Ng Hongsiong as deacons. On the Sabbath afternoon of 11th May, the officers-elect were ordained at the Sinkoe chapel.

\ This Chapter aims at the establishment of two main arguments. The first concerns the RCA leadership over the EPM in the period preceding the *Sinkoe event*. More specifically we argue the RCA Mission was ahead in (a) the having of a church formation objective, (b) the exertion of efforts toward that goal and the gaining of a church membership and (c) the *explicit* conceptualisation of the ideal church. The second argument is that the theoretical factor, in the form of the *Talmage ideal*, was the guiding vision of the RCA church formation plan.

To provide a background we begin with an overview of the foreign workforce of each Mission (2.2). Immediately follows a lengthy discussion consisting of a detailed survey of every individual missionary in terms of his work objective(s) and some of his accomplishments (2.3). Next we document the church membership growth of the 1842-56 period (2.4). Then we discuss the kind of church envisaged by the missionaries (2.5). Finally a concluding summary of our findings closes the Chapter (2.6).

¹ Talmage/Amoy/30May1856, CI/25Sep1856/p. 50c3. Cf. Joralmon/Amoy/30Jul1856, 723CM/Bx1. Note inaccuracies in De Jong’s excerpt (RCC/p. 65).

² Talmage/Amoy/30May1856. Cf. AR-AB/1857/p. 122.

2.2. The missionaries, 1842-56

On 24th February 1842 David Abeel³ arrived in British-occupied Amoy⁴ with W.J. Boone (American Episcopal/AE) and soon settled in Kolongsu. When Boone returned in early June from Macao, the Rev. T.L. McBride (American Presbyterian/AP, Jun-Dec1842⁵) and Dr. W.H. Cumming (independent, 1842-47) came with him.⁶ The death of his wife forced the premature removal of Boone in February 1843.⁷ For a while, the AP presence continued in the persons of Dr. and Mrs. J.C. Hepburn (1843-45), W.M. Lowrie, Rev. John Lloyd (1844-48) and Rev. H.A. Brown (1845-47).⁸ Also in Amoy for some months was L.B. Peet (ABCFM/non-RCA, Mar-Sep1847).⁹ But soon one worker left after another¹⁰ and the last AP man, Lloyd, died in 1848.¹¹ Fortunately the coming of the LMS (1844)¹² provided some permanent company for the RCA while allowing also for the inter-Mission cooperation of the pre-EPM years.

In 1844 Abeel moved into rented quarters at Amoy thus effectively moving the mission base off Kolongsu. In late June, Elihu Doty (1809-65) and William Pohlman (1812-49) and their wives landed. Toward the end of the year Abeel ended his short Amoy career¹³ and sailed for Canton en route home.¹⁴ In November 1845 Doty left for America out of domestic necessity.¹⁵ Until his return in August 1847 with John Van Nest Talmage,¹⁶ Pohlman was the lone RCA man on the ground.¹⁷ Not long after the latter's demise in early 1849, Talmage accompanied Pohlman's ailing sister to America leaving Amoy in March.¹⁸ Until Talmage returned (16Jul1850), Doty was the only RCA missionary in the field.¹⁹ Finally on 20th April 1856, John S. Joralmon the last RCA missionary of our period arrived.²⁰

On the EPM side the first²¹ China missionary William Chambers Burns²² reached Hongkong in November 1847²³ where he later recruited Dr. James Hume Young²⁴ who began his

³ David Abeel III (12Jun1804-4Sep1846).

⁴ Abeel/Macao/30Dec1841, CI/21May1842/p. 174c1.

⁵ IA/pp. 236f.

⁶ Circular letter of the missionaries/Macao/10Jul1842, CI/31Dec1842/p. 94c4-5; AR-AB/1847/p. 166.

⁷ AR-AB/1847/p. 166; cf. AR-AB/1843/p. 136; M.Boone, *The seed of the Church in China* (1973) pp. 97-98,103.

⁸ IA/pp. 236-237.

⁹ Pohlman/Amoy/1May1847, CI/2Dec1847/p. 82c3-5.

¹⁰ Peet left in Sep1848. AR-AB/1848/p. 221.

¹¹ AR-AB/1847/p. 166; Talmage/diary/8Dec1848, FYC/pp. 87ff.

¹² An early account is J. Macgowan, *Christ or Confucius, which? Or, the story of the Amoy Mission* (1895).

¹³ AR-AB/1847/p. 166.

¹⁴ AR-AB/1845/p. 164.

¹⁵ AR-AB/1847/p. 166; cf. AR-AB/1846/p. 170, cf. p. 84; APGS/1846/p. 84.

¹⁶ AR-AB/1848/p. 218; cf. 1847/p. 165.

¹⁷ AR-AB/1846/p. 169.

¹⁸ AR-AB/1849/pp. 167-168; cf. APGS/1849/p. 500.

¹⁹ AR-AB/1851/p. 124; cf. 1850/p. 160.

²⁰ Joralmon/Amoy/30Jul1856. Cf. MH/1856/p. 9; Douglas/Amoy/28Feb1856, Mess/1856/pp. 180-181; AR-AB/1856/p. 10; AR-AB/1857/p. 122.

²¹ In 1845 the sending of Rev. William Charteris by 'an unofficial Ladies' Association' commenced the Corfu mission (1845-64). However it was in 1849 that the Synod accepted him as its official agent (Dale, *Missions*, p. 2n). The Women's Missionary Association was organised later in 1878.

²² 1Apr1815-4Apr1868; ordained 22Apr1847.

²³ Burns/26Nov1847, CAF/p. 69.

²⁴ Matheson, *Narrative*, p. 2; FMCMIn/pp. 74-76.

missionary term in 1850.²⁵ Meanwhile in October 1849 the FMC reversed the Synod's decision to make Amoy²⁶ its station choosing instead Canton.²⁷ Following a brief and unfruitful sojourn in Canton, Young returned to Hongkong and went on to Amoy arriving on 18th May.²⁸ The enthusiastic letters of Young urging Burns to join him finally paid off when Burns reached Amoy in July 1851.²⁹ In December 1853 the second EP ministerial missionary James Johnston arrived.³⁰ In August 1854 the duty fell upon Burns to bring the ill-stricken Young back to England.³¹ Meanwhile perennial health problems forced Johnston to leave for home in 1855 shortly before³² Burns and Rev. Carstairs Douglas³³ arrived in Hongkong in early July.³⁴ Parting ways thereon Douglas proceeded to Amoy arriving in mid-July³⁵ while Burns went to Shanghai.³⁶ It was not until 1858 that the latter next returned to Amoy.³⁷

Thus the Protestant occupation began with Kolongsu as its base but relocated to Amoy after two years. The geographical site of the genesis of Banlam devolution was thereby fixed a dozen years before 1856. The movements of the early missionaries resulted in such a state that during the Sinkoe event only four male missionaries were present, viz. Doty, Talmage and Joralmon (RCA), and Douglas (EPM).

2.3. Missionary objectives

The early Amoy missionaries were basically practitioners before they were theoreticians. It is therefore not surprising to find from them no full-length systematic treatise of missionary goals and methods at the out-start. Not that they had no idea at all of what they were setting out to do but that in their written remains from various times we find notions in the process of field-testing as well as conclusions presented as already field-proven. Indeed they were pioneers in a new environment engaged in methodological experimentation and were self-consciously so. Two important implications emerged at this point, viz. the appropriateness of the diachronic approach which we adopt below and secondly the increased influence potentials of senior missionaries who with their experiential leadership served as the reference handbooks in the textbook-less period of early missionary work in Banlam. Although Doty, Talmage and Douglas were the only foreign players in the Sinkoe event of 1856 the influences and performances of their predecessors or

²⁵ AR-FMC, Mess/1852/pp. 150-153.

²⁶ Mess/1851/p. 140. Cf. WHP/pp. 11-13.

²⁷ FMCMIn/pp. 77-80. Cf. Mess/1850/p. 473, 1851/p. 140. *Contra* Dale, *Missions*, p. 3.

²⁸ *Contra* Islay Burns (*Memoir of the Rev. William C. Burns*, 1870, pp. 383-384) and Matheson (*Narrative*, p. 4) who thought Young started labour at Amoy in Mar1850.

²⁹ Burns, *Memoir*, pp. 375f.

³⁰ 18Dec1819-16Oct1906. EPMF/Johnston. CAF/p. 81.

³¹ Burns/Hongkong/10Aug1854, Bx119/F5.

³² CAF/p. 110.

³³ 27Dec1830-26Jul1877.

³⁴ Burns/Hongkong/5Jul1855, Bx119/F5. *Contra* WHP/pp. 23-24.

³⁵ Douglas/Amoy/21Aug1855, Mess/1855/pp. 370-372. See also Mess/1856/p. 153.

³⁶ Douglas/Amoy/21Aug1855; Mess/1856/pp. 152f; Burns/Shanghai/26Jul1855, Mess/1855/pp. 343f.

³⁷ Burns, *Memoir*, pp. 486ff. Excluding the one-week visit in 1857; see Burns/Swatow/10Sep1857, Mess/1857/pp. 380f.

former colleagues were not entirely immaterial. Thus even if the RCA sometimes dated the official inauguration of its Amoy Mission to 1844³⁸ the proper place to begin our survey is with Abeel. On the EP side we likewise begin with its first China missionary, viz. Burns.

On account of the pioneer character of our period, the matter of missionary objectives tended to be somewhat fluid especially in the earliest years. The small number of the foreign agents presents both a challenge and a consolation as far as our study is concerned. It is a challenge in that the smallness of the missionary workforce makes *each individual* important to the development of the work of his Mission. It is a consolation in that smallness makes the in-depth study of individual missionaries a possible though not at all a less tedious task. In this Section we shall examine each individual missionary and argue the following: both Missions had a church planting objective, the commencement of RCA church work preceded that of the EPM, and, for internal reasons the latter started its church planting work later than it could have.

2.3.1. Abeel

The RCA pioneer missionary regarded his work as consisting of three roles. The first was as advocate of foreign missions. While in Europe (1833-34) and America (1834-39) Abeel zealously promoted foreign missions among various Christian communities.³⁹ The missionary interest at the RCA Seminary in New Brunswick also seems to have been triggered by his visit.⁴⁰ This is significant because the later RCA agents were graduates of this institution.⁴¹ However as this role was played outside the China mission field it is of secondary interest to us. It is the other two rôles which bear a direct relationship to the Amoy work, viz. Abeel as mission field surveyor and then as preacher rather than church planter/pastor. Both roles found roots in his pre-Amoy religious work experience. When Abeel first arrived in China in 1830 his main task was to serve as chaplain to the English-speaking sailors at Canton under the auspices of the Seaman's Friend Society⁴² and the ABCFM. Less known is that his secondary work was to find out whatever could be done among the Chinese accessible to him.⁴³ The latter work became primary when Abeel at ABCFM instruction⁴⁴ undertook a tour of southeast Asia during 1831-33.⁴⁵ The work of the preacher can be traced to an even earlier period. Commissioned in 1826 as an RCA domestic missionary, Abeel began pastoral work that year at Athens (NY).⁴⁶ While serving this pastoral

³⁸ E.g. AR-BFM/1858/p. 9. Later issues retraced to 1842, e.g. 1926/p.i, 1957/p. 5.

³⁹ See Williamson, *Memoir*; A.J. Poppen, 'The life and work of David Abeel' (S.T.M. thesis, UTS, [1959]), SL/XT8.P81, and Chinese translation by W. de Velder (Hongkong, 1963).

⁴⁰ See E.J. Bruins, 'The New Brunswick Theological Seminary, 1884-1959' (PhD, NYU, 1962) pp. 142-162.

⁴¹ E.g. Doty graduated in 1836, Pohlman 1837, Talmage 1845. FYA/pp. 65ff,70ff; *A Sermon delivered May 6, 1849*, pp. 40-41; FYC/pp. 43ff.

⁴² So CI/11May1844/p. 170c2-4. Or 'Seamen's Friend Society', CI/12May1859/p. 182c6-7.

⁴³ Abeel/journal/24Sep1829, Williamson, *Memoir*, pp. 49-51. Cf. pp. 51-52.

⁴⁴ AR-AB/1831/p. 33.

⁴⁵ See Abeel, *Journal of a residence in China* (1834) p. 143; so too 2nd ed. (1836). Hereon, *Journal* and *Journal* (1836), respectively. Not 26Dec, as in M.A. Rubinstein, 'Zion's corner: Origins of the American Protestant missionary movement in China, 1827-1839' (PhD, NYU, 1976) pp. 183-184.

⁴⁶ *Annual report of the Missionary Society of the Reformed Dutch Church in North America* (1826) p. 28.

term he received ordination as an 'evangelist'⁴⁷ (Oct1826) and during 1827 was engaged in *itinerant* evangelistic activities.⁴⁸

During both of his sojourns in China Abeel never actually planted any church in the mission field. Although he resided in Kolongsu for nearly two years⁴⁹ and despite the rather fast growth of his congregation there,⁵⁰ not one person was baptised much less a church organised. Instead of staying on he moved to Amoy in early 1844⁵¹ the decision to rent a chapel in the city no doubt inspired by the 'unbroken succession of Sundays' of preaching.⁵² Just as his Kolongsu term, no baptisms were had until his departure. The agenda of Abeel in Kolongsu-Amoy seems quite similar to that he embraced during his southeast Asian tour when he set out 'with the double purpose of ascertaining the most important posts for missions, and of rendering himself useful in that station, which presented the most claims upon his services'.⁵³ As it turned out, the work of Abeel the reconnoitre ended with his 'occupation' of Amoy. Primarily on account of feeble health, his Amoy work was terminated prematurely. Yet he made it his duty not to leave his post until reinforcements should arrive which happened in June 1844. The objective Abeel set for himself therefore partook of a transitory nature, i.e. he strove to identify a field and occupy it until he could pass it on to others at the soonest time. Thus Abeel's contribution was more in laying the groundwork for later RCA church planting rather than in church formation or devolution. When one recalls that during the period in which he worked there was neither church membership/property to pass on nor any Chinese party on the receiving end to complete the process, then it is not difficult to understand that it could not have been otherwise.

2.3.2. Pohlman, Doty and Talmage

There is little doubt or ground for ambiguity when it comes to the missionary aim of Abeel's immediate and later successors. Among Pohlman, Doty and Talmage the main and rather consistent objective was determinedly the making of Chinese converts and the organisation of these into a church. In the pursuit of this objective the first baptisms were held in spring of 1846 and beginning in 1849 new members were received every year.⁵⁴ After the Sinkoe chapel was built (1849), Talmage started services at Tekchhiukha (1850) resulting in the birth of a second Amoy congregation.⁵⁵ Sustained work over the years eventually culminated in the Sinkoe event.

Toward the chief end of church formation, the RCA was never directly involved in proper medical work and could on only one occasion be said to have been side-tracked (if at all) by

⁴⁷ I.e. today's equivalent of a classical missionary. Poppen, 'Abeel', p. 11.

⁴⁸ See Williamson, *Memoir*, ch1-ch2; Poppen, 'Abeel', ch1-ch2.

⁴⁹ Feb1842-Jan1844. A brief absence was in 1843. Abeel/Canton/11Jul1843, CI/23Dec1843/p. 90c4.

⁵⁰ The missionaries/Macao/10Jul1842. Cf. Abeel/'Kolongsoo'/4Aug1842, CI/7Jan1843/p. 98c2; Abeel/3Jun1843, CI/23Dec1843/p. 90c4.

⁵¹ Abeel/Kolongsu/1Feb1844, CI/6Jul1844/pp. 202c6-203c1. Also AR-AB/1845/p. 165.

⁵² See AR-AB/1845/p. 164 citing Abeel/journal/15Jan1844.

⁵³ Abeel, *Journal*, 'Preface'.

⁵⁴ See 2.4.

⁵⁵ RCC/pp. 26-27.

educational concerns. For the reason that the Mission had no physicians until the 1880s,⁵⁶ involvement in medical work took the form of collaboration with non-RCA agents, viz. Cummings,⁵⁷ Hepburn⁵⁸ and Young.⁵⁹ Consistently the main RCA interest was in the evangelistic opportunities occasioned by the presence of waiting patients rather than in the treatment of their physical ailments. In the latter type of service, the absence of a medical missionary ruled out any realistic RCA participation.

In the matter of educational work the story is a little bit more complicated. The first instance of involvement was the elementary school opened in 1845 by Doty which closed after a few months on account of Mrs. Doty's demise.⁶⁰ Obviously the RCA had an educational concern since early on. After Doty left for America, Pohlman focused all his attention and efforts upon church formation. However during 1846 Pohlman upon learning of the imminent re-sending of Doty thought of having the latter open a boys' school and work full-time in it since such 'is now frequently called for...'⁶¹ However the RCA did not take the initiative to open a school even after Doty returned although the Mission became involved nonetheless in educational work. In 1847 Peet (ABCFM) started a school with 2-3 boys whose number soon grew to 26. After his departure, the work devolved upon Doty.⁶² Speaking retrospectively Pohlman saw no regrets for the delayed commencement of educational work explaining that the 'danger' is when 'schools and printing and other labors' engaged 'the *first attention* of a missionary' when these are 'only secondary' to 'the great and all-important end - *the oral communication of the gospel of Christ*'.⁶³ In speaking of the latter 'end' he of course had his mind on convert-making and the ultimate aim of church formation. For Pohlman school work though valuable should not supersede the work of preaching which was reckoned *the evangelistic method*.⁶⁴ Educational work was not absolutely forbidden but granted secondary importance so that unlike preaching it may be postponed. Even when commenced it was to be undertaken in a manner which will not challenge the primacy of preaching. The same priority was shared by Doty who had charge of the school from 1847. When in a state of overwork and the occasion arose to lighten his load, he gladly handed over education work to the newly arrived Young.⁶⁵

During the post-Pohlman period a redefinition of the aim of educational work was brought about. The operation of *evangelistic* educational work was replaced by the parochial school system. The growth of church membership had brought about a corresponding increase in the

⁵⁶ See RCC/ch11.

⁵⁷ E.g. Pohlman/Amoy/4Jan1847, CI/27May1847/p. 182c3-4.

⁵⁸ RCC/p. 149.

⁵⁹ See 2.3.4.

⁶⁰ RCC/p. 34.

⁶¹ Pohlman to Abeel, Canton/7Aug1846, 'Abeel papers and journals', env.5, SL/MSS.XT8.Ab3.

⁶² Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, CI/27Apr1848/p. 166c3-5.

⁶³ *Ibid* (italics original).

⁶⁴ See 3.4.

⁶⁵ See Burns, *Memoir*, pp. 383-384. Cf. p. 285.

number of children needing Christian education.⁶⁶ Thus in 1854 (Feb) Doty re-possessed⁶⁷ the EP school at Keklai and limited the enrolment to children of church members.⁶⁸ In mid-1856 the two Amoy schools (one being EP) had 'between 40 and 50 scholars, mostly children of Christians' whose 'principal study is of course the word of God'.⁶⁹ The new educational objective therefore signified a shift in the instrumental use of the school. No longer was it mainly a means of ingathering (making new converts) but of consolidation (educating existing converts). Thus in opting for parochial schools, the missionaries, far from having gone off their main pursuit, were perfectly on track toward the objective of church formation.

In conclusion we summarise: The RCA missionaries set to work toward a church formation objective at least as early as 1844. If we are to regard Abeel's work as an 'aborted' attempt at the same end, then the date pushes back to 1842. For the sake of forwarding our discussion however we take 1844 as the beginning. The Mission never did undertake proper medical work although the advantages of medical service were availed of at different times. Educational work was done at first on evangelistic grounds and then in the later years for intramural benefits. Throughout the period under study the RCA fixated upon one objective and did so with determination and substantial steadiness. Thus in 1846 the first converts were baptised and three years later a Mission chapel was completed. Before long two congregations were meeting regularly in different parts of Amoy. Twelve years of church planting efforts eventually gave birth to the Sinkoe Consistory in 1856.

2.3.3. Burns

Burns came to China under the stipulation that he be a thorough-going evangelist with no obligation to undertake church-planting or pastoral duties.⁷⁰ Throughout his *whole* missionary career, Burns played with great consistency this FMC-sanctioned role of a pure-and-free evangelist. For this reason, EPM church formation or pastoral work did not start as soon as its first missionary landed in China.

In pre-1854 times, Burns was involved in various works except church formation. Soon after landing in Hongkong Burns opened an English school although Johnston later revealed that in fact 'he disliked teaching'⁷¹ which disposition Burns himself later confirmed. Hearing about Young's smooth-going educational work in Amoy, Burns wrote from Canton that he would certainly join his physician-colleague 'without delay' if only he had 'an aptitude' for 'the instruction of the young'.⁷² Considering Burns' consistent evangelistic focus, it is likely some *informal* pressure from home may have led to the opening of the Hongkong school in 1847.

⁶⁶ See Talmage/Amoy/16Jan1856, CI/29May1856/p. 189c5-6.

⁶⁷ See 2.3.4.

⁶⁸ Doty/20Apr1854, MH/1854/pp. 280-282; cf. AR-AB/1854/p. 143.

⁶⁹ Joralmon/Amoy/30Jul1856.

⁷⁰ CAF/pp. 68,92; Dale, *Missions*, pp. 2-3.

⁷¹ CAF/p. 70.

⁷² Burns/Canton/19Jun1851, Mess/1851/pp. 281-283.

Nevertheless in late January 1848 Burns informed the FMC secretary of his decision to end the brief educational enterprise and devote himself to mainland preaching with Chinese evangelists.⁷³ Here we see at play not only the dislike for educational work but also the spirit of the evangelist. The same must have motivated Burns to recruit Young to whom he intended to turn over the educational burden thereby freeing himself to be a full evangelist. Note that the recruitment of Young came conspicuously after the home Synod had passed the *formal* resolution calling for the launching of educational work in China.⁷⁴

With FMC sanction, Burns' freedom translated into an operational style characterised by a lack of long-term planning or fixed objectives and coupled with an extreme openness to spontaneity. During his first year in Amoy, Burns found little opportunities for preaching although he did undertake three visits to the surrounding country. With the regular worship services 'well occupied by others', his work became 'of a more undefined and uncertain kind'.⁷⁵ When wet weather further confined him indoors, he took to literary labours.⁷⁶ During 1853 his various activities included re-building the EP house, preaching as opportunities allowed, superintending the Keklai school⁷⁷ and pursuing literary work.⁷⁸ There was much activity indeed but definitely no intentional efforts at church formation in any way.

Even during and after the Pechuia awakening of 1854, Burns exhibited no desire for church planting or pastoring. In April when he thought 'the time is near' to gather a church,⁷⁹ he asked the Americans to take full responsibility for examination, baptism and subsequent 'pastoral oversight'.⁸⁰ This he did in order to avoid 'the peculiar duties of the pastoral office'.⁸¹ Showing full respect for Burns' decision, Doty wrote, 'During the whole course of his ministry, he has ever acted simply as an evangelist, and is unwilling to do otherwise.'⁸² Talmage thought that an additional reason for this RCA action was the fact that Burns had been 'assisted' at Pechuia by RCA converts.⁸³ Relatedly the Americans had something the EPM had not, i.e. natives to oversee the proposed out-station.⁸⁴ Yet while these latter points are good grounds for desiring RCA oversight, the primary cause was Burns' non-pastoral inclination. Thus some three months before he left Amoy, Burns officially turned Pechuia over to the RCA.⁸⁵ Immediately after assuming responsibility, Doty and Talmage set out for the inland town and, after examining the inquirers,

⁷³ Burns/[Hongkong]/29Jan1848, CAF/pp. 70-71.

⁷⁴ See Mess/1850/pp. 473-475.

⁷⁵ Burns/Amoy/8Jun1852, Bx119/F5.

⁷⁶ Burns/Amoy/8Jun1852; Burns/Amoy/17Jan1853, Bx119/F5.

⁷⁷ Young/Amoy/15Aug1853, Mess/1854/p. 52.

⁷⁸ Burns/Amoy/17Jan1853; Amoy/16May1853; White Water Camp/16Jan1854. Bx119/F5. Also Burns/6Jun1853, Mess/1853/p. 291.

⁷⁹ Doty/20Apr1854.

⁸⁰ Talmage/18Aug1854, MH/1855/pp. 41-46. Cf. AR-AB/1855/p. 112; Burns/Amoy/1Jul1854, Mess/1854/pp. 314-315; Mess/1855/pp. 115-117.

⁸¹ Burns/3Mar1854, CAF/pp. 91-92.

⁸² Doty/20Apr1854. Cf. AR-AB/1854/p. 144.

⁸³ Talmage/18Aug1854.

⁸⁴ RCC/p. 58.

⁸⁵ Burns/Shanghai/24Aug1855, Bx119/F5.

accepted five men for baptism the following Sabbath.⁸⁶ During this period we observe that the planless Burns was taking on bits and pieces of work as opportunities appeared but none of these involved gathering a congregation or pastoral work. Even when the opportunity for pastoral work presented itself, he passed on the duty to his American colleagues without the least hesitation.

The same operational mode applied during his second period in China. Upon returning in 1855 Burns immediately set out for Shanghai. It was the desire to reach the Taipings in Nanjing that brought him to that city 'but notwithstanding this I shall not be rash in seeking to force my way to that place, but I shall be ready to fall in with any indication that may be given by God in his Providence etc. that it is my duty to take such a step'.⁸⁷ About this time Burns received a letter from Banlam asking him to return at the soonest time. This request he declined explaining to another party that he was 'unwilling by taking a pastoral oversight of them to restrict my liberty in preaching the Gospel at large' and that for the same reason he had turned Pechuia over to the RCA earlier.⁸⁸ Not only did Burns' characteristic planlessness prevail beyond the Shanghai/Taiiping sidetracking affair, it enveloped the remainder of his future. He wrote, 'How I shall be afterward occupied and how long, I cannot tell but looking to the Lord for guidance and grace. I would desire to do from day to day what my hand finds to do in the work of His Kingdom'.⁸⁹ After the aborted visit to Nanjing, Burns left Shanghai for Swatow in March 1856.⁹⁰ Of the length of his stay in Swatow, Burns again confessed uncertainty but looked up 'to our God and Saviour to guide us as to the future'.⁹¹ In 1863 Burns left Banlam for Beijing arriving in October intent on holding talks with Sir Frederick Bruce on the enforcement of missionary property-holding rights under the Chinese-Western treaties.⁹² It was not long before new literary projects took his fancy.⁹³ Though the literary work in Beijing was captivating, yet Burns never considered that city 'my proper station' but maintained that he will stay only until his publications get done.⁹⁴ Indeed in August 1867 he left for unoccupied Newchwang where his life and career were to soon end.⁹⁵ Even there his pioneering work consisted of free unstructured activity and as before partook of no pastoral character.

With this characteristic mode of operation rather consistently maintained throughout his career, Burns certainly could allow no space for any real church formation or pastoral work. Even so the dissenting opinion of Islay Burns had it that Burns' later labours at Amoy constituted pastoral work, as too those at Hongkong, Fuzhou and Beijing.⁹⁶ But then in the same spirit we

⁸⁶ 11 May entry, Burns/Amoy/8 May 1854, Mess/1854/p. 268.

⁸⁷ Burns/Shanghai/26 Jul 1855, Bx119/F5.

⁸⁸ Burns/Shanghai/24 Aug 1855.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ Burns/Shanghai/4 Mar 1856; Burns/Swatow/31 Mar 1856. Bx119/F5.

⁹¹ Burns/Shanghai/4 Mar 1856.

⁹² Burns/Pekin/25 Jan 1864; Burns/Pekin/24 May 1864. Bx119/F5.

⁹³ Burns/Pekin/24 May 1864; Burns/Pekin/14 Jan 1865; Burns/Pekin/25 Oct 1865. Bx119/F5. Also Burns to Rev. David Brown, Pekin/12 Apr 1866, EPMF/Burns..

⁹⁴ Burns/Pekin/25 Oct 1865.

⁹⁵ WHP/p. 69; Burns/Yingsze, Newchwang/9 Mar 1868, Bx119/F5.

⁹⁶ Burns, *Memoir*, p. 587n.

may as well include his work at Pechuia in particular and Banlam in general. However this is to miss the point, viz. Burns was willing *to assist* in the pastoral work of other missionaries but not to be the *initiator* nor the *head pastor* in such work. Consider for instance his other two extended stays in Banlam. The return to Amoy in 1858 was occasioned by discipline problems at the Pechuia church⁹⁷ and the sudden death of Rev. David Sandeman in July.⁹⁸ With the Pechuia matter resolved Burns left for Fuzhou in October 1859. The sojourn of 1862-1863 was compelled by ‘the desire of friends at home’ and the numerical weakness of the workforce brought about by the temporary removal of two RCA missionary families.⁹⁹ In both cases not only was Burns simply filling in a gap left by others, his quickness to leave at the soonest opportunity proved that he never intended the filling-in to take on a permanent basis. His determined avoidance of a *fixed long term* post was more than clear. Furthermore length of stay in a particular place does not automatically imply the doing of pastoral work. The testimony of an EP colleague summarises things well. Speaking of the Burns of 1862-63 (just before he finally left Amoy for good), Swanson said that the EP pioneer missionary did regularly visit the stations and preach on the Sabbaths but stubbornly refused to do baptismal examinations, administer sacraments or even the administrative work of the Mission.¹⁰⁰

Indeed church formation never did become part of Burns’ primary object throughout his China years. The original stipulation he made attendant upon his China commission was carried out in practice with good consistency. For the EPM the task of church planting had to be postponed until another missionary took it up.

2.3.4. Young

Neither did the second EP missionary involve himself in church formation or pastoral work. Not only because Young was never an ordained minister but that from an early time the PCE had envisaged doing educational work in China. Even before his missionary term began (1850), the 1849 Synod had decided that educational work be launched at Amoy while allowing Burns and Young freedom ‘to act as they might think best’.¹⁰¹ When Young came to Amoy, he found the place desirable beyond his expectations and soon settled into Pohlman’s former house¹⁰² which was next to that of Doty. Upon learning of Young’s educational intention, Doty quickly offered to turn over his day-school, explaining that work overload had forced him to consider ‘disbanding the boys’.¹⁰³ Having agreed to inherit the school,¹⁰⁴ Young was ‘formally inducted’

⁹⁷ Pp. 486ff.

⁹⁸ Burns/Swatow/4Aug1858, Bx118/F4.

⁹⁹ Burns/Amoy/5May1862, Bx119/F5.

¹⁰⁰ Burns, *Memoir*, p. 593.

¹⁰¹ FMC, Mess/1850/pp. 473-475.

¹⁰² Cf. Talmage/17Dec1850, MH/1851/pp. 152-154.

¹⁰³ Young/Amoy/10Jun1850, Mess/1850/pp. 473-475; Mess/1851/p. 138.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Talmage/17Dec1850.

on 27th May on which day he also obtained a language teacher for himself.¹⁰⁵ Thereafter the educational objective was pursued by Young steadily until he left China in 1854.

Beside educational work, Young inaugurated EP medical work in December 1850.¹⁰⁶ Shortly before the insurgents' occupation of Amoy, his time was 'increasingly' taken by medical work (1853).¹⁰⁷ But the reality was that Young placed priority upon the educational rather than the medical work. Thus he started the doing of the former about half a year ahead of the latter. Moreover as early as mid-/late summer 1852 he had felt it needful *on account of the schools* to curtail the medical work.¹⁰⁸ In this light, the remark of 1853 (*supra*) should be read as expressing dissatisfaction than otherwise. Furthermore in letters from the occupation period, Young included updates on educational work but said practically nothing about medical work thereby revealing his chief concern.¹⁰⁹ This was not a case of simple non-reporting but rather that of having nothing to report. The matter was related to the physical condition of Mrs. Young.¹¹⁰ The first hint came in the fact that the desire to curtail medical work in 1852 was expressed some months after April when Mrs. Young first began having health problems.¹¹¹ Presumably this new development affected Young himself even if there was no outright statement that medical work was totally stopped that year. In 1853 the health problem was further compounded by the state of war which brought about the moving of the Young residence more than once. In July¹¹² the Youngs moved into a bungalow because the mother of two 'had been seriously ill'.¹¹³ On 8th August at the suggestion of her physician, the family relocated aboard a foreign store ship because the military fightings had been detrimental to Mrs. Young's physical recovery (aside from the need to escape from the dangerous firings of the imperialist junks).¹¹⁴ Less than a week later with the political situation having improved, the Youngs returned to their own house. Whereas the changing of residence *by itself* did not put a full stop to the school work which was mainly dependent on Chinese teachers, it had the effect of halting the medical work which totally relied on Young himself. Thus all indications suggest it was during the occupation period that Young's medical work came to an end. Moreover the steady deterioration of Mrs. Young hindered the re-opening of the dispensary. As it turned out, she never recovered and passed away before the year ended.¹¹⁵ With regards to the re-ordering of the EP work after occupation, no provisions were specifically

¹⁰⁵ Young/Amoy/10Jun1850.

¹⁰⁶ Young/Amoy/17Dec1850, Mess/1851/pp. 89-91; Young/Amoy/17Jan1851, Mess/1851/p. 121; Mess/1851/pp. 138-139.

¹⁰⁷ Young/Amoy/11May1853, Mess/1853/p. 287; Young/Amoy/5Sep1852, Mess/1852/pp. 371f.

¹⁰⁸ Young/Amoy/5Sep1852.

¹⁰⁹ I.e. Young/Amoy/11May1853, Mess/1853/pp. 288f; Burns/6Jun1853, Mess/1853/p. 291; Young/9Sep1853, Mess/1853/pp. 381f; Burns/13Oct1853, Mess/1854/pp. 49f.

¹¹⁰ On 28May1851 Young married Sarah Harvett of the Society for Promoting Female Education in the East. See marriage document, EPMF/Young. *Contra* CAF/p. 77 and IA/p. 235.

¹¹¹ Young/Amoy/6May1852, Mess/1852/p. 283.

¹¹² Burns/Amoy/13Oct1853, Mess/1854/pp. 49-51.

¹¹³ Mess/1854/p. 51.

¹¹⁴ Young/Amoy/15Aug1853, Mess/1854/p. 51.

¹¹⁵ Johnston/Amoy/21Dec1853, Mess/1854/pp. 82-83; Burns/16Jan1854, Mess/1854/pp. 217-218; Mess/1854/p. 149.

made for medical work. As far as Young is concerned, *settled* medical work in Amoy was never revived. We therefore conclude that for Young medical work was of secondary importance and something which was more easily given up when circumstances called for work reduction. Confirming our conclusion is that the *main* object of the only recorded medical work Young undertook after 1853, i.e. the two-week 'medico-missionary tour' to Chiangchui,¹¹⁶ was more evangelistic than medical.

Strictly speaking it was in no uncertain terms that Young regarded educational work as a means to a higher end, i.e. to enable pupils to acquire the 'knowledge of religious truth'.¹¹⁷ In other words, the aim was religious conversion with education as the evangelistic means. Likewise medical work served the same purpose. Thus after a short while of receiving patients in his room, Young immediately made arrangements so that medical service may be offered in connection with 'the preaching place below',¹¹⁸ i.e. Talmage's chapel.¹¹⁹ During the dispensary's opening hours, two converts were present to 'preach, converse, and give books' to those waiting.¹²⁰ Later a colporteur was assigned to preach for about an hour each day.¹²¹ From the above we see that upon discovering the demand for medical service, Young lost no time connecting it to evangelistic work. Similarly in the Chiangchui tour, he applied his medical skills in an instrumental manner, i.e. as an auxiliary to Chinese evangelisation. Since then, he allotted no fixed times for medical work but concentrated on educational and preaching work. Thus in renting the tenements near Keklai (1854), Young had two intended uses of the premises, i.e. for a school and a chapel.¹²² In May Burns referred to Young's 'nice little chapel, distinct from his school and house, in which native agents chiefly speak'.¹²³ By early July the preaching hall customarily opened four times a week with converts offering assistance to the operations.¹²⁴ A month afterward, the physician sailed for home in seriously ill condition.

Thus even while engaged outwardly in educational and medical work, the main and underlying concern of Young was with the ultimate aim of evangelisation. Within the schoolroom it was the impartation of 'the knowledge of religious truths'. Outside the schoolroom it was the proclamation of Christian doctrines. In the non-doing of church formation or pastoral work, he and Burns were of one mind as illustrated in the incident of 'generosity' in 1851. In autumn when Young first reported 'the opening of the chapel in this house for public worship' he also made it known that this spacious room 'we considered it our duty to place at the disposal of the missionaries of the London [Missionary] Society' who greatly needed it, and also in order that 'another place of worship and of testimony would be kept well supplied with services, and thus

¹¹⁶ Burns/White Water Camp/16Jan1854, Bx119/F5; cf. Young/11Jan1854, Mess/1854/p. 217.

¹¹⁷ Young/Amoy/17Dec1850.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Talmage/17Dec1850.

¹²⁰ Young/Amoy/17Jan1851.

¹²¹ Young/Amoy/15Apr1851, Mess/1851/p. 213.

¹²² Burns/Amoy/3Mar1854, Bx119/F5.

¹²³ Burns/Amoy/8May1854, Mess/Sep1854/p. 268.

¹²⁴ Young/Amoy/6Jul1854, Mess/1854/pp. 315-316.

best employed for the promotion of the Lord's work'.¹²⁵ Two interesting details should here be noted. Firstly the chapel was fitted up by Burns 'at his own expense'.¹²⁶ Secondly this was done after Burns had gained 'a sufficient command of the new dialect'.¹²⁷ In fact by Young's writing, Burns was to begin week-day public services on the following day in the said chapel.¹²⁸ Notwithstanding this the first Sabbath worship held there was an LMS service.¹²⁹ To decide to keep the chapel for their own use, the EP agents had every justification except one, i.e. the readiness to do settled work with a view toward organising a local church and assuming its pastoral care.

However an evangelistic aim is not tantamount to a church formation objective. In fact Young's work served as a feeder to the church formation programme of other Missions. During the pre-1854 years Young never considered it feasible to organise an EP church at Amoy. That he should attempt no church formation or pastoral work is understandable considering that the FMC originally envisioned an educational work and Young himself was a physician not a minister. But even after Johnston had arrived, Young wrote, 'In regard to the visible church which they join, those who come in any measure under my influence are left entirely to the freedom of their own choice; we having as yet no means of forming a church (so to speak) of our own...'¹³⁰ Thus in spring 1854 when the evening meetings at his house had more than a dozen attendants, four had been for some time church members (church affiliation not specified), three had just been received by the LMS, and some were seeking RCA admission while others were applying with the LMS.¹³¹ Since Johnston started to learn the local dialect only in c.May while Young's health started to trouble him in June/July, one may say in effect that throughout his China years there was not one point in time when Young regarded the EPM as being in a position to undertake church formation. Thus whereas with Burns the non-doing of church formation or pastoral work was an instance of *wilful refusal*, with Young it was a case of *believed inability*.

Therefore we see that before 1854 the second EP missionary was occupied mainly with educational and medical work albeit underlied by an evangelistic motivation. Stated medical work was undertaken but only until July 1853. Despite the disruption brought by the insurgents' war, educational work was continued until the incapacitation of the physician. In 1854 Young began to do stated preaching work in a pure chapel context rather than in tandem with a dispensary. But throughout his Amoy career Young never thought that the EPM was at any time ready to start a church on its own. Just like Burns, the main concern of Young was evangelisation. But unlike Burns, it was the belief in EP inability which made Young postpone any church formation plan.

¹²⁵ Young/Amoy/9Oct1851, Mess/1852/p. 20.

¹²⁶ Mess/1852/pp. 150f; Young/Amoy/9Oct1851.

¹²⁷ Mess/1852/pp. 150-153.

¹²⁸ Young/Amoy/9Oct1851.

¹²⁹ Young/9Oct1851.

¹³⁰ Young/20Mar1854, Mess/1854/pp. 164-165.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

2.3.5. Johnston

The third EP agent went to China with a rather well-defined educational mission but ended up continuing the work left behind by his predecessors. However in that Johnston exerted the earliest EP efforts toward church formation on an *intentionally permanent* basis, he actually took EP work beyond the playing field of Burns and Young. Unfortunately these efforts were seriously hindered by language and health problems on the part of Johnston who was finally removed from Banlam against his desire.

Commissioned to do educational work on the principles being acted upon by Alexander Duff in India,¹³² the third EP missionary arrived at Amoy in the third week of December 1853.¹³³ In April¹³⁴ Johnston left for Shanghai to explore its readiness for Duff-type educational work. Returning to the south in May he concluded that 'the time has not yet come for establishing Christian Educational Institutions for the youth of China, as a primary or even prominent branch of missionary operations'.¹³⁵ Decided to settle in Banlam,¹³⁶ Johnston soon launched the EP church formation programme. With the departure of Burns and Young, he assumed full responsibility for the EP school in Amoy and became involved also with Pechuia. Out of his visit in August¹³⁷ was started a free¹³⁸ school in Pechuia. Soon however ill health rendered him inactive for practically the rest of the year.¹³⁹ In 1855 the missionary met with more health disturbances which finally resulted in his forced departure in June.¹⁴⁰

In assuming responsibility over the Pechuia work, Johnston became the first EP missionary to attempt *intentionally permanent* pastoral work.¹⁴¹ Previously Burns did undertake 'pastoral oversight' of Pechuia but only on an *interim* basis. Unfortunately the intention of Johnston was never fully realised. Shortly after Burns left, Johnston's desire to re-possess Pechuia for the EPM was made known to the RCA.¹⁴² Although aware that 'Burns had, to a certain extent, devolved [the management of Pechuia] upon the [RCA] brethren', Johnston said he had no desire 'to relinquish all connexion with such an interesting field of usefulness, in which, from the first, I had felt the liveliest concern, nor were our [RCA] brethren in a position to have the whole burden thrown on them in the present state of their Mission.'¹⁴³ Consequently at the request of Burns and 'the repeated desire' of the Pechuia people as well as with 'the hearty concurrence' of the RCA, Johnston 'gladly consented to spend a part of my time there...'.¹⁴⁴ From the extended quotation

¹³² Mess/1851/p. 140; Mess/1852/p. 150; cf. Mess/1852/pp. 152-153.

¹³³ Johnston/Amoy/21Dec1853, Mess/1854/pp. 82-83; cf. Mess/1854/p. 149.

¹³⁴ 9May entry, Burns/Amoy/8May1854, Mess/1854/p. 268.

¹³⁵ Johnston/6May1854, Mess/1854/pp. 268-271.

¹³⁶ Johnston/Amoy/20Dec1854, Mess/1855/pp. 178-180.

¹³⁷ Johnston/Amoy/5Sep1854, Mess/1855/pp. 19-20.

¹³⁸ Pechuia converts to Burns [England]/c.Sep1854, Mess/1855/pp. 181-182.

¹³⁹ Johnston/16Oct1854, Mess/1855/pp. 21-22; Nov1854, Mess/1855/pp. 52-54; 20Dec1854, Mess/1855/pp. 178-180; Johnston/Greenlaw/[Sep1855], Mess/1855/pp. 314-315.

¹⁴⁰ Johnston/Amoy/1May1855, Mess/1855/pp. 243-245.

¹⁴¹ Doty/20Apr1854.

¹⁴² Doty-Talmage-Joralmon to General Synod/Amoy/17Sep1856/p. 9, AER.

¹⁴³ Johnston/Nov1854, Mess/1855/p. 53.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

above, we see that the concern about RCA shorthandedness was somewhat overshadowed by Johnston's expressed desire to retain fruitful and promising Pechuia which at the time was the only thing that could pass for a trophy of EP work in China. In speaking of Pechuia as being 'to a certain extent' an RCA charge, Johnston implied the Americans had no monopolistic claim over it. However the non-clarification of the 'certain extent' opened up a space of ambiguity so that the critical reader of Johnston's reports is often unsure whether the credit for some particular reported accomplishment should go to the RCA or the EPM. Indeed this was the effect intended by Johnston who delighted to cooperate with other Missions 'without any regard to the share of honour to be claimed by the respective Churches'.¹⁴⁵ But although Johnston constantly spoke of the Pechuia during his days as an EP work,¹⁴⁶ the RCA was nearly as consistent in claiming responsibility for the inland station over the same period.¹⁴⁷ However the American attitude had always been that the oversight of Pechuia was forced upon the RCA by circumstances and to be held merely in an interim.¹⁴⁸

Consequently Johnston assumed the financial responsibilities of Pechuia and took up its oversight as much as his language (in)ability allowed him. To compensate for his linguistic deficiency, the RCA missionaries 'continued to visit the place as often as we could, to preach the gospel, converse with inquirers and administer the sacraments'.¹⁴⁹ Thus in effect, Johnston assumed the pecuniary and administrative duties while the Americans did the pastoral work. This state of affairs lasted until Johnston left Banlam. Therefore it was the RCA-EPM division of responsibilities which allowed Johnston to report *accurately* in 1854 that he was involved with the Pechuia work and that the thing was *never* an exclusively American jurisdiction nor a purely EP operation. In not specifying unambiguously the nature of each Mission's role, Johnston was able to give the *factually correct* impression that during his Amoy days he was in charge of an EP station where pastoral work was being done.

To recapitulate, Johnston came to China with the expressed aim of prosecuting a specific kind of educational work which was eventually discovered to be impracticable. During the exploratory process leading to that discovery, some six months were let by with no real effort at learning the Amoy colloquial. When the decision was made to prosecute settled work in Banlam, the responsibility for the Pechuia station had already been assumed by the RCA. By the Burns-Pechuia request and with RCA consent, Johnston agreed to 'help' in the work. Initially his involvement took the form of administrative and financial responsibility. The Americans agreed to be the temporary giver of pastoral care until such time the EPM could competently do so. With the unexpected departure of his two colleagues just three months into his Amoy settlement, Johnston

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ Johnston, Review of 1854, Mess/1855/p. 144. Hereon, *Johnston/Rev1854*.

¹⁴⁷ See AR-AB/1855/pp. 17,112,114; APGS/1856/p. 113, cf. APGS/1857/pp. 223-224; AR-BFM/1857/pp. 5,122, cf. p. 123.

¹⁴⁸ AR-AB/1855/pp. 112-113. See 2.3.6.

¹⁴⁹ Doty-Talmage-Joralmon/17Sep1856/p. 10. Cf. RCC/pp. 58-59.

was caught flat-footed as the lone EP agent without Amoy-speaking ability. Soon this inability met with physical illness resulting in his permanent withdrawal from China. During his short missionary term, Johnston initiated *intentionally permanent* pastoral efforts on behalf of the EPM at the inland station of Pechuia. Unfortunately his premature retirement from the field left the church formation work in its uncompleted state.

2.3.6. Douglas

Whereas it was Johnston who inaugurated EP church work, the credit goes to Douglas under whose term the work actually attained consolidation and expansion. But that is getting ahead of our story for until the Sinkoe event Douglas was hindered from entering into full missionary work.

In mid-July 1855 the first Scottish-supported¹⁵⁰ agent arrived at Amoy to find himself the sole EP agent there. The task of assuming the supervision of EP schools at Amoy and Pechuia¹⁵¹ proceeded promptly and smoothly. Taking charge of Pechuia was however a slightly different story. For about a year after Douglas arrived, the RCA continued to provide the pastoral care. About summer 1856, American visitations reduced in frequency as Douglas was becoming 'better acquainted' with the dialect.¹⁵² But in July the RCA still had charge of Pechuia since he was still unready to take over the work.¹⁵³ The ABCFM report emphasised again that this oversight was temporary in nature and only at the request of the EP mission until the latter 'should be able to assume the care'.¹⁵⁴ Thus in the first-ever statistical report of its work, the RCA presented firstly the data of the RCA churches and then secondly and separately those of the RCA churches *and* Pechuia.¹⁵⁵ The awareness that Pechuia was only an interim charge was faithfully reflected in print lest there be any misunderstanding at home.

It was sometime in autumn that Douglas finally took full charge of Pechuia.¹⁵⁶ On 30th November Douglas personally admitted five members into the inland church, i.e. the first admissions after August and the last such in 1856.¹⁵⁷ In April he performed the first baptisms at Mapping.¹⁵⁸ In late July/early August 1859, Douglas with Burns and Talmage met privately with the Pechuia members to discuss the election of church office-bearers.¹⁵⁹ Some weeks later, the two elders and two deacons chosen at the said meeting were installed at the communion Sabbath of October.¹⁶⁰ Even though both Burns and Douglas were present at the decisive meeting of July/August, it was Douglas who was instrumental in pushing forward the EP church formation

¹⁵⁰ FMCMIn/6Mar1855/pp. 132-135; cf. Mess/1855/p. 114.

¹⁵¹ Douglas/Amoy/28Feb1856.

¹⁵² Doty-Talmage-Joralmon/17Sep1856/p. 10.

¹⁵³ Joralmon/Amoy/30Jul1856.

¹⁵⁴ AR-AB/1857/p. 123.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ Doty-Talmage-Joralmon/17Sep1856/p. 11.

¹⁵⁷ Douglas/Amoy/3Dec1856, Mess/1857/pp. 84-86.

¹⁵⁸ Douglas/Amoy/6May1857, Mess/1857/pp. 251-252.

¹⁵⁹ Douglas/Mapping/1Aug1859, Mess/1860/pp. 20-21. Cf. Johnston, *Glimpses*, pp. 25ff.

¹⁶⁰ Grant/Amoy/8Oct1859, Mess/1860/pp. 19-20. Cf. Johnston, *Glimpses*, pp. 33ff.

plan. Therefore of Douglas' aim there is no doubt, i.e. his intention was to continue *both* the school work left behind and the church work initiated by Johnston. This was amply confirmed by the lines of action he pursued and the results brought out by these. However his assumption of the full charge of Pechuia occurred some months after the Sinkoe event. In effect, EPM *pastoral* oversight of its first church began after the RCA had been pursuing its church formation objective for more than a decade. In such endeavour, the RCA indeed led the EPM.

2.3.7. Summary

Our investigation of missionary objectives may be summarised thus: As early as 1844 the RCA had started work toward church formation. Three years later Talmage arrived and joined Pohlman and Doty in the same pursuit. The EPM had to wait until 1854 when Johnston 'recovered' Pechuia from the RCA. Even so, language deficiency hindered him from assuming any more than administrative and pecuniary responsibilities while the pastoral work remained in RCA hands. Moreover his forced departure the following year made for the renewed consignment of that station to the Americans for a few weeks. Soon after his arrival, Douglas picked up where his predecessor left off but like the latter was unable to take pastoral charge until after more than a year. Thus by April 1856 the RCA church formation work had been on-going for twelve (or fourteen) years. In contrast the EP had been attempting intentionally permanent work for only less than two years. Furthermore until the Sinkoe event, EP efforts had consistently fallen short of taking full pastoral charge. Therefore in terms of both the having and the pursuit of a church formation objective, the RCA was ahead of the EPM. The clear implication which stands out is this: the stage was definitely set also for RCA leadership in the matter of devolution. Yet this is still not the whole picture as far as church formation is concerned. For intention and work meant nothing if such were not matched by some degree of fruition. This brings up the matter of actual church membership growth.

2.4. Church growth, 1842-56

The immediate factor that occasioned the organisation of the Sinkoe Consistory was the sizable adult church membership which was attained by early spring 1856. In this Section we look at quantitative church growth from the beginning of missionary work until the Sinkoe event. As we shall detail later (Ch3), the meticulous process of preparing candidates for church admission mainly accounted for the slow numerical growth. Nevertheless it will be seen below that membership growth accelerated somewhat dramatically during 1854-56. But before entering that discussion, two methodological problems must be addressed. Firstly in the early period the numerical data on church membership given by both Missions focused practically only on gains and offered sparse information on losses by death, excommunication, *etc.* This means that when we attempt to give cumulative figures over time, chances are we are really looking at all-time admissions rather than the exact number of members at a given time. In other words, the tendency

is not to under-count but to over-count. Fortunately there is positive evidence that the RCA Amoy church membership during this period never exceeded six scores thus providing a baseline to guard us against any large over-count. Secondly there was fuller reportage of adult admissions than of infant or child baptisms. E.g. in giving the Pechuia membership at the start of 1855 Douglas distinguished between adults (25) and children (8) but did not do likewise for the RCA memberships which were simply pegged at 100 for Amoy and 22 for Chiohbe.¹⁶¹ However this poses no obstacle to our main concern as our interest is in the growth of adult membership which has immediate relevance to the formal church organisation.

The first RCA admissions were on 5th April 1846 when Ong Hokkui (d.10Aug1850) and Lau Unsia (d.1Nov1858) were baptised at Liau-a-au by Pohlman.¹⁶² The third member was Teacher U Teng-eng who was earlier baptised in Nanyang (c.1843) and became the first RCA Chinese evangelist on 1st March 1847.¹⁶³ It took more than two years before the next admissions were had. On 29th July 1849 the admission of the aged Hong Sinsi¹⁶⁴ along with her two sons¹⁶⁵ was believed to be the first female Protestant baptism in China.¹⁶⁶ The following Sabbath a communion service was held for the first time in the new Sinkoe chapel.¹⁶⁷ In July the following year, five Chinese including three women were admitted.¹⁶⁸ The RCA adult church membership thus numbered nearly a dozen after eight and a half years of operation. In its 1849 report the ABCFM considered Amoy as among the 'most encouraging' of its fields.¹⁶⁹

In March 1851 the c.50-year-old Hong Bunhong (d.29May1851), the c.40-50-year-old wife of a police officer, and the wife of church-member Chhienghong were admitted by Doty.¹⁷⁰ For the rest of the year, seven¹⁷¹ more admissions were had so that the total active adult membership was nineteen at end-1851.¹⁷² For 1852 two youthful converts were added, one in March and one in August, both men suffering greatly for their faith.¹⁷³ When the year ended with only twenty-one active adults,¹⁷⁴ Doty attributed the poor growth to certain internal problems and the controversy centering around 'our evangelist'.¹⁷⁵ In 1853 work was greatly disturbed by insurgent activities in Banlam especially the troubles at Chiangchui and the extended warfare in Amoy (Aug-Nov).¹⁷⁶

¹⁶¹ Douglas/Amoy/1Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 118-119.

¹⁶² Pohlman/1May1846, MH/1846/pp. 321-322; AR-AB/1846/p. 172; Pohlman/Amoy/6Nov1845, CI/2Apr1846/p. 150c2; AR-AB/1847/p. 167; IA/p. 232; Stronach to Doty [USA], Amoy/8Apr1846, CI/15Oct1846/p. 54c1-2; CREp/1846/pp. 357-361.

¹⁶³ Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1846, CI/6May1847/p. 168c2-4; Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, CI/20Apr1848/p. 162c5-6.

¹⁶⁴ Or 'Ng Si-Sin' (d.8Sep1858) the 64-year old widow. IA/p. 232.

¹⁶⁵ I.e. Ong Chhiengchoan ('Chhieng-chuan') and Ong Chhienghong. Doty/Amoy/16Mar1848, CI/20Jul1848/p. 6c3-5. Cf. AR-AB/1850/pp. 161-162.

¹⁶⁶ Doty/Amoy/15Sep1857, enclosed in Doty/Amoy/17Sep1857, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁶⁷ AR-AB/1850/p. 162. Hitherto RCA and LMS missionaries had joint communions in a private house.

¹⁶⁸ AR-AB/1851/p. 125.

¹⁶⁹ AR-AB/1849/p. 66.

¹⁷⁰ Talmage/Amoy/14Jul1851, CI/1Jan1852/p. 101c1-4; AR-AB/1851/p. 125.

¹⁷¹ *Contra* Matheson, *Narrative*, pp. 4-5.

¹⁷² Talmage/22Jan1852, MH/1852/pp. 149ff; AR-AB/1852/p. 123-124.

¹⁷³ Doty/16Sep1852, MH/1853/pp. 65-67.

¹⁷⁴ AR-AB/1853/p. 128; APGS/1853/pp. 372-373.

¹⁷⁵ Doty/28Jan1853, MH/1853/pp. 161-162.

¹⁷⁶ See Talmage/22Apr,19May,3Jun,10Jun, MH/1853/pp. 349ff; Doty/18Jan1854, MH/1854/pp. 168ff.

The year ended with only six admissions which were offset in half by three deaths, thus a total of twenty-four active members.

It was from 1854 that the missionaries saw their efforts bearing accelerated church growth. During the first eight months of 1854 some twenty-eight new members were gained.¹⁷⁷ The year ended with a total of forty-two additions in Amoy bringing the full membership there to sixty-six.¹⁷⁸ Adding the nineteen received at Pechuia (12)¹⁷⁹ and Chiohbe (7)¹⁸⁰ made up a cumulative figure of eighty-five converts for the whole region¹⁸¹ by early 1855. In the latter year Amoy received forty-six new members, Chiohbe logged in twenty-four and Pechuia had thirteen; thus altogether setting a record eighty-three admissions in a single year¹⁸² and pegging the total active count at 168.¹⁸³ In the first two months of 1856 Amoy received seven more while Chiohbe gained five.¹⁸⁴ The increase for the first half of 1856 was eighteen for Amoy, eight for Chiohbe and twelve for Pechuia, thus yielding existing memberships of 129, 25 and 37 respectively.¹⁸⁵ For the entire year the admission figures were thirty for Amoy, ten for Chiohbe and twenty-two for Pechuia, thus giving respectively 127, 31 and 47. Of the all-time number of 217 converts of both Missions to this time, some 187 were received over the three-year period.¹⁸⁶ The 1854-56 growth so impressed the missionaries as to make Johnston proclaim Amoy the most favourable Protestant station in all China.¹⁸⁷ Even after leaving the field, he continued to propagate this Banlam reputation.¹⁸⁸ Relatedly the ABCFM had as early as 1852 acknowledged Amoy as its most successful mission in China.¹⁸⁹ Four years later it was again reported that while all four ABCFM China missions were 'making progress', Amoy had 'the most signal blessing of divine grace'.¹⁹⁰

Thus by April 1856 the RCA Amoy membership had a cumulative total of 126 adults. In contrast De Jong asserts the total Amoy membership was 122 but gives no supporting documentation.¹⁹¹ One wonders whether any connection exists at all with Douglas' report that at start-1856 the RCA had 100 members at Amoy and 22 at Chiohbe.¹⁹² In comparison our figure for the same time is 119 members. In May 1856 Talmage wrote that the two RCA worship places in

¹⁷⁷ Doty/20Apr1854; Talmage/Amoy/18Aug1854, CI/18Jan1855/p. 113c5-6; Mr. Bonney/Canton/18Apr1854, MH/1854/p. 250; AR-AB/1854/p. 144; AR-AB/1855/pp. 111-112; FYC/pp. 150ff.

¹⁷⁸ Cf. Doty/25Jun1855, CI/25Nov1855/p. 86c4-5.

¹⁷⁹ Johnston/Rev1854, Mess/1855/pp. 143f; Doty to Burns [Britain]/Nov1854, Mess/1855/pp. 180-181.

¹⁸⁰ *Contra* the ABCFM report, the seven Chiohbe members were admitted in Jan1855. See Johnston/Rev1854, Mess/1855/pp. 143f; RCC/p. 60.

¹⁸¹ AR-AB/1855/pp. 111-112; AR-AB/1855/p. 17. Cf. APGS/1855/pp. 605-606; Talmage/9Jan1856, APGS/1856/p. 113.

¹⁸² Talmage/Amoy/16Jan1856. Cf. Talmage/9Jan1856; APGS/1857/pp. 223-224; AR-BFM/1857/p. 5.

¹⁸³ AR-AB/1856/p. 10. Note the inaccurate admission figures for 1851, 1854 and 1855 in AR-AB/1857/p. 122.

¹⁸⁴ Douglas/29Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 146f; Talmage/5Feb1856, CI/29May1856/p. 189c6; APGS/1856/p. 114.

¹⁸⁵ Joralmon/Amoy/30Jul1856.

¹⁸⁶ AR-AB/1857/p. 123. Cf. AR-BFM/1857/p. 5; APGS/1857/pp. 223-224.

¹⁸⁷ Johnston/Amoy/16Oct1854, Mess/1855/pp. 21-22. Cf. Mess/1855/pp. 143-146.

¹⁸⁸ Johnston/Greenlaw/19Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 51-53.

¹⁸⁹ MH/1852/pp. 149f; APGS/1852/p. 277.

¹⁹⁰ AR-AB/1856/p. 10. Cf. AR-AB/1857/pp. 17,22.

¹⁹¹ RCC/p. 65.

¹⁹² Douglas/Amoy/1Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 118-119; Douglas/Amoy/3Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 119-120; Mess/1856/p. 153; Burns, *Memoir*, pp. 481-482; Matheson, *Narrative*, p. 23; WHP/p. 24.

Amoy had ‘over one hundred and ten members’¹⁹³ rather than *over 120* people. If he was using the latest year-end figure then the weight of the evidence clearly falls toward our count of 119. On the other hand if he was citing current data, then De Jong’s figure is closer. However the failure of De Jong to furnish documentation in effect relegates his to the level of pure assertion. In our case the claim of 126 members is solidly substantiated and sustained by the qualification that it is presented as a *cumulative* rather than a *current* figure. At any rate, it turns out our earlier concern about serious over-counting may be put to rest.

With the attained ecclesial population came the need for some form of church organisation¹⁹⁴ which matter raised the issue of church government.¹⁹⁵ Yet human numbers *alone* cannot adequately explain the course taken at Sinkoe in 1856. After all the missionaries could have opted to establish a mission church or a Chinese appendage of the sending denomination habitating in the distant West. Indeed other factors as we shall later see were at work which led to the devolution of 1856. However before this Chapter closes there is one factor which is best taken up immediately. This is on account of two reasons: first, it is intimately related to the objective and task of church formation and second, it provides a launching point for future discussion. That factor concerns the nature of the church envisaged by the first church-planting missionaries of both Missions.

2.5. The envisaged church

Having shown that both Missions did have a church formation objective in our period, the next significant question which arises was *what kind of church(es)* were the individual protagonists aiming to establish. Did Doty, Talmage and Douglas share the same ecclesial ideal/vision? Was there any self-conscious attempt to establish a ‘Chinese’ church? Or did things just happen to turn out the way they did apart from human pre-intentionality? How does the envisaged church relate to the *Three-self ideal* many today associate with Rufus Anderson¹⁹⁶ and Henry Venn?¹⁹⁷

Sometime after Talmage had died, Swanson (EPM) wrote (1894): ‘The ideal of the church in China which [Talmage] had set before him[self], the goal he desired to reach, was a native, self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating church.’¹⁹⁸ Similarly in recalling the life work of Douglas, he had this to say (1878):

‘[Douglas] saw clearly that what he had to do was so to work as, by God’s blessing, to be instrumental in setting up a *native Church* so organized as to be *self-supporting* and *self-propagating*. He felt that he was not sent to Anglicize but to Christianize the Chinese, and everything must be so ordered as not to hinder but to further this end. And the longer he lived, the

¹⁹³ Talmage/Amoy/30May1856.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵ FYC/p. 171.

¹⁹⁶ 1796-1880; ABCFM Secretary, 1826f; Corresponding Secretary, 1832-66. The most recent major work is P.W. Harris, *Nothing but Christ: Rufus Anderson and the ideology of Protestant foreign missions* (OUP, 1999).

¹⁹⁷ 1796-1873; CMS Honorary Secretary, 1841-72. Cf. C.P. Williams, *The ideal of the self-governing church* (Brill, 1990). For earlier studies, see Williams, pp. 275-284.

¹⁹⁸ Swanson, ‘Dr. Talmage -- the man and the missionary’, FYC/p. 271.

more cautious was he of importing methods of work useful in the West, but unsuitable to the peculiar conditions of China. Two things were demanded of him, and to these two he set himself: the earnest, faithful, and loving preaching of the Gospel; and the organizing of the Church so that from it might go forth *natives properly qualified and trained to carry the message to their fellow-countrymen*. He might have been tempted to other more agreeable and congenial lines of work, but he held on his way because he felt it was his duty and wisdom so to do.¹⁹⁹

Thus according to Swanson the church ideal of Douglas virtually matched the *Three-self ideal* held by Talmage. Along similar lines, Johnston writing in the 1890s asserted that the ‘ideal which has been kept before the minds of the Missionaries in China, and the Committee at home, has all along been to raise up a Church in China which should be 1. A self-governing Church; 2. A self-supporting Church; 3. A self-propagating Church’.²⁰⁰ As to when this ideal was first held, it was emphasised ‘the Missionaries had from the first aimed at the formation of a *self-governing, a self-supporting, and a self-propagating Church*...’²⁰¹ The implication of these statements is that the ideal of Douglas traced its roots to Johnston and/or the FMC. While it may be suggested that Johnston, the man that he was, would surely have left behind documents (whether of a suggestive or directive nature) for his successor in the work, there is simply no extant physical evidence of such.

More significantly it should be admitted that all the citations above originated in a later period so that the question of retrospective creativity needs to be raised. In this regard three points may be noted. First, in the case of Talmage there fortunately exists some materials from the pre-1856 period which shed some light on his thinking about the said subject. In autumn of 1848 just after about a year in Amoy, Talmage wrote that the *only* work which fell on its *entirety* upon the missionaries was the laying of the foundation upon which the church was to be built.²⁰² Nevertheless in the actual work of ‘rearing the superstructure’ foreign agents were still needed to ‘render some little assistance’.²⁰³ However in the long term the only manner to evangelise China was to mobilise Chinese Christians to do it.²⁰⁴ On a similar note, a few months before the Sinkoe event Talmage wrote, ‘Missionaries may be employed in *commencing the work, and guiding it at first*’.²⁰⁵ Perhaps the natural questions to arise concern (a) when the foundation should be considered laid and (b) how long the said missionary ‘care and assistance’ was thought necessary. To the first question Talmage’s answer was that the foundation will be ‘fully laid’ only when there exists a certain population (size unspecified) of converts, good Christian schools and a trained native ministry.²⁰⁶ To the second question the reply was simply an unqualified and unclarified

¹⁹⁹ Swanson, ‘His missionary career’, in Douglas, *Memorials*, p. 63 (italics added). Hereon, Swanson, ‘*Career*’.

²⁰⁰ CAF/p. 363.

²⁰¹ CAF/p. 206 (italics original). Cf. CAF/pp. 197-198; *These forty years*, p. 18.

²⁰² Talmage to Middle Reformed Dutch Church (Brooklyn), Amoy/12Sep1848, CI/18Jan1849/p. 109c1. Cf. FYC/pp. 70-72. Note: FYC mis-identified the addressee of the letter.

²⁰³ Talmage/Amoy/12Sep1848. Cf. FYC/pp. 73-74.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁵ Talmage/Amoy/16Jan1856 (italics added).

²⁰⁶ Talmage/Amoy/12Sep1848.

'many years'.²⁰⁷ Despite the vagueness of this short answer, one thing at least is certain, viz. perpetuity was not in Talmage's mind.

What is obvious is that at least since 1848 Talmage already held the view that missionary leadership will at some point become unnecessary, as eventually also missionary assistance itself. Admittedly this does not tell us *directly* what kind of Chinese church Talmage had in mind then. What was *implied* though is that the envisaged church was a Chinese church which is first free of foreign leadership and then later without need of foreign assistance. One wonders therefore what essential difference there is between such a church and a Chinese church which is self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating. Perhaps we may reword the 'Talmage ideal' in this manner:

The long term task of evangelisation and church work is to be done by the Chinese Church, or in other words, a *self-propagating* Chinese Church. That in the building up of the superstructure the missionaries are to play the role of mere assistants implies Chinese *self-government* at some point. When it is said the period of needed missionary assistance is transitory, the suggestion is that Chinese work must take on *self-supporting* capability in the long run.

The inference of the above is that *the essential features of the Three-self ideal* were already contained in the *Talmage ideal* as early as 1848 even though his actual terminology was somewhat different. Indeed later in America, Talmage explicitly wrote (1863): 'Self-support, self-government, and self-propagation are intimately related, acting and reacting on each other, and the native Church should be trained in them from the beginning of its existence.'²⁰⁸ Practically simultaneously in Amoy, Doty wrote that the missionary object is to plant a church which is 'self-sustaining, self-governing [or 'self-standing'] and self-propagating'.²⁰⁹ Although both writings dated from after the formation of the union Presbytery and the first pastoral ordinations in Amoy, the existence of the 1848 documentation leads to the conclusion that the 1863 writings were simply verbalising older ideas in a more compact form. This explains Swanson's remark in 1877 that from the beginning both Missions shared the ideal of a 'self-supporting' and 'self-propagating' native Church. In particular it was the senior missionaries--Doty, Talmage and Douglas--who 'most carefully indoctrinated' those arriving after them with this ideal and who succeeded in doing so.²¹⁰

The crux of the matter therefore is not whether the Three-self formulation of Swanson (1894) was historically accurate from a vocabulary standpoint but that the concept itself was *substantially* contained in the Talmage ideal. In extant pre-1856 records, the absence of any competing church ideal or *contrary* viewpoints on the part of the other RCA missionaries suggests a Talmage hegemony in this respect. Moreover the non-discussion of the subject in the post-1848 records gives the impression that the Talmage ideal soon took on canonical status. The significance of the matter is this: we have established that *theory was a key and basic motivation* in

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁸ J.V.N. Talmage, 'Ecclesiastical relations of Presbyterian missionaries specially of the Presbyterian missionaries at Amoy, China', FYC/p. 300. This pamphlet was from 1863 (FYA/pp. 96-97).

²⁰⁹ Doty/Amoy/10Sep1863/pp. 1-5, AER.

²¹⁰ W.S. Swanson, 'The Presbytery of Amoy, China', Mess/1877/pp. 83-84.

the church formation programme of the RCA and that the Talmage ideal was the guiding vision leading up to the Sinkoe event and beyond.

Second, Swanson was a contemporary of Talmage and Douglas. Having arrived in July 1860,²¹¹ he was a Banlam missionary for twenty-one years.²¹² Since the American controversy in 1863 over church organisation retrieved the 1857 resolution of General Synod,²¹³ Swanson could not have been unaware of the details pertinent to the Sinkoe event. Neither do we mean just the historical details but the theoretical foundations as well. On his part Douglas participated in the Sinkoe event with great enthusiasm and agreed with what the RCA did in April-May 1856.²¹⁴ In other words, there is good warrant for saying the Swanson testimony was based directly on Talmage and Douglas. Thus this brings us back to the Talmage ideal which itself contained the essence of the Three-self ideal. Therefore when Swanson expressed Talmage's vision with the Three-self formula, he was simply re-casting the thoughts of Talmage in the missiological language of the times. On the other hand, note that his description of Douglas' vision in the 1870s partook of incipient (not full-blown) Three-self terminology, i.e. '*...a native Church so organized as to be self-supporting and self-propagating*' (italics added). In both cases Swanson's manners of expression are understandable, i.e. they were instances of the *re-wording* of the Talmage ideal or the Douglas vision in the developing missiological jargon of the nineteenth century. Therefore Swanson's testimony about the church visions of Talmage and Douglas may be regarded accurate on a conceptual if not terminological level.

Lastly it should be recalled that Johnston was the first EP missionary to have held a church formation objective. Without denying the possibility of memory lapse nor historiographic creativity, his very position as the pioneer in this regard should carry some weight. By his own testimony the Three-self ideal was what the EP Amoy Mission 'had *from the first* aimed at...'²¹⁵ This was saying in effect that he himself shared the same aim. Unfortunately an early removal from Amoy disallowed Johnston any *practical* occasion to prove his intention. What we may say with certainty is that he did *at some point* hold the Three-self ideal. But to assert that he held that ideal in 1854-55 we have no external evidence beside his subsequent self-attestation. What we do have however is an indication that very early on he had close sympathies with the Talmage ideal. In 1854 Johnston practically echoed Talmage when he wrote that even though his Chinese assistants had been doing well, an enlarged missionary workforce was still needed because the '*training and teaching of these new churches is a most arduous and important work*'.²¹⁶ This remark proves that in the very year of the birth of its church formation objective, the EPM already held *some* elements of the Talmage ideal. That is to say, *at least* some elements of the Talmage

²¹¹ Swanson/Amoy/16Jul1860, Mess/1860/p. 315.

²¹² WHP/p. 59.

²¹³ APGS/1863/pp. 334-340; CI/1863/pp. 97c6,99c3,99c4,100c3-5,106c5-107c3.

²¹⁴ Douglas/Amoy/23May1856, Mess/1856/p. 338.

²¹⁵ CAF/p. 206 (italics added).

²¹⁶ Johnston/Amoy/7Dec1854, Mess/1855/pp. 82-84 (italics added).

ideal. This is as far as the evidence goes. One can only wonder whether the Talmage ideal was not actually adopted in its *entirety* even then.

But there is a way out of this seeming dead-end. For while Johnston was the first EP missionary with a church formation objective, it was during the term of Douglas that the *practical realisation* of that objective first took place. What we can do then is show that Douglas actually shared the Talmage ideal, so that for all practical reasons the earliest actualisation of the EP church formation objective was attended by the Talmage ideal or in essence the Three-self ideal. This is tantamount to saying that in relation to the EPM we find again RCA leadership in terms of church theory. To begin with, between the two Missions the oldest documentary evidence for the existence of the *concept* of the Three-self native church came from the RCA camp more than two years before Young landed at Amoy and nearly six full years before the EPM assumed a church formation objective. Furthermore the RCA leadership was affirmed by later EP testimony. With reference to Douglas' determination to organise a truly Chinese church, Swanson said his senior colleague 'was doubtless led to these views from intercourse with the missionaries of other churches already in the field' even as Johnston likewise 'followed in the same path'.²¹⁷ This was somewhat corroborated by Johnston who declared that one reason why the EPM was able to see 'so much of these [Three-self] characteristics at so early a stage of its growth' was because the work at Amoy had enjoyed the 'great advantage' of union with 'the old and experienced' RCA missionaries.²¹⁸ That in attributing credit Swanson included the agents of both the RCA and LMS is less material than the point that the EP agents were led by others which *included* the RCA missionaries. As a matter of fact, EPM relations with the RCA were far more intimate than with the LMS.²¹⁹ Yet Swanson never meant the earlier EP agents were blind imitators of the RCA, for Douglas 'the longer he lived in China, and the deeper insight he got into Chinese life and thought, was the more convinced of the wisdom of the plans adopted by the men who had preceded him'.²²⁰ Therefore on the basis of Swanson's testimony, his senior contemporary Douglas pursued the task of church formation with the Talmage ideal as his blueprint. That is to say, in addition to its lead over the EPM in the project of church formation, the RCA was also providing theoretical leadership in the form of a Chinese church ideal.

But that was only the theoretical dimension. Having demonstrated that the Talmage ideal guided RCA church planting work and came to be adopted by the EPM, our next task is to present concrete historical evidence illustrating the pursuit and the realisation of that ideal. The same evidence should be able to shed some light on the accuracy of the Johnston testimony about the early date of the EP Three-self ideal. As is evident by now, the main concern is not whether the very terminology of the Swanson-Johnston Three-self formulation could be found in the pre-1863 period but whether the ideas contained in that formulation actually coincided with the missionary

²¹⁷ Swanson, 'Career', p. 63.

²¹⁸ CAF/p. 208.

²¹⁹ See Ch6.

²²⁰ Swanson, 'Career', pp. 63-64.

accomplishments of that period. The answer to this is certainly in the affirmative, as convincingly proven by the Sinkoe event, the Taihoey event and the pastoral ordinations of 1863 (Ch3-Ch6). In other words, both the pursuit and realisation of the Talmage ideal on the one hand, and substantiation of the Swanson-Johnston claim on the other, enjoyed strong historical validation.

2.6. Conclusion

In this Chapter we have presented very detailed evidence that in *the having of a church formation objective* the RCA was ahead of the EPM by at least a decade. By the time of the Sinkoe event, the EPM had been attempting the same type of labour for no more than two years during which period its personnel were all the while held back from full-scale work on account of health and/or language reasons. Consequently the RCA leadership was maintained in terms of both *efforts and results*. By early spring 1856, the American Mission could boast of over a hundred members in Amoy alone which justified the formal organisation of a church.

Relatedly we have seen that later accounts testified to the early existence of the RCA-EPM Three-self church ideal, i.e. the earliest church-planting missionaries had aimed at establishing a Chinese church characterised by the features of self-government, self-support and self-propagation. Early in Talmage we already see the vision of such a Chinese church. The Talmage ideal became standard RCA doctrine and the guiding vision of its church planting efforts. When that ideal was later adopted by the EPM, the RCA leadership took on its third dimension, i.e. *theory* (in addition to objective and efforts/results).

Finally we have demonstrated that the Talmage ideal was the theoretical motivation behind the RCA church formation programme in general and the formal organisation of the first RCA Amoy church in particular. Our discussion in this Chapter then closed with a brief discussion about the next matter awaiting our investigation, viz. to search for historical proof(s) showing whether the Talmage ideal was indeed pursued in practice and to what extent it was in fact realised as well as to determine whether the Swanson-Johnston claim can be validated.

Chapter 3

Qualifying the electorate: The Christian quality of the church members

3.1. Introduction

Beside possessing theoretical motivation (Talmage ideal), two other elements were indispensable to inaugurate ecclesiastical self-government in 1856. First, there must exist a sub-group of converts whom the missionaries regarded as qualified to be church office-bearers. The sub-group need not be large in numerical composition but should definitely be a *plurality* of persons, for what was constituted in 1856 was a Consistory and not a pastorate. But for any convert to attain such standing, it was essential that *the missionary standards for native church leadership be met with satisfaction*. Second, since the Sinkoe event involved an electoral exercise, it was equally needful for an electorate to have attained a certain level of 'Christian maturity' *in the perception of the missionaries*. Our larger argument in this and the next two Chapters is that the Chinese were able to win the high regard of the missionaries by way of their quality Christian character and impressive religious labours. With the two indispensable elements provided by such means, the Sinkoe event proceeded with relative smoothness and the missionaries found the results quite pleasing.

In this Chapter we examine the 'Christian quality' of the Banlam church members. Our aim is to show that the creation of what to the missionary perception was a generally high-quality church membership (3.2) is intimately related to the admission policy and work method adopted by the American missionaries. In particular we focus on two specific methodological features which helped to ensure that, as much as could possibly be done, only desirable candidates were admitted into the church. The first was the policy of *strict* admission the effect of which was to *over-test* every baptismal applicant in both religious knowledge and personal sincerity (3.3). The second methodological feature was the application of the method of *intensive oral instruction of a selected few* as the chief means of inculcating Christian doctrines among the Chinese inquirers (3.4). After covering these two items, we are ready to attend to a historical peculiarity of the Banlam situation which served as part of the larger background against which the mission methodology was developed, viz. the region's attitude toward foreigners and especially the Western representatives of Protestantism (3.5). Thereafter we examine the correlation between missionary methodology and the quality of the Chinese membership (3.6).

The discussion of the said topics will be done in a thorough manner because they are of great significance for a proper background against which one can better understand and appreciate how the missionaries came to have high regard for the personal Christian character of the *average*

individual church member. The last emphasis is important because the Sinkoe event did not involve only the few office-bearers nor just the missionaries but also the electorate of about six scores of men. Had the missionaries not had confidence in the general membership, the electoral transaction of 14th April 1856 would never have been allowed to happen. In other words, a full discussion is needful to explain why the Sinkoe event took place at all.

3.2. Missionary perceptions of the Chinese Christians

There is no doubt the missionaries held a high view of the *general* quality of their converts during the 1850s. In mid-1851 Talmage expressed his satisfaction at the way the Amoy Christians ‘*continue, so far as we can judge, to give pleasing evidence of being sincere followers of Christ*’.¹ Without apology it was boasted that some may well be ‘*patterns of Christian activity and zeal, even for church members in Christian countries to imitate*’.² The missionary reports in the following years upheld the notion that church members had ‘*generally evinced consistency of Christian character*’.³ Of special delight to the missionaries was the perceived quality of the Pechuia Christians in 1854. Doty highlighted their ‘*spirit of prayer*’ and ‘*rapid progress*’ in gaining Scriptural knowledge.⁴ In full agreement, Talmage affirmed the same while also stressing especially ‘*their lively faith...[and] their joy in the Holy Ghost*’.⁵ It was a matter of missionary pleasure and pride that the members spent most of each Sabbath at the chapel, some not even going home for meals. In addition, during week days some of them went to the chapel spending their time in constant Bible study. This phenomenon of chapel-centripetalism was striking when seen against the larger background of the non-Christian society. Having observed the native zeal at Bible study, Talmage added another aspect to the comparison between the Chinese and their Western counterparts, i.e. although in terms of religious knowledge the Chinese converts were no match for American Christians, yet in terms of Christian character those at Amoy were better than most believers of comparable religious age whether in China or America.⁶ In other words, the missionary perception was that the Christian quality of the Banlam converts was in advance of what was believed to be the normal state of things in the known worlds (i.e. America and China) of the RCA missionaries. The high regard of the foreigners for the local believers could hardly be put any clearer.

Confirmation of the said impression was not lacking on the EP side. With reference to the 36-40 converts of the three Missions in winter 1853-54, Johnston later approvingly remarked that ‘*the character of the converts [had been] highly satisfactory*’.⁷ Likewise in early 1856 Douglas was able to face the future with good hope on the following bases, viz. the supportiveness of the home

¹ Talmage to Anderson and DeWitt, Amoy/14Jul1851, CI/1Jan1852/p. 101c1-4 (italics added).

² Talmage/Amoy/14Jul1851.

³ APGS/1854/p. 473.

⁴ Doty as cited in Young/Amoy/6Jul1854.

⁵ Talmage/18Aug1854, Mess/1855/p. 115.

⁶ Talmage/18Aug1854, MH/1855/p. 43. Cf. FYC/pp. 154-155; AR-AB/1855/p. 112.

⁷ Johnston, *Glimpses*, p. 5.

front, the steady increase of 'the converting work, which is also peculiarly free from any excesses of enthusiasm or superstition', and (most important to us), the zeal of 'almost all' the converts to preach to unbelievers and to instruct newer believers.⁸ The last two items pointed, respectively, to the strict admission policy (3.3 below) and the active self-propagation efforts of the Chinese believers (Ch5).

Thus regarding the Christian quality of the Banlam converts, the missionaries of both Missions were in agreement. Based on observations made during 1854-1856, Joralmon and Johnston attested to the general superior quality of the Chinese Christians on the basis of their religious sufferings and evangelistic zeal.⁹ Clearly and quite consistently the missionaries took pride in the over-all character of the church members of 1851-56.

3.3. Strict baptism/admission policy

Since the beginning, the RCA had always maintained ardent belief in the prudence of a strict baptism/admission policy. The roots of the matter went back to Pohlman but the policy was sustained by his later colleagues and then modified in 1854. The RCA policy was likewise observed at Pechuia where until May 1856, all admissions were regulated by the American missionaries. The effect of this practice was the maintenance of a general church membership whose Christian character was found highly satisfactory by the missionaries. This in turn helped to generate strong missionary confidence in the quality of the Banlam believers and their readiness for self-governance.

However before proceeding further, some preliminary remarks are in order which have to do with a certain limitation set by the nature of our sources upon the task of historical analysis. The matter relates to our discussion on mission methodology. As the RCA missionaries in their letters (including the annual and semi-annual reports) did not *always* take care to separate the official from the personal, it is unclear at some points whether the penman was presenting the consensus of the Mission or his own personal opinion pertaining to mission methods or future plans. The penchant for speaking in the first person plural added another dimension to the ambiguity. For the period now under examination, the problem does not apply materially to the interval from late 1845 to summer 1847 when Pohlman was the only RCA man in the field. But it applies to the periods preceding and succeeding Pohlman's lonely years, for therefrom our sources were penned by individuals when there was a plurality of workers on the ground. The nature of the sources therefore requires us to say that for these periods the discernment of *thought* development on an individual level cannot always be made with definiteness or surety; neither can the same be done on the collective level. Since it is not easy to determine whether the individual writer was speaking his own mind or that of the Mission, it is proper to limit the force of our statements which have to do with mission theoretical thinking. When we say, for instance, 'Talmage

⁸ Douglas/Amoy/3Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 119-120.

⁹ Joralmon/Amoy/30Jul1856; CAF/pp. 20-21.

wrote/believed/thought that...’, it should not be taken to mean we are suggesting that some said thing was one man’s personal opinion nor that it was a group idea. Rather we are simply stating that this item came from the pen of Talmage; or, we are merely specifying the literary source of a certain piece of historical information. The force of our statement is then that Talmage wrote such a thing at a certain time and that it was *not* Doty (or Pohlman) who said it, with no suggestion as to whether Doty believed or disbelieved the thing. However when dealing with the development of *actual work*, we can speak with confidence on both the individual and collective levels. With the said caveat in mind, we proceed with our main task.

Pohlman. From the outset Pohlman had always adhered to high qualifications for church admission. Even though as early as November 1845, there was mention about the interest of Ong Hokkui and Lau Unsia in baptism,¹⁰ it took many more months before they were finally received. Knowing these could be the first baptisms, Pohlman took great care to ensure that proper qualitative standards were in place. Since the Pohlman policy was to take on decisive significance, it is needful we discuss its features in detail.

The first feature was the concern not with mere verbal confession of faith but with some outward behavioural manifestations of a sincere internal reception of Christian teachings (*infra*). Of great interest to us is the external testimony of George Smith (CMS) who visited Amoy during January-February 1846.¹¹ At both the LMS and RCA chapels, Smith observed that more than two-thirds (18) of the regular attendants (c.25) were ‘those who, from their situation or employment, were in some measure dependent on the Missionaries, and whose sincerity might, on that account, be exposed to suspicion’.¹² Aware that this group had greater knowledge of Christian doctrines but not necessarily borne of sincere seeking, extra care was exercised to mark out those ‘who had not yet shown any decided proofs of a change of heart’.¹³ Because Pohlman no doubt was aware that dependence upon a foreign source of livelihood complicated the correlation between external behaviour and inward sincerity, he found it necessary to explore other means to determine the authenticity of personal religiosity.

Second, even among those not materially dependent on the Mission, Pohlman tested out their sincerity by deliberately delaying their baptism/admission. The said group included Ong Hokkui, Lau Unsia, the wealthy tea merchant, Limpai the ‘old reclaimed opium smoker’, Masing, Ban, Kheycheong the conscience-stricken manufacturer of ‘idol-paper’ and Hok-ha the ropemaker.¹⁴ But although all the regular attendants ‘had ceased to worship idols’, it was only Ong and Lau who were ‘about to be admitted to baptism’.¹⁵ Both men were among those who ‘came nearly every day’ for instruction.¹⁶ Of their protracted wait for baptism, Smith wrote:

¹⁰ Pohlman/Amoy/6Nov1845, CI/2Apr1846/p. 150c3.

¹¹ Smith, *A narrative of an exploratory visit to each of the Consular cities of China* (1847) ch25-ch33.

¹² Pp. 397-399.

¹³ Page 399.

¹⁴ Pp. 397-399.

¹⁵ Page 399.

¹⁶ Page 397.

‘Their baptism had been deferred so long, possibly even from an excess of caution unwarranted by scriptural examples, but, nevertheless, under the strong conviction, that, in the present circumstances of the Mission, delay was far preferable to a premature admission of converts; which, though it might increase the number of professing Christians, was calculated also to lower the standard of spiritual religion in the eyes of the heathen.’¹⁷

As can be clearly seen, the delaying of baptism was ‘far preferable’ to its administration with haste and laxity. Related to this strictness was the *maintenance* of a high ‘standard of spiritual religion’ which exhibited a thoughtful concern with the *long-term* quality of the future church. Even when the work could boast of no native baptisms, Pohlman was not preoccupied with the production of a good report of ‘solid’ results to home. Rather the primary concern was to start off church formation with a strict policy of admission, or a strong quality-conscious approach to the making of a church membership.

Third, an important part of Pohlman’s admission policy was the strong stance on the incompatibility of the Christian faith with ‘idolatry’ and especially ancestral worship. On 11th February the Amoy missionaries¹⁸ met to discuss two questions related to baptism, i.e. (a) ‘Could an open renunciation of idol-worship, although the idols remained in the house out of compliance with the superstitious fears of relatives, be deemed a sufficient test of Christian sincerity?’ and (b) ‘How far was retaining the ancestral tablets permissible, as mere tokens of respect for the departed dead, without any worship being offered?’¹⁹ On the first question, the unanimous decision was that if the convert holds chief authority in the household then he must renounce and get rid of all emblems of idolatry. On the second question, it was agreed the convert must cease the worship of all ancestral tablets, remove them from any juxtaposition with the idols and put them out of sight. Even ‘as mere memorials of the dead’ the ancestral tablets were not allowed to be retained because among other reasons ‘[i]ts retention would open a door for the too ready admission of converts, and the admixture of pagan superstitions with Christian doctrines’.²⁰ About the said transaction, we note two important points. First, although at that meeting, baptismal standards were still in the formative stage, the resolutions soon became part of RCA admission policy. Since the candidates were connected with the RCA, Pohlman was in effect ‘consulting’ the larger missionary community on the issue. Even though the final decision was a consensus, he was definitely in agreement with it (or were the others in agreement *with him?*) and was unflinching in the upholding of it later within RCA work. Thus for instance, reporting on his Guangdong visit in 1847, the first RCA native preacher pointed out with negative connotations that Catholics at Canton were still

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ I.e. Pohlman; Lloyd; Brown; Cumming; J. Stronach, W. Young (LMS). Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1845, CI/2Apr1846/p. 150c2-3, cf. p. 154c1-2; PohlmanAmoy/24Oct1846, CI/4Mar1847/p. 132c6.

¹⁹ Smith, pp. 462-463.

²⁰ Pp. 465,466.



‘continuing the worship of ancestral tablets’.²¹ The second point is that the RCA admission policy did not gradually become strict; rather it started out strict.

The requirement of giving up native traditional worships made it extremely difficult for any Chinese to obtain baptism. For one raised with such practices as a part of life and lineal identity, the time needed to lead to their denial and surrender could hardly be short. For instance, ‘one of the very first who was under impressions’ during the earliest times of missionary work saw his admission delayed more than a dozen years by ‘his unwillingness to put away his ancestral tablets’.²² Neither was Pohlman satisfied with mere riddance of the externals of ‘idolatry’. Consider the case of the old lady who burned all her ‘idols’ and then surrendered the last of them (non-combustible) to Pohlman. Hearing the confession that she had yet to destroy the ancestral tablets, he told her not to do so in rash but to first consider the matter carefully. She was advised to get rid of these only when she should become fully convinced that such worship was sinful in God’s sight.²³ Evidently Pohlman was not interested in simple outward conformity neither preceded by careful reflection nor coupled with deep conviction. It is admirable how he determinedly upheld the strict admission policy at a time when there was only a couple of baptisms to show after some forty-five months in Amoy.

Fourth, the admission standard was stricter than we have thus far portrayed, for there were still other requirements. Consider the rich tea merchant. Although he had discarded his ‘idol’ and been offering incense to ‘the one true God’ at home while also being present ‘every day at one of the chapels, with his Chinese Testament and hymn-book’, he continued to be an object of ‘frequent censures’ by the missionaries on account of ‘his self-righteous views, and love of the material worship of incense’.²⁴ Here we see clearly the existence of other requirements beside the renouncement of ‘idol’/ancestor worship. The immediate account revealed that some standards of moral character (i.e. non-self-righteousness) and worship forms (i.e. non-use of incense) were maintained. Furthermore there is no reason to assume that the material contents of both these categories were exhausted by the two specific examples cited, just as there is likewise none to suggest the two categories were all there were. Both of our reasonable assumptions found confirmation in the sources. In mid-1847 Pohlman referred to a few attendants whose attendance was as regular ‘as the sun is in performing his daily course’ but all were deemed unready for admission because all ‘have not a spark of holy fire’ and still fell short of ‘renouncing all for Christ’.²⁵ The last expression seems to be related to Pohlman’s belief that a good test of sincerity was the readiness of converts to suffer on behalf of their Christianity. Thus it was regarded a positive sign when the first two converts were observed to have stood firm in their religious faith

²¹ Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, CI/20Apr1848/p. 162c5-6.

²² Douglas/Amoy/19Jun1856, Mess/1856/pp. 338-339.

²³ Talmage/1Mar1848, FYC/p. 83.

²⁴ Smith, pp. 399-400.

²⁵ 12Jun entry, Pohlman/Amoy/1May1847.

while suffering from trying circumstances, viz. Ong losing a son and Lau enduring business losses.²⁶ Most likely the economic ‘trial’ of Lau was directly connected with Sabbath observance.

Thus far we see the existence of multiple criteria for baptism. These included the cessation of ‘idol’/ancestor worship, the upholding of certain moral standards and worship forms, the willingness to ‘renounce all for Christ’, the readiness to suffer for one’s faith and (likely also) faithful Sabbath-keeping. One can reasonably further the list by associative extension, e.g. by adding ‘non-involvement in business or work related to idolatry’ (on the strength of abstinence from ‘idolatry’). But to go beyond the admission requirements explicitly named above and into more particulars is to venture into guess-work. Nevertheless we have said enough to show that from the very first, the admission requirements were many in number, tough in nature and maintained with strictness.

Lastly, the earliest-mentioned rationale for the strict admission policy is not at all difficult to appreciate. Pohlman believed that baptismal regulations needed to reckon with the discrepancy between the outward seemingness of things and the unseen inwardness of conviction.

‘From the manner in which [the Chinese] are brought up, they have a power of self-restraint which enables them to keep up appearances remarkably well. Thus it will be difficult often to get an insight into their real object or designs. Their coming to worship, their seeming desire to hear the gospel, their external restraint, may frequently be narrowed down to that one great ultimate end, *money*; for, of all men on the face of the globe, none seem equal to the Chinese in the “love of money.” The most promising hearers are not to be trusted without a long trial, under diverse vicissitudes in which deception is impossible. This will require time. Many Christians, and even missionaries, will not readily confide in the *sincere* purposes and intentions of this people.’²⁷ (italics original).

Conspicuously the statement above was penned twenty-four days after Pohlman reported the resignation of his language teacher ‘who has been in my employ since our removal to China’.²⁸ Not only had teacher Tan been exposed to Christianity for years, it was also he who ‘after receiving preparatory instruction from a Missionary [i.e. Pohlman] during the morning, frequently accompanied him in the afternoon to the chapel and to other places, where he took his turn in addressing the assembled Chinese’.²⁹ After working for Pohlman for about three years, Tan left in order to become listed as a military mandarin. Even though Pohlman entertained some hope that Tan might ‘carry the gospel where we cannot go’, yet the RCA missionary was sure his ex-teacher was no more than ‘a *speculative believer* in Jesus’.³⁰ Though Tan ‘has spoken most eloquently in public [and] knows the doctrines of the cross’, Pohlman nevertheless looked forward to a future time when ‘the seed sown in [Tan’s] heart may take deep root, and bring forth divine and saving

²⁶ Pohlman/1May1846, MH/1846/pp. 321-322; AR-AB/1847/p. 167.

²⁷ Pohlman/Amoy/25May1847, CI/16Dec1847/p. 90c3-4.

²⁸ Pohlman/Amoy/1May1847.

²⁹ Smith, p. 399.

³⁰ Pohlman/Amoy/1May1847 (italics added).

fruit'.³¹ Thus despite having in the past allowed the Chinese man to participate in evangelistic work, Pohlman fell short of regarding him a genuine believer. Possibly the assessment of Tan as a 'speculative believer' was retrospective, i.e. after Pohlman came to know how Tan was able to gain his new political job. For it was not the mere seeking of the high-profile and well-paying position which disappointed his former American employer. The latter was convinced that the preferment of Tan by virtue of 'ancestor's merit' involved nothing less than a grand act of 'deception'.³²

That one who had the benefit of receiving Christian instruction for some three continuous years and who had even assisted in the public preaching of the Gospel could in an instant become a participant in such an un-Christian undertaking must have been no mild shock to Pohlman. It was in such a state of affairs and mind that Pohlman condemned the Chinese 'love for money' and lack of sincerity, both of which were believed to be found even among the 'most promising hearers'. It seems therefore the Tan incident was the immediate factor which caused Pohlman to *crystallise* into policy the dual test of time ('long trial') and sufferings ('diverse vicissitudes') in the assessment of sincere faith among the Chinese. In the light of Pohlman's 'positive' attitude toward the sufferings of the first two converts (*supra*), we cannot say it was now that he first discovered sufferings as a test of religious sincerity. What can be said though is that the Tan affair brought home to him the usefulness, or better, the necessity of such testing; thus the crystallisation of it into policy. The implication of Pohlman's attitude toward the Chinese was the extension of the observation/testing time required of every inquirer. In relation to the admission policy, the practice of testing out a candidate by material losses or persecution only served to lengthen the delay of baptism, for neither the missionaries nor the candidates were in a position to create or even hasten the coming of such kinds of testing. Yet more often than not, such visitations took not long in materialising. Still it cannot be denied that delay in any manner or by any length of time *is* delay.

Therefore the RCA's strict baptism/admission policy was traceable to Pohlman whose negative impression of typical Chinese character promoted an initial skepticism toward every inquirer and the presumption of the latter's insincerity unless proven otherwise. Both the policy and its rationale were quickly accepted without question later by the returned Doty and the newly-arrived Talmage.

Doty and Talmage. Regarding Pohlman's admission policy, we find continuity in Doty and Talmage. Consider, for instance, Talmage's objection to ancestral worship.³³ Another example was the reckoning of religious sufferings as an index of convert sincerity. In the missionary letters, it is not infrequent we come across accounts of some convert/inquirer(s) enduring loss of income/property, persecution from family/community or even physical harm. Thus one credential of widow Hong and her sons was their having 'passed through very severe

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Talmage/Amoy/12Sep1848, CI/4Jan1849/p. 102c4.

trials'.³⁴ Likewise from the 1850s there is no want of instances. Speaking of the ten admitted in 1851, Talmage noted most of them 'have been called to experience severe trials' including especially the giving up of the source of livelihood.³⁵ For her opposition to 'idolatry', the aged woman baptised in 1853 was 'in a measure disowned' by her son on whom she depended and for her religion had to suffer 'cruel mockings...bruises and wounds'.³⁶ Admitted at the same time was the ex-sailor who resigned from his job so he may hear the gospel 'in more favorable circumstances' and who later lost his work as boatman because of Sabbath-keeping.³⁷ Another example was the young man who became unemployed for refusing to work on the Sabbath and became so poor that his health suffered until he fell ill. When the missionaries 'felt called upon, as an act of common humanity, to relieve his immediate and pressing need', he declined until by much persuasion they prevailed over him.³⁸ Then there were the converts of the first seven months of 1854 whose religious steadfastness amidst great trials took hold of the missionaries in a most dramatic way. Included herein were the two youthful inquirers who endured much physical abuse; the man from Tong-an who for giving up his idols was severely persecuted by friends and neighbours; the 51-year-old ex-opium addict who tasted the wrath of his own household but still preached the gospel to those 'who had met to oppose him for two hours, until his voice failed him'; the cloth-dealer and his family who preferred to suffer than to contribute toward 'idolatrous celebrations'.³⁹ About the cloth-dealer, it was later said that immediately upon the personal decision to become a believer, he made it a habit to close shop on Sundays 'even though Sunday often fell on a busy market day'.⁴⁰ From these instances we see aside from perseverance amidst persecution the re-appearance of other admission criteria such as rejection of 'idolatry', refusal to contribute to 'idolatrous' festivals, Sabbath observance, and the ready suffering of economic/job loss.

But moving beyond a simple adoption of the Pohlman policy, the period following the arrival of Doty and Talmage actually witnessed the intensification of strictness over applicant qualifications. Speaking of the father and son earlier baptised by Alexander Stronach (LMS)⁴¹ and recommended for LMS admission in March 1848, Doty wrote:

'Neither can read; hence all their knowledge of the religion of Christ is from oral instruction. If sincere, as we trust they are, that sincerity is mixed with much ignorance; if truly in Christ, they are the merest babes. On this account our own views would have led us to have deferred their baptism until they had been further instructed, and time had given a more satisfactory development of Christian character. Our brother of the London Society thought not with us. Though we would have preferred delay, believing it would have been for the interests of the cause, as by further

³⁴ Doty, in AR-AB/1849/p. 170.

³⁵ Talmage/22Jan1852, MH/1852/pp. 149-153.

³⁶ Doty/16Sep1852, MH/1853/p. 66.

³⁷ MH/1853/p. 349.

³⁸ Doty/16Sep1852.

³⁹ Talmage/Amoy/18Aug1854, CI/18Jan1855/p. 113c5-6. Cf. FYC/pp. 152-154, also pp. 157ff.

⁴⁰ Dale, *Missions*, pp. 3-4.

⁴¹ Doty/Amoy/16Mar1848, CI/20Jul1848/p. 6c3-5. The older man had first heard the Gospel from Teacher U about a year earlier. AR-AB/1848/pp. 119-220.

instruction and greater maturity in divine truth they would have been better prepared for the duties as well as the privileges of the church; still, with our brother, we do rejoice over his first ingathering here, though it is with a degree of trembling.⁴²

It is obvious that Pohlman's view had become *de facto* if not official RCA admission policy. If the RCA missionaries could have their way, there would have been no admission at that time. But as it was properly an LMS affair, the Americans could act as no more than consultants. This difference of opinion partly explains why the RCA-EPM bond was stronger than the RCA-LMS one.⁴³

However the more significant point is we observe here the first mention of another factor in the equation of admission qualification, viz. doctrinal knowledge. In a later letter Doty explained the basis for this admission requirement. Unlike Christians in the West, Chinese converts were 'just emerging from the darkness of heathenism' and this 'deep soul-darkness can be removed only by much watchful care and diligent instruction'.⁴⁴ Earlier Pohlman did mention the need for 'introducing light and knowledge into these dark minds'⁴⁵ but at that place he was talking about the necessity of religious education and neither there nor elsewhere in his letters did he ever connect knowledge examination with admission. This of course is not to say that he never did in his mind.⁴⁶

Thus whereas Pohlman argued for the prolonged testing of inquirers in order to determine their *sincerity*, Doty was saying that extensive instruction was needed even for sincere inquirers on account of their 'heathen' upbringing and ignorance of Christianity. In practical terms, this added another dimension to the screening of baptismal candidates and the delay of baptism. Moreover Doty was not only looking for a mere 'mental conviction of the truth of the gospel'. Rather what was desired was the 'sense of sin or need of a spiritual work -- in the heart'.⁴⁷ The following related remark defined a difference not easily given to quantification: '...even in such as we trust there is a genuine spiritual operation - there is not that deep heart work.'⁴⁸ Whatever Doty meant by the latter expression, he did not elaborate. At any rate, for our investigation the knowledge criterion further denied the thought of any quick baptism.

With the case of the reluctant admission of the father and son in 1848 (above) being somewhat a negative illustration, we now present some positive evidence of the application of the Pohlman-Doty criteria of knowledge and sincerity. Consider for example the case of Hong Sinsi and her family as recounted by Doty himself.

'They have applied for baptism. Previous to the departure of Mr. Talmage, we had several examinations of them as to their views, experience, &c. It was our aim to be very close; and although there is still much ignorance, showing that they are but children in the school of Christ,

⁴² Doty/Amoy/16Mar1848. Both men were admitted on 5Mar1848.

⁴³ See 6.7.

⁴⁴ Doty/25Jun1855, CI/25Nov1855/p. 86c4-5.

⁴⁵ Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1846, CI/6May1847/p. 168(170)c2-4.

⁴⁶ Recall our caveat at the beginning of 3.3.

⁴⁷ Doty/25Jun1855.

⁴⁸ Doty/Amoy/15Sep1857.

they nevertheless appear to be very truly in that school, and give very pleasant evidence, perhaps all that we can reasonably expect, of a genuine work of grace in their hearts. We saw no good reason to forbid water that they should not be baptized. If nothing unfavorable occurs, I shall feel it a privilege and duty to welcome them soon to the fellowship of the church. They have now been for about a year and a half under our constant observation and instruction. They have passed through very severe trials arising from sickness, in circumstances well fitted to shake the weak faith of but partially instructed and enlightened minds, just loosened from heathen superstitions, as also from the taunts and opposition of neighbors and friends; and yet they have stood firm. Their example and influence have been decidedly in accordance with their professed interest in Christ and his religion. I have some hope, moreover, that the truth is finding its way to the minds of the wives of the two sons. They have asked, indeed, to be admitted, together with their mother-in-law and husbands, to the privileges of the church; but I shall be under the necessity of deferring their case for more satisfactory evidence of a genuine work in their hearts.⁴⁹

Here we see again the two grounds for delaying baptism. In the case of the daughters-in-law, the hindrance was insufficient proof of sincerity while for mother and sons the obstacle was doctrinal ignorance. Eventually it was about a year and a half after she had gotten rid of her idols that Hong and her two sons were baptised. If including the period of instruction preceding the latter event (a period which may go as far back as late 1846⁵⁰) we are talking of some two and a half to three years of religious instruction and character observation. Even though to her credit she had actually played the role of an evangelist in converting one of her neighbours from 'idolatry' in March 1848, the missionaries did not see this as sufficient ground for exemption from more teaching and supervision. On the contrary it took another sixteen months before the baptismal application was approved. Likewise for the most part of mission year 1848-49, there was no addition to the RCA membership not because there was a lack of applicants but rather on account of the delayed baptism policy.⁵¹ The strict admission process was applied also upon the money-changer from Chiangchui who 'was subjected, as is *our invariable custom*, to several as searching examinations as we have the ability to institute, both as to his knowledge and experience' before he was finally baptised in August 1853.⁵²

Furthermore from post-1847 sources we also find an RCA position on opium smoking. From late 1850 Talmage wrote that any opium user will never be admitted into the church.⁵³ Naturally this included non-involvement in opium-related work/business.⁵⁴ Although it is unsaid at what point in time this criterion came into effect, there is nothing in the sources to suggest that opium smokers were admitted in the 1840s. Nevertheless what the extant records allow us to say *with certainty* is this: By late 1850 opium abstinence was a baptismal requirement.

Relatedly it was also an operational principle of the missionaries that any uncertainty or doubt at all calls for delay. Thus in late 1850 when the missionaries encountered great difficulty in deciding whether to admit or reject the majority of applicants, the recourse was to rather risk erring

⁴⁹ Doty, in AR-AB/1849/p. 170.

⁵⁰ Doty/Amoy/16Mar1848.

⁵¹ AR-AB/1849/p. 170.

⁵² Doty/16Sep1852, MH/1853/p. 66 (italics added).

⁵³ Talmage/17Dec1850.

⁵⁴ Cf. Doty/Amoy/11Mar1862, 723CM/Bx1.

on the side of caution. It was reported that '[w]e have thus far put off admitting the applicants to baptism for a long time, and until we could have the evidence of his conduct, as well as the confession of his mouth'.⁵⁵ In early 1853 after examining some twenty applicants, the missionaries accepted only two for baptism. Doty confessed that 'we felt it difficult to decide that several ought not to be admitted to the ordinances of the church'. In the end however it was 'only because further delay and instruction seemed more prudent, and could not be injurious, that we did not receive them at once'.⁵⁶ Even after 1854 the principle of delay-if-in-doubt was sustained. Thus after the admission of seven out of twenty-five applicants at Chiohbe in early 1855, Doty commented,

'Of those whom we felt constrained to put off, several, we trust, are truly the subjects of the Holy Spirit's work. But our past experience teaches that delay is prudent, where there is any doubt.'⁵⁷

In pursuit of extreme care in applicant screening, the missionaries did not hesitate to impose delay upon delay. Thus in summer 1856, Joralmon after having learned 'the principles on which [Doty and Talmage] examine inquirers -- their delay in receiving them -- their inquiries of those acquainted with them' testified to having 'no hesitation in saying that the brethren here are far more careful in the reception of members than are the churches at home'.⁵⁸ A similar impression appears in the BFM comment on the fifty admissions of January-September 1856: 'Nor were these hasty additions, for the method of examination and trial used by the missionary brethren is shown to be as rigid and cautious as could well be devised.'⁵⁹ Indeed the strict admission policy had been successful to no little extent in producing a membership regarded as being of generally good quality.

From the above one is inclined to think that the strict admission regulations were consistently maintained until 1856. However the evidence does not support this idea. Rather beginning in 1854 the rigour with which this policy had hitherto been held was slightly modified. The most sensible explanation should be related to the Pechuia ingathering which was totally unexpected by the missionaries. What led to the giving up of the belief in slow conversion results⁶⁰ proved to be also effective in the occasional loosening of the practice of *delaying* admission. Not that missionary guardedness over the admission criteria was done away with but that an *extended* period of delay was no longer *always* observed.

For instance, in early April⁶¹ while Burns was away from Pechuia, the former image-maker in his zeal went to Amoy to seek church admission. The examining RCA missionaries were 'astonished and delighted by the evidence which he gave them of knowledge, repentance, and faith'

⁵⁵ Talmage/17Dec1850.

⁵⁶ Doty/28Jan1853, MH/1853/pp. 161-162. Cf. Talmage/22Apr1853, MH/1853/p. 349.

⁵⁷ Doty/Jan1855, AR-AB/1855/p. 113.

⁵⁸ Joralmon/Amoy/30Jul1856.

⁵⁹ BFM in APGS/1857/pp. 223-224 = AR-BFM/1857/p. 5.

⁶⁰ See 5.3.1.

⁶¹ Burns/Amoy/8May1854, Mess/1854/p. 267.

and would have admitted him along with ten other Amoy people 'had it not been that [Burns'] two native companions, returning the day before to Amoy, urged the expediency of delay'.⁶² Note that when the missionaries had relaxed the 'normal' observation time, it was the Chinese who restored them to the original standard. Another case concerns Chiohbe where the work was started by Pechuia believers. After two Pechuia men became the first to preach there in c.July 1854,⁶³ some Amoy evangelists took turns going there. Of the twenty applicants for baptism examined in January, Doty and Talmage 'with their usual caution' passed only seven for admission.⁶⁴ Earlier in November Doty had felt it necessary to soon admit several persons at Chiohbe who had given 'pleasing evidence of regeneration' but the reluctance to do so derived from the hesitation to 'add another [flock]' at such time when the missionaries 'are already taxed beyond time and strength, and cannot give adequate pastoral care to the flocks already gathered...'⁶⁵ One can hardly fail to note that the baptisms were administered just about five months after the first instance of preaching at Chiohbe. Or a bit more unexpectedly that Doty had felt some to be admissible in November, i.e. after just three or four months of preaching/instruction. Adding even more interest is the fact that just at the start of that month Doty had baptised three men at Pechuia after having turned down two others who were examined and 'appeared well, but it was thought prudent to delay [their admission] for the present'.⁶⁶ Therefore by all the indications we could garner from the Pechuia-Chiohbe experience, it is evident the strict requirements had not changed except in the case of the time factor.

The case of Tan Bu-Siat of Pechuia provides proof that there was no lowering of the other admission standards even if the entry process could be cut short. The 28-year-old rice merchant 'gave such conclusive evidence of a genuine change, and underwent such a severe ordeal of persecution in a spirit so truly Christian, that it required but a limited examination to satisfy all parties that he was a proper subject for baptism'.⁶⁷ However to earn this privilege, Tan not only had first to renounce 'the worship of both gods and ancestors' but also to suffer persecutions from relatives including physical violence and the threat of 'the loss of his trade'.⁶⁸ Since it was explicitly stated that the other two male converts who were baptised along with Tan were tested in religious knowledge, there is no reason to deny Tan was likewise examined.⁶⁹ On the other hand, it was not stated outrightly that the knowledge test was applied upon the fourth and last convert who was the lone female. But then one is hard pressed to conclude that this meant she was not. Relatedly one wonders whether the knowledge standards were different for women whom the missionaries knew to be generally unschooled. At any rate what the case of Tan demonstrates is

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ Doty/17Jan1855, MH/1855/pp. 186-187; MH/1855/p. 46; J.V.N. Talmage, *Sketch of the Amoy Mission* (1888) p. 10. *Contra* Johnston, Mess/1855/p. 145.

⁶⁴ Johnston/Rev1854, Mess/1855/pp. 143-146.

⁶⁵ Doty/Nov1854, Mess/1855/pp. 180-181.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ Johnston/c.Mar1855, Mess/1855/pp. 197-200.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

that the strict admission policy did not always necessitate a full length examination and thus that the length of the observation period could be cut short. However the sincerity of the applicant must be beyond any doubt and the expected level of his doctrinal knowledge uncompromised. To put things in perspective, we should emphasise that the laxing of the time factor was not a matter of normality. The case of Tan was never regarded as an ordinary one. What we are saying is that the missionaries had begun to entertain the possibility of *exceptional* cases wherein the time factor may be allowed greater leeway. The first baptisms at Chiohbe should likewise be seen in this light.

That the norm of strictness was nevertheless still retained may be seen in the manner in which the examination of applicants was carried out in 1854. We pay particular attention to the *lengthy* and *tedious* character of the examination process. Early that year, a special meeting was called for all interested in applying for baptism. The response was so overwhelming that until at least August similar examination-instruction meetings were had weekly, sometimes twice weekly or once every fortnight.⁷⁰ From Doty we gain an idea of the nature of the examination meetings.

'In these meetings we are usually engaged from three to four hours, during which time we may converse with or examine, as the case may be, three or four individuals in the most searching manner, both as to their experimental knowledge of the Holy Spirit's work in the heart, and their acquaintance with Christian doctrine. This brings us into the closest personal contact with their minds and enables us to give instruction, to correct misconceptions of truth, guide the inquiring, encourage, warn and exhort, so as to meet the difficulties of each individual, and to the profit of all.'⁷¹

While this quotation reveals the tedious character of the work, the case of widow Hong and her sons (*supra*) shows that the task of examination was carried out over a number of sessions. Moreover the missionaries never set down any time limit upon the duration of the process. On the contrary they preferred delay to haste and would not accept any examination outcome which had the slightest unsatisfactory appearance. Thus the dramatic increase of examination hours in 1854 should be interpreted as an attempt to accommodate more applicants without at the same time compromising high quality control.

With the first eight months of 1854 year yielding a fruition of twenty-eight baptisms,⁷² the effort on the part of the small missionary force was quite draining. In the succeeding months the number of inquirers and candidates sometimes went over forty and the missionaries were found lamenting 'our utter inability to give that [i.e. examination work] time and strength, which the importance of the work demanded'.⁷³ Also during the May communion at Chiohbe in 1855, no admissions were gained 'not however because there were no hopeful candidates but chiefly for want of time for a full and thorough examination'.⁷⁴ Nevertheless through all these demands and

⁷⁰ Talmage/18Aug1854; Doty/20Apr1854.

⁷¹ Doty/20Apr1854.

⁷² Talmage/18Aug1854; Doty/20Apr1854.

⁷³ Doty/25Jun1855, MH/1855/pp. 354-356.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

pressures, the missionaries maintained the strict admission standards even when doing so taxed them greatly.

In summary we reiterate that the strict baptism/admission policy initiated by Pohlman was unreluctantly inherited, then intensified and modified by Doty and Talmage. With the criteria of sincerity and knowledge (among others) upheld uncompromisingly, the delay of baptism became the standard operating procedure. What was presented as field data (i.e. typical insincerity and religious ignorance) served as the rationale for the wisdom of protraction. The principle of delay-if-in-doubt made for a case of delay upon delay. On the strength of all these the tendency was to *over-test* baptismal candidates. The Pechuia-Chiohbe awakening modified the policy by relaxing the time factor for exceptional cases although not at the expense of the other admission criteria which were generally maintained with little compromise. The over-all result was that the general Christian quality of the church membership appeared highly satisfactory to the missionaries.

3.4. Intensive oral instruction of a selected few

Having explained the contribution of the RCA admission policy to the making of a quality church membership, we now turn our attention to the evolution and adoption of the other methodological feature, i.e. the application of the *oral* method of preaching/instruction and the strategy of *intensive oral instruction of a selected few* as the means of instilling Protestant doctrines among inquirers and believers. It will be argued that the preaching method evolved from an extensive to an intensive mode and that the latter contributed to the making of a quality church membership.

Immediately upon arrival in Banlam, Pohlman and Doty decided that preaching be their foremost mission work. Although the Amoy missionaries and their Chinese assistants were also engaged in colportage and literature dissemination,⁷⁵ the supremacy of the oral method was steadily maintained. In the 1844-45 Mission report, Pohlman wrote,

‘I may safely say that during the year, we have done more at preaching and oral instruction among the people than any previous year of missionary life. We have started no schools, and engaged in no labors, which would interfere with *what is now the great work of Chinese missionaries, -- preaching every where the everlasting gospel to the millions by whom they are surrounded*. More than a generation has passed since the first missionary efforts were made in behalf of this people. Comparatively little labor, by preaching and persuasion, has yet been bestowed upon them. The first missionaries -- Drs. Morrison and Milne -- devoted their main efforts to the preparation of valuable dictionaries, and other indispensable works for the use of their successors. We are now profiting by their labors. But *at present* the accessible multitudes are so numerous, and the calls so loud and urgent, that *the demand is for faithful, devoted preachers...*’⁷⁶ (italics added)

⁷⁵ E.g. Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1845, CI/2Apr1846/p. 150c2-3; Pohlman/Amoy/1May1847, CI/2Dec1847/p. 82c3-5; AR-AB/1855/p. 113-114.

⁷⁶ Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1845. Cf. Pohlman/Amoy/25May1847, CI/16Dec1847/p. 90c3-4.

Thus more specifically, what the Mission adopted was the strategy of *itinerant* preaching (note: ‘preaching every where...to the millions’). During the last quarter of 1844, Pohlman spent much time with Abeel in itineration both within and without Amoy surveying the field while also giving tracts and ‘speaking a word as I could’.⁷⁷ Based on the unwavering friendly responses they received and the easy accessibility of the many villages, Pohlman perceived ‘a wide field of itinerant labor’.⁷⁸ That he had preaching work in mind is clear when he assessed the 136 villages on Amoy Island as being all ‘perfectly accessible to the “circuit preacher”’.⁷⁹ The same impressions were expressed by Doty shortly before his departure for America.⁸⁰ A somewhat similar strategy was conceived in autumn 1844 when Pohlman came to believe the city work will not reach many unless street preaching was made ‘a part of our constant operations’.⁸¹ By autumn 1846, it was reported the villages on Amoy Island had been visited almost exhaustively.⁸²

Thus far the missionary method appeared to be that of saturated preaching on a geographical level. The great contrast of open Banlam to their former field in Borneo⁸³ was so overwhelming as to cause the missionary duo to fixate on the ‘multitudes’ and become blind to the individual Chinese. But this strategic focus was not destined to captivate the Mission for long (*infra*). One thing however is significant, viz. the concentration of efforts upon *oral* work. Not that literary and educational work were thought to be of no value; note the credit given Morrison and Milne. Rather the motivation derived from the observed lack of efforts at ‘preaching and persuading’, the perceived evangelistic opportunities offered by the *accessibility* of the people and the believed native desire to hear Christian preaching (‘the calls so loud and urgent’). The last could not be unrelated to the favourable attitude toward the Christian religion expressed by the ‘highest city officer’ in the presence of the missionaries sometime earlier in the year.⁸⁴

It was in late 1845 that the shift of focus from extensive to intensive preaching took place. Reflecting on mission year 1845-46, Pohlman began for the first time in his extant letters to speak outrightly⁸⁵ of the need for settled missionaries and *stated* preaching at the more important villages.

‘These itinerant efforts do little more than prepare the way. It is on our regular, stated efforts at home, that we mainly depend for introducing light and knowledge into these dark minds. There must be “line upon line,” “precept upon precept;” and the more our labors are concentrated on a select few, the more probability is there that the seed will take root, and bring forth fruit.’⁸⁶

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ AR-AB/1846/p. 170; cf. 1847/p. 165.

⁸¹ Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1845.

⁸² Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1846, CI/6May1847/p. 168c2-4.

⁸³ See G. De Jong, *Mission to Borneo* (1989).

⁸⁴ Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1845 [2nd part], CI/9Apr1846/p. 154c1-2.

⁸⁵ The only previous mention of *stated* preaching was in connection with Doty’s dim chances of ever addressing ‘a worshipping assembly on the Lord’s day’, i.e. *non-evangelistic* preaching to converts gathered for Sabbath worship. Pohlman/Amoy/4Nov1845, RCAA/713 Borneo Mission/1838-45 folder.

⁸⁶ Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1846. Cf. Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, CI/27Apr1848/p. 166c3-5; Stronach to Doty [USA], Amoy/8Apr1846, CI/15Oct1846/p. 54c1-3.

This re-evaluation of itineration marked an advancement in the strategic methodology. Itinerary preaching was recognised for its preparatory value only in relation to the potentially more fruitful practice of *regular stated oral communication of the gospel and the intensive instruction of a select few*. Contributing to this refinement of method was no doubt the experience of the summer of 1845. When hot weather reduced the amount of street preaching, Pohlman compensated for the loss by resorting to house calls and in the process found such to be ‘surer work than random visits and talkings in the streets’.⁸⁷ In spring 1847 Pohlman seemed to have arrived at a revised understanding of the nature of the impact (or non-impact) of his early itinerary preaching upon his hearers while also assigning greater value to that activity but only as a form of preliminary work.⁸⁸ More importantly his faith in the practice of stated preaching became stronger.

Helping to preserve the supremacy of the preaching method was perceived field reactions. The hearers believed to be most receptive were neither the ablest nor the keenest readers. Amidst the opportunities of unmolested preaching and the general friendliness of all classes in the region, the non-receptivity of the gentry did not escape the perceptive eye of Pohlman.⁸⁹ The missionary believed the *literati* regarded his kind as ‘mere moralists, far below many of their own wise men’ and that ‘[a]t heart... the Chinese gentry oppose us [and] scorn the idea of our teaching a better way than they and their fathers have trodden hitherto’.⁹⁰ Nevertheless he considered it ‘very encouraging’ that ‘the lower orders...[were] disposed to listen to our message’ for then,

‘We have just the class of hearers here who are generally thought to be the most *hopeful* in all countries. The under ranks are the basis of the community, just as the lowest parts of the wall sustain the higher parts. Religion must *ascend* from the populace to the middle classes, and then again by progressive stages to the higher ranks, to the officers and the Emperor on the throne. We would have much to fear for the genuineness and complete success of Christian efforts in China, were it otherwise. Thus it was in the time of our Saviour, and thus it will ever be.’⁹¹ (italics original)

It was therefore on account of actual field responses and not purely theoretical considerations that Pohlman came to narrow his target group to the lower classes in the short term. The good words said of the latter appear more like justification for a course pre-fixed by extraneous circumstances rather than argumentation for a decision freely and deliberately made. But whether free choice or not, the group now targeted set the parameters for the near-future operational methodology. The masses, Pohlman observed, were generally illiterate and most of the readers he had met were never taught the meaning of the characters they knew so that ‘they cannot explain the simplest sentence’.⁹² Furthermore while the advantage of having a chapel as a physical center especially for

⁸⁷ Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1845.

⁸⁸ Pohlman/Amoy/1May1847.

⁸⁹ Cf. Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, CI/27Apr1848/p. 166c3-5.

⁹⁰ Pohlman/Amoy/1May1847 (italics original).

⁹¹ 12Jun entry, Pohlman/Amoy/1May1847.

⁹² Pohlman/Amoy/25May1847, CI/16Dec1847/p. 90c3-4.

tract distribution was acknowledged, it was believed that many did not actually read 'our books' even though the people were 'eager to obtain them'.⁹³ The consequence was more reason to defer any plan of literary work, thus adding more weight upon the oral preaching method.

Various measures were taken in pursuit of the *stated preaching* method and the *intensive instruction of a select few* approach. The Sabbath preaching schedules of Pohlman's chapel (9am, 3pm), the LMS chapel (9am, 3pm) and the chapel connected with Cumming's dispensary (10am) were structured in such a way that a person could hear three sermons a day if he so desired.⁹⁴ Private meetings were held on Sabbath evenings⁹⁵ to test whether hearers remember the sermons previously listened to. The latter exercises, though slow and tedious, were nevertheless essential, so hearers could be diagnosed on an individual level. Beginning in December 1845, daily (except Thursday) worship with the normal component of preaching was maintained.⁹⁶ By May 1847 the chapel became open also during mornings and the 3pm session had converted into 'stated worship' followed by 'an hour or more' of free conversation with the people.⁹⁷ On 5th January 1846 the first Chinese concert of prayer was held.⁹⁸ With a large oral communication component, this monthly meeting Pohlman considered to be second in importance to the Sabbath meetings.⁹⁹ Intensive Bible study was another line of action undertaken. Beginning in September 1846, a second Bible class was started to study the Old Testament via 'a critical explanation of every verse and phrase'.¹⁰⁰ In July 1847 the first Bible class¹⁰¹ began the study of the New Testament Epistles 'taking up character by character, phrase by phrase, and verse by verse, and dwelling at some length on the great and important truths therein revealed'.¹⁰² This 'slow' process was believed to be not only proper but necessary for 'laying a good foundation, on which should God bless us, we may erect a firm and enduring superstructure...'¹⁰³ Thus in line with his revised strategy, Pohlman adopted individual work methods whose common character was reliance upon the oral medium. As illustrated most powerfully by the choice of the tedious and slow procedure of detailed Bible study, methodological gradualism was not something he wished to avoid.

The return of Doty with Talmage did not change things much. In the report for 1847 Pohlman emphasised that '[h]itherto this mission has been almost exclusively a preaching station'.¹⁰⁴ The greatest value continued to be assigned to the Sabbath preachings and the subsequent private meetings. Despite the continued aloofness of the upper classes, the response of

⁹³ Pohlman/Amoy/4Jan1847.

⁹⁴ Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1846.

⁹⁵ See Smith, *Narrative*, pp. 466ff. We know the unnamed missionary in charge was Pohlman because of the attendance of Hok-ha who was associated with the RCA (see p. 418).

⁹⁶ Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1846.

⁹⁷ Pohlman/Amoy/1May1847.

⁹⁸ Pohlman/25Feb1846, MH/1846/pp. 277-278. Cf. AR-AB/1847/p. 167.

⁹⁹ Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, CI/20Apr1848/p. 162c5-6.

¹⁰⁰ Pohlman/Amoy/24Oct1846, CI/4Mar1847/p. 132(134)c6.

¹⁰¹ Begun on 21Mar1844 by Abeel. AR-AB/1847/p. 166.

¹⁰² Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, CI/20Apr1848/p. 162c5-6.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, CI/20Apr1848/p. 162c5-6.

the lower and middle classes who came to the meetings¹⁰⁵ greatly encouraged the missionaries to persist in stated oral work. Nevertheless the elites were never totally removed from the long-term schedule of evangelisation. The plan was to soon ‘lay the foundation of a neat and substantial house of worship, to which the better class will be induced to come. ...[for i]t is thus that we may acquire a commanding influence among the Chinese, by a system of regular instruction vigorously prosecuted at respectable chapels, where we can at stated seasons be always sought and found’.¹⁰⁶ Here it should be noted that the oral method was maintained (continuity) even in the planned attempt to reach the elites. To attract the latter, it was believed a more impressive physical setting (‘respectable chapels’) was what was required.

This methodological continuity was also revealed in the next Mission report. The ‘general plan of labor’ remained constant with gospel preaching and oral instruction as ‘the burden of our efforts’ as these two ‘seem more and more to be *the method* of reaching the mind and arresting the attention of the people’.¹⁰⁷ Indeed new experiences confirmed this conviction. Consider for instance the father and son admitted by the LMS in 1848 who were both illiterate so that ‘all their knowledge of the religion of Christ is from oral instruction’. Or the case of the c.50-year-old Hong Bunhong who though a non-reader passed all examinations and was admitted in 1851,¹⁰⁸ proving both the necessity and the effectiveness of the oral method. The system of *stated* preaching was also confirmed by actual experience when the fitted-up building on the newly-acquired chapel site was opened for Sabbath services and weekday instructions.¹⁰⁹ For three consecutive months, the missionaries witnessed the attendance of a record-breaking number of newcomers. At the Sabbath services, the normal show-up was ‘a crowd, as great as the place can accommodate, of attentive, and (in regard to some we think it can be said) interested listeners’. Therefore the wisdom of methodological continuity was affirmed by immediate results.

In the 1850s the same continuity was in operation. Thus Talmage spoke approvingly of existing practices, viz. strict admission, oral preaching (due to widespread illiteracy) and intensive instruction (due to heathen upbringings).¹¹⁰ Continuity was further attested by the mid-year report of 1851 which noted that operations had ‘assumed so much regularity’.¹¹¹ The primacy of intensive instruction suffered no subordination even after the Pechuia awakening when the *oral* instruction of inquirers and baptismal candidates became ‘our most solemn work and most pressing duty’.¹¹² Up till 1856 gospel preaching was maintained as ‘our first and great work’, it being understood as the directive of Christ and the model set by the Apostles thus also the foremost task

¹⁰⁵ See Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, p. 166c3-5.

¹⁰⁶ Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, p. 162c5-6.

¹⁰⁷ Doty/Amoy/16Mar1848, CI/20Jul1848/p. 6c3-5 (italics original).

¹⁰⁸ Talmage/Amoy/14Jul1851, CI/1Jan1852/p. 101c1-4.

¹⁰⁹ Doty/Amoy/16Mar1848, CI/27Jul1848/p. 10c2-3.

¹¹⁰ Talmage/17Dec1850; Talmage/22Jan1852, MH/1852/pp. 149-153.

¹¹¹ Talmage/Amoy/14Jul1851.

¹¹² Doty/25Jun1855, MH/1855/pp. 354-356.

of the present. Both faith and experience sustained the missionaries in this conviction. As Talmage put it,

‘...we doubt not that, as the missionary work advances, experience will prove that the plan of Christ and his apostles is the best plan. This at least is the testimony of our own experience.’¹¹³

Doubtlessly the oral method had attained axiomatic status. Even later in 1857 during his visit to Amoy Island and the mainland, Joralmon was extremely careful to give away literature only ‘to those who are able to read - which, I am sorry to say, is but a small proportion - so that our principal means of reaching this people must be by oral proclamation of the truth’.¹¹⁴

In our survey of the evolution and adoption of RCA strategy, we find that the initial practice of itinerary preaching gave way to that of stated preaching and the intensive instruction of a ‘select few’. From the start, oral communication was regarded the medium of reaching the Chinese due to various factors, viz. the receptivity of the lower orders, the problem of extensive illiteracy and the suspicion that dispensed literature was not actually read. Confirmed by field experiences, the later Pohlman methodology was continued by Doty and Talmage until 1856 and beyond. Before examining the relationship between work methods (oral intensive method and strict admission policy) and membership quality, we shall look at an aspect of the larger working environment generally encountered by China missionaries, i.e. the widespread hostility toward foreigners.

3.5. Anti-foreignism in Amoy

In this Section we show that in the matter of anti-foreignism, Amoy proved to be a happy exception as far as the early Banlam missionaries were concerned. In other words, there was a *general non-antagonism toward foreign missionaries* at Amoy. After that discussion, we then explain the implication of the peculiarity for mission methodology.

The friendliness toward foreigners was believed by many to be peculiar to Amoy among the treaty ports during the 1840s. Having also visited Hongkong, Canton, Macao, Shanghai, Ningbo, Chusan Island and Fuzhou,¹¹⁵ Smith (CMS) found in Amoy such amiability as he had nowhere else seen.¹¹⁶ Despite this favourable impression, his account of the Chinese was not entirely rosy as he reported both the admirable and the abhorable traits of the people.¹¹⁷ But this only shows that Smith was attempting what he judged to be an objective account of things. Earlier Pohlman and later others were to make similar comments on Amoy friendliness, often in contrast to Canton.¹¹⁸ Exceptionally we find from Johnston a positive remark on Cantonese hostility. After

¹¹³ Talmage/Amoy/16Jan1856.

¹¹⁴ Joralmon/16Apr1857, CI/30Jul1857/p. 17c3-4.

¹¹⁵ Smith, *Narrative*, ch1-ch24.

¹¹⁶ Pp. 490-491.

¹¹⁷ Pp. 489-490.

¹¹⁸ E.g. Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1845, CI/9Apr1846/p. 154c1-2; Pohlman/Feb1846, AR-AB/1846/pp. 170-171;

visiting that port in 1853, he declared that the hostile attitude to foreigners has been 'greatly modified' and the place looks promising for an English school.¹¹⁹ But in the light of uniform testimony to the contrary, one wonders whether Johnston had an exceptional experience during his short visit or in his eagerness to start educational work had read the situation with an overdose of optimism. Or perhaps it was because he was comparing the Canton he saw (not with Amoy but rather) with the Canton he had earlier heard about. Anyway he did afterwards mention Amoy friendliness although without contrasting with Canton.¹²⁰ In sum, the missionaries believed in the non-prevalence of strong hostility toward foreigners in Amoy.

Because of this Amoy peculiarity, the problem of mission work *from the start* was not the lack of an audience but the overtaking of the supply (preachers) by the demand (hearers). In contrast to Macao where his attendance ranged from two to seven people,¹²¹ Abeel's Kolongsu congregation attained an average of fifty in just four months.¹²² By spring 1843 there were as many as a hundred.¹²³ Whether rain or shine (literally),¹²⁴ the Chinese interest continued unabated.

The phenomenon of general non-antagonism requires some explanation. First, there was the larger background of anti-Manchu sentiments in Fujian which traced back to the pro-Ming resistance in early Qing times.¹²⁵ Thus soon after the first Protestant missionaries arrived, a Chinese man proposed to one of them a plan to 'effect an expulsion of the present Tartar dynasty'.¹²⁶ Second, there was the more immediate background of the first Sino-British war. As Smith (CMS) noted, the kindly attitude in Amoy toward foreigners may also be attributed to the lenient treatment of the local population during the British occupation of 1841-1845 which stood in contrast to the conduct normally expected of victorious Chinese troops.¹²⁷

Then there are the factors more directly related to the missionary presence. One of these was the attractive power of medical work, or the 'happy influence of the Dispensary'.¹²⁸ More significantly, Smith (CMS) called attention to the peculiarly advantageous position of Abeel in the earliest days. Since he arrived in Amoy already with knowledge of the local dialect, Abeel was able 'to remonstrate with the people on the very first appearance of danger, and to disarm the first

Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1846, CI/6May1847/p. 168c2-4; Pohlman/4Jan1847, CI/27May1847/p. 182c3-4; AR-AB/1847/pp. 167-168; 12Jun entry, Pohlman/Amoy/1May1847, CI/2Dec1847/p. 82c3-5; Pohlman/Amoy/25May1847, CI/16Dec1847/p. 90c3-4; Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, CI/20Apr1848/p. 162c5-6; Doty/16Mar1848, CI/20Jul1848/p. 6c3-5; Burns/25Jul1851, in Burns, *Memoir*, p. 285; Burns/5Aug1851, Mess/1851/pp. 370f; Burns/9Mar1852, Mess/1852/pp. 219f; Burns/16May1853, Bx119/F5; Talmage/diary/5Jun1848, FYC/p. 85; Talmage/Apr-Jun1853, MH/1853/pp. 349-353; Swanson, 'Career', p. 58; Joralmon/16Apr1857, CI/30Jul1857/p. 17c3-4; Macgowan, *Christ*, pp. 13-16, 41-47; FYA/pp. 34-37.

¹¹⁹ Johnston/Victoria/23Nov1853, Mess/1854/pp. 53-54.

¹²⁰ Johnston/Feb1854, Mess/1854/pp. 162-163.

¹²¹ Poppen, 'Abeel', p. 121; cf. Abeel/journal/5Jun1840, in Williamson, *Memoir*, p. 196.

¹²² The missionaries/Macao/10Jul1842. Cf. Abeel/'Kolongsoo'/4Aug1842.

¹²³ Poppen, 'Abeel', p. 136.

¹²⁴ Abeel/3Jun1843.

¹²⁵ See L.A. Struve, *The Southern Ming, 1644-1662* (Yale UP, 1984).

¹²⁶ Smith, *Narrative*, p. 394.

¹²⁷ Pp. 379ff.

¹²⁸ Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1845, CI/9Apr1846/p. 154c1-2.

symptoms of hostility'.¹²⁹ Also as the interpreter-mediator between Chinese and foreign authorities and with the advantage of living during the regimes of two liberal-minded Haihongs, Abeel was able to quickly establish good relations with Amoy officialdom.¹³⁰

On the whole Smith's analysis is certainly on the right track. But perhaps we should highlight some details in order to better understand the position of Abeel in his historical context. We call attention to his popularity and indispensability as the *only* fluent Amoy-speaking foreigner¹³¹ in the *uncertain diplomatic situation* of post-war Amoy. The linguistic ability allowed 'the opportunity of doing little favors for those in authority as well as for others...'¹³² These earned him the courtesy, 'friendly' visits and occasional hospitality of various local officials during the latter part of 1842.¹³³ Among these official kindnesses, the most memorable was the formal reception of the missionaries by the chief magistrate in late October,¹³⁴ i.e. just about two months after the Nanjing Treaty was ratified.

Thus we see it was the fortunate conglomeration of many factors which made for the advantageous position of the early Amoy missionaries, viz. the language ability of Abeel, the post-war situation, the liberal-mindedness of the Haihongs as well as the arrival of medical missionaries which made possible the rendering of medical services and the winning of *public* appreciation. The same position of advantage was soon enjoyed by the LMS and RCA agents who came after Abeel.¹³⁵ In 1846 the five high Mandarins hosted a banquet where the missionaries were given seats of honour.¹³⁶

General local friendliness was well sustained until 1856 and beyond. Reinforcing good inter-racial relations was foreign assistance in fighting the big Amoy fire in 1856 and in anti-pirate operations.¹³⁷ In late 1856 when 'the din of war is heard in the distance', the Banlam missionaries were still 'enjoy[ing the] most complete quiet and peace, [and] the people are as friendly as ever' despite continuing objections about the coolie and opium traffics and the behaviour of foreign sailors.¹³⁸ With the mandarins anxious to remain on good terms with Western authorities, neither foreign consuls nor the missionaries saw any cause for alarm believing that even should a 'general war' ensue, 'Amoy would very easily be kept in tranquillity.'¹³⁹

There exist records of three occasions when the general Amoy friendliness seemed to have been less than consistent. The first incident concerned Pohlman's second visit to Chiangchiu in

¹²⁹ Smith, pp. 381-382; Johnston/Feb1854, Mess/1854/pp. 162f. Cf. Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1845.

¹³⁰ Smith, pp. 382,388ff. A civil mandarin but with military powers, the Haihong was practically the most powerful local official.

¹³¹ The missionaries/Macao/10Jul1842.

¹³² Abeel/31Oct1842, CI/8Apr1843/p. 150c2.

¹³³ Poppen, 'Abeel', pp. 133-134, citing Abeel/journal/9,24,29Nov1842.

¹³⁴ Abeel/31Oct1842, CI/8Apr1843/p. 150c2.

¹³⁵ E.g. AR-AB/1846/pp. 170f; 1847/p. 165; Talmage/diary/5Jun1848, FYC/p. 85. Cf. FYA/p. 60.

¹³⁶ Smith, *Narrative*, pp. 472-479. Cf. Pohlman/Feb1846, AR-AB/1846/p. 171.

¹³⁷ Douglas/29Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 146f; Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, CI/27Apr1848/p. 166c3-5; Joralmon/16Apr1857.

¹³⁸ Douglas/Amoy/3Dec1856.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

March 1847 during which he and his three companions were ‘under an escort of soldiers, who came to lead us around, and protect us from insult and injury’.¹⁴⁰ Even though no untoward incidents were reported we are at a loss to say whether the peace was attributable to local friendliness or to the military presence. At any rate the missionary perception was of uninterrupted ‘exhibitions of friendliness, both of men in office of various grades and of the common people’.¹⁴¹ Such an impression had an encouraging effect upon the continued application of the oral preaching method. The second incident was the three-day mob rally in 1852 which culminated in an attack upon a foreign establishment. Deriving its cause from ‘some mercantile transactions, in which natives employed as agents were guilty of nefarious practices among the Chinese far and wide’,¹⁴² the affair did not directly involve the religious agents. Even though there was much anti-foreign feelings ‘in the region around us’, the missionaries were in ‘no danger’ in Amoy ‘where we are well known’. But to travel into the interior at that time presented a great risk unless the foreigner was ‘personally and favorably known’. In Amoy therefore the antagonism found its specific target at Western *merchants*. The same was said to apply in the interior but with the difference that there the missionaries were not as well known so that they risked being the object of mistargeted violence.¹⁴³ Thus the most this generated was the temporary suspension of missionary visits to the interior. Missionary work within Amoy was never significantly hindered. The last incident came when the Little Knife insurrection first broke out near Amoy in 1853 and the missionaries ‘felt some anxiety’ over how foreigners will be treated.¹⁴⁴ However the whole affair ended with the missionaries suffering no personal harm at the hands of the insurgents¹⁴⁵ although the interior was closed off for some time. At Chiangchiu the execution of evangelist U Teng-eng was not a case of anti-foreignism but of mistaken association.¹⁴⁶ Just like the second incident, there was at most the interruption of preaching in the interior. Thus despite the three incidents, the missionaries continued to believe in the *general* friendliness of *all classes* in Amoy toward them.

In sum, the Amoy situation was somewhat unique in that there was not the outward expression of anti-foreign/missionary sentiments to the degree as was encountered, e.g., at Canton, Fuzhou or Swatow.¹⁴⁷ However the relative absence of official restriction and popular non-opposition did not mean the people were receptive to the evangelistic message.¹⁴⁸ This distinction is important for it relates to the slow conversion rate encountered in the early period. In 1852

¹⁴⁰ Pohlman, AR-AB/1848/p. 221.

¹⁴¹ Pohlman, AR-AB/1848/p. 222.

¹⁴² Doty/28Jan1853, MH/1853/pp. 161-162.

¹⁴³ On the first major anti-missionary movement in Banlam after 1842, see J.V.N.Talmage, *The anti-missionary movement in south China* (1871).

¹⁴⁴ Talmage/3,10Jun1853, FYC/pp. 139-140.

¹⁴⁵ APGS/1854/p. 473.

¹⁴⁶ Doty/18Jan1854, MH/1854/pp. 168-171.

¹⁴⁷ Joralmon/16Apr1857; E. Stock, *The story of the Fuh-kien mission of the CMS* (1890); E.C. Carlson, *The Foochow missionaries, 1847-1880* (Harvard UP, 1974); G.A. Hood, *Mission accomplished?: The English Presbyterian Mission in Lingtung, South China* (1986) ch2.

¹⁴⁸ E.g. Burns/25Jul1851, in Burns, *Memoir*, p. 285; Pohlman/Amoy/1May1847, CI/2Dec1847/p. 82c3-5; Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, CI/27Apr1848/p. 166c3-5.

Burns noted that the Amoy residents were already 'somewhat accustomed' to Christian preaching but the masses were generally 'very apathetic and unconcerned'.¹⁴⁹ Perhaps the assessment of Johnston came closer to reality: 'To say that we are respected or loved would be too much [for] they have their doubts about us, and entertain a considerable sense of superiority, mingled with an unwilling impression that the superiority has not been well sustained, either in the national or personal intercourse'.¹⁵⁰

It remains to discuss the implication of the above for mission methodology. Whether as practitioners or theoreticians, the early Amoy missionaries never operated in a vacuum. Their existential predicament at different times determined to a great extent their thinking, inclinations, behaviour and work methods. The general friendliness of Amoy toward foreigners has two important effects upon RCA work methods. First, the relative openness of Amoy allowed Pohlman to first try out the extensive preaching approach and then quickly discard it in favour of the intensive approach. With the intensive instruction method adopted at quite an early time, the dividends gradually paid off in the form of converts whose Christian character displayed a quality highly acceptable to the missionaries. Second, the problem of the missionaries was not the lack of native interest but the challenge of separating the sincere from the insincere seekers. The latter class was expected especially on account of the 'endorsement' of Chinese officials. Even though ulterior motives behind the 1846 banquet were suspected, the missionaries believed the event would nevertheless effectively assure the populace that espousal of Christianity would not bring about official persecution.¹⁵¹ As Talmage later put it: 'The people will not fear to listen to us, attend our meetings, and visit us at our houses, as they would if the mandarins kept aloof from us.'¹⁵² Indeed the missionaries were proven right. Not only did they receive 'the same polite attentions and friendly disposition everywhere[!]', their bold anti-idolatry statements 'did not appear to excite any ill-will'.¹⁵³ The Chinese non-reaction to such verbal assaults upon their culturo-religious heritage suggests that the endorsement of officialdom had not only given the missionaries the freedom to preach at will but also had a restraining effect upon potential popular hostility. It was in such an atmosphere that the strict admission policy was forged. This is understandable since strong local antagonism to the *foreign* missionaries would naturally discourage any Chinese from associating with them and thereby become itself a test of religious sincerity. But in its absence, the missionaries compensated with alternative screening criteria and in the process ended up with high baptism/admission standards. This is irregardless of whether the *compensational* character of this adjustment did or did not come to the conscious attention of the missionaries. In other words, we are talking not about intention but actual effect.

¹⁴⁹ Burns/Amoy/9Mar1852, Mess/1852/pp. 219-221.

¹⁵⁰ Johnston/Feb1854, Mess/1854/pp. 162-163.

¹⁵¹ Smith, *Narrative*, pp. 472-479. Cf. Pohlman/Feb1846, AR-AB/1846/p. 171.

¹⁵² Talmage/diary/5Jun1848, FYC/p. 85.

¹⁵³ Smith, pp. 392-395.

3.6. Work methods and membership quality

Thus far we have examined two RCA methodological features, viz. strict admission and intensive oral instruction. Since the American missionaries did all the examination and admission of candidates, these methods reigned supreme at Amoy, Pechuia and Chiohbe. Both were consciously adopted as precautionary measures with the intention of creating and preserving a church membership with good Christian character or quality. The internal elements of both features made it extremely difficult for any applicant to qualify for baptism. The rigour of the knowledge and sincerity tests acted as a deterrent to the undetermined and the feigning. The protracted length of the qualifying process screened off the impatient and the non-durable. The scrutinising missionary interview of each applicant on an individual level put off the timid and the undecided.

Yet despite missionary strictness and carefulness, the Chinese members were not entirely 'free from faults' so that it was believed they still require much pastoral care and instruction.¹⁵⁴ Up to the end of 1853, there were no cases of church discipline. In February 1854, Johnston noted:

'The Church here numbers more converts than in any of the other parts in China; and from what I have seen of them, they will bear comparison with the same class of converts in any heathen place that I have visited. ... It says not a little for the stability of the Chinese character, as well as for the caution of the missionaries in admitting converts, that there has never been a sufficient ground for the exercise [of discipline] on any member of the Church since its formation: eight have passed from the Church below, we trust to the Church above, but none have been suspended or expelled.'¹⁵⁵

But by mid-1855 Chiohbe already had three disciplinary cases (including one excommunication) and one instance of a native helper being de-posted.¹⁵⁶ For that year, Douglas reported there had been among the converts of the three Missions 'some cases of backsliding and falling away' including that of an evangelist being taken by opium smoking.¹⁵⁷ Months later, Douglas corrected his original remark saying the fallen helper was not actually 'a colporteur' but rather a briefly-employed chapel-keeper.¹⁵⁸ To put the record right, it was added that '[n]one of the Evangelists or colporteurs employed here have ever fallen back'.¹⁵⁹ It seems the fallen worker was the Chiohbe helper we just mentioned. For the RCA there were one excommunication and one suspension in 1855.¹⁶⁰ By January the suspended Sabbath violator had been found repentant and was likely to be received back soon. A report from July 1856 told of a cumulative record of two cases of 'backsliding' at Amoy and one at Chiohbe.¹⁶¹ The latter was likely the young man who

¹⁵⁴ Talmage/18Aug1854, MH/1855/p. 43.

¹⁵⁵ Johnston/Feb1854, Mess/1854/pp. 162-163.

¹⁵⁶ Doty/25Jun1855, MH/1855/pp. 354-356.

¹⁵⁷ Douglas/Amoy/3Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 119-120; cf. CAF/p. 112.

¹⁵⁸ Douglas/Amoy/21Jul1856, Mess/1856/p. 339.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰ Talmage/Amoy/16Jan1856.

¹⁶¹ Joralmon/Amoy/30Jul1856.

had been excommunicated 'apparently without hope of recovery'.¹⁶² Unfortunately the existing records do not provide much details about these incidents other than to cite or enumerate them.

Thus gone were the days when the only discipline exercised was 'in the milder form of exhortation and counsel'.¹⁶³ Church growth had brought in a new problem in the form of internal membership quality control, this in addition to admission quality control. Nevertheless by all indications, problematic cases were definitely very few and seemed to have been customarily handled with seriousness and promptness. In early 1856, it was assured that disciplinary cases were 'very rare' and some had truly repented.¹⁶⁴ Although the mission-affiliation of the fallen ones was not disclosed, the given impression was that the missionaries were still quite happy about the *general quality* of the congregations. Moreover the number of disciplinary incidents *in Amoy* was indeed small, with only two or three cases (one ending in restoration) among a membership of over a hundred men. Comparatively at Chiohbe there were at least four cases among twenty-four members in 1855 alone. This distinction is significant because the Sinkoe event was an *Amoy* affair. Therefore in effect the missionary idea of a generally good quality body of believers *in Amoy* can be sustained reasonably well. Toward the achievement of the intended end, i.e. the production of good-quality members, the RCA methodology can be said to be quite fruitful and on the whole the missionaries reckoned themselves rather successful.

3.7. Conclusion

The records show that the missionaries were quite impressed with the general Christian quality of their baptised converts. As we have shown, the quality factor ties in to the strict baptism/admission standards and the intensive oral method of the RCA which had been upheld since 1846. To counter the obstacles to Chinese conversion -- viz. 'heathen' background, insincerity and ignorance -- the mission methodology was specifically designed to *over-test* baptismal candidates and to provide intensive oral instruction to a select few. The general atmosphere of outward non-antagonism to the missionaries on the part of the natives helped pave the way for the installation of other criteria for the discernment of applicant sincerity. The same also allowed for the early test-out of the extensive or itinerant preaching method and its quick replacement by the intensive method. Consequently the RCA methodology was substantially formed even before the EPM arrived at Amoy. But even with the EPM around, the matter of examination and baptism was orchestrated by the Americans using their methods. While it is true there were instances of quality failures beginning in 1855, these were few *in Amoy* and discipline was normally applied swiftly. Thus in April-May 1856 the missionaries were quite satisfied with the general quality of their baptised membership in Amoy and could find no reason to adjudge the two Chinese congregations unfit an electorate.

¹⁶² Douglas/Amoy/23May1856, Mess/1856/pp. 337-338.

¹⁶³ AR-AB/1855/p. 112.

¹⁶⁴ Douglas/Amoy/3Jan1856.

Comparatively the Banlam practice contrasted with the lax admission standards of the French Catholic mission in Guizhou during the 1860s.¹⁶⁵ Likewise the *consistent* character of its application contrasted with certain Protestant practices in north Fujian. Coming after a decade of fruitless work in Fuzhou, the CMS' first baptisms (1861) conspicuously followed the 'threat' of closing the mission (1859).¹⁶⁶ That three of the four baptised men eventually discarded Christianity while the fourth remained as a chapel-keeper easily lends to the accusation of the first-fruits being composed of three phoneyes and one rice-Christian. One wonders whether they were instances of panic admission on the part of a Mission greatly anxious about its very existence. Similarly the baptised converts of the Methodist Episcopal Mission in Fuzhou grew dramatically from one (1857) to fifty-four (1860) after doubts were expressed by the home Board (1859) about the continuance of the mission.¹⁶⁷ Even after CMS' accelerated deployment of native helpers had brought about rapid conversion growth, the quality of both helpers and converts was subject to serious questioning by both internal and external parties.¹⁶⁸ In contrast the Banlam missionaries faced no such pressure and were able consequently to enforce their strict admission policy without compromise. Chiefly on this account, the RCA held a higher view of the character of Banlam converts and workers than missionaries elsewhere in China generally held of theirs.¹⁶⁹

Relatedly the intensive *instruction* method as an approach in *personal* work corresponds to the *concentration* method as an approach in *strategic geographical* work. The latter stands in contrast to the extensive method of Gutzlaff and societies like the ABCFM and China Inland Mission.¹⁷⁰ Both the intensive instruction and the concentration methods were adopted by the RCA and EPM in Banlam and contributed to the success of their missionary work. Likewise at Swatow the concentration method helped to make the EPM one of the more accomplished missions in China.¹⁷¹

On another note, our discussion on methodology bears a connection to Chapter 2. There we argued the RCA was ahead of the EPM in setting a church formation objective, in working toward it, in reaping results along that line and in having the Talmage ideal. This Chapter shows that the RCA was the first to adopt the policy of strict admission and to apply the method of intensive oral instruction. These features were also characteristic of the EP methodology. In view of the intimacy of the two Missions,¹⁷² the British were surely aware of the RCA practices even *before* they began to do the same. In this sense we find another instance of RCA leadership.

¹⁶⁵ Cohen, *China*, pp. 135-143.

¹⁶⁶ Stock, *Story*, pp. 29f.

¹⁶⁷ Carlson, *Foochow*, pp. 66-68.

¹⁶⁸ Carlson, pp. 79-80,96-100. This casts doubt upon claims of *generally* good helper/convert quality made by CMS missionaries and Stock (e.g. *Story*, pp. 31,37-38,291). Indeed admission was not always strict as evinced by cases of 'hasty' admission at different times (e.g. *Story*, pp. 87,100,148-150).

¹⁶⁹ See Talmage, in *Records 1877*, pp. 322-323.

¹⁷⁰ See Latourette, pp. 366,376.

¹⁷¹ See Hood, *Mission*.

¹⁷² See Ch6.

Chapter 4

Creating and filling a Chinese work space: Missionary limitations and Chinese labours

4.1. Introduction

As said earlier, the larger argument of Chapters 3-5 is that the Chinese church members were able to win the high regard of the missionaries. In this connection, the last Chapter argued that the Christian quality of the general membership was satisfactory to the missionaries. This Chapter and the next continue the larger argument by showing how Chinese religious labours also helped to win missionary confidence in their readiness for self-government.

More particularly, this Chapter explains (a) how certain missionary limitations created and expanded a work space for native participation in Banlam Protestant work and (b) how the Chinese filled this work space ably, thereby contributing to the demonstration of their maturity for devolution before the eyes of the missionaries. To do that, we first look at various limitations upon the missionary workforce and how these interacted in a complicated fashion to create and expand a space for Chinese labour in both paid and voluntary forms. In particular we discuss the lack of missionaries (4.2); language hindrances, failing health and death (4.3); and the impact of other work demands (4.4). Next we demonstrate that the two Missions shared the belief in the necessity of a native agency (4.5). Then we survey the origin and development of employed Chinese labour, arguing that the missionaries were quite satisfied with the character and performance of the native colporteur/evangelists (4.6). Following this, we try to prove that native voluntary labours further enhanced the standing of the Christians before the missionaries (4.7). Thereafter we examine the effectiveness of native evangelism in general, showing how this helped to convince the missionaries that the Chinese were ready for devolution (4.8). Finally a brief summary of our findings closes the Chapter (4.9).

For clarity's sake, we define *Chinese work space* as opportunities for the Chinese to take part in religious work undertaken either under missionary leadership or with tacit missionary consent. Such work embraces preaching, colportage/literature-distribution, religious conversation/instruction, Mission/church-connected educational work and other forms of labour carried out by the Chinese whether in Amoy or elsewhere. The Chinese we have in mind include converts/members (baptised), inquirers/professors of Protestantism (unbaptised) and paid/employed workers whom the missionaries believed to have sincerely embraced Protestantism. In other words we are speaking of Chinese *Christians* in a broad sense (thus including those unbaptised) while excluding non-Christian school-teachers and other employees. This precision is important for it is

difficult to conceive of how the good performance of a non-Christian teacher should be interpreted by the missionaries as constituting sincere commitment to the Christian faith.

Relatedly even though our main concern is the Sinkoe event, we shall nevertheless be also looking into the EPM dimension for two reasons. First, the EPM availed of RCA Chinese labour on various occasions, thereby not only enlarging the Chinese work space but also helping to 'test out' the RCA converts. Second, although *positive* EPM impressions of the Chinese may not have the effect of dramatically altering *positive* RCA impressions of the same, *negative* EPM experiences/impressions could substantially affect *positive* RCA impressions. To discover whether the latter happened, the EP side of the story requires investigation.

4.2. Shortage of missionaries

From the earliest times, the shortage of missionary personnel had been a perennial problem. As earlier discussion¹ has shown the smallness of the *total* missionary number over the *entirety* of the 1842-56 period, we now look at the exact number of missionaries on the ground at specific times. Below is an overview of the combined workforce of the two Missions.

RCA and EPM missionaries, 1842-56

| DATES | MONTHS ² | MALE | FEMALE |
|---------------------|---------------------|------|--------|
| Feb1842 to May1844 | 28 | 1 | 0 |
| Jun1844 to Dec1844 | 7 | 3 | 2 |
| Jan1844 to Nov1845 | 23 | 2 | 2 |
| Dec1845 to July1847 | 20 | 1 | 0 |
| Aug1847 to Jan1849 | 30 | 3 | 1 |
| Feb1849 to Mar1849 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Apr1849 to Apr1850 | 13 | 1 | 1 |
| May1850 to Jun1850 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| July1850 to Jun1851 | 12 | 3 | 2 |
| July1851 to Nov1853 | 29 | 4 | 3 |
| Dec1853 | 1 | 5 | 3 |
| Jan to Aug1854 | 8 | 5 | 2 |
| Sep1854 to Jun1855 | 10 | 3 | 2 |
| July1855 to Mar1856 | 9 | 3 | 2 |
| Apr1856 | 1 | 4 | 3 |

RCA. From February 1842 to April 1856 (197 months), the number of RCA missionaries was highest at three men and two women during a brief seven-month spread in 1844. For about 123 months there were four workers, at times including one woman (30 months) and at other times two (92 months). Negligible is the short and transitional time of two months with three persons as well as the one month with six agents upon the arrival of the Joralmons. During a span of fifteen

¹ See 2.2.

² For convenience, portion of a month counts as one.

months, Doty was the only male missionary though accompanied by his second wife. Lastly there were four years with only one missionary in Banlam.

Unlike the missionary records what we have listed is not *years of service*, a category often misleading with respect to actual time spent in the field. Rather we give actual *times of presence* in Banlam though including short trips or extended breaks at Macao, Hongkong and elsewhere in China but excluding trips to America and related transit points. What we observe then is that there were only two male missionaries for nearly twelve years and only one man for more than five years. For a brief three years, there were three men but these were in the 1840s. When it is recalled that church growth took off in the mid-1850s, then it is easy to see why the missionaries came to attribute good credit for it to Chinese labour.

EPM. With the British, the situation was certainly worse. Over the entire 72-month period, the staff was largest when there were three men and one woman in December 1853, a state of affairs which lasted about twelve hours.³ If we include Mrs. Young, there were three agents during some thirty-seven months; if not, we are reduced to three months with three men. For two months in 1851, the Youngs were the only ones at Amoy. Finally there was only one missionary in the field nearly half the time (32 months). But if we are to reckon the sub-period during which the EPM had a church formation goal, the staff size at Banlam was three men over a four-month span followed by one man in a twenty-month stretch. Even so, the work during those times suffered from various limitations (*infra*).

4.3. Language, health and death

Having shown in the previous Section that both Missions suffered from lack of missionaries during our period, we now argue that (a) this was further complicated by the delayed entry into full labour brought about by language acquisition and also by problems of health and death; and (b) the combined effect of all these limitations was the creation and expansion of a Chinese work space.

RCA

Pre-1847. The first reduction of the RCA workforce was occasioned by the perennial failing health of Abeel.⁴ On 19th December 1844 the pioneer left Amoy, transited at Canton and sailed for home in January.⁵ With health as his major limitation, it was a consolation that the language factor did not diminish Abeel's usefulness during his short Amoy career. In the early 1830s, Abeel had begun studying the Amoy dialect at Batavia⁶ and consequently was able to start

³ Johnston/Amoy/21Dec1853, Mess/1854/p. 82.

⁴ Letter of the missionaries at Macao (Canton)/1Jan1842, CI/21May1842/p. 174c2; Abed/3Jun1843; Abeel/Canton/11Jul1843, CI/23Dec1843/p. 90c4.

⁵ AR-AB/1847/p. 166; 1845/p. 164.

⁶ AR-AB/1831/pp. 33-34; Abeel/journal/20Jan1831&ffg, Williamson, *Memoir*, p. 85; Williamson, p. 253.

colloquial preaching soon after arrival in Banlam.⁷ But whether language or health, Abeel has little consequence for us. Since there were no Chinese Christians during his time, he looked to foreign reinforcements *alone* for help. Wherefore in Abeel's case, any talk about a Chinese work space could not be truly meaningful.

The first Chinese work space (1847). Not long after reaching Amoy, Pohlman and Doty faced the twin problems of illness and death. The summer of 1844 saw malaria forcing the suspension of missionary operations until late September and dwindling the worship attendance to fifty. By autumn the missionaries were back in good health (except for Abeel) but the happy state was short-lived. During July-October 1845, death took Doty's wife and son as well as Pohlman's wife and two of his children.⁸ In November Doty left for America with his two daughters and two Pohlman orphans.⁹ Thus during this brief period, health removed Abeel and death two wives and three children; the latter also occasioned the 20-month absence of Doty. In less than twelve months, the five-adult RCA missionary company had been reduced to a single man (Pohlman).

The situation was further complicated when it turned out the fortune of Abeel in the matter of language was not to be the lot of his immediate successors. Upon arrival in Amoy, both Doty and Pohlman suffered some disheartenment upon knowing that the Amoy tongue was somewhat different from the Chinese dialect they had learned in Borneo.¹⁰ This called for language acquisition as the immediate task, thus the postponement of direct work among the Chinese. Fortunately the acquisition of the vernacular was made somewhat easier on account of its close affinity with the 'Khek' (Hakka) dialect which the two men had acquired at Borneo.¹¹ Even so, after the departure of Abeel, the RCA had to seek the aid of the LMS at various times on account of language limitations. For the most part of 1845, the American Mission was chiefly dependent on Stronach and Young (LMS) for the sustenance of the chapel services and the Bible class, because neither Doty nor Pohlman 'had sufficient command of the dialect to preach intelligibly'.¹² A later report tells us that for 'sometime' previous to 1846, the Bible class was 'alternately officiated' by the members of the two Missions.¹³ Likewise the female meetings that year were conducted by Pohlman and Stronach alternately.¹⁴ While Pohlman was away at Canton and Macao for eye treatment, the AP missionary H.A. Brown 'assumed my duties, as far as his knowledge of the language would allow -- holding family worship, examination meeting, and receiving visitors daily at the chapel'.¹⁵ Meanwhile the pulpit duties were taken care of by LMS missionaries. The monthly ecumenical 'concert of prayer' was continued¹⁶ presumably by the LMS and likely also

⁷ Smith, *Narrative*, pp. 381-382. Also Johnston/Feb1854, Mess/1854/pp. 162-163.

⁸ Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1845; Doty/4,5,6Oct1845, 'Journal, June 7, 1836-October 6, 1845', RCAA/MF/Doty.

⁹ AR-AB/1847/p. 166; cf. 1846/pp. 84,170; APGS/1846/p. 84.

¹⁰ Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1845, CI/2Apr1846/p. 150c2-3. Cf. AR-AB/1845/pp. 163-164.

¹¹ See De Jong, *Borneo*, ch4.

¹² Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1845; Doty/9Jul1845, MH/1846/p. 17.

¹³ Talmage/22Jan1852, MH/1852/pp. 149-152.

¹⁴ Pohlman/Amoy/4Jan1847.

¹⁵ Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1846, CI/6May1847/p. 168c2-4. Cf. Pohlman/Macao/22Jun1846, CI/15Oct1846/p. 54c1.

¹⁶ Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1846.

the AP.¹⁷ Thus in pre-1847 times, a work space for non-RCA agency was generated by health and language problems. However this space was taken up by the LMS and AP missionaries. This should occasion no wonder since there were yet no *suitable* Chinese church members to fill the gap. For both Ong Hokkui and Lau Unsia were *new* members (baptised Apr1846) and would hardly be considered by Pohlman to be ready to take on serious religious work.

Note that the said LMS and AP assistance overlapped the period after Pohlman had preached his first sermon in the Amoy tongue (22Mar1845)¹⁸ which suggests it was with some effort that the one-sermon-per-week output was kept up. This was indeed confirmed in the markedly less triumphal sounding note from his private letter to an English friend: 'Our imperfect knowledge of that difficult dialect has prevented our doing as much as our hearts desire.'¹⁹ Thus at the baptismal Sabbath of 1846, Stronach preached the sermon at Pohlman's chapel (9am) after which the latter administered the ordinance at the dispensary chapel (10am). At the afternoon service, Young (LMS) delivered the sermon and Stronach officiated the holy communion.²⁰ The eye problem of Pohlman and perhaps also the extended efforts given to the examination of the very first baptismal candidates²¹ had made the task of sermon preparation surpass the capability of the missionary. In any case on account of the ophthalmic illness which had befallen him sometime after Doty left for America (Nov1845), it was not very long before Pohlman realised that he would never be able to continue any serious language studies. Along with 'occasional attacks of the old malarial fever',²² the eye ailment threatened for a while to reduce the functional missionary force to nil. By February 1846, Pohlman was ordered to cease from all reading and allowed to write for only half an hour a day. For maintaining correspondence, he normally had to recourse to an amanuensis.²³ In early spring, it was determined that his eyes could not be cured at Amoy and the advice was that he should return to America for treatment. In a letter to Abeel, Pohlman exposed his dread about the possibility of being taken out of the mission field on account of his worsening eye condition.²⁴ Refusing to leave his field but desiring to first exhaust all other measures, he went to Canton where the treatment of Dr. Peter Parker helped a bit but not enough for him to resume his language studies as he 'can only use [his eyes] a little during the day'.²⁵ By late October 1846 Pohlman sadly announced that he 'must abandon all ideas of being a *student*' of the Chinese language and that he had no choice but to let others carry on literary labours and 'such work as requires good eyes'.²⁶ Eventually he was incapable even of reading. When Talmage arrived in

¹⁷ Cf. the role of the teacher of Lloyd (AP) at the concert of Jan1847. Pohlman/Amoy/4Jan1847. The ABCFM report for 1846 stated that Pohlman cooperated with AP and LMS agents. AR-AB/1847/p. 165.

¹⁸ Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1845, CI/2Apr1846/p. 150c2-3.

¹⁹ Pohlman/Amoy/4Jan1847.

²⁰ Stronach/Amoy/8Apr1846, CI/15Oct1846/p. 54c1-2. Cf. Pohlman/1May1846, MH/1846/pp. 321-322.

²¹ Recall the strict admission policy.

²² Talmage, 'Reminiscences of missionaries and mission work', as cited in FYC/p. 95.

²³ Pohlman/Amoy/15Apr1846, CI/15Oct1846/p. 54c1.

²⁴ Pohlman to Abeel [USA], Canton/7Aug1846, in 'Abeel papers and journals', env.5.

²⁵ Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1846, CI/6May1847/p. 168c2-4. Cf. Pohlman/Canton/15May1846, Macao/22Jun1846, CI/15Oct1846/p. 54c1; CRep/1846/p. 479.

²⁶ Pohlman/Amoy/24Oct1846, CI/4Mar1847/p. 132c6.

1847, he found that '[m]uch of [Pohlman's] reading and writing had to be done for him by others'.²⁷ Talmage himself regularly read to Pohlman for an hour each morning at 6-7am while another did the same at 12-1pm. The said condition provided the proper context for appreciating this remark of Pohlman from mid-1847: 'Men *able to acquire the language* must come forth in great numbers. I am pained to hear that none are ready to come'.²⁸ The coincidence of two factors, viz. missionary shortage and physical ailment, made for both reduced work output and lowered field morale. The life-long linguistic deficiency means that throughout his China career Pohlman was never able to really do (as he put it above) 'as much as our hearts desire'. Here we see therefore how the health and language factors interacted in such a manner as to result in the employment in 1847 of Teacher U Teng-eng the first RCA native agent.²⁹ This event marks the beginning of Chinese Christian labour within the RCA experience and passes as the first Chinese work space offered by the American Mission.

The emergence of Chinese voluntary labours (1849). The return of Doty with Talmage restored the male missionary number to that of June 1844. However although the ocular affliction was to be Pohlman's lot for the rest of his life, the manner of his removal from the field was entirely unexpected by himself or anyone else. On 19th December 1848 Pohlman left Amoy taking Julia Ann,³⁰ his sister 'upon whom he fondly doated', to Hongkong on account of her health.³¹ Just after new year day, Pohlman boarded the schooner *Omega* for Amoy presumably with the prized lamps for the new Sinkoe church building.³² Not readily appreciated by those accustomed to the omnipresence of electrical lighting is the missionaries' excessive preoccupation with church lamps. The fact is good lamps which made possible the opening of chapels in the evenings were hardly available in Amoy even in 1851.³³ Meanwhile on the 5th the *Omega* struck and Pohlman drowned when his lifeboat sunk after it capsized.³⁴ In March, Julia already back at Amoy was finding her health turning worse. On the 25th, the duty fell upon Talmage to take her home to America.³⁵ Thus death removed Pohlman permanently while health concerns (Julia) forced another temporary missionary absence (Talmage) which lasted about a year and a half.

The departure of Talmage left the Dotys as the only foreign workers of the RCA at Amoy until the former returned in July 1850. About the language acquisition experience of Doty, we have no self-testimony but only Pohlman's annual report dated September 1845.³⁶ The said letter

²⁷ Talmage, 'Reminiscences', in FYC/p. 95.

²⁸ Pohlman/Amoy/25May1847, CI/16Dec1847/p. 90c3-4 (italics original).

²⁹ More in 4.6.

³⁰ RCC/p. 21.

³¹ *A Sermon delivered May 6, 1849*, p. 44. Julia came to Amoy c.Mar1848. Doty/Amoy/16Mar1848, CI/27Jul1848/p. 10c2-3.

³² Pohlman went to Hongkong 'to procure lamps for the [Sinkoe] edifice'. FYA/p. 73.

³³ Thus in a letter to his brother Goyon (18Mar1851), Talmage described with gusto and pride his four home-made tumbler-lamps which allowed the opening of his chapel during evenings. However the Sinkoe chapel remained closed at such times since there were 'no good lamps yet for the church'. FYC/pp. 110ff.

³⁴ See CRep/1849/pp. 51-54; Talmage/8Feb1849, FYC/pp. 89ff; AR-AB/1849/pp. 167-168. Cf. APGS/1849/p. 500.

³⁵ AR-AB/1849/pp. 167-168; cf. APGS/1849/p. 500.

³⁶ Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1845, CI/2Apr1846/p. 150c2-3.

spoke of both men's inability to preach in the Amoy dialect as something belonging to the past. However after Pohlman died and Talmage left, Doty found it necessary to have Young (LMS) preached once on alternate Sabbaths³⁷ which suggests that (like Pohlman) Doty found it a bit burdensome to be producing one sermon a week. Again during the baptismal Sabbath of July 1849, the LMS suspended their services in order to lend needed assistance, with Young (LMS) doing the introductory exercises and Stronach the sermon.³⁸ Because of extreme overwork, Doty's health failed that summer and the Sabbath services were taken over by the LMS missionaries.³⁹ By this time Teacher U already had other duties and was unable to fill in for Doty.⁴⁰ When the latter finally recovered health in October, there was no alternative but to lessen his duties.⁴¹ This course of action was deemed necessary not only because the physical breakdown last summer had been 'to the imminent peril of his [Doty's] life'⁴² but also because of the lack of *employed* Chinese workers to cover for him. Relatedly during mission year 1848-49, some work (not specified) had already been cut due to the lack of workers.⁴³

From the above, we see that the work space produced by Doty's limitations was more than enough for the existing employed Chinese agency to occupy. Whether Doty was ready to devolve upon Teacher U *all* the duties he had given up is another question altogether. Anyway the absence of more Chinese workers had the RCA going back to the LMS for assistance. In this case therefore the Chinese work space occupied by the *employed* native workforce was maintained but not enlarged. Note however it was in 1849 that *voluntary* Chinese work began to be done in significant amount (*infra*). The same year saw the permanent removal of Pohlman by death, the temporary absence of Talmage for reasons of (Julia's) health and the bodily failings of Doty. Correlating these with the emergence of Chinese voluntary labour, we find that missionary health limitations contributed to the making of a work space for Chinese volunteers.

But this is not all. For after 1849, continuing health problems on the part of the missionaries further enlarged the Chinese work space. Sometime in 1850, the work of Doty was again interrupted by 'broken health'.⁴⁴ The return of Talmage did boost the labour force but it was not until 22nd December 1850 that he preached his first 'regular sermon' during the Sabbath morning service at his newly opened chapel.⁴⁵ For the afternoon service, he exchanged pulpit with Doty who had earlier inherited Pohlman's chapel at Sinkoe. By 1851 the growth of the work had become more than the health-weak team could handle.⁴⁶ Though seasons of good health were not

³⁷ Doty, in AR-AB/1849/p. 170; also AR-AB/1850/p. 161.

³⁸ Doty, in AR-AB/1850/pp. 161-162.

³⁹ AR-AB/1850/p. 160.

⁴⁰ See 4.6.

⁴¹ MH/1851/pp. 10-11; AR-AB/1850/p. 160.

⁴² AR-AB/1850/p. 163.

⁴³ AR-AB/1849/p. 171.

⁴⁴ AR-AB/1850/p. 67.

⁴⁵ Talmage/23Dec1850, MH/1851/p. 154.

⁴⁶ APGS/1852/pp. 277-278.

totally lacking that year,⁴⁷ both men in their attempts to cope with field demands did suffer some physical damage. During April-May, Doty found it needful to take a six-week a trip to Shanghai for recovery's sake. Meanwhile his colleague was struck down by a fever 'for a few weeks' in autumn. Later in December, throat inflammation forced Talmage to cease from all public speech.⁴⁸ While there was also some health-related work interruption during the following year,⁴⁹ it was delightfully reported that all were in very good health at the end of 1852.⁵⁰ The same happy state prevailed in mid-1856 although the missionaries were 'somewhat worn out by overwork'⁵¹.

As the subject of Chinese labour in both paid and voluntary forms will be discussed in detail below, we presently summarise by saying that in addition to missionary shortage, the limitations brought about by language-acquisition and health/death were significant factors in the creation and enlargement of a Chinese work space. As we shall see later, in addition to the Christian quality of the members, the performance of the employed and voluntary native workforce contributed to the earning of increased missionary confidence in the readiness of the Amoy converts for devolution.

EPM

With respect to limitations connected with language, health and death, the sufferings of the EPM were even more costly to its work. This was so not only because of its smaller staff size, but especially since serious troubles started around the time when the church formation objective was adopted. Below we shall see that just as the RCA experience, the same limitations on the part of the EPM agents helped to create some work space for Chinese labours.

Mrs. Young. Previous to the adoption of a church objective, the sailing had been quite smooth for both Burns and Young in terms of health. But the same could not be said of the latter's wife. As the first serious casualty on the EP camp, Mrs. Young did suffer from a severe illness during the spring of 1852 and was 'for some time...in considerable danger'.⁵² In 1853 her health again failed, having revived briefly for only about a week in August while living aboard the store ship of a Mr. Tait.⁵³ In the third week of December, death finally came upon the 36-year old⁵⁴ mother of two although not at all unexpectedly.⁵⁵ Looking at the relationship between her illness-death and the making of a Chinese work space, we note that aside from her domestic duties she was at one time responsible for the teaching of the English class (3-4pm) at Young's school.⁵⁶ But the

⁴⁷ E.g. Talmage/Amoy/14Jul1851, CI/1Jan1852/p. 101c1-4.

⁴⁸ Talmage/22Jan1852, MH/1852/pp. 149-152; AR-AB/1852/p. 122.

⁴⁹ E.g. in January it was reported that the health of both Doty and Talmage was failing so that some plans had to be 'neglected'. Talmage/22Jan1852, MH/1852/pp. 149-152.

⁵⁰ AR-AB/1853/pp. 129,127.

⁵¹ Joralmon/Amoy/30Jul1856, CI/18Dec1856/p. 98c4-5.

⁵² Young/Amoy/6May1852, Mess/1852/p. 283.

⁵³ Young/Amoy/15Aug1853, Mess/1854/p. 51.

⁵⁴ 1-page typescript, in EPMF/Young.

⁵⁵ Mess/1854/p. 149. Cf. Johnston/21Dec1853, Mess/1854/pp. 82-83; Burns/16Jan1854, Mess/1854/pp. 217-218; Section 2.3.4.

⁵⁶ Young/Amoy/5Sep1852.

nature of her educational work was such that it could not be taken over by the Chinese (who did not know the Western language) so that her removal could only mean added pressure upon her husband. Unless she became involved in the EP school *only after* her marriage, Young was certainly teaching the English class previously.⁵⁷ But we do not know that for a fact. At any rate, her resignation from educational work was followed by the temporary cessation of Young's *direct* involvement in the same work from July 1853 onwards. After this time, there is no further information on whether or not the English class was revived. Thus the illness and death of Mrs. Young could not be said to have much impact upon the making of a Chinese work space.

Burns. On his part, Burns had the good fortune of not having any serious health problem during his Amoy times as well as of having a talent with languages. There were at least three instances of minor illness. In 1849 Burns had meant to sail from Hongkong to Amoy (5Sep) but fell sick of a fever (4Sep) from which he recovered after six days.⁵⁸ Three years later, he had a fever again (8-12Sep) on which account he relocated to Doty's house (14Sep) for recuperative purposes.⁵⁹ Lastly in August-September 1856, Burns suffered from 'an intermittent fever, with chills' while in Guangdong province.⁶⁰ Eventually it was in late December 1867 that an attack of 'simple febricula' resulted in serious health deterioration⁶¹ leading to his death in Manchuria on 4th April 1868. In the matter of language, the situation was even more cheering. Just a month after his arrival at Amoy, Burns was already able to understand 'a great part of what I hear in preaching' as well as to 'generally make myself understood by those about me' even though he did not expect to be preaching in the colloquial until 'some time'.⁶² Four months later, Young remarked that Burns was already preaching two or three times a week at the chapel and also occasionally in the streets with a church member as his partner.⁶³ Later at Shanghai in 1855, Medhurst expressed surprised at the 'short time' required for Burns to learn to preach to the Shanghai villagers.⁶⁴ No doubt his acquaintance with the Cantonese dialect⁶⁵ somehow helped to account for the short time he took to acquire the Amoy colloquial. But other than this was his natural ability with languages. All throughout his student career terminating with his divinity course at Glasgow University, Burns had always had an outstanding academic record especially excelling in *language studies* including Hebrew and Greek.⁶⁶ In this light, Burns' statement in March 1852 that for some months he had been able 'to speak *a little* [italics added] in the *Amoy* [italics original] dialect' within Young's premises and outdoors⁶⁷ contained more modesty than it appears.

⁵⁷ See Young/15Apr1851, Mess/1851/pp. 212-214.

⁵⁸ Burns/Hongkong/28Sep1849, Mess/1850/pp. 206-207.

⁵⁹ 15Sep entry, Young/Amoy/5Sep1852, Mess/1852/p. 373.

⁶⁰ Burns/Canton/10Oct1856, Mess/1857/pp. 20-23.

⁶¹ Burns to Douglas/Newchwang/22Jan1868; [Dr.] James Watson to Dr. Islay Burns, Newchwang/19Feb1868. Bx119/F5.

⁶² Burns/Amoy/5Aug1851, Mess/1851/pp. 370-371.

⁶³ Young/Amoy/19Dec1851, Mess/1852/pp. 115-116.

⁶⁴ Dr. [James] Legge/Hongkong/15Sep1855, in Douglas/29Sep1855, Mess/1856/p. 21.

⁶⁵ Burns/Amoy/5Aug1851, Mess/1851/pp. 370-371.

⁶⁶ See Burns, *Memoir*, ch1-ch2.

⁶⁷ Burns/Amoy/9Mar1852, Mess/1852/pp. 219-221.

Thus with the dialect quickly acquired and no serious health disturbances during his first Banlam sojourn, Burns became the first EP man to cooperate with Amoy Chinese Christians in evangelistic work. Already we have noted in the previous paragraph his street preachings in partnership with the unnamed Chinese Christian. From Talmage we learn that the latter was actually an RCA convert.⁶⁸ It is possible the same became the colporteur employed in 1852 who was jointly supported by Burns and the RCA.⁶⁹ Even though this connection could not be ascertained, the fact of the said joint employment by itself shows that Burns did help to create a work space for a *paid* Chinese worker. Since the employment relationship of the latter with the missionaries ended in early May 1853,⁷⁰ the native agent served with Burns on a salaried basis for more than a year. Aside from these cooperative efforts, Burns also visited Chiangchiu in April 1853 for nine days in company with two RCA Christians who a short while ago had preached there for some days and were then making a second tour.⁷¹ The following January another inland tour was undertaken with two RCA-related but Chinese-supported⁷² ‘colporteurs’ one of whom was also part of the Chiangchiu team the year before.⁷³ In both instances however there was a role reversal, i.e. instead of the foreign agent (Burns) making room for Chinese involvement, it was the Chinese who requested for a missionary to go with them on *their* preaching expeditions.⁷⁴ The second inland tour however had a twist to it. Sometime between 27 February and 3 March (1854), Burns took over the support of the two RCA Chinese workers⁷⁵ in order to have them dedicated to the work at Pechuia. However a closer look reveals that there was no real change in terms of size or nature as far as the Chinese work space is concerned, since both men continued to do the same work as before. The only thing which changed was the source of support for the two Chinese agents. True to his words, Burns was labouring ‘without any plan but that of co-operating generally in the work as I find opportunity’,⁷⁶ by which he means the work of *others*. Since Burns was supporting the two agents out of his own means, the arrangement seems to have ended when the EP missionary left China some months later.

In sum, Burns engaged in much cooperative work with the Chinese. However on account of the spontaneous or planless manner in which he worked, he was hardly playing a leading role in these joint efforts. The only possible exceptions are two. First, the case of the street preaching work in 1851-52; but we cannot be certain whether Burns was taking the lead or joining an ongoing work. Second, the joint support with the RCA of a colporteur in 1852-53; the contribution of Burns in this case seems to be surer. In conclusion, Burns did help to create some work space for Chinese labour but this is far from saying he played the role of a *major* creator of such.

⁶⁸ Talmage/22Jan1852, MH/1852/pp. 149-152.

⁶⁹ See AR-AB/1853/pp. 127,129, cf. p. 28.

⁷⁰ See 4.6 and 5.2.

⁷¹ Burns/Amoy/16May1853, Bx119/F5.

⁷² More in 5.2.

⁷³ Burns/White Water Camp/16Jan1854, Bx119/F5.

⁷⁴ Cf. CAF/p. 88.

⁷⁵ Burns/Amoy/3Mar1854, Mess/1854/p. 218.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

Young. For Young the main problem until June 1854 was not health but language. When the dispensary opened in 1851, it received more than thirty patients at 9:30am-2pm on Wednesdays and Saturdays.⁷⁷ While the patients waited for medical attention, they had opportunities to listen to Christian preaching, converse with converts and receive religious literature. All these were made possible by the services of two Chinese Christians⁷⁸ who almost certainly were connected with the RCA and were rendering free labour. This arrangement was later replaced by the deployment of a 'colporteur' who preached for an hour each day.⁷⁹ With the simultaneous ongoing of educational and medical works as well as the Romanised Amoy project, Young was soon saying '[m]y engagements leave me little leisure [even] for [letter] writing...'⁸⁰ This overwork situation was the immediate cause for the decision to curtail medical work. However the preaching of the colporteur at the dispensary was sustained. If co-extensive with stated medical work (as it almost certainly was), this lasted until July 1853 at the latest. Thus during 1851-53, EP medical work created a Chinese work space in the form of evangelistic outreach to patients waiting at the dispensary. This work opportunity was first taken by two Chinese converts who were most likely RCA volunteers and then afterward taken by a paid agent. On the part of Young, it was language limitations⁸¹ which necessitated these Chinese labours. But even were he able to preach in the colloquial, the demands of the medical work itself would have made it physically impossible for him to be doing such evangelistic labours during dispensary hours.

On 18th May 1853, Amoy was taken by the local⁸² insurgents and for sometime classes ceased.⁸³ With the student population greatly reduced, the two EP schools united into one at Keklai when Young moved out of his house in July⁸⁴ on account of the health of Mrs. Young. In February⁸⁵ the Keklai school was returned to the RCA which took over its responsibility.⁸⁶ Meanwhile Young had rented some quarters nearby and started his own school which during April-June had an average attendance of twenty-six pupils.⁸⁷ During this phase of EP work (until his incapacitation), the preaching at Young's 'chapel'⁸⁸ were done by Chinese converts⁸⁹ on a voluntary basis. Likewise earlier in January during the visit to Chiangchui which lasted a fortnight, Young seemed to have been almost fully dependent upon his several (RCA?) Christian companions for the work of preaching.⁹⁰ Thus we see again that language limitations on Young's part created a great deal of work space for Chinese volunteers in the sphere of evangelistic labour.

⁷⁷ Young/Amoy/17Jan1851; Mess/1851/pp. 138-139.

⁷⁸ Young/Amoy/17Jan1851.

⁷⁹ Young/Amoy/15Apr1851, Mess/1851/p. 213.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ See 2.3.4.

⁸² These were not Taipings. Burns/Amoy/6Jun1853, Mess/1853/p. 291; Mess/1854/p. 51.

⁸³ 20May entry, Young/Amoy/11May1853, Mess/1853/pp. 288-290.

⁸⁴ Burns/Amoy/13Oct1853, Mess/1854/pp. 49-51.

⁸⁵ See 4.4.3.

⁸⁶ Burns/Amoy/3Mar1854, Mess/1854/p. 218.

⁸⁷ Young/Amoy/6Jul1854.

⁸⁸ Burns/Amoy/8May1854, Mess/1854/p. 268.

⁸⁹ Young/Amoy/6Jul1854.

⁹⁰ See Burns/White Water Camp/16Jan1854, Bx119/F5.

It was about half a year after his wife passed away that Young started to have serious health problems. Even though during the time of her illness his work output did suffer some reduction,⁹¹ Young was able to '[bear] the loss of Mrs. Young remarkably well'⁹² and was back at work almost immediately.⁹³ While he himself enjoyed 'uninterrupted health' until June 1854,⁹⁴ the illness which befell him at about that time led to his final removal from China. On 21st July 1854 the diagnosis was given 'with no prospect of his being better' in China.⁹⁵ As it was a condition 'affecting his mind', Burns had to accompany him back to England.⁹⁶ The party that left Amoy on 5th August also included Young's 2.5-year-old girl Tessie,⁹⁷ her nurse and two Chinese 'menservants'.⁹⁸ Thus health and death brought about temporary work reduction on the part of Young, the permanent removal of the Youngs and in an indirect manner the extended absence of Burns. The departure of Burns and Young was especially damaging on account of its having taken place just when the pursuit of church formation had started. It was under such circumstances that Johnston began to employ Chinese assistants at his own financial expense, thus enlarging the Chinese work space in Banlam.

Johnston. The most tragic case of health disturbance on the EP camp was that of Johnston. Not very long after having started the study of the written language,⁹⁹ he suffered some health problem¹⁰⁰ which occasioned a visit to Shanghai¹⁰¹ during parts of April and May. The trip did some good and thereafter sound health prevailed¹⁰² but not for long as we shall see. Meanwhile having decided to settle in Amoy, Johnston quickly revised his language study plans. Before the giving up of the educational objective when the location of his missionary station was in a state of indecision, Johnston had limited his study to the written characters and postponed the learning of any colloquial dialect.¹⁰³ The delayed learning imposed a severe limitation upon his settled missionary work at Banlam. Thus in company with two evangelists and 'five or six others as servants or boatmen' during the three-day visit to the villages of the Aukoey district (c.20 miles north of Amoy) in September 1854, Johnston was able to do no more than attract crowds at different localities by his presence as a Westerner while the preaching was done by the Chinese

⁹¹ See 2.3.4.

⁹² Johnston/Amoy/21Dec1853, PFS1/Bx17/F5.

⁹³ See Young/11Jan1854, Mess/1854/p. 217; and Burns/White Water Camp/16Jan1854, Burns/Amoy/3Mar1854, Bx119/F5.

⁹⁴ Young/Amoy/6Jul1854. Cf. Young/17Dec1850, Mess/1851/pp. 89f. The only reported health disturbance was minor in character, viz. suffering a cold. See 15Sep entry, Young/Amoy/5Sep1852.

⁹⁵ Burns/Hongkong/10Aug1854, Bx119/F5.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ I.e. the 'Jessie' (b.15Mar1852) mentioned in the 1-page typescript, EPMF/Young. The other daughter was Sarah Marion (b.21Sep1853).

⁹⁸ Burns/Hongkong/10Aug1854, Bx119/F5. Left in the care of Dr. and Mrs. Hirschberg was the ten-month old daughter. *Contra* Band who thought Young returned with both children (WHP/p. 13).

⁹⁹ Johnston/Amoy/18Jan1854, PFS1/Bx17/F5; Johnston/Shanghai-Hongkong/6May1854, Mess/1854/pp. 268-271.

¹⁰⁰ Johnston/Shanghai-Hongkong/6May1854.

¹⁰¹ Burns/Amoy/3Mar1854, Mess/1854/p. 218.

¹⁰² E.g. Young/Amoy/6Jul1854.

¹⁰³ Johnston/Shanghai-Hongkong/6May1854.

assistants.¹⁰⁴ The resourceful Johnston however did not immediately reduce the EP labours formerly carried on by Burns and Young because he was able to employ Chinese agents to continue the operations. Furthermore the work actually expanded in September 1854 when Johnston started a school at Pechuia and hired a Chinese teacher ‘of good moral character, in whom all the [Pechuia] brethren present had confidence...’¹⁰⁵ However by all indications the employed man was not a Christian, much less a member of the Pechuia church so that we need not dwell on that matter. What interests us more though are the four Chinese assistants whom Johnston acquired in September for engagement in the work of preaching and colportage.¹⁰⁶ Clearly in this instance, it was missionary shorthandedness and linguistic inability which created a work space for this little company of employed Chinese labourers.

A month after Burns left Amoy Johnston wrote home for immediate reinforcement explaining that his work load was such that he could not continue long ‘without injury to my health’.¹⁰⁷ After a few weeks, he was ‘completely’ downed by dysentery¹⁰⁸ and for about three months was hindered from active work. The illness laid him aside from September/October¹⁰⁹ until December when he recovered enough ‘as to resume my work’.¹¹⁰ During this period he was for some time ‘confined to my sofa’¹¹¹ and thus unable to supervise *in person* the work at Chiohbe which was started by some Pechuia believers and later reinforced by Chinese evangelists from Amoy.¹¹² In March 1855, Dr. Hirschberg in consultation with another doctor attempted a projected month-long treatment ‘the most severe they felt warranted in making in this climate’.¹¹³ When it became known a week later that not only had there been no improvement but in fact the applied blister ‘was rapidly reducing my strength’, the final directive was given that Johnston should go home to find cure. On his part, the EP agent resolved to wait for Burns and Douglas to arrive before taking leave while consenting to the medical specification that the departure should be by June at the latest. As it turned out, Johnston had already left by the time Douglas arrived at Amoy in July. Even though Johnston nevertheless continued the language studies under his Chinese teacher,¹¹⁴ he never did attain any real fluency¹¹⁵ when he finally left Amoy in June.¹¹⁶ Yet at that time Johnston never expected the home visit to last longer than medical treatment requires.¹¹⁷ Thus

¹⁰⁴ Johnston to the *Juvenile Messenger*, Amoy/22Dec1854, Mess/1855/pp. 110-114. Cf. Johnston, *Glimpses*, p. 7.

¹⁰⁵ Johnston/Amoy/5Sep1854, Mess/1855/p. 21.

¹⁰⁶ Johnston/Rev1854, Mess/1855/p. 146.

¹⁰⁷ Johnston/Amoy/5Sep1854.

¹⁰⁸ Johnston/Amoy/16Oct1854, Mess/1855/pp. 21-22.

¹⁰⁹ Johnston/Greenlaw/[Sep1855], Mess/1Oct1855/pp. 314-315.

¹¹⁰ Johnston/16Oct1854, Mess/1855/pp. 21-22; Nov1854, Mess/1855/pp. 52-54; 20Dec1854, Mess/1855/pp. 178-180.

¹¹¹ Johnston/Amoy/16Oct1854, Mess/1855/pp. 21-22.

¹¹² Johnston/Rev1854, Mess/1855/pp. 143-146.

¹¹³ Johnston/c.Mar1855, Mess/1855/pp. 199-200.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ Matheson, *Narrative*, p. 18. *Contra* AR-FMC, Mess/1856/p. 153 (which reported that previous to leaving China Johnston ‘had already made great proficiency in the language, and had become fully initiated in the regular work of the Mission...’).

¹¹⁶ Johnston/Amoy/1May1855.

¹¹⁷ See Mess/1855/p. 245.

after failing to get his language teacher to go home with him, Johnston had his baptised servant who was 'a good scholar' accompany him so he could continue to learn the Amoy dialect.¹¹⁸ On 23rd August he landed in London with good optimism about a future return to Amoy,¹¹⁹ not least because he believed his ailment was '*only local*, and my general health is little impaired'.¹²⁰ Soon after landing, Johnston was working toward the shortening of the twelve-month home stay prescribed by his China doctors.¹²¹ Unfortunately he failed not only to shorten that period but also to preserve its transient character. Toward the close of that year, medical advice prohibited him from going overseas and he consequently shifted his attention to promoting foreign mission work among the home churches.¹²² For the rest of his life, he never did return to the Amoy mission field.

Thus health failure on the part of Johnston resulted at first in reduced work output (c.Sep1854- Jun1855)¹²³ and finally in permanent withdrawal from the field (Jun1855). Therefore whereas in the earlier instance, it was language deficiency and missionary shorthandedness which *created* a work space for the Chinese evangelists of Johnston, in this case the additional motivation brought about by feeble health helped to *sustain* the created space. But there is another dimension to the matter. During the time of his illness, Johnston continued his administrative work although he was not always able to do on-site supervision of the field work. At one time, he was forced into 'superintending from his sick bed the labours of the native agents'¹²⁴ at Pechuia, Chiohbe and Amoy. When health improved, he kept up communication with the stations via the Gospel Boat. Nevertheless the physical absence of the missionary from the field made for the first occasions of *unsupervised* labour on the part of the Chinese workers. Admittedly this 'freedom' may have been used to the better or the worse by the evangelist-colporteurs. Yet considering the positive results brought about at Pechuia and Chiohbe,¹²⁵ there is good reason to think in the affirmative. The implication is this: the Chinese work space took on a new dimension, beyond the mere quantitative or the increase of volume of the same kind, and into the qualitative, i.e. from supervised to unsupervised mode. Brought about by the health factor, this kind of 'test' along with its results certainly added to the merits of Chinese labour as far as the gaining of the high regard of the missionaries is concerned. Not least because all of the four men employed in 1854 were RCA converts.¹²⁶ In the case of Johnston, therefore, we see how the interplay of the three factors -- missionary shortage, language hindrance and health problems -- brought about the creation and the sustenance of a quantitative Chinese work space as well as its 'enlargement' in a qualitative way.

¹¹⁸ Johnston/Amoy/1May1855. Cf. Johnston/Greenlaw/[Sep1855], Mess/1Oct1855/pp. 314-315.

¹¹⁹ Mess/1855/pp. 281-282.

¹²⁰ Johnston/c.Mar1855, Mess/1855/pp. 199-200 (*italics original*). Cf. Mess/1855/p. 245.

¹²¹ Johnston/Greenlaw/[Sep1855], Mess/1Oct1855/pp. 314-315.

¹²² Mess/1855/pp. 376-377. Cf. FMCMIn/1Jul1856/pp. 151-153.

¹²³ See Johnston/Greenlaw/[Sep1855]. Johnston said the three-month voyage did more for his health than the *nine-month* medical treatment in China.

¹²⁴ Matheson, *Narrative*, p. 18. Note that Matheson mistook 'Baypay' (Maping) for Chiohbe.

¹²⁵ See 2.4.

¹²⁶ Johnston/Rev1854, p. 144

Douglas. Concerning the health of Douglas, there is happier news to report. Writing the month after arrival, Douglas reported a current state of good health as well as a programme aimed at keeping that state. The latter consisted in walking for 1.5-2.0 hours every weekday evening, ‘a plan which seems excellent for keeping the system in good order’.¹²⁷ As his brother John testified, the young Douglas was always ‘studiously careful of bodily health’, having regular daily exercise especially walking (besides rowing and swimming) so that ‘his health, like his good temper, was absolutely unbroken from childhood till he went to China’.¹²⁸ Even into and throughout his China period the missionary continued to maintain the same health consciousness and discipline. To illustrate, John cited Douglas’ report of his daily exercise during a 2-week country visit in 1869:

‘My long walks on this journey have been as follows: Friday 20 miles, Saturday 20 miles, Wednesday 27 miles, Thursday 17 miles, Friday 9 miles, Saturday 37 miles, Tuesday 20 miles. The 37 miles of Saturday were in two halves, with seven hours quiet [sic] sitting in the Chapel between [sic], and included of course about five hours of moonlight walk, distributed between the morning and the evening...’¹²⁹

Obviously this specific account was the reflection of a regular habit. The physical condition and stamina required for this two-week output could not have been developed within that time nor shortly before it. One ‘brother missionary’ wrote how Douglas was ‘famous for the long journeys he used to perform on foot in his missionary tours’ while another noted how he ‘would rouse them [i.e. ‘younger labourers’] up to physical exercise when they were inclined to over[-]study’.¹³⁰ For the entirety of his missionary career, his health ‘remained generally good’ until the last two years of his life. I.e. except the instances when he had ‘those diseases of climate which assail most Europeans under the sun of South China...’.¹³¹ His colleague Swanson recalled his ‘remarkable’ endurance and how ‘the Chinese used to say that while he could wear them all out it was impossible to wear him out’.¹³² Therefore as far as Douglas was concerned, there was no major health disturbances during our period.¹³³ Nevertheless during 1855-56 the Chinese workspace was maintained if not enlarged under him for another reason.

That which hindered Douglas from commencing ‘the full work of a missionary’¹³⁴ was none other than the first obstacle common to all new religious agents from the West, viz. linguistic deficiency. Although Douglas claimed he had finished ‘my first reading of the New Testament in

¹²⁷ Douglas/Amoy/21Aug1855.

¹²⁸ Douglas, ‘Memorials’, p. 13.

¹²⁹ Douglas/Amoy/22Dec1869, in Douglas, ‘Memorials’, p. 13n.

¹³⁰ Douglas, ‘Memorials’, p. 14. Cf. Douglas/Amoy/24Sep1873, in Douglas, ‘Memorials’, pp. 38-39 (Coming back from Liong-khey, Douglas ‘reached the boat at Kwan-jim ... after 6 1/2 hours’ continuous walking, with very brief occasional halts’.)

¹³¹ Douglas, ‘Memorials’, p. 13. Cf. Douglas/Amoy/29Jun1870, in Douglas, ‘Memorials’, p. 38.

¹³² Swanson, ‘Career’, p. 65.

¹³³ Douglas/19Mar1876 contains the first allusion to failing health (Douglas, *Memorials*, p. 43). On 26Jul1877 Douglas died in Amoy after a 12-hour bout with cholera (Douglas, ‘Memorials’, p. 18).

¹³⁴ AR-SA/1856/p. 4.

Chinese' even before he reached China,¹³⁵ yet after some weeks of attending Chinese worship at Amoy he admitted that 'I am able to understand a little; though still but little'.¹³⁶ Thus during the day visit to Pechuia not long after arrival in Amoy, he was unable to tell anything out of that encounter except that the people were happy to see a new 'Teacher' come to China.¹³⁷ Even after about a month in Banlam, he was 'as yet able to do nothing' other than spend the bulk of his time in language study.¹³⁸ Meanwhile the Amoy school went on as usual while the Chinese assistants preached at the chapel and also helped in the work at Pechuia and Chiohbe.¹³⁹ In late September, Douglas still could not understand spoken Amoy to any useful degree and did not expect to speak it 'for a long time to come'.¹⁴⁰ For the rest of that year, Douglas was often out with Chinese evangelists even if he was unable to assist them.¹⁴¹ By January he could understand Amoy quite well¹⁴² and for the first time 'tried to explain a little of the Scriptures' at the Pechuia services although he was still unready to speak in public.¹⁴³ The first attempt at public preaching occurred the following month during the tour to Tong-an in company with three evangelists and others. Occasionally Douglas would utter a few sentences before the hearers 'and they seemed to understand'.¹⁴⁴ By the time of the Sinkoe event however he was still unprepared for full scale public preaching. This held true also of the visit to Maping in mid-May when Douglas met with the applicants and inquirers in the inner room while leaving the chapel preaching to the evangelists.¹⁴⁵ Note that not only was this an informal conversation situation (in contrast to formal public preaching), it was not mentioned whether Douglas had Chinese co-examiners with him. In fact it was not until a few more months afterward that the desired linguistic breakthrough took place. Until that time, the assistance of the Chinese workers were invaluable. However unlike the times of the unhealthy Johnston, Douglas was in fit condition to accompany his native agents into the field. Thus the Chinese work space was maintained but the opportunities for unsupervised field work were dramatically lessened if not totally removed.

In late 1856 the Scottish Association exulted that their first missionary had entered into 'the full work of a missionary'.¹⁴⁶ It was declared that the latest letter of Douglas revealed he had began preaching in Amoy.¹⁴⁷ However the field story contained some interesting details which may not have been known to the SA. Until August, the tasks of examining candidates for church membership and of administering the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper were all

¹³⁵ Douglas/Straits of Sunda/6Jun1855, in Douglas, 'Memorials', pp. 19-20.

¹³⁶ Douglas/Amoy/1Oct1855, in Douglas, 'Memorials', p. 20.

¹³⁷ Douglas/Amoy/21Aug1855.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ E.g. Douglas/Amoy/29Sep1855, Mess/1856/p. 21.

¹⁴⁰ Douglas/Amoy/29Sep1855.

¹⁴¹ Douglas/Amoy/3Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 119-120.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ Douglas/[Amoy]/29Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 146-148.

¹⁴⁴ Douglas/Amoy/28Feb1856.

¹⁴⁵ Douglas/Amoy/23May1856, Mess/1856/pp. 337-338.

¹⁴⁶ AR-SA/1856/p. 4.

¹⁴⁷ I.e. Douglas/Amoy/21Aug1856, AR-SA/1856/p. 5.

performed by the RCA.¹⁴⁸ The first Sabbath of the said month was the scheduled morning for the baptism of five candidates (who had previously completed the ‘proper examinations’) as well as the stated afternoon for the administration of the Lord’s Supper.¹⁴⁹ With a case of illness in the RCA ranks hindering the departure of its foreign workers from Amoy, the two tasks devolved upon Douglas who proceeded to Pechuia without any missionary companion. Even so, the indications were that the EP missionary was then merely a beginning public speaker and could not do without Chinese help. Thus referring to the Sabbath proceedings, he remarked that ‘[i]n the devotional parts of the service I had some help from one of our native evangelists...’¹⁵⁰ Moreover for both baptismal and communion liturgy, Douglas simply read off pre-fabricated liturgical forms, i.e. making ‘free use of the admirable forms used by the [RCA]’.¹⁵¹ What we see therefore is a situation wherein health hindrance (on the RCA side) and language limitation (Douglas) opened up a *pulpit* space for the Chinese. Had either restriction been absent, the entire proceedings (including the ‘devotional parts’) would have been ably managed by the presiding foreigner with little or no native input.

Since Douglas had attained preaching ability by August (1856),¹⁵² the RCA in mid-September was expecting him to soon take full pastoral charge of Pechuia.¹⁵³ Yet the RCA statement of hope was not entirely unqualified, for it was followed immediately by this remark: ‘We shall however continue to assist in the examination of candidates for baptism so long as it seems advisable.’¹⁵⁴ The earliest external testimony to *fluent* Amoy preaching on Douglas’ part came from Sandeman in February 1857.¹⁵⁵ However of this witness we should perhaps not succumb to credulity considering that Sandeman had been in Amoy only about two months,¹⁵⁶ a fact which tells on his competence at dialect assessment. The RCA readiness to assist in candidate examination even after Douglas took full charge of Pechuia likely derived from more than one motivation, viz. EP missionary shortage (the limited work output of Douglas), RCA missionary shortage (the desire to be ‘relieved’ of *inland* Pechuia), the concern to maintain the strict admission policy for the sake of church quality control, and Douglas’ novitiate ability at vernacular preaching. In other words, the RCA regarded Douglas ready to assume *primary pastoral responsibility* for Pechuia but also knew that the EPM at the time was in no state to provide the *full pastoral attention* needed at that station without assistance. Thus despite Douglas’ ‘unreadiness’, manpower limitations compelled the Americans to let the EP missionary take on as much as he could. At the same time, the recognition of EPM pre-maturity for full pastoral duties underlay the RCA pledge of

¹⁴⁸ Doty-Talmage-Joralmon to General Synod/Amoy/17Sep1856/pp. 10-11, AER.

¹⁴⁹ Doty-Talmage-Joralmon/17Sep1856/p. 11.

¹⁵⁰ Douglas/Amoy/21Aug1856, AR-SA/1856/p. 5.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ Doty-Talmage-Joralmon/17Sep1856/p. 11.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ Cf. Sandeman/Feb1857 claimed that Douglas was ‘now very well able to preach’ in Amoy (Johnston, *Glimpses*, p. 21).

¹⁵⁶ Sandeman reached Amoy on 9Dec1856. See A.A. Bonar, *Memoir of the life and brief ministry of the Rev. David Sandeman* (1861) pp. 255-313. Cf. Mess/Nov1856/p. 340; CAF/p. 114.

continued assistance when needed. Within this complicated situation, the Chinese work space was maintained and enlarged along with the growing work, so that the value of Chinese work cannot be said to have depreciated on any count. Even with no more linguistic impediment, the *singular* membership of the existing EP missionary workforce by itself eliminated any thought of doing without Chinese help.

Summary

In this Section we have seen that the Missions suffered first of all from the shortage of missionary personnel. This limitation was further complicated by those brought about by the factors of language, health and death. Already suffering from numerical weakness, the RCA saw these factors bring about diverse results which compounded their predicament by further limiting the functional capability of the already-small American missionary outfit, viz. permanent removal (Abeel and Pohlman), extended absence (Doty and Talmage), reduced labour ability (Pohlman) and reduction or temporary cessation of work output (Doty and Talmage). During the pre-1847 period, a work space was created by health and language problems but not occupied by any Chinese party. In 1847 the first Chinese agent was employed by Pohlman who was enduring a situation characterised by extreme missionary shortage, severe health limitations and stunted language ability. It was not however until two years later that *voluntary* Chinese work began in earnest. Thereafter perennial personnel shortage and occasional health failures helped to extend the Chinese work space.

On the EP side, the illness and death of Mrs. Young did not substantially affect the Chinese work space. Notwithstanding the planless character of his operational style, Burns did manage to help create a little of such space. From 1851 until July 1853, despite being hindered by language and medical work, Young arranged for his dispensary to provide an evangelistic work space for Chinese labour in both voluntary and paid forms. Furthermore in 1854 he joined forces with Chinese Christians during the trip to Chiangchiu and for some months his chapel featured regular preaching by converts on a voluntary basis. Although he was never sent as a missionary-evangelist, Young created more preaching space for the Chinese than Burns did. When physical incapacity compelled the departure of Burns and Young, and Johnston subsequently found himself tongue-tied, we see three factors -- health, language and shorthandedness -- acting in concert to occasion the employment of the largest ever team of Chinese agents (four) in September 1854, thereby enlarging the Chinese work space in Banlam. The health breakdown of Johnston sustained this work space but also went further in extending it qualitatively into the unsupervised (i.e. without immediate missionary presence) kind of field work even if only for a short while. For Douglas, it was linguistic impediment which helped to make for the continuing need for Chinese labour whether at Amoy or Pechuia and Chiohbe. However his excellent health effectively put an end to the practice of unsupervised Chinese field work (until such time later when the work had expanded beyond the physical limits of immediate personal supervision). Yet until April-May

1856, he was still unable to preach and therefore Chinese assistance proved indispensable. Even when Douglas had gained preaching ability in summer 1856, there was not the slightest indication that he or the RCA thought that Chinese labour was no longer needed. The very shortage of EP missionaries by itself demanded opposition to the thought.

On the whole the damages suffered by the EP were greater than those of the RCA. If we are to count only the men, the RCA lost Abeel and Pohlman permanently while the EP Young and Johnston. In effect the Americans lost a third of its church formation team (Pohlman). Nevertheless the presence of that team was maintained continuously without break even if at times only one team member was on the ground. Comparatively the EP absorbed a 100 per cent elimination (Johnston) and this at a time when the church formation programme had just started. Under such conditions, Chinese labour was not only welcomed but actually *much needed* by both Missions.

4.4. Other work demands

Next we look at the other work demands placed upon the Missions which were already burdened with the problems of shorthandedness, health, death and language. In particular we pay attention to those labours which were *not directly connected with convert-making and church-gathering* and which therefore competed with these in terms of time-use on the part of the missionaries. Specifically we will look at Bible translation, the Romanised Amoy project, medical work and educational operations. Among these topics, some have already been partly discussed earlier (Ch2); in such cases, our comments will be kept to a minimum. What we are especially concerned with presently are the time demands made upon the missionaries, a concern which relates to the making of a Chinese work space.

4.4.1. Bible translation

First we look at the work of Bible translation. On 12th December 1844, the daily meeting for the revision of the Chinese Bible (later, the Delegates Version) was started.¹⁵⁷ The participants in the literary project were Pohlman, Doty, Stronach, Young (LMS) and 'our four teachers'.¹⁵⁸ In February 1846, Smith (CMS) the Amoy visitor noted that the Bible translation project took 'a considerable share of attention' daily.¹⁵⁹ Consisting then of three missionaries and three Chinese teachers, the working group met at 11:30am to 1pm with a few regular attendants of older ages also present. The practice was to do twelve verses each day, going from the Greek text to their own translation, then consulting the versions of Medhurst, (then) Morrison and (occasionally) Gutzlaff. By the start of 1847 when the allotted portion of the New Testament was nearly done, there were only the Stronachs doing the work since Doty had left and Pohlman was suffering from eye

¹⁵⁷ Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1845, CI/2Apr1846/p. 150c2-3; AR-AB/1847/p. 166. Cf. MH/1846/p. 17.

¹⁵⁸ AR-AB/1846/p. 170.

¹⁵⁹ Smith, *Narrative*, pp. 470-472.

ailment.¹⁶⁰ Thus the time demand upon the RCA included, firstly, attendance at the daily ninety-minute session from late 1844 to c. February 1846,¹⁶¹ and secondly, the unknown amount of 'homework' hours put in. However when it is noted that this work took place in the period before there was any baptised convert, then there is no basis to see any significance in it for the much-later making of a Chinese work space.

4.4.2. The Romanised Amoy project

The second area of work is the development of a written form of the Amoy dialect. Building on work already done and work being done by the other Missions,¹⁶² Talmage launched the RCA battle against the illiteracy of Chinese converts shortly after his second arrival at Amoy. It was estimated that at most only every tenth man in 'this region can read with intelligence' whether among the general populace or church membership.¹⁶³ Within the latter group, it was noted that '[o]nly a very few can read the word of God with any degree of intelligence' and '[s]ome cannot read a simple verse'.¹⁶⁴ The perpetuation of this widespread ignorance was believed to be guaranteed by the difficult nature of the written language and its great difference from the spoken colloquial. Of course this does not mean the Amoy dialect by itself could be learned with ease. As one missionary explained,

'...I consider it impossible to give even an approximate idea of their sound on paper. These tones must be learned from the living voice, and no possible amount of description of them will compensate for the loss of this.'¹⁶⁵

This difficulty implies the investment of a substantial amount of time on the part of any missionary wishing to learn the dialect. To enable converts and other interested parties to read the Bible for themselves, concentrated efforts were exerted to develop a written form of the Amoy colloquial with the use of the Roman alphabet.¹⁶⁶ In late 1850, Young reported the system of orthography of the Romanised colloquial had already been 'decided some time ago by a majority of the missionaries here'.¹⁶⁷ That same year he had started the teaching of this form in his school and soon opined that 'boys who are apt in acquiring knowledge' could be taught to read the Bible in the

¹⁶⁰ Pohlman/Amoy/4Jan1847. Cf. Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, CI/27Apr1848/p. 166c3-5. Eventually J. Stronach became the Amoy representative to the Shanghai meeting in Jun1847.

¹⁶¹ Pohlman/15Apr1846, CI/15Oct1846/p. 54c1.

¹⁶² Talmage/Amoy/14Jul1851, CI/1Jan1852/p. 101c1-4. Talmage noted that both Dr. Young (EP) and Mr. Young (LMS) were devoting 'considerable attention' to the Romanisation project. Pitcher said the pioneer was John Lloyd (AP) who 'did considerable work on a Romanised Colloquial Dictionary, which formed the basis of Dr. Douglas' excellent book' (IA/p. 237). The last reference was to C. Douglas, *Chinese-English dictionary of the vernacular or spoken language of Amoy* (1873). Never finishing his work, Lloyd died of typhus fever in Amoy on 6Dec1848 (Talmage/diary/8Dec1844, FYC/pp. 87-89).

¹⁶³ Talmage/17Dec1850.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ Macgowan, *Dictionary* (c.1883), 'Introduction'. Cf. Pohlman/Amoy/25May1847, CI/16Dec1847/p. 90c3-4.

¹⁶⁶ Talmage/17Dec1850.

¹⁶⁷ Young/Amoy/17Dec1850.

Romanised colloquial within 'less than three months'.¹⁶⁸ At Talmage's class which met four times weekly, a few adults were likewise learning the same and after 'some half dozen lessons' were reported to be 'making good progress'.¹⁶⁹ Parallel with instructional work was that of producing reading materials for both immediate and future readers. The intention was to publish religious literature which 'will not only serve to establish the Christian converts in the truths of religion, but will enable many of them to become public readers, and furnish them with the materials to communicate instruction to others'.¹⁷⁰ The last concern reminds us of the self-propagation aspect of the Talmage ideal.

In 1851 Young with two other missionaries became involved in the project of publishing the Gospels in Romanised Amoy¹⁷¹ with the EP man giving a 'certain portion' of his time to transcribing the translated portions for printing purposes.¹⁷² By July, Young's pamphlet *History of Joseph* became the first completed and published work in the Romanised colloquial¹⁷³ while the *Gospel of John* was ready for printing.¹⁷⁴ Completed with the 'counsel and assistance' of Talmage, the former work was produced out of the immediate need of a few boys who were already able to read but required some 'printed pages for practice'.¹⁷⁵ Likewise the 'Gospel of John' was prepared for the same intended use. However because its printing at Canton was delayed beyond expectation, the Romanised colloquial was not taught at both EP schools in 1852 (except for 'some revisal by the English scholars').¹⁷⁶ That same year Talmage himself published a 30-page primer on the Romanised Amoy script and in the following year an edition of the 17-page first reader appeared.¹⁷⁷ Also in the latter year the 'Book of Ruth' and the first part of *Pilgrim's progress* (by Burns) came off the press.¹⁷⁸ In early 1854 Doty reported that Talmage 'devotes a portion of his time to the preparation of books' in the Romanised colloquial.¹⁷⁹ By that time the 'Gospel of Matthew' had also been readied by Talmage for publication.¹⁸⁰ The following year saw the publication of 'the first Anglo-Chinese Manual of the Amoy dialect' (Canton, 1855) compiled by Doty.¹⁸¹

In terms of the demand upon missionary work-hours, the Romanised Amoy project was a major consumer. The pioneer character of this linguistic work means that there were little ready-

¹⁶⁸ Talmage/17Dec1850.

¹⁶⁹ Talmage/Amoy/14Jul1851, CI/1Jan1852/p. 101c1-4.

¹⁷⁰ Talmage/17Dec1850.

¹⁷¹ Young/Amoy/15Apr1851, Mess/1851/p. 213. At this writing, translation work was being done on Matthew, Luke and John.

¹⁷² Young/Amoy/19Dec1851, Mess/1852/pp. 115-116.

¹⁷³ Young/Amoy/17Dec1850; Young/Amoy/15Apr1851, Mess/1851/p. 213; CRep/1851/pp. 472-478; AR-AB/1852/p. 124; IA/p. 235.

¹⁷⁴ Talmage/22Jan1852, MH/1852/pp. 149-152. Cf. Talmage/Amoy/14Jul1851, CI/1Jan1852/p. 101c1-4; AR-AB/1852/p. 124; AR-AB/1853/p. 130.

¹⁷⁵ Young/Amoy/17Dec1850.

¹⁷⁶ Young/Amoy/5Sep1852.

¹⁷⁷ FYA/pp. 77f.

¹⁷⁸ Doty/18Jan1854, MH/1854/pp. 168-171; AR-AB/1854/p. 143.

¹⁷⁹ Doty/18Jan1854.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. AR-AB/1854/p. 143.

¹⁸¹ IA/p. 234. The work was still being used in the early 20th century as 'the basis of the Manuals...used in this region and in Singapore and Formosa'. Cf. RCC/pp. 19-20.

made materials to build upon or refer to. The difficulty with which the dialect could be learned implies the prolongation of the language-acquisition time, not to mention the time spent for the Romanisation exercise itself. The success of the experiment however brought about even more reduction in the amount of time given to other labours¹⁸² as both Doty and Talmage¹⁸³ devoted a portion of their attention to the production of works in the newly developed script. Even so the literary work continued¹⁸⁴ because of the lack of suitable tracts as well as 'the difficulty of obtaining them from other places',¹⁸⁵ this doubtless mainly due to the localised extent of the usage of the Amoy dialect. From the extant sources, any attempt at an estimate of the work hours consumed at this task is subject to futility unless one is ready to accept sheer speculation. But even if exact quantification eludes us, it is evident the Romanisation project did partake substantially of missionary work-hours during this period. The consequent reduction in field hours on their part made the missionaries welcome any Chinese contribution to evangelistic work, thus the enlargement of the Chinese work space.

4.4.3. Medical and educational work

While the RCA missionaries consistently upheld the work of oral preaching and instruction, medical and educational work were not totally rejected. However in the former area, the RCA did not really do anything in particular for the Mission had no medical missionary during this period and thus was totally reliant upon cooperative relations with non-RCA agents. Doty's plea for a physician was never realised until the 1880s.¹⁸⁶ The implication of this was that the RCA missionaries never encountered any real time demand arising from *direct* medical work during our period.

As far as educational work is concerned, the RCA involvement during the pre-1854 period consisted only in two occasions, viz. operating an elementary school for a few months in 1845 and continuing the school of Peet from September 1847 to May 1850.¹⁸⁷ In the 1845 instance, the undertaking was short-lived and happened before the occurrence of the first Chinese baptisms. Without yet any church member much less Chinese worker, we are in no position to speak of a Chinese working space in a truly meaningful sense. In the 1847-50 instance, Doty did have full charge of a school but he was *no more than a supervisor* who devoted the most of his time to other labours geared toward church formation. This time demand was much less than it would have been if he were a classroom teacher. The supervisory role partly explains why the school could be so readily passed on to Young at a time when the latter had just been in Amoy for ten days and had

¹⁸² Cf. AR-AB/1854/p. 143.

¹⁸³ The magnum opus of Talmage was *The Amoy Colloquial Dictionary*. FYA/pp. 77f.

¹⁸⁴ By the early 1890s, the number of publications was reportedly about fifty. FYA/pp. 196-197.

¹⁸⁵ In 1854, some 500 copies of *Pilgrim's* were printed aside from tracts in the order of 1,042,000 pages. AR-AB/1855/p. 113-114.

¹⁸⁶ Doty/25Jun1855, CI/25Nov1855/p. 86c4-5; RCC, ch11.

¹⁸⁷ See 2.3.2.

barely began to learn the local tongue.¹⁸⁸ Thus in the pre-1854 period, educational work was at most a *minor* competitor for the work hours of the RCA missionary force. But this is not yet the whole story on educational work.

In February 1854 the RCA opened its first parochial school in Amoy. This was in fact the former EP school at Keklai which by that time consisted 'almost exclusively' of RCA-related pupils and was superintended by Doty and Talmage.¹⁸⁹ Fortunately the times were unlike the early years when the search for Chinese teachers suffered from the lack of Christian candidates and morally acceptable non-Christians. At all times the issue of opium use had been a matter of great concern to the missionaries. Even before 1854, it had been noted that not only was opium 'used to a fearful extent by all classes of the people' but the habit was 'so nearly universal among the educated, that it is difficult for us to find teachers who are not addicted to it'.¹⁹⁰ In fact it was thought at one time that 'more than one-half of the men of Amoy are more or less addicted to the practice!'¹⁹¹ However with the increase of converts came a corresponding growth in the number of available Christian teachers even while some professional qualifications were maintained. Relating the above to our main interest, we note that the educational enterprise created a work space for Christian teachers like the man baptised in Siam,¹⁹² Gui Bunhoan (baptised Jan 1855)¹⁹³ and others of whom we have no personal details.

In the said educational enterprise, the missionaries mainly limited their involvement to general supervision, the holding of religious exercises¹⁹⁴ and teacher training.¹⁹⁵ As the last activity was held but only once and for special reasons, the time-claims of educational work upon the missionaries on the whole were not substantial. But neither were they negligible. For given that work-hours were a limited quantitative commodity, the time expended on educational work, though not substantial on their own, did *add up* to take away precious man-hours which may be otherwise devoted to conversion and church formation ends. In other words, the educational demand should be situated among the other factors, *viz.* the shortage of missionaries, the health- and language-related reduction of work output, the pressures of the time-demanding Romanisation project and the expansion of educational work especially since 1854. Seen in this context, there could only be a lessening of efforts on the part of the RCA missionaries toward convert-making and church-planting. Thus one may say this particular aspect of RCA educational work contributed only *in a minor way* to the enlargement of the Chinese work space. In contrast, however, the needs of classroom teaching provided a larger space for Chinese educational labour.

¹⁸⁸ See Young/Amoy/17Dec1850.

¹⁸⁹ Burns/Amoy/3Mar1854, Mess/1854/p. 218.

¹⁹⁰ Talmage/22Jan1852, MH/1852/pp. 149-152.

¹⁹¹ Talmage/17Dec1850.

¹⁹² See Doty/20Apr1854.

¹⁹³ See Doty/Amoy/15Sep1857; Talmage/Amoy/16Jan&5Feb1856, CI/29May1856/p. 189c5-6.

¹⁹⁴ Talmage/Amoy/16Jan&5Feb1856. Cf. Talmage/Amoy/14Jul1851, CI/1Jan1852/p. 101c1-4.

¹⁹⁵ Talmage/Amoy/16Jan&5Feb1856.

However the same cannot be said of higher education work, i.e. theological training. Despite his many duties mentioned earlier, Talmage conceded more work-hours when he started the theological class in July 1855.¹⁹⁶ Other than the fixed hours of the three 90-minute meetings each week, we are told nothing about extra-class time spent. The known details however should offer some lead. As the Tuesday subject was 'systematic theology', we may suppose much time was required to render the extensive technical terminology into the dialect. The Thursday textbook being in English means another round of pre-class translation work before meeting with the English-illiterate students. At any rate, one may safely assume that *considerable* work-hours were dispensed in this training work, particularly from the time immediately preceding its commencement until the end of the first year of running (i.e. when courses were being taught the first time, thus requiring more preparation). Thus the theological training project translates into more Chinese work space in the form of increased *field* work opportunities for the natives.

As for the EPM, it has already been discussed in detailed fashion how Young's dispensary (1851-53) and chapel (1854) were the venues for the evangelistic labours rendered by some Chinese volunteers and at least one colporteur.¹⁹⁷ Indeed medical work took some of Young's time but *not time otherwise devoted to convert-making or church-gathering*. At most, it competed for time with educational work. But as seen earlier, the work space furnished by the school work could only accommodate two Chinese teachers or, later when the student population shrank, just one teacher. Until 1853 the latter post was filled by Tekchoan. Of his successor (if there was any at all), we have no information. With the Chinese work space in educational work thus filled, the devotion of time to medical work by Young is really irrelevant to the matter of Chinese work space enlargement.

In the area of educational work, the emergence of a work space for Tekchoan (baptised Jul 1850)¹⁹⁸ requires some clarification. Hitherto how the early EP school work gave occasion for Tekchoan to engage in educational labours (1851-53) has only been passingly noted.¹⁹⁹ When Young took over the Peet-Doty school on 27th May 1850, there were only thirty boys²⁰⁰ but three left at the end of August.²⁰¹ In October the services of 'a more efficient Chinese teacher' was acquired.²⁰² But since this man was later referred to as 'the Heathen teacher',²⁰³ it is quite unlikely his predecessor was a Christian. After the Chinese new year holidays, only nineteen out of the twenty-seven boys returned but they were joined by twenty newcomers. As more enrolments followed to yield a total of fifty-five regular plus six or seven irregular pupils, Tekchoan volunteered to become a teacher. The latter was the man mentioned by Burns who upon arrival at

¹⁹⁶ Talmage/16Jan1856, MH/1856/pp. 167-170.

¹⁹⁷ See 4.3.

¹⁹⁸ See Talmage/Amoy/14Jul1851.

¹⁹⁹ See 2.3.4.

²⁰⁰ Young/Amoy/17Dec1850.

²⁰¹ Young/Amoy/15Apr1851, Mess/1851/pp. 212-214.

²⁰² Young/Amoy/17Dec1850.

²⁰³ Young/Amoy/15Apr1851.

Amoy moved into 'a small room' connected with the EP school²⁰⁴ which he later said was 'conducted by an esteemed professing Christian Chinese'.²⁰⁵ With the suddenly enlarged student body, the school was divided in March between Young and the non-Christian teacher on one hand and Tekchoan on the other.²⁰⁶ Afterwards Young devoted himself mainly to the school beside his residence while paying only occasional visits to the one at Keklai.²⁰⁷ The reason was not only distance but also the fact that the Keklai teacher was a Christian whereas the other teacher was not. Later the supervision of the Keklai school was handed over to Burns.²⁰⁸ Meanwhile Young's engagement with the Romanised colloquial project had added to his supervisory duties the work of producing literary materials in the new script. Writing in 1852, Young stated that he spent his mornings 'engaged with my teacher, preparing the lessons which [the students] translate [into the colloquial]'.²⁰⁹ Then for one hour during mid-day he supervised the three classes at his school. Meanwhile Tekchoan remained faithfully at his educational post until May 1853 when his position was taken by a Siam-baptised returnee.²¹⁰ In the Tekchoan episode therefore we see how it was the expansion of the educational enterprise which created the work space for an RCA convert.

But the case of Tekchoan is of particular interest to us in yet another way. His voluntary resignation from the teaching post was occasioned by his appointment as one of the colporteurs to Choanchiu.²¹¹ In other words, whether others regarded it as evidence of interest in full time 'religious' work or as testimony to potentially good performance in such work, his labours at the EP school became a sort of credentials supporting his candidacy to the new position. This therefore is one instance wherein involvement in one kind of work space (education) led to entry into another kind (colporteur). The former work allowed the 'testing' of the man, showing him to be fit (or making others believe him to be fit) for the latter work.

If we may recall, the EPM started to have a church formation objective only in about the middle of 1854 during the term of Johnston. The sudden departure of his colleagues made for the devolution upon him of the educational work which he soon extended to Pechuia.²¹² However just like Young and the RCA men, Johnston played the role of a supervisor and therefore expended but a little work-time in the undertaking. In his case, the generation of a work space for Chinese evangelists was (as mentioned earlier) mainly on account of EP missionary shortage as well as his own language and health limitations. With Douglas, the language-acquisition task provided additional (though really unnecessary) motivation to maintain the Chinese workforce inherited from his predecessor which company was eventually enlarged as the demands of the work

²⁰⁴ Burns/Amoy/25Jul1851, in Burns, *Memoir*, p. 285.

²⁰⁵ Burns/Amoy/8Jan1852, Bx118/F5. Cf. Burns/Amoy/8Jun1852, Bx119/F5.

²⁰⁶ Young/Amoy/15Apr1851.

²⁰⁷ Young/Amoy/19Dec1851, Mess/1852/pp. 115-116.

²⁰⁸ Young/Amoy/11May1853, Mess/1853/p. 287.

²⁰⁹ Young/Amoy/5Sep1852.

²¹⁰ Burns/Amoy/16May1853, Mess/1853/pp. 290-291. Cf. Young/Amoy/6May1852, Mess/1852/p. 283; Burns/Amoy/8Jun1852, Mess/1852/pp. 282-283.

²¹¹ See Talmage/3&10Jun 1853, MH/1853/pp. 350ff; Burns/Amoy/16May1853.

²¹² See 2.3.5.

increased. There is no reason to think that the nature of Douglas' involvement with the EP schools in 1855-56 was any different from that of Johnston. Therefore as far as its church planting period (1854-56) is concerned, there was no other work demand which acted in any way as a *major* competitor for EP missionary man-hours.

4.4.4. Summary

In that it occurred in the earliest years, the work of Bible translation was of no consequence in the making of a Chinese work space. In contrast the Romanised Amoy project was a major competitor for the work hours of Doty, Talmage and Young. In effect this translated into an enlargement of the evangelistic work space for both converts and assistants. Whereas the RCA encountered no time demand originating from direct medical work, their educational work, although in itself only a minor competitor for missionary work hours, nevertheless did create an educational work space for Christian classroom teachers. For the EPM, Young provided opportunities for evangelistic work first at his dispensary and later at his chapel. In addition, not only did his school allow Tekchoan occasion to engage in some educational labour, the episode also helped the Chinese man to obtain the post of a colporteur. During the period with a church formation objective (1854-56), both Johnston and Douglas did undertake some educational work but such duty was never a major claimant for EP missionary work hours. Putting the matter in historical context however reminds us that the said EP period, even though relatively free of competing work demands, was one in which health and language factors alone were sufficient to render the British workforce operating at far below its optimal level. In sum, we can say that for both Missions, various work demands not directly connected with convert-making or church-gathering did contribute to the making or the enlargement of the Chinese work space.

4.5. Missionary attitudes toward a Chinese agency

Having argued that various missionary limitations *contributed* to the creation and expansion of the Chinese work space, we now attempt to demonstrate that not only did the missionaries believe in the need for a Chinese agency, they also aimed at or took steps toward the formal training of a native ministry. In our survey of RCA attitudes toward a Chinese agency, we study Pohlman and Talmage since nothing on the matter was found in Doty's writings from our period. For the EPM, we focus on Johnston and Douglas.

4.5.1. Pohlman

Shortly before Talmage arrived, Pohlman had passingly mentioned the need for a corps of native helpers.²¹³ In the records of the Amoy Mission, this is the earliest reference to such a thing.

²¹³ Pohlman/Amoy/25May1847, CI/16Dec1847/p. 90c3-4.

The remark of Pohlman is best seen within his historical situation and within the context of the 'centre' approach to mission work.

Within the larger situation in which Pohlman worked and thought, we find various factors disposing him toward the use of native agency, *viz.* the closure of the interior to foreigners, the hugeness of the Banlam field, his being the only RCA field person at a time when he believed no reinforcement from home was forthcoming,²¹⁴ the difficulty of the Amoy dialect which required extended time to learn thus further delaying a missionary's actual work, his eye ailment which began around the time of Doty's departure, and lastly the recognition that certain societal segments were not easily accessible to missionaries.²¹⁵

Aside from these situational factors, there is also the methodological dimension which consists of the 'centre' strategy. During the time when itinerant preaching was the main strategy, Pohlman spoke of Amoy as 'a center' from which some 400 villages may be reached.²¹⁶ This *Amoy-centre* approach actually built upon the assumption of the missionary staying within the legal limits of travel beyond the treaty port. But by any stretch of the imagination, it is unlikely Pohlman seriously thought the scale of the work to be done was such as could be adequately done by missionaries *alone*. If so, sooner or later a Chinese workforce would have to be deployed. Thus even though the earliest *extant written* expression of the necessity of a native agency dated from mid-1847, it seems the need itself was already contained within the missionary situation even before that time. More so in light of the situational factors noted earlier.

Despite the strategic shift to the intensive method, the belief in the need for a native agency remained unaltered. However the shift did entail the replacement of the Amoy-centre approach by the *chapel-centre* approach. Although itineration never ceased completely,²¹⁷ its main function was more of exploration rather than work proper, *i.e.* to spot potentials for settled work and not to substitute for stated work. Due to the initial success of the new approach, Pohlman wished there had been 'scores of places open every day' all over the 'city' and on Amoy Island instead of just three chapels.²¹⁸ Before long, this expressed desire for a multitude of chapels was followed by the stated need for a corps of 'efficient', 'well-trained and faithful' native helpers.²¹⁹ Speaking of the many villages along the Chiang river valley, Pohlman remarked that 'we can now either send natives or go ourselves in perfect security, *to settle down*, as Roman Catholic priests do, preaching the gospel, and teaching thousands and myriads of souls the way of everlasting life and glory'.²²⁰ The above implies not only a huge *potential* work space for Chinese workers but more importantly

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

²¹⁵ Consider: when his teacher left to enlist as a military mandarin, Pohlman hoped to hear someday that 'the gospel has been carried by him "in all the palace" of "Caesar's household,"', *i.e.* that he can 'carry the gospel where we cannot go...' Pohlman/Amoy/1May1847.

²¹⁶ Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1845, CI/2Apr1846/p. 150c3.

²¹⁷ Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1846; Pohlman/1May1846, MH/1846/pp. 321-322; Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, CI/20Apr1848/p. 162c5-6 and 27Apr1848/p. 166c3-5.

²¹⁸ Pohlman/Amoy/24Oct1846, CI/4Mar1847/p. 132c6.

²¹⁹ Pohlman/Amoy/25May1847, CI/16Dec1847/p. 90c3-4.

²²⁰ Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, CI/27Apr1848/p. 166c3-5 (*italics added*).

the *need* for native agency. Although missionary shortage and limitations compelled the RCA to concentrate on Amoy for many years to come, what is worthy of note is that even at this time Pohlman no longer needed to argue for the *necessity* of a native agency. The thing had become tacit knowledge so that he simply spoke beyond it, taking it for granted. Neither was there any change in this line of thinking after the Sinkoe chapel was constructed. Although Pohlman emphasised the principle of *a chapel for every missionary*,²²¹ there is no hint he thought the chapel-centre approach negated the need for Chinese help. On the contrary, its success created a new optimism about the possible expansion of the work which if realised would require more hands.

For Pohlman, therefore, both situational and methodological considerations made native agency a must in evangelistic and church work. The concept of the 'centre' first took form within the framework of the itinerant preaching strategy. With the strategic shift to stated preaching and instruction, the chapel-centre model was adopted and later instituted. Against this methodological development as immediate background, the oldest existing RCA record of the idea that a native agency was needful appeared from the pen of Pohlman dating from mid-1847. Later both Talmage and Doty exhibited no hesitation in following the same line. But it was the younger man who brought the idea out of incipency and developed it into a comprehensive strategy.

4.5.2. Talmage

Writing a year after his arrival, Talmage called special attention to the only viable long term strategy of evangelising China, viz. via Chinese agency.²²² As an important aspect of the Talmage ideal, this conviction stubbornly persisted into later times. For instance, in 1856 Talmage continued to insist that 'China must be *evangelized chiefly* through the instrumentality of natives'.²²³ By also designating the foreign missionary as the layer of foundation and carer-helper in erecting the superstructure,²²⁴ Talmage defined clearly the respective roles of Westerners and natives as well as their temporal loci of function within a comprehensive long-term action plan. By this, the Talmage ideal actually went beyond the mere need for native agency.

Thus shortly before the Sinkoe event, Talmage wrote that it was 'of great importance to prepare the native Christians *as rapidly as possible*, for the work of preaching the gospel to their countrymen'.²²⁵ Even though the original literary context of this remark was speaking about the theological class started in 1855, it should be noted that Talmage never conceived of the native workforce exclusively in terms of employed labourers. Back in 1848 he had pointedly explained that 'every *true* convert becomes in some measure a helper'.²²⁶ Irreplaceable were the example of the believer's changed conduct and his various advantages over the missionary, viz. unrestricted

²²¹ CRep/1846/p. 356. The unnamed author was Pohlman (see p. 358). Also cf. AR-AB/1847/p. 166.

²²² Talmage/Amoy/12Sep1848, CI/18Jan1849/p. 109c1.

²²³ Talmage/Amoy/16Jan1856 (*italics added*).

²²⁴ See 2.5.

²²⁵ Talmage/Amoy/16Jan1856 (*italics added*).

²²⁶ Talmage/Amoy/12Sep1848 (*italics added*).

travel, better cultural understanding, acquaintance with the obstacles to Chinese conversion and how to deal with these, and lastly, exemption from the anti-foreign prejudices of the people. Therefore it was no surprise the theological class was attended by 'our colporteurs...and by *several other Christian converts*, mostly young men of much promise'.²²⁷ Although it is almost certain Talmage entertained hope that some (if not all) from the latter group would someday become full-time agents, the commencement of the theological class certainly did not imply the discarding of the idea of mobilising volunteers, much less the closure of the work space to such people. For Talmage was everything but inconsistent in his high esteem for the evangelistic zeal of the Christians.²²⁸ Rather the offering of advanced studies was made necessary by the growth of the work which called for the deployment of a native workforce better trained than the *average* volunteer. Both optimism (about the growth potentials of the work) and pessimism (about the numerical increase of missionaries) combined to motivate Talmage into taking action toward the soonest development of a company of qualified native workers to further the work of Chinese evangelisation.

Thus toward the close of his 13th month in Amoy, Talmage had already worked out a comprehensive strategy for evangelisation. The immediate and medium-term future called for not only the continuing presence but also the increase of foreign workers. However the long-term work of evangelisation and of the pastorate fell within the province of the Chinese. On account of this belief in the crucial role of native agency, Talmage started the more formal training of native workers in July 1855.

4.5.3. Johnston

The attitude of Johnston toward a Chinese agency may be discerned via the correlation of a few factors, viz. the FMC-designated size of the EPM, the 'planetary' method, the proposal of the 'Educational Institute', the 'adoption' of two youths and the acquisition of Chinese assistants.

EPM size. The first factor influencing Johnston's attitude toward a Chinese agency was the FMC designation that the China missionary team be composed of only *three* men. After Young had settled at Amoy, the appeal was soon made for a *third* missionary specifically for educational work.²²⁹ During our period, the FMC believed a *three-man* team would render its China staff 'complete'.²³⁰ Thus being certain Young could not return to China, the FMC looked for another man to 'complete the original number'.²³¹ The slot was later filled by Sandeman²³² which suggests Douglas was regarded as having taken the place of Johnston.

²²⁷ Talmage/Amoy/16Jan1856 (italics added).

²²⁸ See e.g. Talmage/Amoy/14Jul1851, CI/1Jan1852/p. 101c1-4; Talmage/Amoy/16Jan1856.

²²⁹ Mess/1851/pp. 120-121,140.

²³⁰ Mess/1851/p. 140; 1852/p. 150. Contrary to Burns' reckoning (p. 150), the FMC never considered Mrs. Young a full member of the Banlam team.

²³¹ Mess/1855/p. 148.

²³² *Ibid.*

The limitation upon EPM personnel size is better understood not as an underestimation of the magnitude and needs of the Banlam mission field. Rather it should be interpreted as a reflection of the existential restraints upon the PCE both in terms of finance and missionary candidates. To read out of the limited size of the EP team *alone* an implied intention to raise a Chinese church may be a bit uncertain. But to say that it implied raising up a native agency is tenable, for this was certainly the direction it was pointing toward. The restricted size of the EP missionary team made it necessary that a place be reserved for Chinese labour if any substantial work is to be done. Neither would this Chinese labour space be by any means a small one. Therefore the designated size of the EPM contributed to making Johnston believe in the need for Chinese agency.

Planetary method. Partly on account of the restricted size of the Mission, the 'planetary' method was devised around the time the EPM church objective was first adopted. Within the EPM, a 'centre' idea was first expressed by Burns in 1852.²³³ The idea then was of Amoy as a base for itinerant work. As is quickly seen, this was identical to the Amoy-centre model of the early Pohlman. In contrast, the FMC argued for mission buildings in Amoy, so that its missionaries will be enabled to recognise 'the territorial principle' (i.e. concentration method) and thus 'unite in establishing one centre of usefulness, from which...they might hope the sooner to tell on the surrounding community', i.e. the community *within* Amoy (so the original literary context).²³⁴ This stated-centre concept paralleled the chapel-centre approach of the later Pohlman. Thus what Young did in 1854 when he started the EP preaching station at A-kui-a (Amoy) was actually no different from the later RCA approach.

The practice of Young was continued by Johnston when he took over the work.²³⁵ The routine of having three evening services per week was maintained during the hot season and in winter replaced by daily morning services. The attendance fluctuated wildly from full capacity to nil with only half a dozen people or less classifiable as regular attendants. Reflecting on the early EP efforts, Johnston explained the 'planetary method' in contrast to the 'sporadic' principle of Burns:

'The plan on which the Mission was organised in 1854 was what may be called the *centrifugal*, as opposed to the *sporadic*, principle. ... What we may call the planetary method is to choose a centre or centres from which the Word may radiate, but not beyond the reach of the influence of the central power. The radius may be long and reach far, provided that there be intermediate stations to support one another, and all should gravitate to the centre, as planets to the sun. In this way there is in the Mission, as in the solar system, both a centrifugal and a centripetal force, preserving the unity and vigour of the organisation. This principle has been consistently carried out from first to last,'²³⁶ (italics original)

²³³ Burns/Amoy/9Mar1852, Mess/1852/pp. 219-221.

²³⁴ Mess/1853/pp. 142-144.

²³⁵ Johnston/Rev1854, Mess/1855/pp. 143-146.

²³⁶ CAF/pp. 197-198.

Corroborating this were the writings of Johnston from the 1850s. In January 1854, the EP man visited Chiangchiu with the aim of determining whether Amoy would make a suitable 'centre of a vigorous and extensive missionary organization'.²³⁷ Campaigning later for EP buildings in Amoy, Johnston said if the port be regarded 'the ecclesiastical capital for evangelistic purposes', there would be within an accessible c.40-mile radius a homolingual population of above two million.²³⁸ By themselves, these remarks may give the impression that Johnston was taking the Amoy-centre itineration approach. Yet in that Johnston was aiming at the formation of local churches, the Amoy centre was actually conceived of as *both an administrative and an evangelistic centre but more of the former than the latter*. Thus faced with many country openings, the proper strategy was to train more men to occupy them and to 'be prepared to open preaching halls in every important town and village...'²³⁹ By such 'judicious diffusion with centralization of effort',²⁴⁰ Johnston clearly had in mind the chapel-centre variety of mission work coupled with Amoy as the administrative-supervisory centre of EP operations within Banlam.

In relation to Chinese agency, the planetary method was designed in such a way that the legwork would be done mostly (if not entirely) by the Chinese. Also under the chapel-centre approach, itineration did not cease altogether.²⁴¹ Rather it continued but only as an auxiliary or feeder to the chapel-centre.²⁴² What this continuity implied was the need for *more* Chinese workers than would be the case if itineration were totally stopped. In short, the planetary method effectively reinforced Johnston's belief in the necessity of a native agency.

Educational Institute. Writing much later, Johnston claimed that though he disfavoured Duff-type educational work in China, he 'strongly advocated' education in the native tongue for converts and their children as well as 'the training of a native ministry'.²⁴³ The last concern was corroborated in the 1856 letter calling for EP mission buildings in and outside Amoy.²⁴⁴ Among various facilities, he called for an 'Educational Institute' in Amoy. This was entirely different from the existing EP schools, for its design was to train colporteurs, evangelists and pastors. About such training, he later elaborated,

'A knowledge of a few elementary truths was sufficient, and a personal experience of their truth in the preacher was enough in China, as it has been in all ages and all lands. The great work of the evangelist is to tell what God had done for his own salvation,... But to rest content with such an elementary teaching as this, or with such an imperfect teacher, is not only defective, it is destructive to both teacher and taught. The child of the kingdom must grow in knowledge, or he will never "grow in grace" or in the graces of the Spirit. To obviate this danger, and secure the

²³⁷ Johnston/Greenlaw/Oct1855, Mess/1855/pp. 373-375.

²³⁸ Johnston/Greenlaw/19Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 51-53.

²³⁹ *Ibid* (italics added).

²⁴⁰ *Ibid*.

²⁴¹ Johnston/Rev1854, Mess/1855/p. 146.

²⁴² Johnston/Amoy/7Dec1854, Mess/1855/pp. 82-84.

²⁴³ CAF/p. 82.

²⁴⁴ Johnston/Greenlaw/19Jan1856.

development of each believer and of the whole Church, it was needful to educate these evangelists, or to train others for the "work of the ministry" ...²⁴⁵

In speaking of such training work, Johnston was assuming not simply a Chinese work space but the actual need for a dedicated native agency working on a full-time employment basis.

Adoptions. During his Banlam period, Johnston had demonstrated interest in the theological training of natives but could not do it himself. This was seen in practical terms when he took under his roof the teenage Kow-a of Amoy (who after parental expulsion had become Johnston's 'adopted son') and later, fifteen-year-old Kwai-a from Pechuia.²⁴⁶ Earlier Young did have a pupil-boarder,²⁴⁷ but the *adoption* of Kow-a was definitely a first. Likewise the case of Kwai-a may be in a way considered a first. As his dilemma was the impending cessation of his schooling in order to help in his father's business, it is not difficult to believe the primary motivation for providing boarding was Johnston's refusal to risk 'losing such a youth to the future service of the Church'.²⁴⁸ Writing some weeks later, Johnston was unambiguous in expressing his hope that Kwai-a will someday 'make an excellent evangelist or pastor...'²⁴⁹ Thus we have here the first instance of taking in a boarder with a *clear* intention of rearing a future agent.

In the case of Kow-a, the motivation may initially be mixed, i.e. both wanting to help a homeless boy and also desiring to rear a potential assistant. Nevertheless the fact is, from the first the main concern of Johnston was the schooling of Kow-a, or with what was hoped to be the latter's continuing preparation to become an EP worker in some future time. Thus even though Johnston had earlier known about the severities inflicted upon Kow-a by family members, he 'did not think it desirable to interfere, so long as he was permitted to attend school...'²⁵⁰ When intervention failed and the lad was ejected from home, Johnston took him in until the British Consul successfully secured parental agreement for the boy to continue school. It seems this state ended shortly after Kow-a received baptism and was again expelled from home, whereupon Johnston immediately adopted him for good.²⁵¹ A year later, Johnston explained his interest behind such adoption: 'So important have I felt it to seize on promising youths of Christian character, that, rather than lose sight of two that came under my notice twelve months ago, I have kept them at my own expense.'²⁵² In fact, Johnston announced he would unhesitatingly take on twenty more boys should they come forward.²⁵³ Therefore the justification given for the two adoptions of 1854-55 made it clear that the training of a native agency was at the back of Johnston's mind since the beginning. This furnishes another proof that Johnston thought Chinese agency indispensable.

²⁴⁵ CAF/p. 212.

²⁴⁶ Johnston/Rev1854, Mess/1855/p. 146. Note: not *Kuvai-a*.

²⁴⁷ Young/Amoy/17Jan1851; Young/Amoy/15Apr1851, Mess/1851/p. 213.

²⁴⁸ Johnston/Rev1854, p. 146.

²⁴⁹ Johnston/c.Mar1855, Mess/1855/pp. 198-199.

²⁵⁰ Johnston/Amoy/5Sep1854, Mess/1855/pp. 19-20.

²⁵¹ Johnston/Rev1854, pp. 145,146.

²⁵² Johnston/Greenlaw/19Jan1856.

²⁵³ Johnston/Rev1854.

Johnston's assistants. After Burns and Young left, Johnston soon acquired four Chinese agents.²⁵⁴ But as fully as he was convinced of the need for a native agency, Johnston was persuaded against the *unsupervised* deployment of such. Missionaries were regarded 'as highly important, and, in the way of superintendence and devotion, absolutely necessary'.²⁵⁵ Thus the main hindrance to starting a church at promising Chiohbe was not the shortage of Chinese hands but the lack of 'men [missionaries] to superintend those [native agents] we have'.²⁵⁶ Indeed the policy of Johnston was to employ assistants 'in such a way as would at once enable me to superintend their labours'.²⁵⁷ During his illness and indoor confinement, he continued to direct the Chinese workers from his Amoy quarters.²⁵⁸ Because of this concern with missionary supervision, Johnston considered the distance of Pechuia to be the greatest of his problems (which was solved by having a boat wherein he could sleep and travel at the same time).²⁵⁹ At times, the refusal to let the assistants 'out of sight' almost verged on distrust.

In relation to our investigation of Johnston's attitude toward a native agency, his *very act* of acquiring native evangelists indicates little resistance on his part to the *use* of such. His one reservation pertained to unsupervised use, i.e. improper or unwise use, but not to *very use* itself. In real experience, this resulted in a starting ratio of *one* foreigner (Johnston) to *four* Chinese, a ratio which exhibits a good amount of whole-heartedness and enthusiasm in the deployment of native agency.

Summing up, we find that Johnston was as convinced of the necessity of a Chinese agency as he was that it be a *missionary-supervised* labour force. Together the FMC restriction upon EPM size and the 'planetary' method gave an assured place to Chinese agents. Conviction was expressed in action when Johnston took the initiative to adopt two boys and to deploy Chinese evangelists. Even if the desire to train a native ministry was never realised during his missionary career, he ceased not to promote the idea after leaving China (i.e. proposing the 'Educational Institute'). There is no doubt therefore that Johnston felt strongly the need for a native agency.

4.5.4. Douglas

The attitude of Douglas toward a native agency should be seen within the context of the continuity of the 'planetary' method. Picking up where Johnston left off, Douglas supervised the work along the same methodologic lines.²⁶⁰ With regards to Chinese agency, Douglas expressed his attitude more via action than word. For one, he continued to maintain the four assistants of Johnston. When Tauro was recalled by the RCA for assignment to Chiohbe,²⁶¹ the position was

²⁵⁴ See 4.3.

²⁵⁵ Johnston/Amoy/20Dec1854.

²⁵⁶ Johnston/Amoy/16Oct1854, Mess/1855/pp. 21-22; cf. Johnston/Rev1854.

²⁵⁷ Johnston/Amoy/Nov1854, Mess/1855/pp. 52-54.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁰ Swanson, 'Career', pp. 64-65.

²⁶¹ Douglas/Amoy/1Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 118-119.

quickly refilled so that the original number was restored.²⁶² Furthermore Douglas not only assumed the care of Johnston's two 'adopted' sons but took concrete steps to see an EP native agency trained up. This he did by making arrangements for Kwai-a to join Talmage's three-week-old 'systematic doctrinal' class.²⁶³ By early 1856, a total of five youths were staying with Douglas, of whom three or four were expected to be evangelists soon.²⁶⁴ Swanson was definitely correct when he testified: 'From the very outset [Douglas] perceived the great importance of training up a native ministry and of educating native agents to carry on the work. When alone and single-handed in his own Mission, he did what he could in this department, and he never ceased his care about it until he saw a thoroughly equipped institution established in full working order.'²⁶⁵ While the last sentence referred to post-1856 times, the tenor of the quotation in its entirety accurately reflected the Douglas of our period.

4.5.5. Summary

In this Section we have demonstrated that the first explicit statement about the need for a Chinese agency came from Pohlman. By 1848 Talmage had developed the idea into a full evangelistic strategy while also allowing a place for volunteer native labour. Aside from this contribution, Talmage commenced the organised training of Chinese agents and some volunteer workers. On the EP side, Johnston and Douglas also held very similar attitudes toward a Chinese agency. In advocating a native agency, Johnston was particularly emphatic about the need for missionary supervision and did actually himself attempt to live up to this ideal as much as he could. Whereas there was the actual deployment of native workers, circumstantial hindrances disallowed the EPM from undertaking the work of training during our period. Nevertheless Douglas took the initiative to meet this need by having Kwai-a join Talmage's class. Therefore whether by word or deed, the RCA and EP missionaries were one in the belief about the need for a Chinese agency.

4.6. Paid Chinese agency

In this Section we look into the history of employed Chinese agency up to the first half of 1856. We attend particularly to the acquisition of the first Chinese agent in 1847 and to the overall growth of paid native agency. Our argument is that generally speaking the missionary confidence in this agency proceeded in a positive direction rather progressively.

The first case of paid RCA Chinese agency was anything but motivated by pure theoretical considerations. On the first day of March 1847, U Teng-eng became the first 'native helper' to be employed by the American Mission. Converted and baptised at Siam in January 1844, he had left that country in company with the missionaries formerly at work there and had relocated to China. Though actually a native of 'Ka-eng-chew' (Canton), yet 'being a young man of education and

²⁶² Douglas/29Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 146-148.

²⁶³ Douglas/Amoy/21Aug1855.

²⁶⁴ Douglas/Amoy/3Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 119-120.

²⁶⁵ Swanson, 'Career', pp. 65-66.

good mental powers, he has learned to speak the Amoy dialect with frequency'.²⁶⁶ By spring, Pohlman's chapel became opened also in the morning (11am), an operational expansion made possible by 'Teacher U' as he was commonly addressed at Amoy. During this time however the morning session did not have a good attendance 'as it is the time for doing business, and all classes are generally engaged'.²⁶⁷ Although he was referred to in the earliest instance as an 'evangelist',²⁶⁸ the fact is that throughout his term of work he was also considered a colporteur.²⁶⁹ Even as late as the summer of 1856, RCA helpers were at once both colporteurs and evangelists.²⁷⁰

Among the various situational factors which favoured the use of an employed native agency, it was perhaps Pohlman's *personal* predicament which was most forceful in realising the acquisition of the first paid Chinese worker, i.e. his eye ailment. By October 1846 Pohlman had given up all hope of language studies and had conceived his own role as that of 'a sort of general agent, or overseer, engaging in active, outdoor labors, exploring, exhorting, preaching, from house to house'.²⁷¹ The proximity of this date to the acquisition of Teacher U is particularly noteworthy. That the Chinese agent was not employed any earlier is because he had just barely arrived at Amoy. That no assistant was recruited previously is explained by the absence of a suitable candidate. Thus the acquisition of Teacher U represents Pohlman's hurried and unhesitating seizure of the earliest opportunity to obtain a native helper. Therefore the first Chinese space was afforded by among other factors the partial disability of a lone foreign labourer.

It was not long after the acquisition of Teacher U when Pohlman hinted that he had had a somewhat satisfactory experience working with the first RCA evangelist. This was in the form of the statement about the need for a corps of native helpers which was penned in May,²⁷² i.e. barely 3 months after Teacher U assumed his post. Even considering the fact that Pohlman's eye condition had not improved at that writing, there must be some positive motivation behind the implicit endorsement. Had there been any unpleasant encounter or observation of a serious nature, we would certainly expect the statement of May to be accompanied by some recommendation pertaining to the acquisition and/or management of Chinese assistants. In other words, we find from the lone Pohlman years no indication of any sort that the missionary was at any point in any way unhappy about Teacher U or his labours. On the contrary, the statement of May suggests just the reverse. However not every RCA missionary was to be destined to have such a smooth experience.

The attitude of Doty toward native agency suffered a mild and short-lived setback soon after his return to Amoy. In recounting his first personal meeting with Teacher U in September

²⁶⁶ Pohlman/Amoy/1May1847.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁸ Pohlman/Amoy/1May1847. So too AR-AB/1848/p. 223; Doty/28Jan1853, MH/1853/pp. 161-162; Talmage/3Jun1853, MH/1853/p. 350, cf. FYC/pp. 136-138; Doty/Amoy/15Sep1857.

²⁶⁹ APGS/1854/p. 473.

²⁷⁰ Doty/17Jan1855, MH/1855/pp. 186-187; Joralmon/Amoy/30Jul1856. Cf. Talmage/Amoy/16Jan1856.

²⁷¹ Pohlman/Amoy/24Oct1846, CI/4Mar1847/p. 132c6.

²⁷² I.e. Pohlman/Amoy/25May1847, CI/16Dec1847/p. 90c3-4.

1847, Doty confessed to initial negative impressions about the zeal and character of the Chinese worker. After some six months, however, these had been 'much modified and changed' toward a more realistic appreciation of the 'growing Christian' and commendable remarks were made regarding the valuable assistance contributed by the evangelist.²⁷³ The change in attitude was greatly influenced by the work of the preceding three months. When the temporary chapel at Sinkoe opened for daily instruction and Sabbath preaching, the attendance at all meetings immediately increased dramatically. During these times, overflow crowds were known to have attended the morning meetings of Teacher U.²⁷⁴ With free conversation as a regular component of the daily routine, the language limitation of Doty and Talmage gave one more reason for needing and appreciating the input of Teacher U. Doty testified: 'Indeed, but for his aid we could not have kept up the various and frequently recurring services of the two chapels or places of public resort and instruction under our care.'²⁷⁵ It was therefore the growth of labour demands upon a physically (Pohlman) and linguistically (Doty and Talmage) deficient missionary workforce which allowed the earliest case of paid Chinese labour a work space to further prove its worth. Upon this space, the death of Pohlman brought an enlargement. During 1850-51, Teacher U generally spent his time at the place of worship, conversing with inquirers, but also held 'more formal meetings' and undertook occasional tours to the surrounding region.²⁷⁶ In the ABCFM report of 1853, it was said 'a good amount of less formal work, in the distribution of tracts, conversation and exhortation, has been done by the evangelist colporter [sic], and other native brethren'.²⁷⁷ The agent referred to was certainly Teacher U who (as noted earlier) was regarded by those two terms. Despite the absence of standardised terminological distinction at the time, the second native helper recruited in 1852 was always simply called a 'colporteur',²⁷⁸ probably out of convenience in order to differentiate him from Teacher U.

The commencement in 1850 of a third Sabbath service which was conducted by the Chinese evangelist²⁷⁹ was not only occasioned by the perception of increased Chinese interest but also supported by added confidence in Teacher U on the part of the missionaries. In an experiential manner, the value of Chinese agency became especially impressed upon Talmage in 1851 when for health reasons Doty sailed for Shanghai in April leaving him alone at Amoy. During the six-week span of solitude, it was because of Teacher U that 'we were able to continue all our regular public services'.²⁸⁰ This first hand observation provided the background for Talmage's confidence in Chinese agency. Thus in 1851 after a visit to Chiangchiu, he would have proceeded with the

²⁷³ Doty/Amoy/16Mar1848, CI/20Jul1848/p. 6c3-5.

²⁷⁴ AR-AB/1848/p. 222.

²⁷⁵ Doty/Amoy/16Mar1848.

²⁷⁶ AR-AB/1851/p. 125.

²⁷⁷ AR-AB/1853/p. 129.

²⁷⁸ See AR-AB/1853/pp. 127,128,129.

²⁷⁹ AR-AB/1850/p. 161.

²⁸⁰ Talmage/Amoy/14Jul1851, CI/1Jan1852/p. 101c1-4.

posting of a colporteur there to be backed up by periodic missionary visitation, had not the 'weak-handed' state of the workforce hindered the execution of the intention.²⁸¹

The missionary confidence however was tested the following year by a 'very serious case' in which charges of 'very great import' were pressed against Teacher U by some church outsiders. For a time the evidence seemed 'so conclusive' that even the church members joined at condemning him. Eventually it was discovered that he simply committed 'certain blameworthy imprudences, which were not really sinful' at all. While confessing these, he continued to maintain his innocence until the 'principal in the guilt, personally unknown to us...came forward and made a full confession, clearing away in a moment the cloud which for days had been hanging over the evangelist'.²⁸² The impact of this episode upon missionary confidence in Chinese agency was not explicitly stated. However a few things may be noted. First, while the missionaries acknowledged that some church members did condemn Teacher U at some point, there was no indication any missionary did the same. Moreover the affair seemed to have lasted only for 'days' so that no prolonged time was given to the breeding of distrust or the creativity of rumours if any at all. Second, while Doty attributed the low church growth rate of 1852 to internal problems, he considered the main cause to be the 'cases of private disagreement' among certain members. If these related to the case of Teacher U, nothing was expressly stated to that effect. Third, there was no suggestion that Teacher U was relieved of his duties nor that these were reduced. In other words, there is no evidence to show that the event created any large diminution of missionary confidence in Teacher U. Furthermore the unquestioned acceptance of him by the Amoy church along with the tacit missionary endorsement for what turned out to be his final mission (*infra*) demonstrated just the opposite.

In fact the missionary confidence in Teacher U was sustained until the very day he was removed from the work by death. In early May 1853, the Amoy church decided to send two men to open up Chiangchui. Having volunteered for the mission, Teacher U and Lotia left Amoy on the 12th of the month.²⁸³ The latter man was the second native helper hired in the previous year as a 'colporteur' being salaried by both the RCA and Burns.²⁸⁴ Lotia should not be confused with Lo the young church member baptised in December 1851 whom Talmage said to be 'generally in my employ since my return to Amoy'.²⁸⁵ It is not only because it seems the young Lo was never really hired as a colporteur but also because he died in March 1853 and thus could not have been Lotia who was able to flee death at the hands of the Chiangchui mob a couple of months afterward.

On the 17th, the insurrection broke out at Chiangchui and the insurgents took over the inland city with little bloodshed as 'most of the officers fled'.²⁸⁶ After the beheading of two

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*

²⁸² Doty/28Jan1853, MH/1853/pp. 161-162.

²⁸³ Talmage/3Jun1853, MH/1853/pp. 350-351.

²⁸⁴ Burns/13Oct1853, Mess/1854/pp. 49-51; AR-AB/1853/pp. 127,129, cf. p. 128.

²⁸⁵ Talmage/22Apr1853, MH/1853/p. 349.

²⁸⁶ Talmage/3Jun1853.

captured officials, the people thought the same fate awaited two other officials (whom they held in high esteem) and therefore attacked the insurgents on the 19th. While taking leave of the city, Teacher U was taken by the mob. After escaping and hiding for a while he was again recaptured. Meanwhile Lotia had fled to Amoy where he narrated the sad account to ready ears.²⁸⁷ But the details of the death of Teacher U came much later to the missionaries. At the trial of the mandarin-speaking official by the dialect-speaking insurgent chief, Teacher U volunteered as interpreter. In the course of things, the kind-hearted evangelist had asked for the sparing of the lives of 'two or three small mandarins' and this with success.²⁸⁸ When the populace recaptured the city, these acts were interpreted as proving Teacher U was one with the insurgents. Even though the acting magistrate found him innocent of the charge, none could stop the uncontrollable mob from beheading him.²⁸⁹ Inasmuch as these things happened while Teacher U was in the line of work, the martyr-like character of his suffering and death could do nothing other than to increase the respect for him on the part of the Christian community consisting of both Chinese and Westerners. Earlier we have said that the missionary confidence in Teacher U lasted till his last day. But given the manner of his death, perhaps it is no overstatement to suggest that the feeling of respect for him actually outlived him.

After the death of Teacher U and with the abortion of the Choanchiu mission, Tekchoan and Chhiengchoan became the only Chinese workers and were transferred to be stationed at Amoy.²⁹⁰ Another native helper was added later making a total of three in 1855.²⁹¹ But that same year one died of consumption, i.e. the young man 'of much promise' who was given a sum for clothing and food so he could do some colportage and also study at same time.²⁹² Also around that time, a helper was de-posted but the man was only a chapel-keeper and not a colporteur/evangelist.²⁹³ Despite this unpleasant experience, the positive character of the general missionary attitude toward the latter class of workers remained unmoved. By mid-1856, there were seven 'evangelists or colporteurs wholly or in part engaged in preaching and distributing tracts, not in Amoy alone, but also in the surrounding villages and at Chioh-be'.²⁹⁴ When Joralmon and Doty visited Chiohbe in late June/early July, Taulo (not 'Tan-Lo') was the evangelist stationed there.²⁹⁵ Of the commitment of these agents to their work, the financial test convinced the missionaries there was hardly any room for doubt.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁸ Doty/18Jan1854, MH/1854/pp. 168-171.

²⁸⁹ Doty/18Jan1854. Cf. Burns/Amoy/13Oct1853, Mess/1854/pp. 49-51.

²⁹⁰ Talmage/3Jun1853, MH/1853/p. 350. Cf. MH/1854/pp. 9-10.

²⁹¹ AR-AB/1855/p. 111.

²⁹² Talmage/Amoy/16Jan&5Feb1856, CI/29May1856/p. 189c 5-6.

²⁹³ See 3.6.

²⁹⁴ Joralmon/Amoy/30Jul1856.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.* Pitcher said that in 1857 there were five 'church catechists' (FYA/p. 202).

‘There is not one of our native assistants, who makes money by connection with us. Several of them renounced situations of considerably larger incomes, willingly receiving a small living allowance for the sake of usefulness among their perishing countrymen.’²⁹⁶

Thus the general satisfaction of the RCA missionaries with their Chinese agency was revealed not only in increased deployment but also in explicit remarks about the manner in which native workers proved their sincere dedication. Whereas increased deployment might be ‘explained away’ by the missionary limitations we discussed earlier, the straightforward commendation argues for missionary *satisfaction* with the Chinese labourers. The sudden growth of the pool of Chinese agents indeed corresponded with the increase in the number of converts (1854 onward) albeit in delayed synchronisation. That the former began after the latter had started for sometime merely confirms another points of ours, namely: church growth created more space for Chinese labour. But no matter the cause, missionary confidence in paid Chinese work was quickly found. About a year and a half after the Sinkoe church elections, Doty proudly wrote of how ‘years of happy and comforting experience’ had proven the effectiveness of native agency.²⁹⁷

Neither does the delayed commencement of the work of training the native workers disprove the missionary confidence in the Chinese agency. Of course it cannot be denied that despite the early date of his theory on Chinese agency, it was not until 31st July 1855 that Talmage actually started the first ‘theological class’.²⁹⁸ Attended by the employed agents and other Christians, the class met three times a week with each session lasting about ninety minutes. In mid-1856, it was said that there were some eight to ten class members, of whom some ‘were frequently engaged in preaching and colporteur work’.²⁹⁹ But it cannot be denied that there was much informal and practical training going on even before the theological class was started. The main difference is that previously nothing to that degree of intensity was ever done. Furthermore there were practical reasons for the delay of training. First, one problem in the preceding years was the lack of suitable or available students for such a class. Consideration should be given to the fact that generally the candidates were rather young, and in earlier years many were probably too young in terms of biological, educational and Christian ages. Second, there was the matter of missionary ability and availability to carry out such work. A key factor is language proficiency especially since lectures in ‘systematic theology’ (Tuesdays) and on ‘Edward’s [sic] [A] History [of the Work] of Redemption’³⁰⁰ (Thursdays) could not avoid the meeting of unusual vocabulary. Lastly, the missionaries did not expect the *accelerated* church growth of 1854f and especially its inland dimension.³⁰¹ As a result, they did not among other things ready a theologically trained Chinese workforce in order to cope with the suddenly enlarged work. Very likely, the new situation with its

²⁹⁶ Doty, in AR-AB/1857/p. 122.

²⁹⁷ Doty/Amoy/7Oct1857, 723CM/Bx1.

²⁹⁸ Talmage/Amoy/16Jan1856. Cf. AR-AB/1856/p. 10.

²⁹⁹ Joralmon/Amoy/30Jul1856. Cf. AR-AB/1857/p. 123.

³⁰⁰ Talmage/Amoy/16Jan1856. See *Works of President [Jonathan] Edwards* (NY, 1843-44), volume 1.

³⁰¹ See 5.5.1.

greater needs acted as an incentive for the missionaries to consider certain candidates for training who would not have been otherwise considered. Therefore the delay of theological training should not be taken as implying the lack of missionary confidence in the Chinese agents.

But the matter can actually be taken a step further. When it is recalled that in the RCA tradition, a full course of theological education was a prerequisite to the ordained ministry,³⁰² then it becomes easier to appreciate the place of that education in the scheme of things. The matter of providing such training is of great significance for the process of church devolution which requires the emergence of a native pastorate. The very act of undertaking the work on the part of the RCA attests to not only the sustenance but also the *active growth* of missionary confidence in the Chinese agents. Therefore, not only does the delay of theological training not suggest the decrease of missionary confidence, the commencement of the work actually points to the increase of that trust.

Finally there is another important correlation which should not be missed. This pertains to the native agency and the training programme on the one hand and ecclesiastical devolution or self-government on the other. Among the promising converts who attended the theological class in 1855 was the outstanding Gui Bun-hoan whom the missionaries hoped will become 'one of the first native pastors over some native church in Amoy or surrounding region'.³⁰³ Baptised at age thirty on 28th January 1855, the former 'practicing physician of a wide-spread reputation for skill' was the teacher at the parochial school for one year and a half before his death on 9th July 1857.³⁰⁴ Very likely also a member of the class was Chhoa Giau who during 1856-57 was 'wholly engaged as an assistant in our work, mostly in Amoy, on the small salary of \$5 per month'.³⁰⁵ Baptised on 25th March 1855, he spent the last year of his life in such engagement before passing away on 27th June 1857. Significantly both men were among the first batch of elders elected by the Amoy church in April 1856 and then ordained a month later. At the Sinkoe event, the formal or complete names of Gui Chiongjin and Chhoa Giau-siok were used.³⁰⁶ Therefore we see here how a space for employed labour allowed two Chinese to build up their credentials for church leadership by way of their work performance and in effect how such labour contributed toward the winning of the confidence of both the electorate and the missionaries.

For the EP side, we simply enumerate the known cases of hired Chinese agency, keeping our comments to a minimum since much has been discussed in earlier Sections. Aside from Lotia the colporteur jointly employed by Burns and the RCA, there was the Christian assistant obtained

³⁰² *Articles of Dort* (1619) Article 8; *Articles explanatory of the government and discipline of the Reformed Dutch Church in the United States of America* (1792) Articles II-IV; *RCA Constitution* (1833) ch1, Sections 4-5; *RCA Constitution* (1874) Article II, Sections 4-5. See E.T. Corwin, *A digest of constitutional and synodical legislation of the Reformed Church in America* (NY, 1906) pp.xvi,x,xi.

³⁰³ Doty/Amoy/15Sep1857.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.* Cf. Talmage/Amoy/16Jan1856, MH/1856/pp. 167-170.

³⁰⁵ Doty/Amoy/15Sep1857.

³⁰⁶ See Talmage/Amoy/30May1856. Cf. Joralmon/Amoy/30Jul1856.

by Young³⁰⁷ to serve as ‘colporteur’ and preacher at his dispensary³⁰⁸ during the pre-1854 period. The American records indicate that this must be the RCA church member engaged for some time as a colporteur at Amoy under the supervision of Young.³⁰⁹ Then there was Tekchoan who served as teacher in the EP school at Keklai from about March 1851 to May 1853.³¹⁰ In the first quarter of 1854, Burns assumed the support of the two RCA workers for the sake of the work at Pechuia.³¹¹ Later in September, Johnston acquired four assistants ‘of the kind I wished’.³¹² Consisting of two old men and two young men, the Chinese agents ‘partake of the twofold character of evangelists and colporteurs, and do not strictly sustain the full character of either’.³¹³ It was in later times when the EP training of evangelists became more developed that these came to be more strictly distinguished from the colporteurs.³¹⁴ Neither was the performance of the assistants disappointing to Johnston. During the visit to Aukoey in 1854 (Sep), the unending questions of the crowd on the last evening had the evangelists take turns eating supper and lasted ‘until near midnight, when they were obliged to give over through exhaustion, not from the people being tired of hearing’.³¹⁵ From November/December during ‘the time of our greatest weakness’ (for ‘never were we weaker than now’, i.e. with only one EP man on the ground and sick too), Johnston was able to boast of three cases of conversion which derived ‘almost exclusively through the instrumentality of our native agents’.³¹⁶ By early 1856, there were a total of fifteen native agents working under the three Protestant Missions at Amoy³¹⁷ among whom four were under the supervision of Douglas.³¹⁸ Likewise Burns reported in early 1856 that the Chinese Protestant workforce consisted of fifteen colporteurs and evangelists, some young men under training and the lay volunteer preachers.³¹⁹ In sum, we see that the practice of employing Chinese labour was started by Young and continued by Burns. Due to circumstantial obstacles, both however were unable to form any long lasting Chinese workforce. The commencement of that task was to fall upon Johnston but the establishment of things on surer footing was to be Douglas’ contribution. As far as the records go, there is no known case of unpleasant experiences with Chinese agents in the EP camp during our period. Speaking for both the EPM and the RCA, Douglas was emphatic in saying there was not a single case of disciplinary action administered upon the colporteurs or evangelists from the beginning until 21st July 1856.³²⁰ Like their American colleagues, the EP missionaries had a high regard for the Chinese agency they had come to know.

³⁰⁷ Young/Amoy/11May1853, Mess/1853/p. 287.

³⁰⁸ Young/15Apr1851, Mess/1851/p. 213.

³⁰⁹ AR-AB/1851/p. 125.

³¹⁰ See 4.4.3.

³¹¹ See 4.3.

³¹² Johnston/Nov1854, Mess/1855/pp. 52-54.

³¹³ Johnston/Rev1854, Mess/1855/p. 146.

³¹⁴ See CAF/pp. 358-360.

³¹⁵ Johnston/Amoy/22Dec1854, Mess/1855/pp. 112-113.

³¹⁶ Johnston/7Dec1854, Mess/1855/pp. 82-84.

³¹⁷ Douglas/Amoy/3Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 119-120.

³¹⁸ Douglas/29Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 146-148.

³¹⁹ Burns, *Memoir*, pp. 481-482.

³²⁰ Douglas/Amoy/21Jul1856, Mess/1856/p. 339.

Let us summarise and conclude this Section. Paid Chinese labour began with the employment of Teacher U by Pohlman who was motivated by both situational and methodological factors. A mild disenchantment on the part of Doty dissolved quickly even as the work of Teacher U and its results won the satisfaction and confidence of his foreign employers. The incident of 1852 failed to remove the missionary confidence which was likely enhanced by the 'martyrdom' at Chiangchiu in the following year. Meanwhile the paid Chinese workforce grew to seven in number by mid-1856, an increase which reflected the continuity of the positive missionary attitude. The latter was further proven by straightforward statements of missionary approval, not least concerning the Chinese readiness to pass the 'financial test'. Far from showing the lack of missionary confidence, the commencement of theological training even if somewhat late evinced the *active growth* of missionary faith in the Chinese agents. The case of Gui Bun-hoan and Chhoa Giau illustrates how satisfactory performance at employed labour could help one win election into church office, or how it could be useful in earning the trust of the missionaries and the Chinese church members. From the EP side, we could find no record of any disappointing experience with Chinese agents during our period. On the contrary, the strong commendation offered by Douglas affirms the Chinese workers of both Missions. Therefore we close this Section by saying both the RCA and EP missionaries shared a similar confidence and the same high regard for their employed Chinese workers.

4.7. Chinese voluntary work

In this Section we focus on the voluntary labours of the Chinese converts, i.e. work offered without any expectation much less a pre-agreed arrangement involving payment for labour in the form of money or goods. Our argument is that as a powerful expression of religious zeal, this type of labour contributed to the winning of missionary high regard toward the Chinese Christians. In general, voluntary Chinese work may be divided into two kinds, viz. (1) native participation in the work administered within the missionary structure, and (2) personal religious efforts undertaken by the Chinese on their own. The first kind of work consisted primarily in helping at the chapels, joining missionary-led/directed tours, and the likes. Up to mid-1856, the latter kind comprised (a) work done within Amoy, especially spontaneous preachings to relatives, friends and others, at homes or in the streets, (b) sporadic short-term work done outside Amoy, at the initiative of the Chinese with or without the seeking of missionary approval, (c) the attempted occupation of Chiangchiu and Choanchiu, and (d) the stated work at Pechuia and Chiohbe. Presently our concern is with all the above except (c) and (d) which shall be treated in the next Chapter.

Substantial voluntary work input seemed to have started after the construction and opening of the Sinkoe church building. At the initiative of the Chinese converts, evening meetings for prayer and exhortation were held six times a week since the new Sinkoe chapel opened in 1849, the remaining evening being reserved for teaching and mutual encouragement. For five afternoons of the week, a service for tract dispensation and conversation was also held 'principally by one of

these brethren'.³²¹ Nor was it unusual for recent converts to be found earnestly preaching his religion to others, sacrificing time otherwise to be imputed to the pursuit of his livelihood.³²² After the first Sabbath morning service held at his house on 22nd December 1850, Talmage noted with pleasure how 'some of the converts continued a long time, exhorting and reasoning with the people'.³²³ Likewise when the afternoon service ended, one member continued speaking to his countrymen 'till evening'.³²⁴ While the help of Teacher U was appreciated, credit was attributed also to the Chinese Christians for making it possible in 1851 to have both chapels open 'also some part of almost every day and evening in the week'.³²⁵ Writing in March 1851, Talmage happily noted how the dedicated Chinese converts did this: 'One, two, three, or more of the converts are always ready to hold forth almost every afternoon and evening.'³²⁶ During Doty's six-week absence, Talmage was able to continue most of the regular meetings due to the assistance of Teacher U and 'other native members of the church'.³²⁷ Chinese help in the daily 'informal services' made it possible for Talmage to commence another meeting for Chinese women held at his house in August.³²⁸ In early 1852, the ABCFM noted that the '[t]he week-day meetings... continue as heretofore [and that t]he native brethren are found very helpful in this department of labor'.³²⁹ Sometime after Talmage had ceased from street preaching in the latter half of 1851, the work was picked up by Burns who was 'usually accompanied and assisted' by one or more RCA members especially the one who habitually 'spends the first of the day in laboring to sustain himself and family, but devotes much of the afternoon to the work of the Lord'.³³⁰ On his part Burns confirmed that in his indoor and outdoor preaching activities in Amoy, he had 'co-operated with various members of the native Church here, and they have shown a ready forwardness and zeal in the work'.³³¹ During February-March 1852, he toured Amoy Island along with two new RCA members and the school teacher Tekchoan who was on Chinese new year holiday.³³² After Doty offered the RCA chapel to Burns in c.October 1853 because the latter had failed to find a good indoor preaching venue, the work in the forenoons was assisted by Lotia as well as by RCA members.³³³ But even before the offer, the chapel for 'a great part of every week-day, is unoccupied, except by members of the native Church, who are frequently engaged from day to day, in collecting and addressing companies of the passers[-]by'.³³⁴ In its annual report of 1853, the ABCFM noted that a great deal of informal work in the form of tract-distribution, conversation and

³²¹ AR-AB/1851/p. 125.

³²² *Ibid.*

³²³ Talmage/Dec1850, AR-AB/1851/p. 125.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*

³²⁵ Talmage/Amoy/14Jul1851, CI/1Jan1852/p. 101c1-4. Cf. APGS/1852/p. 278.

³²⁶ Talmage/18Mar1851, FYC/p. 111.

³²⁷ Talmage/Amoy/14Jul1851. Cf. AR-AB/1852/p. 123.

³²⁸ Talmage/22Jan1852, MH/1852/pp. 149-152.

³²⁹ MH/1852/p. 9.

³³⁰ Talmage/22Jan1852.

³³¹ Burns/Amoy/9Mar1852, Mess/1852/pp. 219-221.

³³² *Ibid.*

³³³ Burns/Amoy/13Oct1853, Mess/1854/pp. 49-51.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*

exhortation had been done by Teacher U as well as by the native believers who helped in the work 'from time to time, as volunteers'.³³⁵ The evidence is therefore abundant that throughout 1849-53 a significant amount of voluntary work was being done.

While at times it was some form of missionary limitation which created opportune moments for the converts to fill in, such was not always the case. In 1851 Talmage noted that not only were the male converts 'always ready, when opportunity offers' to preach the gospel to others but also that 'most of them are zealous in seeking opportunities' to do so.³³⁶ This distinction is very important, for the opportunity-seeking spirit demonstrated convert sincerity in a most convincing manner, thereby earning for the Chinese the increased confidence of the missionaries. For instance, it was at the converts' *initiative* that the daily evening meetings were begun in 1849. From Young we learn that these sessions were conducted 'in turns' by the Chinese converts who were 'really most exemplary' and exerted themselves 'untiringly'.³³⁷ Besides helping with the work at the chapels, some of the converts also frequented the busier thoroughfares in order to proclaim the gospel as they could.³³⁸

'Two of our members, although compelled to labor with their hands for the sustenance of themselves and their families, yet devote the afternoons and evenings of almost every day in the week, in making known the way of salvation to their countrymen. They spend the Sabbath also, only omitting their labors long enough to listen to the preaching of the missionary and to partake of their noonday meal, from early in the morning until bedtime, in the same way, publishing the Gospel to their countrymen.'³³⁹

!But the zeal of the converts was by no means limited to 1849-53 only. For likewise in later years, they were readily spending their leisure hours in evangelistic activities.³⁴⁰ Especially common were the efforts in reaching out to relatives and friends as well as in tract-distribution work in the streets of Amoy or its surrounding villages.³⁴¹ As a matter of fact, the missionaries observed an intensification of the native fervour in 1854. Talmage gave an eye-witness account: 'Almost every one seems to be impressed with the truth, that he or she is to improve every opportunity to speak a word for Christ'.³⁴² Adding to the interest which the last statement generates is the reference to the female dimension of the voluntary work. Regretfully the general remark precluded any detailed information on the contribution of the women converts. However we do know of some individual cases at least, e.g. widow Hong³⁴³ and the widow who brought her

³³⁵ AR-AB/1853/p. 129; APGS/1854/p. 473.

³³⁶ Talmage/Amoy/14Jul1851, CI/1Jan1852/p. 101c1-4.

³³⁷ Young/Amoy/15Apr1851, Mess/1851/p. 213.

³³⁸ Talmage/18Mar1851, FYC/p. 111.

³³⁹ Talmage/14Apr1851, FYC/p. 112.

³⁴⁰ Joralmon/Amoy/30Jul1856.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*

³⁴² Talmage/Amoy/18Aug1854, CI/18Jan1855/p. 113c5-6. Cf. FYC/p. 155; AR-AB/1855/p. 112. See also Doty/18Jan1854, MH/1854/pp. 168-171.

³⁴³ Doty/Amoy/16Mar1848, CI/20Jul1848/p. 6c3-5. Cf. Talmage/diary/27Feb&1Mar1848, FYC/p. 83.

two sons and some neighbours to Amoy in 1854 so they too could hear the gospel.³⁴⁴ But of female voluntary labour as a category, we are in the dark. At any rate, by early 1856 it was reported that most converts 'as formerly' continued to be possessed by the zeal to share the gospel with their fellow-Chinese.³⁴⁵ Actually the same zeal among the converts persisted even beyond the Sinkoe event of 1856.³⁴⁶ A stand-out in voluntary evangelistic work was Ong Chhienghong who 'was according to his ability, one of the most useful men among the converts'.³⁴⁷ By occupation a bead-carver, he often would take a good position at a busy thoroughfare, simultaneously carrying on his handicraft and proclaiming the gospel to the public. He also did preach frequently at the chapels and undertake many preaching visits to the surrounding towns of Amoy. Although 'a poor man, supporting himself entirely by the labor of his hands', he neither received nor asked for any pecuniary reward for these voluntary labours.³⁴⁸

In addition to the reference to Ong Chhienghong's itinerant preachings, other cases of short-term evangelistic activity undertaken outside Amoy can also be furnished. In 1853 just shortly after the Chinese new year's day, two church members invited Talmage to join their tour to the villages on Amoy Island. After much preaching had been done Talmage returned to the treaty port that same day. The pair however stayed on for several days and were soon joined by other Amoy converts. The men returned home later with reports of good local reception.³⁴⁹ In August the following year, a man from Koajim (c.10 miles beyond Pechuia) came to Amoy bearing a letter written by the school teacher on behalf of several families. The petition was for the sending of someone to preach the gospel in their region. As the missionaries were unable to go, three Chinese Christians were sent instead on the 14th. Four days later, the small company returned to Amoy to relate the good reception they had and how the messenger-man had furnished them food and lodging but refused all remuneration.³⁵⁰ For the whole of 1854, 'several preaching and colporter [sic] excursions' had been undertaken.³⁵¹ In mid-1855 Doty explained the situation: 'Think too of partially awakened persons coming twenty, thirty, and even forty miles from different quarters, and pleading for some one to go and preach to them and their villages the everlasting gospel! For want of ability, we have been compelled to refuse a compliance with their wishes.'³⁵² The great demand upon the limited missionary workforce had more than once given occasion for Chinese exercises.

Commenting on the very encouraging church growth of the three Missions for 1855, Douglas remarked prospectively with great optimism:

³⁴⁴ Talmage/18Aug1854.

³⁴⁵ Talmage/Amoy/16Jan&5Feb1856, CI/29May1856/p. 189c 5-6.

³⁴⁶ Doty/Amoy/15Sep1857.

³⁴⁷ Joralmon/Amoy/29Aug1856, 723CM/Bx1. This letter was sent with that of 30Jul.

³⁴⁸ Joralmon/29Aug1856.

³⁴⁹ Talmage/3Jun1853, MH/1853/p. 350.

³⁵⁰ Talmage/18Aug1854, MH/1855/pp. 45-46.

³⁵¹ MH/1855/pp. 9-10.

³⁵² Doty/25Jun1855, MH/1855/pp. 354-356.

‘...as to the future, our hopes rest, under the mercy and love of God, on various reasons, partly [on] the *zeal and prayerfulness stirred up at home* [italics original], partly on the singularly steady progress, and [the] continual proportional increase of the converting work, which is also peculiarly free from any excesses [sic] of enthusiasm or superstition -- and *very much* [italics added] on the fact that the converts almost all are full of zeal to lead their relatives and friends to become partakers of the like precious faith, and to instruct in the Scriptures and the doctrine those who are younger in Christ. They seem, so far as I can see, to delight to tell those that are still without, [about] the grace and peace which they have found.’³⁵³

To conclude, we have in this Section focused on the voluntary labours of the Chinese converts. Attention has been given to the Chinese participation in the work of the missionaries as well as to spontaneous native efforts exerted in Amoy and short-term Chinese-initiated/led work of a sporadic nature done outside Amoy. The finding has been that throughout 1849-56 the voluntary evangelistic and preaching work of the converts had been consistently maintained. It is unfortunate that the result of this work cannot be quantified even in rough figures since there was in force a missionary monopoly on the administration of baptism and the granting of church admission. Easier it is to determine how many Chinese were baptised by Pohlman or for that matter all the missionaries together, but certainly not so the task of specifying how many were converted by way of voluntary Chinese preaching (or even by Teacher U and the other hired agents for that matter). Nevertheless there is compelling evidence to show that the amount of Chinese voluntary participation in the general work of the Mission as well as ‘extra-curricular’ personal evangelistic efforts was in sufficient volume to gain not only the attention of the missionaries but also their pleasure and admiration.

4.8. Chinese effectiveness

An aspect of Chinese work common to both its paid and voluntary forms which greatly impressed the missionaries is perceived native evangelistic effectiveness. The effectivity of Chinese spokespersonship on behalf of the Christian faith was first observed by Pohlman. In 1847 the week-day morning meetings (11 am) were started being conducted by Teacher U ‘in one of the vacant houses on the site selected for our church edifice’.³⁵⁴ Although visited by the missionaries only ‘once or twice a week’, the room was sometimes ‘crowded to overflowing’. During the last Chinese monthly concert of prayer that year, Pohlman after listening to Teacher U’s account of his recent tour to Canton observed that the Chinese were ‘generally more free to express themselves and state their objections to a native than to us foreigners’.³⁵⁵ Correlating this with Pohlman’s impression of Chinese excellence at appearance-keeping,³⁵⁶ it is not difficult to see how native agency was believed to have bettered its foreign counterpart at detecting or even drawing out hidden thoughts and attitudes among Chinese audiences. Consider also how the missionary had

³⁵³ Douglas/Amoy/3Jan1856, Mess/1856/p. 119. Cf. CAF/p. 111.

³⁵⁴ Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, CI/20Apr1848/p. 162c5-6.

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁶ See 3.3.

earlier been impressed by the two early converts³⁵⁷ whose occasional addresses before their fellow-countrymen at the week-day afternoon services were followed 'not infrequently' by 'interesting religious discussions'.³⁵⁸ Thus as early as December 1847, Pohlman had made explicit his appreciation for the effectiveness of Teacher U as well as the converts.³⁵⁹

Talmage took the matter a step further when he verbalised the belief in the superior efficacy of Chinese evangelism:

'Thus every true convert becomes in some measure a helper...His example is a "light shining in a dark place". Especially is it true among the heathen, that every disciple of Christ is as "a city set on a hill which cannot be hid." His neighbors and acquaintances must observe the change in his conduct ...*His example must tell.*

...Such converts, also, in some respects, may be more efficient than the missionary. They can go where we cannot, and reach those who are entirely beyond our influence. They understand the customs of the people thoroughly. They remember what were the greatest difficulties and objections which proved the greatest obstacles to their reception of the Gospel, and they know how these difficulties were removed, and these objections answered. Besides, they have all the advantages which a native must be expected to possess over a foreigner, arising from the prejudices of the people.'³⁶⁰

Thus it was not only cultural identity which gave the Chinese the edge. More fundamentally it was the convert's very identity as a Chinese Christian which was the more forceful unspoken testimony. Whereas a missionary may by some ability and means bridge the cultural gap to a good extent, there was absolutely no way the foreign missionary could change his national identity in order to delete all the disadvantages it brought to the evangelistic task. But it was not only theoretical reflection that formed the basis of Talmage's argumentation for the greater effectivity of the convert or even the idea that every convert was a helper. The concrete example of widow Hong Sinsi and her sons³⁶¹ were clearly at the back of his mind when he wrote in the same letter of 1848 that the conduct of some paralleled those of the Samaritan woman at the well and of Andrew and Philip the disciples of Christ.³⁶² Just as the Samaritan woman brought the people of her city to meet Jesus, so too Hong started a weekly meeting at her house so the neighbours could hear Christian preaching. Likewise just as Andrew upon finding the Messiah quickly went and told his brother Peter, as too Philip told Nathaniel, so the younger son of Hong having heard the gospel in 1846 at the LMS chapel soon got his brother to attend too. No doubt in his memory also was the illustration of Chinese effectiveness afforded by the case of widow Hong's preaching to her neighbour just about half a year ago. On the Sabbath of 27th February 1848, Hong and her two sons presented two idols to Pohlman at the chapel. The latter was informed that the trio had earlier burned all their other idols and ancestral tablets. Beyond regular church attendance, a weekly

³⁵⁷ I.e. Hokkui and Unsia. Pohlman/Amoy/17Sep1846; Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, p. 162c5-6.

³⁵⁸ Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, p. 162c5-6.

³⁵⁹ Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, CI/27Apr1848/p. 166c3-5.

³⁶⁰ Talmage/Amoy/12Sep1848, CI/18Jan1849/p. 109c1-2 (*italics original*).

³⁶¹ Doty/Amoy/16Mar1848, CI/20Jul1848/p. 6c3-5.

³⁶² The Gospel of John 1:35-51; 4:1-42.

meeting at their house was requested for. At the first such meeting held in March, a female neighbour confessed to having burned all her idols after being convinced by Hong and right there surrendered her last (incombustible) idol to Pohlman.³⁶³ Talmage was deeply impressed by Hong's preaching and especially her instant convert, saying she was 'so successful'.³⁶⁴

A few years later, the same conviction was still held by Talmage who continued to believe that '[f]or much of the work[,] these converts are perhaps better adapted than ourselves'.³⁶⁵ Along the same line, the missionary wrote later in 1854 that 'many' of the converts were 'quite effective speakers'.³⁶⁶ In this regard, the perceived response of those who heard the converts was an item of particular interest to the missionaries.

'The heathen are often astonished to hear men from the lower walks of life, who previously had not had the benefit of any education, and are yet perhaps unable to read, speak with such fluency, and reason with such power concerning the things of God, as to silence their adversaries, even though they be men of education.'³⁶⁷

But as far as the missionaries are concerned, probably the most dramatic illustration of Chinese effectiveness was the extension of the work into the interior in 1854. Since the interesting work of that year requires (and deserves) an extended discussion, it shall be left to the succeeding Chapter. What this Section demonstrates is that the missionary belief in Chinese evangelistic effectiveness pre-dated 1854 even if it was re-confirmed at that time in a highly impressive manner.

Therefore to the missionaries, the matter of Chinese effectivity was of great interest even in itself. In addition there was also another dimension to that interest, i.e. the missionary concern with the task of long-term evangelisation at a time when the interior was closed to foreigners while a pessimism reigned over the prospect of reinforcements from the home churches in the West. Thus both the readiness of the natives to do the work and their effectiveness at it added greatly to the missionary confidence in the Chinese Christians.

4.9. Conclusion

Toward the end of our period, the great expansion of the work at Banlam had unfortunately not been matched by a correspondence in the size, much less the capability of the missionary workforce. Especially problematic was the inability of the missionaries to attend to the inland stations which were too physically distant from the Mission bases in Amoy. This inability was confirmed by Doty in 1857. While speaking of the cessation of 'open persecution' at Chiohbe, it was mentioned in passing that the missionary intelligence was actually based on the 'reports of the

³⁶³ Doty/Amoy/16Mar1848, CI/20Jul1848/p. 6c3-5. Cf. Talmage/diary/27Feb&1Mar1848, FYC/p. 83.

³⁶⁴ Talmage/diary/1Mar1848, FYC/p. 83.

³⁶⁵ Talmage/18Mar1851, FYC/p. 111.

³⁶⁶ Talmage/[day/month?]1854, FYC/p. 155.

³⁶⁷ Talmage/1854, FYC/p. 155. Cf. AR-AB/1855/p. 112.

Evangelists and native brethren who assist in the work there'.³⁶⁸ From around mid-1856, Joralmon noted that it was impracticable for the missionaries 'to give as much attention to outstations as they wish on account of the pressure of duties in Amoy' and that it was in this matter 'they most bitterly feel the want of more laborers'.³⁶⁹

Placing what this Chapter has discussed within the historical context just mentioned, we find that along with the growth of the work over time, the missionaries had to face not only the shortage of foreign workers but also the further reduction of man-hours occasioned by health failures, deaths, forced absences, language acquisition exercises and other work demands. Alongside these *internal* limitations, the relative absence of local hostility was an *external* non-limitation which made for increased work opportunities as well as the less-restricted expansion of the Protestant enterprise. Not only did all these factors occasion over-exhaustion on the part of the existing personnel, they also provided a large work space for Chinese labour.

Relatedly the missionaries had held the belief in the need for a Chinese agency since the late 1840s. However it was not until 1855 that the formal training of native workers began. Meanwhile the created work space was filled by the Chinese since Pohlman's time. In general, the American missionaries were quite satisfied with the local agents they hired during our period. On the EP side we found no evidence to suggest that the British experience with native agents was any different. With regard to Chinese voluntary work, the missionaries were quite impressed with native participation in the work headed or directed by them as well as with the spontaneous efforts exerted by the Chinese in or outside Amoy. Especially striking was Chinese evangelistic effectiveness which the missionaries had observed since 1847.

At the beginning of this Chapter, we have asked whether there existed any EPM impressions about the Chinese Christians which may affect RCA impressions of the same in a negative way, thereby reducing RCA confidence in the native converts, thus retarding the journey toward devolution. In reply, we say that until the Sinkoe event, we have discovered no *significant* negative experience or impression on the part of the EP missionaries in their dealings with Chinese labour. Indeed we have also identified several instances wherein the British Mission availed of the labours of RCA agents and converts. But these were generally positive in character and in effect became additional opportunities for the Chinese to prove their reliability and worth. Consequently these contacts had the general impact of increasing the missionaries' regard for the Christians.

Thus by all the features of native labour cited above, the Chinese were able to win the high regard of the Westerners. Having had manifold opportunities to 'test out' native work firsthand, the missionaries soon became convinced believers in the readiness of Chinese church leadership.

However as far as Chinese labours are concerned, the more powerful testimony of native 'maturity' came in the form of the inland initiatives from 1853 onward. To these, we now turn our attention.

³⁶⁸ Doty/Amoy/15Sep1857.

³⁶⁹ Joralmon/Amoy/30Jul1856.

Chapter 5

Taking the initiative: Chinese inland labours

5.1. Introduction

To review, our larger argument in Chapters 3-5 is that the church members were able to win the high regard of the missionaries who came to believe in Chinese readiness for devolution in 1856. Already we have argued that the missionaries were satisfied with the general Christian character of the converts (Ch3) and that this was further reinforced by the performance of native labour in both paid and voluntary forms (Ch4).

In this Chapter we continue the larger argument by looking at long-term operations outside of Amoy which were begun at Chinese initiative. By *long-term* we mean either intention or results but not necessarily both. The Chiangchui and Choanchui missions of 1853 (5.2) were planned as long-term operations but both were soon cut short by extraneous forces. In contrast, the Chinese initiatives which culminated in the establishment of the churches at Pechuia (5.3) and Chiohbe (5.4) did not originally involve any plan to start permanent work but ended up as such. The Chapter argument is that the Chinese initiatives in extending the work inland further boosted the confidence of the missionaries in the natives, and more significantly, did so in such a manner as to convince the missionaries that the next step in the church formation programme was self-government (5.5).

5.2. Chiangchui and Choanchui

Being 'in many respects a more eligible post than Amoy',¹ the inland city of Chiangchui had long held the fancy of the missionaries. Early missionary visits were made in November 1846 (Pohlman), March 1847 (Pohlman) and September 1847 (Pohlman, Doty, Talmage and Lloyd).² During and/or after the visit of 1851 in company with Stronach (LMS) and James Legge (LMS, Hongkong), Talmage had entertained the thought of at least having an out-station in Chiangchui. Inspired by the observation of the Roman Catholic priest who had obtained permission to reside 'near there' and had been engaged for sometime in preaching, the initial idea was to assign there a resident missionary. Further consideration revealed this to be less realistic than simply posting a

¹ Talmage/22Jan1852, MH/1852/pp. 149-152.

² CRep/1847/pp. 75-84; Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, CI/20Apr1848/p. 162c5-6; AR-AB/1848/pp. 221-222; FYC/pp. 81ff.

colporteur in that region and then coupling the arrangement with monthly missionary visits.³ By early 1852, the refined strategy was to have two colporteurs reside there and one missionary visit the out-station as often as possible.⁴ However local obstacles prevented the undertaking of any concrete action.⁵

The eventual realisation of the plan to occupy the city was a result of Chinese initiatives. In March 1853, Ong Chhiengchoan the son of widow Hong requested that he be sent to his hometown Chiangchui along with Lotia in order to preach and dispense tracts there. His willingness 'to give the time and bear his own expenses' readily won an affirmative response from the missionaries.⁶ The latter also asked the Chinese convert to check out whether the time was ripe to rent a house there and open an out-station. On his return in early April, Chhiengchoan reported the city was yet unready for occupation. Several days later, another request for a visit was forwarded but this time asking also that a missionary join in the visit. As it was to be a trip of 'several days', the RCA missionaries were unable to go.⁷ In their stead went Burns who confessed that he did so 'at the earnest desire especially of one of [the two RCA converts]'.⁸ A few days after the party left on 13th April, they were joined by Chhienghong the other son of widow Hong.⁹ Two weeks later on 26th April,¹⁰ the party returned to announce that the place was ready to be an out-station.¹¹ Local interest was confirmed sometime afterwards when two (or three¹²) men from Chiangchui came to Amoy to inquire deeper into 'the way of the Lord'. On the 3rd of May, a meeting of male church members was held to discuss the matter of sending a team of two men to occupy the inland city. The proposal was followed by another one stating that if two more men were ready, they will be sent to the northern region between Amoy and Choanchui (Chinchew) with a view to starting operations in the latter city. Although the Choanchui proposal was 'new to us [i.e. the missionaries], and probably was new to most of the members', it was accepted along with the first.¹³ Consequently Teacher U and Lotia were assigned to Chiangchui while Tekchoan (the teacher at Young's school) and Chhiengchoan became the colporteurs to Choanchui. These men became the first Chinese-supported¹⁴ domestic missionaries in the history of Banlam.

The episode demonstrated the evangelistic/missionary initiative of Chhiengchoan as an individual and of the Amoy converts as a collective body. After May 1853, Chinese work had taken on a life of its own so that it had gone beyond the missionary-given Chinese work space and ventured into a state of self-extension. At this point though, it should be remembered that the

³ Talmage/Amoy/14Jul1851, CI/1Jan1852/p. 101c1-4.

⁴ Talmage/22Jan1852, MH/1852/pp. 149-152.

⁵ See AR-AB/1853/pp. 129-130.

⁶ Talmage/3&10Jun1853, MH/1853/pp. 350ff Cf. FYC/pp. 134-136.

⁷ Talmage/3&10Jun1853.

⁸ Burns/Amoy/16May1853, Bx119/F5; Burns/16Jan1854, Mess/1854/pp. 217-218.

⁹ Talmage/3&10Jun1853.

¹⁰ Burns/16May1853.

¹¹ Talmage/3&10Jun1853.

¹² Burns/16May1853. So too Burns/13Oct1853, Mess/1854/pp. 50-51.

¹³ Talmage/3&10Jun1853.

¹⁴ See Talmage/3Jun1853, FYC/pp. 136-138.

missionaries on their own took the first step of devolving the decision-making responsibility upon the Chinese. While some credit should be given that act, yet by the missionaries' own confession, the converts by way of their Choanchiu proposal actually outran and took the lead over the foreigners in the matter of extending the work beyond Amoy. That the work was cut short at both places by the insurrection and related political unrest¹⁵ did not lessen what positive impression was created on the part of the missionaries. The sentiments of the latter were effectively transmitted back to America, as shown by the editorial comment of the *Missionary Herald*: 'The missionary spirit seems to pervade this little band of disciples in an unusual degree. They are ready, not only to proclaim the love of Christ in Amoy, but to go to other places having at present no permanent laborers, as they have shown by their conduct.'¹⁶ Therefore even though the Chiangchui and Choanchiu missions failed to realise their objectives in 1853, the very act of attempting them succeeded in winning the further admiration of the missionaries for the Chinese converts.

5.3. Pechuia

In the summer of 1854 Talmage wrote: 'Were it not for the Christian activity of our members, so many of them abounding in good works, our operations here would *necessarily be confined within much narrower limits*.'¹⁷ The wider limits which Talmage had in mind when composing the last line referred to the extension of the work to the inland town of Pechuia. Before we take up the latter subject in this Section, we have deliberately taken care to first discuss the *local* (4.4) as well as the *short-term non-local* work done by the converts on their own (5.2). The discussions are useful for they show that the missionaries had no reason to believe that the Chinese initiatives in extending the work to Pechuia and Chiohbe were born of mere adventurism. On the contrary, there was every reason to be convinced that such efforts were but the natural outgrowth of a pre-existent and consistent spirit of evangelism. With this significant point made, we are ready to look into the Chinese-initiated work on the mainland.

In this Section, our argument runs like this. In terms of origin, both the RCA and EPM acknowledged the work at Pechuia to be born of Chinese initiative (5.3.1). The missionaries were favourably impressed with the growth of the work and believed the result to be mainly creditable to Chinese labour (5.3.2). In other words, the Chinese agents and volunteers were thought to be doing the bulk of the *local work*, i.e. preaching whether in the rented house or elsewhere, and informal conversation with inquirers. The Chinese rather faithfully operated along the lines of the RCA mission methodology, which gave assurance to the missionaries that the natives had already 'gotten things right', i.e. methodologically (5.3.3). The zeal and effectiveness of the Pechuia believers as well as their steadfastness under persecutions proved their religious authenticity, thereby

¹⁵ On Chiangchui, see 4.6. On Choanchiu, see Doty/18Jan1854, MH/1854/p. 169. Cf. AR-AB/1854/pp. 142-143.

¹⁶ MH/1854/pp. 9-10.

¹⁷ Talmage/Amoy/18Aug1854, CI/18Jan1855/p. 113c5-6 (italics added). Cf. FYC/p. 155; AR-AB/1855/p. 112.

demonstrating the capability of native work to produce genuine converts (5.3.4). By all the above, significant progress was made toward missionary readiness to grant Chinese autonomy.

5.3.1. Origins

Both RCA and EP sources agree the work at Pechuia was born of Chinese initiative. On 9th January 1854, Chhiengchoan induced Burns and Tekchoan ('Tiek-choan') to undertake with him a preaching trip to 'some region where [the Gospel] had not been heard'.¹⁸ The first stop was at a somewhat lively inland town which held twelve market days each month. With a population of c.5-6,000, Pechuia lies about half-way between Amoy and Chiangchiu (with Chiohbe 10-12 miles away), thus occupying a very good 'central position'.¹⁹ That it was the ex-fortune teller (Chhiengchoan) who initiated this venture, which led to the market town located some twenty miles southwest from Amoy, was attested by no less than Burns' own confession.²⁰ Likewise Doty attributed the preaching tour to the 'urgent importunity' of Chhiengchoan.²¹ Therefore the work at Pechuia originated out of an evangelistic initiative which was distinctively Chinese in character. This is of course historically speaking, rather than intentionally speaking, for the 'only definite plan' on 9th January was to preach at some new region²² so that Talmage could justly say later that Pechuia 'was not selected by ourselves, but by our Master, who has thrust us unto it'.²³ At any rate, there was no dispute among both Missions that the Pechuia work was initiated by the Chinese.

5.3.2a. The early Burns phase (Jan-Mar)

Originally planned to last only a few days, the Pechuia visit was unexpectedly extended to two months. The unusually bright prospect encouraged Burns to rent a house there as 'our headquarters'²⁴ with the lower storey for a preaching hall and the upper for living quarters.²⁵ It was not long before the Sabbath services and the nightly meetings were attended by 'a goodly number of apparently interested listeners'.²⁶ The destruction of idols and renunciation of their worship were taken as signs of a true spiritual awakening. In early February, the two RCA agents returned to Amoy for 'a few days' leaving Burns and his 'servant' to man the station.²⁷ At the invitation of some men they had met at Pechuia,²⁸ Burns and the two RCA agents²⁹ proceeded further into the

¹⁸ Doty/20Apr1854; cf. Mess/1854/pp. 345-346. See also Burns/16Jan1854, Mess/1854/pp. 217-218.

¹⁹ Talmage/18Aug1854, MH/1855/p. 45. Cf. Mess/1855/p. 115. In 1857 Sandemann put the population at 8,000 (Mess/1857/p. 227).

²⁰ Burns/White Water Camp/16Jan1854, Bx119/F5. Cf. Burns/Amoy/8May1854, Mess/1854/p. 266; Matheson, *Narrative*, p. 10; CAF/p. 88.

²¹ Doty/20Apr1854.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Talmage/18Aug1854, Mess/1855/p. 115.

²⁴ Burns/Amoy/3Mar1854, Bx119/F5.

²⁵ Doty/20Apr1854.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Burns/Amoy/3Mar1854, Bx119/F5. When Burns returned to Amoy on 27Feb, he had been away for 'exactly 49 days' (i.e. 9Jan-26Feb).

²⁸ AR-AB/1854/p. 144.

²⁹ Doty/20Apr1854.

interior.³⁰ While the trio was away for ‘some weeks’ in March, two other Chinese from Amoy³¹ carried on nightly preaching in the rented hall.³² When Burns returned to Pechuia later in the month, he found that the work had progressed much under the Amoy converts whose preaching was attracting a fair crowd with some 40-60 people staying up ‘every night to a late hour’ and that the interested ones ‘had evidently advanced in knowledge and earnestness of spirit, and resolved to obey the Gospel at the risk of much reproach and opposition’.³³ Meanwhile during the rest of his stay in Pechuia which lasted till the end of April, ‘several members of the native Church at Amoy [had] successively come out of their own account to aid in the work’.³⁴ Although Doty did visit Pechuia while Burns was away in March, his visit was short lasting a few days at most, so that there is no compelling reason to think he was instrumental in attracting the listening crowd nor in advancing the Christian knowledge and spirit of the interested ones. Moreover as we have seen, Burns himself implicitly attributed the results to the Chinese converts from Amoy.

Therefore by Burns’ return there were already twenty persons who professed the faith, including twenty-year-old Lamsan and his family as well as the entire household of Nui³⁵ the cloth-dealer.³⁶ Again we recall Doty’s statement above which suggested that most (if not all) of these were the products of Chinese labour.³⁷ Furthermore Burns implied that there was nothing like twenty professions before he left Pechuia. While it is not known to us how many professions there were before he left, it is clear some progress was definitely made during his absence. But even for the work done before his absence, one can never at all disclaim the credit of Chinese labour as we have already shown earlier.

Thus far, we have seen that the Pechuia work was initiated by Chhiengchoan and sustained almost always by RCA Chinese agents, with or without Burns around, even if seemingly presided over by the foreigner. To his credit, Burns it was who rented the house at Pechuia thus making possible the extended work at the town. Yet his presence was all the time in company with the two RCA Chinese. Doty confirmed: ‘Two of our native brethren are *constantly* employed in connection with Mr. Burns’.³⁸ Even during Burns’ absence in March, the work was sustained by another Amoy duo. Thus the RCA missionaries had much reason to regard the local work at Pechuia up to this point in time as partaking of a dominant input of Chinese labour and hence Chinese credit.

5.3.2b. The later Burns phase (Mar-Jul) and the first RCA interval (Aug-Sep)

³⁰ Burns/3Mar1854, in WHP/p. 18 and CAF/pp. 89-91.

³¹ Doty/20Apr1854.

³² Burns/3Mar1854.

³³ Burns/Amoy/8May1854, Mess/1854/p. 266.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Burns, *Memoir*, p. 592n9.

³⁶ Burns/3Mar1854.

³⁷ I.e. in Doty/Nov1854.

³⁸ Doty/20Apr1854 (*italics added*).

After settling down again at Pechuia in March, Burns continued to work alongside the RCA Chinese. As Burns desired to remain strictly an evangelist, the tasks of applicant examination and baptism he turned over to the RCA. In April or May, the RCA assumed the charge of Pechuia. Previously the responsibility for it was not very clearly defined although the Americans reckoned it an EP work. When Doty and Talmage took over Pechuia from Burns, they did so with great reluctance while also planning to return it to the EPM at the soonest possibility.³⁹ The inner conflict which lay behind the RCA reluctance is best learned via Doty's own words:

'With our hearts and hands full as they are here in Amoy, we scarcely know what we are to do. Although those converts might be gathered into the church here perhaps, yet for their own spiritual interests and usefulness, the proper place is doubtless their native town. In this case, pastoral oversight will be needful. This would be exercised by Mr. Burns so long as he remains in the place. But his desire and purpose are not to be tied down to any locality longer than he feels he has evidence of a special call. While this is the case, the most we could do would be only an occasional short visit. The burden of the work would devolve of necessity on native brethren.'⁴⁰

A number of things is worth noting. The impracticality of connecting the converts with the Amoy church was accepted without question. No doubt physical distance was a major consideration. Along with RCA personnel shortage, this ruled out the chance of any realistic pastoral care on the part of the Amoy-based missionaries. Even with its uncertain duration, the presently available Burns 'pastorate' could keep things going at least in the meantime. As it turned out, Burns stayed on practically until he left China in August. However given his repulsion to pastoral work and attraction to itineration, there is strong likelihood he was away from Pechuia at some points in time during May-July. For comparison we may note that from January to May, he took trips to Amoy, Maping, Poolamkio,⁴¹ Huihau⁴² and possibly also other places. But there is no way we can ascertain the absence(s) if any in the later part of his Pechuia period. Of more certainty is that Pechuia was probably his operational base up to late July. Until that time, the credit for the local work may not be *totally* attributed only to the Chinese. But this is to say that the natives continued to do much of that work.

Meanwhile the work was making progress to the satisfaction of both Chinese and missionaries. After the RCA agreed to take charge of Pechuia, a group of eight interested Chinese were sent to 'our American brethren' in Amoy for baptismal examination⁴³ sometime in April or May.⁴⁴ After the interviews the RCA missionaries decided that '[o]n the whole, it seemed advisable to organize a congregation and administer the sacraments in their own town'.⁴⁵ On 10th May, Doty and Talmage went to Pechuia and examined the baptismal applicants until the following

³⁹ AR-AB/1855/pp. 112-113.

⁴⁰ Doty/20Apr1854.

⁴¹ Burns/3Mar1854, Bx119/F5; Burns/Amoy/8May1854, Mess/1854/p. 266. Note: *Contra* 'Poo-lam kid' (south bank bridge) as in Mess/1854/p. 266. 'Bridge' in Amoy is correctly 'kio'.

⁴² Pechuia converts to Burns [Britain]/c.Aug1854, Mess/1855/pp. 181-182.

⁴³ Burns/3Mar1854, CAF/pp. 91-92.

⁴⁴ See Doty/20Apr1854.

⁴⁵ Talmage/18Aug1854.

day, deciding in the end to receive five from among the many. On Saturday the 13th, they returned to Pechuia 'accompanied by several of our church members' and on the Sabbath baptised five men with ages ranging from 16 to 55.⁴⁶ They were the cloth-dealer, his two eldest sons, the furnace god burner (Lamsan) and the ex-image maker (the second son of the divided family);⁴⁷ except for the first man, all were considered young men at the time.⁴⁸ On the same day (14th May),⁴⁹ the Pechuia members were organised into an RCA church.⁵⁰ Less than two months later on 2nd July, another four were baptised by Doty.⁵¹ Thus by 5th August 1854 when Burns left Amoy for Britain with the ill-stricken Young, there were already nine members at Pechuia, viz. Kongbiau, Tek-iam, Teklian, Uju, Sibü (Siboo), Jit-som, Ki-an, Lamsan and Kimkoa.⁵² In addition to church members, there were of course those who attended the meetings regularly or occasionally. With the rented house soon found to be too small, an adjoining house plus the upper floor of the next house were rented and fitted up for use.⁵³ The above tells us that there was much preaching and informal work being done. But as we have noted, the honour is unclearly divided between Burns and the Chinese.

After Burns left, the work remained under RCA supervision for a time. The first RCA interval covers August and a part of September, or the time span after Burns left and before Johnston acquired Chinese assistants or before he reclaimed Pechuia. In late August, Talmage with Johnston went to Pechuia⁵⁴ and probably there were also RCA visits at other times. However distance and pressing duties at Amoy rendered such visits short and sparse.⁵⁵ As a matter of fact, the visit of late August was out of the ordinary, i.e. the trip was initiated by Johnston (not Talmage) as a rescue mission in response to the news that enemy villages were planning to 'plunder and burn the whole place' on a Friday night.⁵⁶ Thus during the first RCA interval, the Chinese sustained their part in the local work and practically held the fort for a stretch of many weeks.

Therefore during the later Burns phase (Mar-Jul), the credit for the local work was shared by both Burns and the Chinese. For their part, the Amoy-based RCA missionaries visited the station when they could or when they needed to undertake the examination and admission of applicants. However the magnitude of the Chinese input could not be ascertained as clearly as in the early Burns phase. In contrast, there is clarity when it comes to the first RCA interval (Aug-Sep) during which the bulk of the local work was done by the Chinese volunteers and hired agents.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ 11 May entry, Burns/Amoy/8May1854, Mess/1854/p. 268. *Contra* the confused Matheson who wrote that four months after the Pechuia work started, some twenty people 'old and young' were baptised (*Narrative*, p. 14).

⁴⁸ Burns/Amoy/1Jul1854, Mess/1854/pp. 314-315.

⁴⁹ AR-AB/1855/p. 112. *Contra* 17May1854 as (misprint?) in Talmage/18Aug1854 (cf. Mess/1855/p. 115), which was echoed in RCC/pp. 58-59.

⁵⁰ See Burns/Shanghai/24Aug1855, Bx119/F5.

⁵¹ Talmage/18Aug1854.

⁵² Pechuia letter of 21Aug1854 (Chinese 28th day, 7th month), addressed to the 'Public Society' (ABCFM), enclosed with Talmage/30Aug1854, CI/18Jan1855/p. 113c6. A copy was sent via Burns to the EP church, Bx119/F5.

⁵³ Talmage/18Aug1854.

⁵⁴ Johnston/Amoy/5Sep1854, Mess/1855/p. 20.

⁵⁵ See Pechuia/21Aug1854, Mess/1855/p. 116. Cf. Doty/20Apr1854.

⁵⁶ Johnston/Amoy/5Sep1854.

Therefore in both sub-periods, the Chinese were responsible to different degrees for sustaining the local work.

5.3.2c. The Johnston phase

During the Johnston period, it was Chinese labour in both employed and voluntary forms which kept the local work going. After the departure of Burns and Young, Johnston quickly took to the establishment of an EP station at Pechuia. Not only did the RCA take no offense at his reclamation of Pechuia, they generously assisted in the work⁵⁷ of the still linguistically incompetent Johnston.⁵⁸ On 5th November, the father and brother (Lamchun) of Lamsan along with the young Kanglo were baptised by Doty.⁵⁹ Consequently the year ended with a total membership of twelve people at Pechuia.⁶⁰ However the truth is that the help offered by the RCA missionaries was (as before) practically limited only to the examination and admission of candidates, something which Johnston could not do and which the Chinese agents were not allowed to do. In other words, the American assistance was minimalist, being confined to essential work which only they could do. But that which they were unable to do, the Chinese themselves took up. Thus while the RCA missionaries were all tied up with increasing work at Amoy, 'these young converts not only kept their ground, but made rapid advances' so that 'the little handful of seven or eight [Note: nine, to be correct] who were left by their spiritual father when they were but babes in Christ, grew and spread, so that within a year they had multiplied four or fivefold in their own village, and in villages around'.⁶¹ By or after winter 1854-55, Johnston was speaking of fourteen communicants and a community of forty people apart from the inquirers.⁶²

At the start of May, Johnston could say that he had been recently spending 'nearly all my Sabbaths' at Pechuia, leaving Amoy on Saturday night and returning during daylight on Monday.⁶³ At the EP station, Johnston spent most of the time leading Bible study at the morning and evening assemblies, holding informal discussions with those who had Bible questions and hearing pupils memorise Scriptural passages. Yet his visits in the previous year were as regular as his unsteady health condition. Even in the weeks (or months) leading up to May when such visits became more consistent, the efforts of the missionary constituted only part of the work, as the Chinese carried on their part during the rest of the week. Expecting to leave China in June, he enlarged the Pechuia accommodations for the sake of the increased membership, improved the living quarters for whoever should be labouring there, and built a separate section for women in the worship place.⁶⁴

⁵⁷ CAF/p. 92.

⁵⁸ See 4.3. Also CAF/pp. 101,103-104. A reference to Johnston's personal language ability was possibly contained in this line taken from a letter to Mr. Matheson: 'Within four months I have personally, or by our agents, conveyed the Gospel message *in an imperfect way*, to more than fifty towns and villages...' (p. 99, italics added).

⁵⁹ Doty/Nov1854, Mess/1855/pp. 180-181.

⁶⁰ AR-AB/1855/p. 112.

⁶¹ Johnston, *Glimpses*, p. 7.

⁶² CAF/p. 97.

⁶³ Johnston/1May1855, Mess/1855/pp. 243-245.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

That the work continued to grow despite his health and language deficiencies speaks no little for the contribution of the native Christians. As Johnston put it, 'I cannot speak too highly of the spirit of order and brotherly love manifested by that infant Church' in which 'each member seems to feel that the work of an evangelist is laid upon him; and, although not one has as yet been appointed to any office, or offered any reward for his work, they labour, out of love to the Saviour, as much, or perhaps more, than most paid agents would do.'⁶⁵ Therefore it was by Pechuia volunteer efforts 'aided' by EP native agents from Amoy that the district about Pechuia came to hear the Gospel with the result that several villages became favourably disposed toward it. With great admiration for their 'independence, stability, common sense, consistency, zeal' and 'aggressive character of religion',⁶⁶ the EP missionary also commended the sincerity of the faith of the Pechuia converts who despite their many sufferings and material losses never asked for help from the missionaries.⁶⁷ Thus it was basically Chinese input which kept the Pechuia operations running during the Johnston period.

5.3.2d. The second RCA interval

During the second RCA interval (1855 Jun ffg) which overlapped the first year of Douglas (July 1855-July 1856), the charge of Pechuia reverted back to the RCA missionaries but the local work was still sustained by the Chinese. The transfer of charge occurred when Johnston was forced by ill health to leave Amoy just a few weeks before Burns and Douglas reached Hongkong. Even though Johnston said the EP work was left to 'the other two Societies',⁶⁸ there is not the slightest indication that the LMS was ever involved at Pechuia.⁶⁹ In fact Chinese labour continued to dominate even after the arrival of Douglas. Eventually the year 1855 yielded a total of thirteen new members.⁷⁰ In the Douglas phase, the sources of native output consisted mainly of the EP assistants (employed), the Pechuia converts (voluntary) and possibly also at some points RCA native agents. By July 1856, the RCA still had charge of Pechuia although Douglas was 'beginning [to be] more fitted to assist' in the work.⁷¹ At that time, some twelve people had been admitted since the year started.⁷² Later ten more were added and the end of the year saw the total membership at forty-seven.⁷³ With the RCA missionaries still based at Amoy and kept quite busy

⁶⁵ Johnston/Rev1854, Mess/1855/pp. 143-146. Cf. CAF/pp. 97-98.

⁶⁶ CAF/p. 102. Cf. pp. 101-105.

⁶⁷ CAF/pp. 97-98. The converts did help each other and the missionaries did give to the 'poor fund' of the church, a practice not unknown in their home churches in the West (pp. 104-105).

⁶⁸ CAF/pp. 105-106.

⁶⁹ It is unclear whether the EP school in Amoy was entrusted to another Mission or stopped altogether.

⁷⁰ Talmage/Amoy/16Jan1856. Further confirmation came from Burns who in early 1856 reported that the Pechuia membership was twenty-five. Burns, *Memoir*, pp. 481-482. Likewise Douglas' report for end-1855 was twenty-five converts at Pechuia (WHP/p. 24). The account of Swanson that the EP had eighteen persons 'in full communion' in 1855 (Swanson, *Sketch*, 1870, p. 8) should refer to sometime before the end of the year.

⁷¹ Joralmon/Amoy/30Jul1856. Cf. AR-AB/1857/p. 123.

⁷² Joralmon/Amoy/30Jul1856.

⁷³ AR-AB/1857/p. 123.

by the work there all the time, the 'burden of the work' (indeed as Doty anticipated) had devolved upon the native Christians.⁷⁴

Thus the dominance of Chinese labour since the earliest days of settled operations at Pechuia had been maintained. About this case of native work, the missionaries had no compelling reason to feel embarrassed or disappointed.

5.3.3. Work methodology

The missionary attitude toward the work at Pechuia should also be seen in the light of how the Chinese rather faithfully operated along the lines of the RCA mission methodology. Firstly, there was the upholding of the intensive oral instruction based on the Bible. In this connection, especially impressive was the appetite of the Pechuia Christians for the study of the Christian Scriptures and how they were 'continually coming to us for explanation of passages which they cannot understand'.⁷⁵ Though 'but babes in Christ', the converts there had attained a 'remarkable' level of Bible knowledge.⁷⁶ As far as the knowledge test in the admission process is concerned, they could easily be perceived as quite promising applicants. But since the bulk of the instructional work had been done by the Chinese agents, the missionaries could not but naturally regard the state of things as creditable to native labour.

Secondly, there was the maintenance of the strict baptism/admission policy. In February a man from Pechuia arrived at Amoy to seek church membership. Doty recounted,

'One of these has already been with us at Amoy, and was examined as to his Christian experience and knowledge. Never, in any instance, have we met with a case among the Chinese indicating more clearly the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart. He was not however then received into the church fellowship, it being thought more prudent that there should be some delay.'⁷⁷

As a matter of fact, the American missionaries were all set to accept the man after the interview, had not the two RCA agents having returned just 'the day before' from Pechuia to Amoy 'urged the expediency of delay'.⁷⁸ Although the reason for delay in this case was not divulged in detail, it was clearly not an instance of missionary perception of applicant disqualification. The observation is important, for it means the missionaries did not question the quality of the inquirer instructed by the native agents and Burns. Two points may be noted here which argue for increased missionary confidence in Chinese labour. One, the applicant from Pechuia had passed the strict admission standards of the RCA. This said much about the quality of the work put in by the Chinese agents and Burns. Nor was his by any means a unique case as the RCA was able to determine later by

⁷⁴ Doty/20Apr1854.

⁷⁵ Talmage/18Aug1854. Cf. FYC/pp. 156-157.

⁷⁶ Talmage/18Aug1854.

⁷⁷ Doty/20Apr1854.

⁷⁸ Burns, as quoted in WHP/p. 18.

first-hand observation. When Doty took a short visit in March while Burns was away from Pechuia, he was delightfully amazed at what was happening there.

'I found such an awakened interest and spirit of inquiry as I had never before met with among Chinese... The most marked cases are of young men of some education, and endowed with considerable zeal and energy. These are very active in efforts to awaken the attention of others.'⁷⁹

Indeed the work at Pechuia was not at all found wanting in authenticity. However it would seem our argument that the RCA missionary confidence in Chinese work was reinforced by these results is somewhat diluted by the participation of Burns in the work. Wherefore this cannot be said to be an unambiguous ground for added missionary confidence in *unsupervised* Chinese work, i.e. work done independently in the absence of a foreign agent. But to say that it added to missionary confidence in Chinese work is a different matter. Moreover the matter becomes unambiguous when we hear Doty himself affirming that at Pechuia the 'instrumentality has been the native brethren almost entirely'.⁸⁰ In other words, the RCA missionaries were convinced that the chief credit and honour belonged to the Chinese and not to Burns.

The second point is that the counsel of delay on the part of the Chinese agents demonstrated that they were very careful, in fact stricter than the foreigners in this particular instance, about the matter of baptism/admission. Such native temperance and restraint from laxful haste could not have failed to make an impression on Doty and Talmage especially upon their faith in the judgment of the Chinese agents. Along with the first point this adds force and validity to the argument that the Pechuia work did increase missionary confidence in the Chinese.

5.3.4. Zeal, effectiveness and steadfastness

The zeal and effectiveness of the Pechuia believers and their steadfastness amidst persecutions helped to confirm missionary confidence in the ability of native labour to produce genuine converts. During his short visit in March, Doty already noted how some young men were zealously spreading the Christian message about.⁸¹ In early 1855 when the work had made much more progress, Johnston did not hesitate to commend the voluntary efforts of the converts.⁸² Probably the best known among the Pechuia volunteers during his time was Sibü whom Burns met on his first visit to Pechuia. At that time about 18-20 years old, he had attained an education 'rather good for his position'.⁸³ Upon conversion, he gave up his job as an idol-carver ('his only means of support') without hesitation and 'neither asked nor received any assistance from the missionary' but became instead a 'carver of beads for bracelets and other ornaments' thereby

⁷⁹ Doty/20Apr1854. Cf. Doty, in Burns, *Memoir*, p. 404; Burns/3Mar1854, CAF/p. 90. Some reference to the 'revival' at Pechuia had been made in an earlier letter to a friend of his at Canton. See Mr. Bonney/Canton/18Apr1854, MH/1854/p. 250.

⁸⁰ Doty (Amoy) to Burns (Scotland), 1854, in Burns, *Memoir*, pp. 423-425. Cf. FYC/pp. 163-164.

⁸¹ Doty/20Apr1854. Cf. 5.3.3.

⁸² Johnston/Rev1854, Mess/1855/pp. 143-146. More in 5.3.2c.

⁸³ Johnston, *Glimpses*, p. 44.

supporting himself and his mother.⁸⁴ Since his trade was portable, Sibü often joined the EP Good News Boat, carving while sailing, then colporteur and preaching without pay at the places where the boat stopped. Having trained in Amoy to do the work of an evangelist, Sibü was later sent to Singapore in 1857 to work among Chinese emigrants.⁸⁵ This means that he was around during the early part of Douglas' term. Aside from the employed agents and the young men under training, the successor of Johnston also had several volunteers who from time to time participated in the evangelistic labours carried out under his direction.⁸⁶ Thus during the Chailau festival in mid-January 1856, the EP team which visited Pechuia included Douglas, the four evangelists, Lamsan and a fellow-student of his, and lastly a volunteer, i.e. the wood-carver 'who gives much of his time towards spreading the Gospel'.⁸⁷ By all indications, the last is possibly Sibü. Or maybe not, for he was not at all a unique instance. As Johnston revealed, 'In this way our Church had the benefit of many a useful evangelist, free of all charge on her funds; for [Sibü] was far from being the only one who gave hours and often days of gratuitous service. Some [others] *of the same occupation* as himself employed their time in the same way.'⁸⁸

Another manner in which the Pechuia believers displayed their zeal was in the initiating of new work. Three instances may be cited in this connection. First, after 'active opposition' had stopped at Pechuia, the Chinese took the initiative to open a free evening school for boys, using mainly Christian books and with instruction provided by 'the more advanced converts'.⁸⁹ Being in addition to 'the regular day-school', this educational undertaking was unknown to Douglas 'till after it had been in operation several days'.⁹⁰ Inasmuch as both texts and teachers were Christian in character, a religious motivation in launching the educational work should not only be considered possible, but should be regarded as playing a major role. The second case of Chinese initiative was the beginning of the work at a market-town eight miles southeastward from Pechuia, i.e. Maping which Burns had before visited 'but with no fruit'.⁹¹ Following the baptism of two Maping persons at Pechuia, many visits were made by both evangelists and converts with the result that by late March 1856 'a considerable number' had become interested.⁹² When the request for a chapel was forwarded, it was 'suggested' that 'they might try to do so themselves'.⁹³ Immediately those at Pechuia and Maping joined forces and 'rented a small room for a place of worship at their own expense', paying the annual amount of three dollars while the EPM supplied the furnitures and 'an evangelist or member each week to go and spend the Sabbath, and usually, as yet, the most of the

⁸⁴ *Glimpses*, p. 45.

⁸⁵ Pp. 53,44.

⁸⁶ Douglas/Amoy/3Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 119-120.

⁸⁷ Douglas/29Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 146-148

⁸⁸ Johnston, *Glimpses*, pp. 45-46 (italics added).

⁸⁹ Douglas/Amoy/29Mar1856, AR-SA/1856/p. 14.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*

week, for twenty or thirty people are said to come every evening, staying long to hear'.⁹⁴ Lastly, and most impressively, is the beginning of the work at Chiohbe which will be separately discussed later. In sum, the zeal of the Pechuia Chinese was quite commendable as far as the missionaries are concerned.

On top of zeal there was also the evangelistic effectiveness of the converts which was demonstrated in the overnight conversion of one entire household. When Burns left Pechuia on 1st May, there were about twenty adults and children 'who have declared themselves on the side of the Gospel' including 'two whole families of six members each'.⁹⁵ One family was that of twenty-year old Lamsan⁹⁶ who burned 'the furnace god' on the latter's birthday and was beaten 'severely' by his parents.⁹⁷ Having heard of this matter, 'some of the Pechuia inquirers' went to comfort him and also to talk to the parents, with the result that 'in a day or two afterwards they, with their sons, brought out all their idols and ancestral tablets and publicly destroyed them in the view of the people'.⁹⁸ After meeting the father for 'two or three times', Burns reported that both he and his four sons were all 'in a promising state of mind'.⁹⁹ By late 1854, the parents were among the 'applicants for baptism'.¹⁰⁰

But native effectiveness did not apply only to conversion success. It was also observed in the phenomenon of the accurate repetition of Christian instruction on the part of the Chinese. The case of Un Hese the first female baptised at Pechuia helps to illustrate this point.

'The most interesting circumstance in the conversion of He-se is that she has never had any instruction, except from the members of her own family; and as soon as they apprehended the truth themselves, they began to communicate it to her ... From an early period she manifested a lively interest in the Saviour, and encouraged her children to obey the new doctrine. She, by the tyranny of Chinese custom [being a woman], dare not come to hear for herself, but her sons were in the habit of repeating to her as much of the sermons they heard as they could carry home; and when, at any time, they heard any exposition of Scripture, during their intercourse with their teachers, they would set off to tell their mother, and return for more to convey. And so well had she profited by their instruction, that all who heard her examination were surprised at the extent and accuracy of her information...'¹⁰¹

Although among the earliest people to confess the Gospel at Pechuia, 'two or three are women whom we have not seen - mothers who have received the truth from their sons or husbands',¹⁰² the case of Un Hese was outstanding in that she passed the stringent examination standards. The

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ Burns/Amoy/8May1854, Mess/1854/p. 267.

⁹⁶ Matheson, *Narrative*, p. 12. Lamsan later became a medical student at the Amoy hospital and was 'sent forth as a native medical missionary by Dr. Carnegie in 1863'.

⁹⁷ Burns/Amoy/8May1854.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Johnston/22Dec1854, Mess/1855/pp. 113-114.

¹⁰¹ Johnston/c.Mar1855, Mess/1855/pp. 198-199. By this writing, the husband of Un Hese and her three sons were also already members of the Pechuia church.

¹⁰² Burns/Amoy/8May1854, Mess/1854/p. 267.

doctrinal mastery of the lady owes as much to her memory and learning ability as to the accuracy of the oral transmission of her sons.

In addition to zeal and effectiveness, there was also the steadfastness of the believers which included endurance under suffering and faithful observance of the Sabbath at the cost of income reduction. Since its early months the work at Pechuia had encountered opposition and ‘a disposition to annoy and disturb the public worship’.¹⁰³ Even so, the nightly and Sabbath attendances had been satisfying to both the Chinese agents and the missionaries. By May, a number of individuals had ‘resolved’ to live the Christian life and to do so at the risk of persecution and opposition.¹⁰⁴ For instance, the cloth-dealer suffered much for his faith and refusal to contribute to ‘idoltrous celebrations’.¹⁰⁵ As one of the first two families to be converted wholesale, the man, his wife and three sons¹⁰⁶ had ‘twice lost all their property [to] robbers’.¹⁰⁷ During the second robbery when their house was burned by the retreating criminals, ‘the whole family were obliged to leap from an upper story, and yet escaped unhurt!’¹⁰⁸ Having accepted the Christian message ‘on its first announcement’, they had consistently closed the family shop on Sabbaths even if these be at times market-days.¹⁰⁹ The missionaries were especially impressed by the zero resistance of the cloth-dealer to an officer of the mandarin intending plunder, which effectively disarmed the latter who then left without doing any harm.¹¹⁰ Another instance of readiness to suffer loss of income and the opposition of family members was the case of the family which was divided with the mother and two sons being receptive while the eldest son and his wife were hostile, not least because the family business consisted of ‘making paper images used in idolatrous processions, for burning to the dead, &c.’¹¹¹ To dissociate from this, the second son ‘has begun a general business in one half of the shop which they have in common’ so that the shop was one-half closed on Sabbaths.¹¹² Likewise the other converts faced reproach and persecution but were said to be enduring such well.¹¹³ The local anti-Christianism partly explains why for a time after the first baptisms (May), there were ‘almost no accessions to the number of awakened inquirers’.¹¹⁴ It was not until November that Doty could say ‘[t]he disposition to annoy has very much subsided, if not entirely ceased’.¹¹⁵ As this referred to the public worship context, one should not assume that all other forms of opposition also ended. In fact, making matters worse was the unintended negative effect brought about by the first female baptism at Pechuia which occurred

¹⁰³ Doty/20Apr1854.

¹⁰⁴ Burns/Amoy/8May1854, Mess/1854/p. 266.

¹⁰⁵ Talmage/18Aug1854, MH/1855/pp. 44-45.

¹⁰⁶ Matheson, *Narrative*, pp. 12-13.

¹⁰⁷ Burns/Amoy/8May1854, Mess/1854/p. 267.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ Douglas/Amoy/3Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 119-120.

¹¹¹ Burns/Amoy/8May1854.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ Burns/Amoy/1Jul1854, Mess/1854/pp. 314-315.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ Doty/Nov1854, Mess/1855/pp. 180-181.

during the first quarter of 1855. All those who had the opportunity to examine Un Hese were impressed 'at the courage she manifested in coming openly forward, with no other woman to bear her company, and that in a place where she was the first, as well as the solitary professor of her sex', especially since by temperament she was 'naturally timid and retiring'.¹¹⁶ No doubt her courage included the readiness to face the trying course which others before her had endured and/or were still enduring. But the negative result of her courageous action was the generating of 'so great' a persecution 'that no one [female] can come publicly out to the worship of God'.¹¹⁷ By the beginning of May, Pechuia had only one baptised woman and one female applicant. Meanwhile opposition and persecution lasted into 1856.¹¹⁸ By late February some of the baptismal candidates who were intimidated by the opposition had returned to regular worship.¹¹⁹ Since the referent in the last remark were *non-members*, there is no necessity to think the observation suggests a significant diminishing of missionary confidence in the Chinese *church members*. What it was more likely to generate is a reminder to the missionaries about the value of the test of persecution in the examination process. As Johnston noted in early 1855, the persecutions at Pechuia (and Chiohbe) had failed to do any real damage.¹²⁰ Likewise a year later, Douglas confirmed that the trying events actually resulted in 'the increased zeal of the infant Churches [at Pechuia and Chiohbe]' and in the revelation of their continued readiness to suffer for their faith.¹²¹ Therefore as far as the missionaries are concerned, the perseverance of the converts amidst such adverse circumstances only proved the genuine character of their faith.

Therefore whether zeal, effectiveness or steadfastness, the Christian character of the Pechuia believers certainly appeared to be of good quality in missionary eyes. Since the matter of suffering religious persecution and of Sabbath-keeping pertains to the sincerity test in the admission process, convert steadfastness evinced the capability of Chinese work to make genuine converts. With religious zeal constituting another proof of that valued sincerity, the case is made even more convincing to the missionaries that Chinese labour working along the proper methodological lines could be relied upon to produce good quality believers.

5.3.5. Summary

The missionaries believed that the Pechuia work was initiated by the Chinese and basically thrived upon native labours. That the Chinese were doing the bulk of the *local work* holds true especially for the early Burns phase, the first RCA interval, the Johnston phase and the second RCA interval. During the later Burns phase (Mar-Jul 1854) the size of the Chinese contribution is uncertain but its factuality is. In their faithful application of the RCA mission methods, the

¹¹⁶ Johnston/c.Mar1855, Mess/Jul1855/pp. 198-199.

¹¹⁷ Johnston/1May1855, Mess/1855/pp. 243-245.

¹¹⁸ AR-SA/1856/p. 3.

¹¹⁹ Douglas/Amoy/28Feb1856.

¹²⁰ Johnston/Rev1854, Mess/1855/pp. 143-146.

¹²¹ Douglas/Amoy/3Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 119-120.

Chinese gave the missionaries no cause for worry in terms of proper methodology. Finally the zeal and steadfastness of the Pechuia believers proved the authenticity of their faith, thereby providing the missionaries solid ground for believing in the native competence to produce genuine Christians. In conclusion, all these signify that significant progress was being made toward the missionary granting of Chinese autonomy.

5.4. Chiohbe

In this Section we argue thus: The missionaries knew that the work at Chiohbe was initiated by the Pechuia believers and regarded its success as being brought about mainly by Chinese labour (5.4.1). The missionaries were quite satisfied with the Christian quality of the converts *as a group* (5.4.2). A summary puts things together showing that in consequence of the above the missionaries came to have greater respect and higher regard for the Chinese converts in Banlam (5.4.3).

5.4.1. Origins and sustenance

Situated some 8-10 miles from Pechuia and c.20 miles from Amoy on the way to Chiangchui, the large village of Chiohbe had a population of about 60,000¹²² inhabitants.¹²³ In June or July¹²⁴ 1854, two Pechuia converts, Uju and Tek-iam,¹²⁵ went over to sell opium pills and to preach¹²⁶ to the people with the result that 'several' seemed to have been awakened.¹²⁷ Meeting with good interest and invitations to return, the two men made more visits.¹²⁸ After the second or third visit, the Pechuia men took the initiative and rented a house for a preaching place¹²⁹ with the upper storey for living quarters.¹³⁰ Receiving the call for reinforcement, the RCA sent two colporteur/evangelists¹³¹ who preached to nightly crowds for a month and then returned to Amoy with drained voices seeking for substitutes while they take a rest.

'From this time the desire to hear the Word and for instruction became so intense, that time was scarcely allowed to take food or rest. Again and again, both from Amoy and Peh-chui-ia, have brethren gone to assist, and have been constrained by the waiting multitude to speak the Word until voice and strength failed, and so would break down, and be compelled to retire for rest.'¹³²

¹²² Johnston/Rev1854, Mess/1855/p. 145; Douglas/1Jan1856, Mess/1856/p. 118; AR-BFM/1867/p. 7 and 1868/p. 7. *Contra* CRep/1847/p. 78 (300,000!), AR-AB/1855/p. 113 (c.5,000-8,000) and CAF/pp. 93ff (20,000).

¹²³ AR-AB/1855/p. 113.

¹²⁴ *Contra* Johnston who dated it Nov (Rev1854, p. 145).

¹²⁵ Pechuia/21Aug1854, CI/18Jan1855/p. 113c6. Other forms of the names were Iju (Doty/Nov1854; Burns, *Memoir*, p. 592n5) or Eju (FYC/p. 163) and Tickjam (Doty; FYC).

¹²⁶ Johnston/Rev1854.

¹²⁷ Doty/17Jan1855, MH/1855/pp. 186-187. Cf. MH/1855/p. 46.

¹²⁸ Johnston/Rev1854.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ WHP/pp. 19-20. Cf. Doty/17Jan1855.

¹³¹ Doty/17Jan1855.

¹³² Doty/17Jan1855. Cf. Doty/Nov1854, Mess/1855/pp. 180-181; FYC/p. 163.

Among the evangelists sent 'one after the other' by the two Missions, some returned not only 'quite hoarse and worn-out with speaking' but had to be 'fairly laid aside for awhile [sic] from exhaustion', saying they were obliged to talk 'till long after midnight' and could hardly find time to take their meals during the day.¹³³ The last expression was no exaggeration since the preaching at the rented place was sustained 'daily and almost hourly'.¹³⁴ By mid-October, there were already fifteen 'earnest' applicants and many more serious inquirers.¹³⁵ After the Chinese preachers consistently came back in the same state and with similar good news, the missionaries proceeded there in October/November.¹³⁶ Finding several already qualified for baptism, Doty felt the necessity to admit them soon but hesitated at the thought of forming a new congregation whose pastoral care was beyond the capability of the existing missionary workforce.¹³⁷ Among those who exhibited 'pleasing evidence of regeneration' was the man saved from death during the recapture of Amoy who had been praying for months that there be a church at Chiohbe.¹³⁸ During the four-day massacre of both insurgents and inhabitants which followed the recapture of Amoy by the imperialists on 15th October 1853 and which resulted in more than 600 deaths, the wounded man's head was 'nearly severed from the body' but he later recovered remarkably.¹³⁹ While under medical care, he came to know Young¹⁴⁰ and later 'began to pray to Jesus in secret'.¹⁴¹ Returning to his home in Chiohbe, he continued to worship the Christian God and keep the Sabbath¹⁴² as well as to pray for some teacher of Christianity to come.¹⁴³ Not long afterwards, Uju the Chiohbe cook heard the preaching at Pechuia, converted to the faith and then carried the Gospel to his hometown.

On 6th December, Doty and Talmage examined more than twenty applicants and found seven or eight of them highly satisfactory.¹⁴⁴ Consequently on 7th January 1855, seven persons out of twenty-five applicants were received as the first members at Chiohbe.¹⁴⁵ Even so, the missionaries believed that 'several' of those turned down were 'truly the subjects of the Holy Spirit's work'.¹⁴⁶ Despite these rejections, the RCA missionaries were 'satisfied that several of the others only require a little further instruction to qualify them for [baptism]'.¹⁴⁷ Johnston recalled that another 'twenty or thirty' also expressed desire for baptism but the near-midnight hour hindered more examinations.¹⁴⁸ By mid-January, there was 'less excitement' among the public, but

¹³³ Johnston/Rev1854. Cf. Johnston/16Oct1854, Mess/1855/pp. 21-22.

¹³⁴ Doty/Nov1854.

¹³⁵ Johnston/16Oct1854. Cf. Doty/Nov1854.

¹³⁶ Doty/Nov1854. Cf. Burns, *Memoir*, pp. 423-425.

¹³⁷ Doty/Nov1854.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ Matheson, *Narrative*, pp. 6-9. Cf. CAF/pp. 28-29.

¹⁴⁰ Johnston/16Oct1854.

¹⁴¹ Matheson, *Narrative*, pp. 8-9.

¹⁴² Johnston/16Oct1854.

¹⁴³ Matheson, *Narrative*, pp. 8-9.

¹⁴⁴ Johnston/Amoy/7Dec1854, Mess/1855/pp. 82-84.

¹⁴⁵ Doty/17Jan1855, MH/1855/pp. 186-187; AR-AB/1855/p. 113.

¹⁴⁶ Doty/17Jan1855.

¹⁴⁷ Johnston/Rev1854, Mess/1855/p. 145.

¹⁴⁸ CAF/pp. 93-96.

within the Christian community 'the same desire for the Word continues'.¹⁴⁹ On 4th March, another seven were admitted into the church.¹⁵⁰ During the May communion, there were no admissions not because of a lack of 'hopeful candidates' but due to the 'want of time for a full and thorough examination'.¹⁵¹ The year closed with a total of twenty-four admissions.¹⁵² On 3rd February, five more people were received.¹⁵³ During the whole of 1856, there were ten admissions, the year ending with a total active membership of thirty-one.¹⁵⁴ Although the work was started by Pechuia Christians, the EPM turned Chiohbe over to the RCA.¹⁵⁵ Johnston viewed this act as his liberal way of 'repaying' the American kindness in returning Pechuia to him after Burns left.¹⁵⁶ Exactly when this turn-over took place we do not know. However relevant talks seem to have started as early as November 1854 when Doty told Burns about the RCA hesitation to take on the pastoral oversight of Chiohbe. The matter was already settled by the time Johnston left. When 1856 started, Taulo the 'best' of Douglas' evangelists had been re-transferred to the RCA who appointed him to Chiohbe.¹⁵⁷ To his credit, the EP missionary took this personnel transfer readily, acknowledging Chiohbe was more important than Pechuia in terms of population size and location (being on the direct route to Chiangchiu some twelve miles away).

Never at any point did the missionaries express doubt that the Chiohbe work was initiated by the Chinese. Likewise with uniformity, the RCA and EP missionaries attributed the main credit to native agency for the work done up to January 1855 (when the first admissions took place) and beyond. On his part, Johnston consistently attempted to give honour to the Chinese even though he presented two versions of the story. In one, he handed the credit to the employed agency, i.e. the Chinese evangelists. Thus in December 1854, he wrote that the work at Chiohbe over the last three or four months was 'so far as human agency is concerned, entirely the work of native agents, with a very small degree of foreign help in the way of direction and encouragement'.¹⁵⁸ The truth is during the last quarter of 1854, Johnston was for sometime 'confined to my room, and unable to take any part in the work, save in sending men to assist, receiving their reports when they returned, and encouraging them in their labours'.¹⁵⁹ Before he 'was able to go about', more than a score had been enrolled as baptismal applicants.¹⁶⁰ It is understandable therefore when he confessed that though he 'ha[d] given what little aid I could, I would be ashamed to take to myself the smallest share of credit'.¹⁶¹ Yet this does not mean he never visited Chiohbe in company with his

¹⁴⁹ Doty/17Jan1855.

¹⁵⁰ Doty/25Jun1855, MH/1855/pp. 354-356.

¹⁵¹ Doty/25Jun1855, CI/25Nov1855/p. 86c4-5.

¹⁵² Talmage/Amoy/16Jan1856. Douglas' report for end-1855 was twenty-two members at Chiohbe (WHP/p. 24).

¹⁵³ Talmage/Amoy/5Feb1856, CI/29May1856/p. 189c6. Cf. APGS/1856/p. 114.

¹⁵⁴ AR-AB/1857/p. 123. The all-time total was thirty-two.

¹⁵⁵ WHP/pp. 19-20.

¹⁵⁶ CAF/p. 92.

¹⁵⁷ Douglas/1Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 118-119.

¹⁵⁸ Johnston/Amoy/7Dec1854, Mess/1855/pp. 82-84.

¹⁵⁹ Johnston/Rev1854, Mess/1855/p. 145.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ Johnston/7Dec1854.

evangelists before his bed-ridden period.¹⁶² However at other times, Johnston gave a different version wherein he appeared to be crediting the Pechuia converts exclusively. Thus in mid-October 1854, he wrote that the work ‘was begun, and is still chiefly carried on, by the native converts from that first fruit of our Church’s Mission’.¹⁶³ Again in penning the annual review the following January, it was stated that at Chiohbe ‘all that has been done, in so far as man has been instrumental, is due to the Peh-chu-ian [sic] converts’.¹⁶⁴

To us, each of the two versions is incomplete by itself. From our earlier narrative, we know both the Pechuia believers and the Chinese evangelists contributed their shares, and none could therefore justly claim a monopoly of the deserved honour. Doty explicitly noted that the pioneering efforts of Uju and Tek-iam were followed by the ‘repeated visits’ of others from *both* Pechuia *and* Amoy.¹⁶⁵ In agreement with our position, the RCA missionary delightfully reported to Burns that ‘[t]he instrumentality has been native brethren *almost* entirely’.¹⁶⁶ Writing a bit later to the American home front, Doty was no less consistent,

‘The agency blessed in this work is entirely native. The most which we have been able to do, was an occasional visit, taking a general supervision, and meeting with the inquiring, and examining those applying to be received among God’s people.’¹⁶⁷

Therefore the evidence is clear and convincing on two counts. First, both the RCA and EP missionaries acknowledged the opening of Chiohbe was brought about by Chinese initiative. Second, the foreigners also believed that the main credit should go to native agency for the local work carried out at the town.

5.4.2. Convert quality

Furthermore the Christian quality and commitment of the Chiohbe converts *as a group* added to the missionary confidence in Chinese labour. We do not suggest that every individual believer had shown model behaviour. In fact by June 1855 there had been one case of excommunication.¹⁶⁸ About a year later (c.May1856), there was another instance of discipline involving the expulsion of a young lad who had committed ‘several acts of impurity’ and was thought to be ‘without hope of recovery’.¹⁶⁹ However the missionary awareness of their inability to exercise pastoral oversight to this distant congregation may have been coupled with a readiness to hold expectations laxer than those upheld at Amoy. Furthermore the second disciplinary case

¹⁶² See Johnston/16Oct1854, Mess/1855/p. 22.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ Johnston/Rev1854. Cf. the official EP version from the 20th century: ‘From the human side this remarkable movement was entirely due to the devotion and diligence of comparatively uneducated Chinese Christians.’ (WHP/p. 20).

¹⁶⁵ Doty/Nov1854, Mess/1855/pp. 180-181.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid* (italics added).

¹⁶⁷ Doty/17Jan1855, MH/1855/pp. 186-187. Cf. AR-AB/1855/p. 113; FYC/pp. 163-164.

¹⁶⁸ Doty/25Jun1855, MH/1855/pp. 354-356. This explains Talmage’s claim that there were until 16Jan1856 only thirteen admissions at Chiohbe. See Talmage/Amoy/16Jan1856, MH/1856/pp. 167-170.

¹⁶⁹ Douglas/Amoy/23May1856, AR-SA/1856/pp. 14-16.

seems to have come a bit late to affect the decision behind the Sinkoe event. If so, that leaves just one singular instance of excommunication which would naturally be reckoned by the missionaries as exceptional in nature. Wherefore this exceptional occurrence does not negate our argument that the missionaries had good reasons to believe the Chiohbe converts *as a group* were of satisfactory quality. Having dealt with the negative evidence, let us now look at the positive in order to complete our argument.

Already we have mentioned the early 'desire to hear the Word and for instruction' which was 'so intense'¹⁷⁰ that the visiting Chinese preachers could hardly eat or rest and how the missionaries in their first visit discovered many already qualified for baptism.¹⁷¹ Likewise we have seen that the admission of many more was delayed mainly on account of the lack of time to give the 'little further instruction'¹⁷² needed to qualify them and that it was the same reason which hindered the examination of applicants at others times.¹⁷³ In June, Doty revealed that there was 'still a number concerning whom we have much encouragement, some of these, it is probable, will be soon received'.¹⁷⁴ The said desires to hear the preaching, grow in Christian knowledge and seek baptism were readily interpreted by the missionaries as indications of religious sincerity.

Furthermore the believers manifested their Christian quality and commitment by way of their evangelistic zeal and perseverance under persecution. Of zeal, we may cite for instance one of those admitted in March 1855, i.e. a 65-year old widow who had been visited by widow Hong and led to attend the chapel. As by 'her marriage, and by the marriage of her only daughter' she had become 'connected with Mandarin families of considerable note', she did not hesitate to use 'her influence to induce others to join her in hearing the Word' even though she suffered much opposition especially from her own daughter.¹⁷⁵ Mainly on account of her 'efforts and example', there was 'quite a number' of women who became regular hearers 'some of whom are professed (if not hopeful) inquirers'.¹⁷⁶ The other way in which the converts proved their worth was via steadfastness amidst persecution. Actually it was the dramatic staying power of the converts during an extended period of sustained opposition which most impressed the missionaries. The severe intensity of the experience is best appreciated by a detailed account of the series of events which commenced in July 1855.

Two months after the new chapel opened on 1st May 1855, Doty was at Chiohbe to baptise 'several persons' and conduct the Lord's Supper on the Sabbath of 1st July.¹⁷⁷ On the previous evening, a hostile mob had gathered 'around and within the chapel' so that the police had to be

¹⁷⁰ Doty/17Jan1855, MH/1855/pp. 186-187.

¹⁷¹ See 5.4.1.

¹⁷² Johnston/Rev1854, Mess/1855/p. 145.

¹⁷³ CAF/pp. 93-96; Doty/25Jun1855, CI/25Nov1855/p. 86c4-5.

¹⁷⁴ Doty/25Jun1855.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ Talmage/Amoy/16Jan1856.

called in to restore order.¹⁷⁸ On account of the police presence at the chapel provided by the Chiohbe magistrate at Doty's request, the baptism of the four men and one woman proceeded peacefully.¹⁷⁹ However on Sabbath evening, the people were stirred up by a literary man and the citizens' police chief whose family business was 'the manufacture and sale of idolatrous paper'.¹⁸⁰ Realising that both these men had more 'influence in the place than himself', the pro-Christian civil magistrate sent for the district magistrate from Chiangchui.¹⁸¹ When the latter visited the place, he sided with the anti-Christian party. Soon an official proclamation was posted warning the populace against accepting the Christian faith, hearing the preaching and even going to the foreigners' chapel. After being reprimanded by the higher official, the Chiohbe magistrate immediately 'threw up his appointment' and went several times to hear at the chapel.¹⁸² The police officer of the ward was arrested and beaten for allowing foreigners to obtain a house in his area without reporting the matter.¹⁸³ The house seller was arrested and imprisoned at Chiangchui for letting foreigners buy his property. A Chiohbe inhabitant was 'arrested for entering the chapel', imprisoned, 'severely beaten', then released.¹⁸⁴ Meanwhile an official notice was forwarded to the British Consulate at Amoy, protesting that Englishman [!] Doty had violated treaty terms by living in Chiohbe and demanding that he be immediately 'recalled'.¹⁸⁵ As for the house-chapel, the mandarins asked that it be returned offering to refund the full purchase amount. The persecution worsened when the 'Mandarins of three districts', while on official business at Pechuia, also issued a similar proclamation.¹⁸⁶ Thus the chapels at both places remained closed for sometime. Fortunately the one at Pechuia was reopened after a few weeks. At Chiohbe the persecution was diminishing by late September, at which time the imprisoned hearer had already been set free but not so the house seller.¹⁸⁷ Before the year ended, the chief opposition man at Chiohbe died.¹⁸⁸ Consequently the new year found the persecution at both Pechuia and Chiohbe to have subsided.¹⁸⁹ On the Sabbath of 6th January, the 'front doors' of the Chiohbe chapel reopened with Doty present to officiate baptism and holy communion before a large audience.¹⁹⁰ When the police officer of the ward reported the matter to Chiangchui, orders were sent to the Chiohbe authorities to arrest anyone who dared enter the chapel. On the following Sabbath, an official was stationed in the shop across the street, professedly with the intention to arrest anyone who dares to enter the chapel. Consequently the large street doors of the chapel remained close. Yet 'the Christians and a few inquirers'

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ Douglas/Amoy/21Aug1855.

¹⁸⁰ Talmage/Amoy/16Jan1856.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸² Douglas/Amoy/21Aug1855.

¹⁸³ Talmage/Amoy/16Jan1856.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁷ Douglas/Amoy/29Sep1855, Mess/1856/p. 21.

¹⁸⁸ Douglas/Amoy/3Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 119-120; Douglas/1Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 118-119.

¹⁸⁹ Douglas/Amoy/3Jan1856.

¹⁹⁰ Talmage/Amoy/16Jan1856.

continued to meet at the chapel every evening for Bible-reading and worship but all the time using only the side-doors.¹⁹¹

As it was believed that Sabbath-keeping was the sign of the true convert, word was passed around by the anti-Christians 'that any shop which might be shut on the Sabbath should be given over to plunder'.¹⁹² Knowing that the mob 'would be sustained by some men of influence and by the civil authorities', the male converts at the usual Saturday evening meeting discussed whether to leave their shops open just once. The unanimous decision was to obey God by closing shop and going to church. Faith and courage were well rewarded when the Sabbath passed peacefully without any plunder. Except for one member who had absented himself since the mandarin prohibitions, '[t]he others have all stood firm' and 'several' had been received at both Chiohbe and Pechuia.¹⁹³ Up till 5th February 1856, the front doors remained closed with the side doors still being used by church members and 'a few inquirers'.¹⁹⁴ About that time, Douglas paid two visits to Chiohbe where 'we tried a little street-preaching, and found the people quite willing to hear' and thus concluded 'it is plainly just the fear of the mandarins that keeps them from entering the chapel'.¹⁹⁵ In late June or early July 1856, it was reported that for 'the last few months' the believers had suffered no molestation although the large street doors of the chapel were still unopened.¹⁹⁶ Despite the somewhat still-tense situation, some eight people had been added to the church since the beginning of the year.¹⁹⁷ By September 1857, 'all open persecution' had stopped and the attendance at the chapel was 'encouraging, both as regards members and also as to the interest manifested in hearing the Word and receiving gospel instruction'.¹⁹⁸ However there was not 'that marked evidence of the Holy Spirit's presence and power which we formerly enjoyed'.¹⁹⁹

Throughout the trying episode, the faithfulness of the Chiohbe converts did not fail to convince the missionaries of their high Christian worth. The length of the distress, the *unanimous* refusal to close shops for even one Sabbath, the continuing attendance despite the watch upon the unopened front door, the fact that there were even additions to the church under such circumstances -- all added up to make a powerful statement not only about convert character, but also the productivity of Chinese labour undertaken under massively stressful conditions.

5.4.3. Summary

Parallel features with the Pechuia case are immediately obvious. The missionaries held no doubt that the work at both Pechuia and Chiohbe was initiated by the Chinese. Likewise the credit for the *local work* at Chiohbe went mainly to the natives from Pechuia and Amoy. Furthermore the

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹² *Ibid.*

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁴ Talmage/Amoy/5Feb1856, CI/29May1856/p. 189c6.

¹⁹⁵ Douglas/Amoy/28Feb1856, AR-SA/1856/pp. 13-14.

¹⁹⁶ Joralmon/Amoy/30Jul1856.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁸ Doty/Amoy/15Sep1857. Cf. Douglas/Amoy/21Jul1856, Mess/1856/pp. 339-340.

¹⁹⁹ Doty/Amoy/15Sep1857.

Westerners were very impressed by the Christian quality of the converts *as a group*. The sincerity of the latter was manifested by the Chinese desire to hear the preaching, grow in religious knowledge and seek baptism. Their commitment was demonstrated by evangelistic zeal and steadfastness under the most trying circumstances. At the same time, the persecution of 1855-56 revealed the *effectiveness* of Chinese labour undertaken in extremely distressful times. Even though we find no specific reference to evangelistic or instructional effectiveness in the case of the Chiohbe group, the missionary narratives do not fail to exude the implication of such. When Doty told Burns that the first RCA missionary visit (made some four or five months after the work began) found several applicants already qualified for baptism, one can see without difficulty an implicit statement of Chinese effectiveness. In a similar manner, the instruction of those admitted in 1855-56 were done almost totally by the Chinese. Thus when the missionaries expressed that several of those denied baptism in early 1855 actually needed only 'a little further instruction',²⁰⁰ the underlying thought was probably less of instructor ineffectiveness than of premature application on the part of the hearers. In sum, the effect of the Chiohbe work was to increase the missionaries' respect and high regard for the Chinese converts in Banlam.

5.5. Pechuia and Chiohbe in historical context

During 1853-54, there were various attempts to extend the work inland. Except for the Chiangchiu mission, all the others were initiated by the Chinese. Although the attempts of 1853 were aborted on account of the Banlam insurgency, those of 1854 proceeded despite strong local opposition and eventually became permanent work. On the part of the missionaries, all the above created even more favourable impressions of the Chinese converts. But the matter does not end there. For the Pechuia and Chiohbe initiatives are qualitatively different from the mere filling up of some work space intentionally or otherwise 'created' by the missionaries. For the initiatives culminated in an impressive demonstration of *self-propagation* on the part of the Banlam Christians. To see the fuller picture of the impact of Pechuia and Chiohbe, it is essential to locate them in their original context.

The aim of the upcoming Sections is to establish two points. One, until 1854 both the RCA and EP missionaries believed the ingathering of converts will be a protracted process but the Pechuia results led to the shattering of that belief (5.5.1). Two, the Chiohbe case was beyond any doubt an instance of *purely* Chinese self-propagation (5.5.2).

5.5.1. Expectation of slow results

During the pre-1854 period, the American missionaries expected the ingathering of converts to be a slow and gradual process. Writing in mid-1847 while alone at Amoy, Pohlman became the first RCA missionary to voice this expectation.

²⁰⁰ Johnston/Rev1854, Mess/1855/p. 145.

'It is not to be expected that a permanent interest will be awakened in behalf of China, till *true believers* are multiplied, and *native helpers*, well-trained and faithful shall cause the highest hopes of the Church to be realized. ...*The conversion of China will be slow work*. Converts will be gathered in very gradually.'²⁰¹ (italics original)

Along the same line, Pohlman argued that the ingathering of Chinese believers will occur 'very gradually', i.e. converts may reasonably not be expected immediately since it was 'but recently that regular preaching has been maintained, and missionaries have had full and free intercourse with the people'.²⁰²

But other than this, the belief in slow ingathering was reinforced by the RCA work methodology which tended to lengthen the process of member-making, i.e. the policy of strict admission and the intensive oral instruction method. Whereas the relationship between delayed admission and slow results is rather clear, the one involving the oral method requires some comments. Unlike the printed page, the verbal method depended *totally* on the personal presence and capability of the preacher or instructor, so that the opportunity and pace of information dissemination were somewhat restricted. In significant relation to this during our period is the fact of the various forms of missionary limitation.²⁰³ By fall of 1846, Pohlman on account of a serious long-term eye ailment had resigned from all attempts to learn the written language²⁰⁴ and had subsequently confessed his 'imperfect knowledge of that difficult dialect'.²⁰⁵ In the post-Pohlman period, there was for most of the time only two and for a while only one missionary on the ground. Furthermore in relation to the element of doctrinal knowledge in the baptismal examination process\ the oral method relied basically upon the *memory power* of the typically illiterate hearer-applicant. Unlike possessed literature which could be re-read or reviewed at any time at all, what was heard could not always be re-heard or recalled as easily. The non-schooled background of most applicants conceivably did not make the memorisation task any less difficult. This likely explains in part the lengthy character of the examination process as far as doctrinal knowledge is concerned. In late 1850, the disadvantage of full dependence upon the oral method became obvious to the RCA. During that time, the assessment of applicants was made severely difficult by 'the ignorance of the people'.²⁰⁶ Yet on the same account, it was argued later that the intensive oral Bible classes were more needed at Amoy than elsewhere in China, for even with the Bible already translated into the Chinese language, it was nevertheless 'not into the language spoken by our people'.²⁰⁷ Talmage lamented, 'The written language is entirely unintelligible to the great majority of the Chinese of this region; and by a comparatively small part of the remainder it is only

²⁰¹ Pohlman/Amoy/25May1847, CI/16Dec1847/p. 90c3-4.

²⁰² *Ibid.*

²⁰³ See Ch4.

²⁰⁴ Pohlman/Amoy/24Oct1846, CI/4Mar1847/p. 132c6.

²⁰⁵ Pohlman/4Jan1847, CI/27May1847/p. 182c3-4.

²⁰⁶ Talmage/17Dec1850

²⁰⁷ Talmage/22Jan1852, MH/1852/pp. 149-153.

imperfectly understood'.²⁰⁸ In response to the problem of mass ignorance and also because of the difficulty of learning the traditional character system, Talmage resorted to the experiment of the Romanised colloquial script. But after about eighteen months into it, it was announced that the promising project 'necessarily advances very slowly' for practical reasons.²⁰⁹ Thus the fall-back was upon the oral method again. In sum, the overall tendency of the oral method was toward a slow-down of the journey toward baptism/admission. Indeed such actual results or experiences *tended to confirm* the already-held expectation of slow work fruition. When this is correlated with the strict admission policy, it is not difficult to appreciate how the expectation of slow increase in membership was justified.

The Pohlman dictum that slow results were to be expected was adhered to as well by his colleagues after his death. In accounting for the 'slow' fruition of the work up to 1851, the confident assurance given by Talmage was that the progress was nevertheless 'steady and sure'.²¹⁰ In the later records the idea was not mentioned again until 1854. After a presentation of the recent conversion results garnered at Pechuia from May to July, Talmage announced with a mixture of joy, surprise and relief,

'This remarkable work may well fill our hearts with gratitude and encouragement. *Heretofore, we have always been obliged to wait a long time* before we were permitted to see much fruit of our labor; and we were *almost* led to the conclusion that such must *always* be the case, in carrying the gospel to a heathen people. Now we see that such need not be the course of events. We should preach the gospel with larger expectations, and in the hope of more immediate fruit. He 'who commanded the light to shine out of darkness,' can shine into the darkest minds, 'to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus' on the first announcement of the truth as it is in Jesus. When the proper time comes, and his church is made ready for the great accession, it will be an easy thing for him to accomplish the expectation that a nation shall be born at once.'²¹¹ (italics added)

From the above, it is obvious that within the RCA, the idea of slow results first uttered by Pohlman was subsequently maintained with both (synchronic) uniformity and (diachronic) continuity until 1854. The 'heathen' background of the Chinese people had produced 'the darkest minds' which was thought to make conversion an extremely tedious and slow process. At the same time, the anticipation of retarded results was confirmed by actual field experience. This is clearly the force of the line, 'Heretofore, we have always been obliged to wait a long time before we were permitted to see much fruit of our labor...' At any rate the Pechuia experience not only broke up the hegemony of the old expectation but also modified the strict admission policy by relaxing the time factor²¹² which in effect accelerated church growth from 1854.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁹ Viz. there was no printing press at Amoy, there was no competent proof-reader at Canton and Hongkong, and the Amoy workers had much work already. Talmage/22Jan1852.

²¹⁰ Talmage/Amoy/14Jul1851, CI/1Jan1852/p. 101c1-4.

²¹¹ Talmage/18Aug1854, MH/1855/p. 44.

²¹² See 3.3.

On the EP side, the earliest impression derives from Young who after about a year in Amoy commented with regard to the state of the work that 'first steps require caution and thought...'.²¹³ Toward the end of 1851, he reported that the public worship sessions were 'thinly attended' and there was as yet no 'direct results from our incipient efforts' although several had a good understanding of the gospel message.²¹⁴ From these remarks, the most we can say is that the first EP agent in Amoy anticipated at least a slow *beginning* for the work and regarded the labours of 1850-51 as partaking of a preliminary ('incipient') nature. The latter point is not at all difficult to understand since there was not at that point in time any concrete church planting objective on the part of the EP workers. In spring of 1852, Burns likewise could speak only of 'openings for labour' but not 'special evidences of success' while holding on firmly to the belief that 'the fruit will in due time appear'.²¹⁵ But when Johnston arrived in late 1853, Burns confessed tearfully, 'I have laboured in China for seven years, and I do not know of a single soul brought to Christ by me'.²¹⁶ It can be safely assumed that by then real experience had taught Young and Burns that the ingathering of converts will be slow work.

On his part, Johnston followed his predecessors in holding the same conviction. Thus with reference to the work of the three Missions done up to winter 1853-54, Johnston later approvingly remarked, 'The work had been slow, but a solid and stable foundation had been laid...'.²¹⁷ In the same spirit, he compensated for the small number of the converts by pointing out that their 'zeal and fidelity...have been very remarkable'.²¹⁸ It should be noted however that these remarks dated from a later period, i.e. a few years after Johnston had left China for good. Whether this was a matter of recollection (with accuracy being a separate question) or retrospective evaluation, there is no solid basis for us to argue from. The evidence only permits us to state that sometime after leaving the mission field, Johnston expressly justified the quantitative results on qualitative grounds.²¹⁹ But this is not all, for fortunately from the period of his China residency we find one instance when the matter of non-results was taken up. In early 1854 when the EP Amoy work had been on-going for more than three years, Johnston wrote home to report the fruition of labour. After a long discussion about the locality and its conditions, he asked rhetorically on behalf of his reader: 'have you nothing to say about *our Mission*?'.²²⁰ To this Johnston remarked with regret that no real gathering had yet been had although some work had been done in the form of medical

²¹³ Young/Amoy/15Apr1851, Mess/1851/p. 213.

²¹⁴ Young/19Dec1851, Mess/1852/pp. 115-116.

²¹⁵ Burns/Amoy/9Mar1852, Mess/1852/pp. 219-221.

²¹⁶ CAF/p. 84. Whatever Burns meant when he said earlier that the China work 'is making *real* progress', he certainly did not mean the accelerated ingathering of converts in Banlam. See Burns/(no day/month) 1851, Mess/1853/p. 380 (italics original).

²¹⁷ CAF/p. 5.

²¹⁸ CAF/p. 19.

²¹⁹ Similarly Burns later emphasised that the five Pechuia members (quantitatively few) were making progress in knowledge and enduring religious persecutions 'with patience [and]...joy' (qualitatively good).

Burns/Amoy/1Jul1854, Mess/1854/pp. 314-315.

²²⁰ Johnston/Amoy/18Jan1854, Mess/1854/pp. 218-220 (italics original).

service, educational work, preaching, assisting in instructing the converts of other Missions and the production of the *Pilgrim's progress*. Then he wrote on:

‘And all this is well: we know not that the Church has a right to *expect* more, however much she may desire more; and it is well that the Church should know what the state of the matter is, that she may humble herself, as we humble ourselves, before God, and that she may unite with us in a more importunate supplication for the promised grace of the Spirit? What are we in such a field as this? How can we go against this great host, if we are not supported and encouraged by the prayers and warm sympathies of the Church? Arise, O Lord, and plead thine own cause!’²²¹ (*italics original*)

In his failure to report any ingathering of converts, Johnston shifted the attention to the *helplessness* of the missionaries in the face of their formidable task as well as the dual duty of prayer and sympathy on the part of the home Church. *In other words he spoke under the assumption that slow results are but natural and to be expected*. Relatedly we should bear in mind that almost all of EP efforts in Amoy up till mid-1854 had always taken the form of cooperation with the other Missions. Without a church-planting agenda, the EP naturally could claim no converts of its own even if it did exert efforts aimed at individual conversions (e.g. Burns’ preachings). Thus in concluding his letter, Johnston could only extend the weak consolation that he intends in his next letter to speak of ‘what God had wrought here by the instrumentality of other Churches, that you may in that rejoice, as we do’.²²²

Picking up the tune of Johnston, the FMC in its annual report of 1854 confirmed that ‘we would pursue the same course of forbearance and caution which has been adopted by our excellent missionaries [for w]e believe that the work is one of extraordinary difficulty...’²²³ In an attempt to provide some consolation to the PCE constituencies, the FMC pointed to the conversions registered by the ‘older missions’, the movement toward Christianity among the insurgents, the many opportunities of Burns for preaching and colportage as well as some form of receptivity he met with, and lastly, the successful cure by Young of many opium-smokers, one of whom had already been baptised by the LMS. There was neither any EP ingathering to celebrate nor any FMC complaint over the non-existence of such. The FMC had accepted the missionary theory about slow conversion results and made it its own in the absence of any better explanation of non-results.

Although the missionary belief in slow results was effectively communicated to the home front which came to share it, it was not until news of the Pechuia ingathering was received that the FMC had the courage to publicise its long-held expectations with regard to its China work:

‘But no one acquainted with the nature of missionary labour, especially in China, expected to hear of speedy results from a soil so unpromising - surrounded by so many difficulties, which could be overcome only by patience, and persevering industry. Nor even after the first difficulties were surmounted, and our brethren were enabled to declare to the people in their own tongue “the wonderful works of God,” were we prepared to look for an early harvest. “Paul may plant and

²²¹ Johnston/Amoy/18Jan1854, p. 220.

²²² *Ibid.*

²²³ AR-FMC, Mess/1854/pp. 148-150.

Apollo's water, but God giveth the increase;" and pre-eminently so must this be the case where the Gospel is offered to a people blinded and debased by the grossest idolatries. Frequently we have been informed of the willingness of many to listen to the preaching of the Word, - and we know how faithfully and earnestly it has been declared to them; - but few have been prepared to forsake their sins and turn to the living and true God.²²⁴

A two-point parallel can at once be drawn with the case of the RCA discussed earlier. First, the slowness of results again found its rationale in Chinese culturo-religious obstacles. Second, the turning point in the expectation of slow conversion results was likewise the year 1854.²²⁵ Therefore we see that with regard to the expectation of slow results as well as the termination of that expectation, both the RCA and EPM shared the same experience. The turning point was Pechuia.

On account of its place and status in the history of the work in Banlam, Pechuia was very significant in reinforcing the missionary confidence in the Chinese. Already we have established earlier that the main credit for the local work went to the natives as far as the missionaries are concerned. The formal establishment of a church after just four months of work -- it was believed that Burns was the first missionary ever to have been in Pechuia²²⁶ -- was the event that made Talmage declare the end of the long-held expectation of protracted results from religious work.²²⁷ On this count alone, the impact of the Pechuia work upon the RCA missionaries cannot be underestimated. Moreover the Pechuia church growth over three years (47 admissions during 1854-56) stood in great relief to that of Amoy over twelve years (31 admissions during 1842-53, i.e. including Teacher U). It would take little effort at memory to decipher that Chinese-led work had produced results which equaled 150 per cent of what missionary-led work had produced over a period four times as long (!). As the first major breakthrough in the Banlam work and also recognised as well as celebrated for what it was, Pechuia was a heavy-weight reinforcement of the missionary confidence in the capability and effectiveness of the Chinese converts.

In this Section we have shown that in the period leading up to 1854 the foreign workers of both Missions believed that the ingathering of converts will be a protracted process. Methodologically speaking, both the admission policy and the instructional method required an extended time with the effect that each individual admission was delayed and over-all church membership growth retarded. Thus actual work experience inclined to confirm that results slow in coming were but naturally to be expected. Against this background, the significance of the Pechuia ingathering of 1854 shines with clarity. Not only did the inland awakening demolish the missionary expectation of slow conversion results, it also modified the admission policy in such a way as to accelerate church growth, thereby hastening the advent of the Sinkoe event.

²²⁴ 'Good news from China', Mess/Sep. 1854/p. 265.

²²⁵ The case of Douglas has not been discussed in this Section for the reason that he arrived in China *after* 1854. Perhaps on the same account we should not be surprised that we find in his letters no talk about expecting slow results.

²²⁶ AR-AB/1855/p. 112.

²²⁷ Talmage/18Aug1854.

5.5.2. Self-propagation

Aside from Pechuia, the work at Chiohbe also contributed its share to making 1854 a memorable year in the history of Banlam Protestantism. Whereas Pechuia enjoys the distinction of chronological priority (especially in ending the missionary expectation of slow results), the Chiohbe work presented even more convincing evidence of the capability of native labour, not least because it emerged as the first uncontested case of successful Chinese self-propagation.

The results achieved at Chiohbe were more powerful than those at Pechuia in increasing the missionary confidence in Chinese work for at least four reasons. First, unlike the case of Pechuia, the work at Chiohbe was initiated by volunteers who were also quite young Christians, having been baptised only about a year ago (July 1854). In contrast, the pioneers at Pechuia were two Chinese colporteur/evangelists who were paid to preach the Gospel, and had been believers since 1849 or 1850. Furthermore at Pechuia, it was Burns who at his own expense rented a house for public preaching and for preacher's quarters. On the other hand, at Chiohbe it was the two Chinese men themselves who hired a small house at c.3 shillings a month for the same purposes.²²⁸ Thus on account of their lesser 'Christian credentials' and (presumably) poorer financial resources, Uju and Tek-iam were certainly more impressive as models of religious zeal and effectiveness.

Second, the work of preaching and instruction was done substantially if not fully by Chinese volunteers and evangelists. Unlike Pechuia, no foreign missionary was ever *resident* at Chiohbe. Neither was there *prolonged on-site* missionary supervision of Chinese labour. Thus there was no foreigner (like Burns in the case of Pechuia) to share the honour for the local work accomplishments. In contrast, Swanson could assert (though erroneously) that '[i]n 1854 there was a remarkable work of grace at Pechuia, in which Mr. Burns was the great agent'.²²⁹ A somewhat similar impression is communicated to the reader by the later accounts of Johnston (1897)²³⁰ and of the FMC secretary (1907).²³¹ However the latter could not say the same for the extension of the work from Pechuia to Chiohbe which he acknowledged to have happened 'mainly through the labours of the Pechuia Christians' who were 'unpaid evangelists'.²³² Indeed the work was started by the 'peripatetic pastrycook' Uju ('one of the most successful volunteer evangelists'²³³) and Tek-iam (another early Pechuia convert) and then followed up by other Chinese from Pechuia and Amoy. When the missionaries arrived, it was not to instruct but to examine the inquirers. In other words, the work of qualifying the applicants for admission was already done so that only the task of examination and admission remained. Had the Chinese been authorised to examine candidates and administer the sacraments, there would be no need for any missionary presence at all. This point

²²⁸ Johnston/Rev1854, Mess/1855/p. 145.

²²⁹ Swanson, 'Career', p. 57; cf. p. 64.

²³⁰ CAF/p. 201.

²³¹ See Dale, *Missions*, pp. 3-4.

²³² Dale, *Missions*, p. 4.

²³³ CAF/pp. 93-96. Uju or 'I-ju' was later an elder at Chiohbe in 1868. Burns, *Memoir*, p. 592n5.

could not have been missed by the missionaries. That the foreign agents postponed going over until the time for examination was ripe should not be surprising when we recall the shortage of missionaries and the demanding work in Amoy. As a matter of fact, Doty candidly let it out that the Chiohbe work was at once an encouragement as well as 'a source of increased care and labo[u]r' to them.²³⁴ What can be said is that the planting of the Chiohbe church and its fast growth, both being the products of mainly Chinese labour, indeed added to the missionary confidence in the Banlam Christians.

Third, although there had been previous missionary visits, it was the preaching of Uju and Tek-iam, and the other Chinese who went after them, which triggered the sort of impact in the latter half of 1854 that amazed the missionaries.²³⁵ Although Chiohbe 'has generally shown a curiosity to hear', Johnston wrote in mid-October 1854 that 'the interest now is very different' from before when the crowd followed the preaching party only to see the foreigner; the difference being 'a real desire to hear the Word'.²³⁶ That this remark was based upon observations taken during a *recent* visit suggests a possible correlation with a series of events that happened within the last two months or so. In late August, Johnston and Talmage visited Pechuia with the intention to protect the believers from the neighbouring villages which were threatening to attack the town. To carry out their plan, the would-be attackers 'had called in to their aid, in hope of plunder, a large number of bad characters from the surrounding districts, which are so infested by bands of thieves and robbers...'²³⁷ As the presence of the foreigners succeeded in deterring the planned offensive, they attacked Chiohbe whose mandarins quickly fled. Shortly afterwards, the missionaries heard the news that peace talks with Pechuia were in progress. One cannot help but note that immediately previous to this event, Johnston had been successful in getting the British Consul ('although he had no laws to support him...') to secure from Chinese parents 'full religious toleration' for two students, and that the news of this had quickly spread around in Amoy.²³⁸ The said background events raise the question as to whether the new local receptiveness was not unrelated to some Chinese perception of political advantages which derive from associating with the foreign missionaries. Of course, one cannot discount the possibility of such thought on the part of (at least) some of the locals. But the key issue is whether the missionaries actually did think there was a correlation of the two factors on the part of the Chinese. The sources certainly do not give any sort of indication that the Westerners did. Furthermore the severe persecution of 1855-56 and the non-appeal to foreign political authorities on the part of both missionaries and converts were sufficient to disappoint any advantage-seeking native. At the same time, the ordeal acted as a purifier within the believing community, weeding out the insincere and the weak while preserving those with

²³⁴ Doty/25Jun1855, CI/25Nov1855/p. 86c4-5.

²³⁵ See Johnston/16Oct1854, Mess/1855/pp. 21-22.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*

²³⁷ Johnston/Amoy/5Sep1854, Mess/1855/pp. 19-20.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*

genuine commitment and stability. In sum, the missionaries had compelling reasons to believe that the results brought about by Chinese labour were authentic in character.

The last and most important point builds on those preceding it. As the fruit of Pechuia zeal, the success at Chiohbe amounted to what constituted self-propagation on the part of the Chinese converts. Thus *contra* the special pleading of Johnston,²³⁹ what came first was not self-government but self-propagation. Albeit this instance of self-propagation took place on a personal rather than an ecclesial level. In other words, the case is of *individuals* preaching the message *spontaneously* to others at a different locality, rather than of *corporate* action undertaken after *deliberation and planning*. Understandably it was only after church communities were organised that ecclesial self-propagation could proceed. Nonetheless Chiohbe can truly be considered a case of native self-propagation, for it *actually resulted in the eventual formation of a new congregation*. At first regarded the third RCA church (after Amoy and Pechuia),²⁴⁰ Chiohbe later became the second RCA church when Pechuia was returned to the EPM. As an instance of native self-propagation, the Chiohbe case was unique in its time. It differs from Pechuia, for the latter included missionary participation in the local work. It is dissimilar to the Chiangchiu and Choanchiu missions in that the latter were properly congregational actions and did not give birth to new congregations. For the last reason, it is also to be set apart from the common forms of Chinese labour discussed in the last Chapter. Thus in describing the development of the Chinese Church under the EP as starting with self-government and ending with self-support and self-propagation,²⁴¹ Johnston was actually forcing the facts to fit a formula which had become 'conventional wisdom' in the latter half of the nineteenth century.²⁴²

With the demonstration of native self-propagation at Chiohbe, the matter brings us back to the Talmage ideal, in which the native church is to attain firstly, freedom from foreign leadership, and latterly, independence of foreign assistance.²⁴³ By demonstrating self-propagation, the Chinese had convincingly showed readiness for the next step in Talmagean devolution, i.e. self-government. Though most likely without Chinese intentionality and knowledge, self-propagation had provided the credentials for ecclesiastical autonomy.

5.5.3. Summary

It was Pechuia and Chiohbe which made the year 1854 crucial. With the local work done mainly by the natives (even though with some *assistance* from Burns), the Pechuia work and its ingathering terminated the missionary expectation in slow results. Where the local work was done practically by the Chinese alone, Chiohbe demonstrated the lively spirit of self-propagation of the Banlam converts. In both instances, geographical expansion into the mainland put the work

²³⁹ See CAF/pp. 363-364.

²⁴⁰ AR-AB/1855/p. 17.

²⁴¹ CAF/pp. 363ff.

²⁴² See Williams, *Ideal*.

²⁴³ See 2.5.

beyond the convenient reach and oversight of the Amoy-based missionaries; more so in the case of Chiohbe.

So captivating was the Pechuia-Chiohbe spectacle that it easily overshadowed everything else. As a watershed year, 1854 actually had its share of other stories of success and failure. The year actually also witnessed a sudden rise in admissions at Amoy. Aware that there were many interested to become applicants, the RCA called a special meeting for such people in January, at which about thirty men and women, with ages from 20 to 70, appeared. Although many were reckoned as yet unready for 'church membership', the missionaries were pleased to see such great interest.²⁴⁴ After more examination meetings were held, a total of eighteen men and ten women were admitted by the end of July.²⁴⁵ Yet 1854 was not without some unfruitful efforts. The same trio who brought about much local interest at Pechuia failed to do a repeat performance at Maping (Feb/Mar) where despite a generally favourable reception 'there were no cases, as at Pechuia, of persons coming out and declaring themselves on the side of the Gospel'.²⁴⁶ In other words, not all Chinese inland efforts were successful. However such failures were overshadowed by Pechuia-Chiohbe²⁴⁷ into which the other success story was also drowned. The putting to an end of the belief in slow results created such an impact that all other events were miniaturised and marginalised.

Even into 1856 both Chiohbe and Pechuia continued to be without resident missionaries. Speaking against the background of the persecution of 1855, Talmage wrote,

'We know not what language to use to express the wonderful peace of God towards these feeble churches [at Chiohbe and Pechuia]. They are as sheep among ravening wolves, *without any under-shepherd* to lead, and comfort, and protect them. We can only occasionally visit them. "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes."²⁴⁸ (italics added)

In missionary language one may say: Humanly speaking it was the doing of the Chinese at Pechuia and Chiohbe which enabled the congregations to live on and even grow in the absence of sustained missionary labour or sustained on-site supervision. Thus by early 1856, missionary confidence in the Chinese converts had reached a very respectable and enviable level.

5.6. Conclusion

Previously we have seen how various missionary limitations created some Chinese work space which the natives did not hesitate to fill up (Ch4). The present Chapter takes the matter further by showing how the converts 'out-ran' the missionaries by way of their initiatives in extending the work inland. Going beyond the mere filling up of some missionary-provided work

²⁴⁴ Doty/20Apr1854.

²⁴⁵ Talmage/18Aug1854.

²⁴⁶ Burns/Amoy/8May1854, Mess/1854/p. 266.

²⁴⁷ Even if one were to say that the lack of *immediate* success at Maping was something expected or thought to be normal by the missionaries (since the visit took place when the latter still believed in protracted results), the distinction of Pechuia-Chiohbe would not be diminished any, but would only be put in greater relief.

²⁴⁸ Talmage/Amoy/16Jan1856.

space, the Chinese initiatives were a new kind of labour, being *qualitatively* different from the former. Not only because they were geographically ambitious, but also because they exhibited a powerful religious self-motivation, thus a persuasive proof of greater 'maturity'. Such instances did not fail to further boost the missionary confidence in the natives. Moreover as the terminator of the missionary belief in slow results, Pechuia may justly be said to have brought about a 'paradigm shift' in missionary thinking. After this ground shaking but before the after-shocks had all passed, Chiohbe as the first unambiguous case of self-propagation switched the RCA church formation programme into 'turbo' mode. Following the blueprint provided by the Talmage ideal, the step forward was nothing other than self-government. Therefore triggered by the demonstration of Chinese self-propagation, the process of devolution started with the Sinkoe event in 1856.

In the last four Chapters, we have shown that in the pursuit of a church formation objective, the RCA lead the EPM not only chronologically but also ideologically in the form of the Talmage ideal (Ch2); by way of their Christian quality, the Chinese church members were able to qualify themselves as an electorate in the eyes of the missionaries (Ch3); on account of various limitations, the missionaries created much work space for the natives, and in taking up the missionary-given work space, the Chinese labourers whether employed or voluntary were able to meet or exceed missionary expectations (Ch4); in taking the work inland, Chinese initiatives brought about a 'paradigm shift' in missionary thinking and reached a high point when self-propagation was actually demonstrated (Ch5). Therefore by their Christian character and labours, the Banlam Christians were able to win the high regard of the missionaries who came to believe in their readiness to elect their own leaders. At the same time, from among the converts the missionaries were also able to identify a sufficient number of individuals whom they thought of as having met all the qualifications of office-bearers within the Presbyterian tradition of church polity.

Based on the above, practically all the basic preconditions for a Consistory were met, viz. a devolution plan, a qualified electorate and a plurality of candidates for church office-bearers. It was not long before the last needed thing materialised, i.e. the attainment of an appropriate membership size (Ch2). With both qualitative and quantitative requirements simultaneously met by spring 1856, the Sinkoe event secured its place in the history of Banlam Protestantism.

Chapter 6

'Realising' the ideal: The Taihoey and the first pastors

6.1. Introduction

The Taihoey event. On Wednesday 2nd April 1862, the first meeting of the Amoy 'Classis/Presbytery' was held consisting of three sederunts (forenoon, afternoon, evening). In attendance were five RCA and two EP missionaries along with 14 Chinese elders from the five organised congregations (Sinkoe, Tekchhiukha, Chiohbe, Pechuia, Maping).¹ After the moderator was chosen and a clerk appointed, the lengthy discussion on the proper Chinese name was undertaken. Since the EP Sessions were called 't'iong lo hoey' (assembly of elders),² it was agreed to adopt the name 'toa t'iong lo hoey' (great assembly of elders); or, in short, *Taihoey*. Thus was formed the union 'Classis', another advancement in ecclesiastical devolution in China, and more significantly the first instance of church 'union' in the modern Protestant missionary movement.³

The first pastors. At the second Taihoey meeting in December, the Chinese raised the matter of pastoral ordination.⁴ During the special meeting in January, the pastoral calls were approved and examinations set in February.⁵ The examination results being satisfactory to all,⁶ Lo Tau (Sinkoe) and Iap Han-chiong (Tekchhiukha) were ordained on 29th March.⁷ Thus by RCA definition, two 'self-supporting churches' were constituted.⁸ When the missionaries immediately relinquished 'the old relation of a Missionary pastor'⁹ devolving the duty upon the new pastors,¹⁰ full self-government on the local church level was attained. With Chinese domestic missions ongoing, self-propagation was likewise in place. Therefore by missionary reckoning, after two decades of work the Talmage ideal had become reality.

In this Chapter we tackle two questions. The first is: why organise a Classis? We shall argue that the organisation of the Taihoey was made possible by both quantitative and qualitative growth on the part of the Chinese churches (6.2). The *immediate* cause of the Taihoey was the

¹ Ostrom/Amoy/7Apr1862, AER. To allow equal representation, it was later decided there be one elder from each church.

² Swanson/Amoy/7Apr1862, Mess/1862/pp. 216-217.

³ So W.J.R. Taylor, 'Union and co-operation in foreign missions' in J. Johnston (ed), *Report of the Centenary Conference on the Protestant missions of the world* (1888) II:pp. 465-466; MacGillivray, *Century*, p. 368.

⁴ Doty/Amoy/6Jan1863, 723CM/Bx1.

⁵ Kip/Amoy/2Feb1863, 723CM/Bx1.

⁶ Ostrom/Amoy/20Feb1863, 723CM/Bx1.

⁷ Blauvelt/Amoy/10Apr1863, 723CM/Bx1.

⁸ Ostrom/Amoy/20Feb1863.

⁹ Doty/Amoy/26Mar1863, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁰ AR-AM/Amoy/31Dec1863, 723CM/Bx1.

need for a higher church court but the *long-term* motivation was the missionary desire for pastors. Although on both counts the Taihoey was a devolutionary necessity, the timing of its genesis was governed by unexpected circumstances which explains why there was no decision to ordain pastors until later (6.3). The other question is: why a *union* Classis? While ecclesiastical devolution is *essentially* contained in the Talmage ideal, the same cannot be said of the element of union. We shall argue that the union was chiefly motivated by the actual experience of cooperation (6.4) and facilitated by a convergence of three major factors, viz. common vision (6.5), a shared denominational heritage (6.6) and methodological similarity (6.7). Here we make an important distinction, viz. the *chief motivation* is that which initiates motion/movement while a *facilitating factor* is that which allows the movement to continue. We will explain how historical cooperation (chief motivation) triggered the movement toward organic union and how the three *major* facilitating factors made possible the smooth progress of that movement.

6.2. Church growth and quality

This Section argues the formation of the Taihoey was made possible by the quantitative and qualitative growth of the churches. More specifically the critical factor is not (a) the mere increase of individual members but rather (b) the growth in the number of organised congregations. Nevertheless in a real sense (b) rode upon (a) although the latter by itself could not justify having a 'Classis'. For this reason we present the data for both categories to make the picture complete. After that, we argue that in qualitative terms the missionary confidence in the Chinese during 1856-62 was not only sustained but improved by progress made toward the Talmage ideal.

By November 1857 the two missions could boast of more than 200 members, the RCA having 172 and EP 53.¹¹ Until 1862 the annual membership growth among the RCA churches was fairly constant.

RCA communicants, 1857-62¹²

| | Sinkoe and Tekchhiukha | Chiohbe | TOTAL | |
|----------|------------------------|-------------------|---------|-------|
| End-1857 | 137 | 35 | 172 | |
| End-1858 | 146 | 38 | 184 | |
| End-1859 | 162 | 44 | 206 | |
| End-1860 | 182 | 47 | 229 | |
| | | | | |
| | Sinkoe | Tekchhiukha | Chiohbe | TOTAL |
| End-1861 | 122 | 89 | 51 | 262 |
| End-1862 | 139 | 100 ¹³ | 70 | 309 |

¹¹ Smith/[Amoy]/c.Nov1857, Mess/1858/p. 146. The LMS Amoy church had 190 members. Cf. AR-FMC, Mess/1858/p. 149. The Amoy membership matched that of the region from Canton to HK and surpassed those of Ningbo, Shanghai and Fuzhou. Smith/c.Nov1857; Smith to Mr. Barbour, Amoy/11Feb1858, Mess/1858/p. 148. By 1860 the Amoy figure had topped the 600 mark. AR-SA/1861, Mess/1862/pp. 49-51.

¹² Talmage, Annual tabular view for the year 1857, 723CM/Bx1; AR-BFM (1858-1865); MacGillivray, *Century*, p. 371.

¹³ *Contra* RCC/p. 91 which states the 1900 membership of 165 is 'more than double' that of 1863.

On the EP side, 1857 ended with 52 members.¹⁴ At Pechuia, internal 'discord',¹⁵ certain 'spiritual evils' and 'external chastisements'¹⁶ as well as 'active opposition'¹⁷ stunted growth until March 1860 (one adult admission)¹⁸ or, by missionary reckoning, until June 1861 when it was hoped the three adult and two child admissions be the 'first-fruits' of a long-awaited revival.¹⁹ At Maping the first baptisms were of four adults plus three women from another village (Apr1857).²⁰ By December 1861 Maping already had two out-stations, viz. Kangkhau (c.12 members) and Soatau (10-11 members, 20-30 inquirers).²¹ At Anhai it was more than three years after the first missionary visit²² that the first baptisms were held (Sep1860).²³ At the end of 1861 the cumulative EP membership was 93.²⁴

Aside from the above, labour was also in progress in two other places. The Chiangchiu work commenced in 1858²⁵ but the first admissions dated January 1862.²⁶ As an RCA-EPM joint venture, its membership was subsumed under Chiohbe.²⁷ In 1860, EP work started at Emungkang with a view of forming a church out of the RCA members residing there.²⁸ The two adults baptised in June-July 1861²⁹ were given membership in the Amoy churches.³⁰ Therefore until the Taihoey genesis, Chiangchiu and Emungkang did not appear independently in the statistical reports.

Alongside communicant growth was the numerical increase of Consistories over a four-year span. At Chiohbe, three elders and three deacons were ordained in May 1859.³¹ Inspired by this,³² Pechuia installed four office-bearers in October.³³ After the completion of its chapel (1859), Tekchhiukha became the third organised RCA church with eight office-bearers (1860).³⁴ At Maping two elders and three deacons took office in August 1860.³⁵ Formal organisation was

¹⁴ Talmage, Annual tabular view for the year 1857, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁵ Burns/Swatow (Double Island)/10Sep1857, Mess/1857/pp. 380-381; AR-FMC, Mess/1858/p. 149.

¹⁶ Douglas/Amoy/4Sep1858, Mess/1858/p. 386.

¹⁷ Douglas to Mr. Barbour, Pechuia/15Jun1860, EPMF/Douglas.

¹⁸ Grant/'Bay Pay'/9Mar1860, Mess/1860/pp. 184-185.

¹⁹ Swanson to Dr. Hamilton, Amoy/3Jun1861, Mess/1861/pp. 281-282.

²⁰ Douglas/Amoy/6May1857, Mess/1857/p. 251.

²¹ Swanson to Dr. Hamilton, Amoy/9Dec1861, Mess/1862/pp. 86-87.

²² Douglas/Amoy/2Jul1857, Mess/1857/p. 347.

²³ Swanson/Amoy/21Sep1860, Mess/1860/p. 381.

²⁴ AR-BFM/1862/p. 13.

²⁵ Douglas to Mr. M[atheson], Amoy/7Apr1858, Mess/1858/p. 223; Douglas to Mr. Matheson, Amoy/17Dec1858, Mess/1859/pp. 87-88.

²⁶ Douglas to Mr. Barbour, Amoy/23Jan1862, EPMF/Douglas.

²⁷ Douglas/Amoy/6Feb1864, Mess/1864/pp. 211-212.

²⁸ Douglas to Mr. Barbour, Amoy/24Nov1860, EPMF/Douglas.

²⁹ Swanson/Amoy/3Jun1861, Mess/1861/pp. 281-282; Douglas to Mr. Barbour, Amoy/2Aug1861, Mess/1861/pp. 350-351.

³⁰ Thus Douglas wrote the Sinkoe-Tekchhiukha membership was correctly 213 (not 211). 1861 statistics, Douglas/[Amoy/Feb1862], EPMF/Douglas.

³¹ Douglas/Amoy/16Jun1859, Mess/1859/pp. 285f; Ostrom/Amoy/1Jun1860, 723CM/Bx1.

³² Douglas/Amoy/16Jun1859, Mess/1859/pp. 285f.

³³ Grant to Mr. Matheson, Amoy/8Oct1859, Mess/1860/pp. 19-20. Not Oct1860 (*contra* WHP/p. 48).

³⁴ AR-BFM/1860/p. 20; 1861/pp. 13,15.

³⁵ Douglas/Amoy/20Apr1860, EPMF/Douglas; Talmage/Amoy/30Aug1860, 723CM/Bx1.

postponed at Anhai due to the plunder of the chapel (Nov1861).³⁶ By year-end this state of affairs applied.³⁷

| | Elders | Deacons | Members |
|-------------|--------|---------|---------|
| Sinkoe | 4 | 4 | 122 |
| Tekchhiukha | 4 | 4 | 89 |
| Chiohbe | 4 | 4 | 51 |
| Pechuia | 2 | - | 27 |
| Maping | 2 | 3 | 37 |
| Anhai | - | - | 29 |
| TOTAL | 16 | 15 | 355 |

Therefore by April 1862 the RCA had three organised churches, the minimum required to form a Classis.³⁸ By the same standard the EP was lacking one. However by union, the deficit was overcome, and with the RCA again taking the lead, the union 'Classis' was organised.

Beside quantitative growth, there is the qualitative dimension.³⁹ In the missionary perception there was continuity with pre-1856 times in terms of Christian quality, zeal and self-propagation. Furthermore missionary confidence in the Chinese was greatly boosted by new breakthroughs in demonstrated self-governmental ability and proven willingness to undertake self-support.

Quality and zeal. During 1856-62 missionary satisfaction over convert quality was frequently expressed. In 1857 Doty reported the Amoy and Chiohbe converts 'are mostly manifesting much of the spirit of Christianity' and had gained 'decided growth in knowledge and grace...'⁴⁰ There was also optimism that some young members could make 'future pastors and teachers'. Smith noted 'there is every reason to believe that by far the greater proportion of these are genuine disciples of Christ'.⁴¹ Although Smith referred to the three Missions, the assessment was based primarily on RCA-EP realities.⁴² The missionaries were also struck by the sincerity of the Pechuia and Maping believers who walked 12-20 miles to attend communion at Chiohbe.⁴³ For 1859 the RCA was comforted by 'many evidences of progress' especially development in Christian character.⁴⁴ When Doty returned in 1861, he found that the converts 'as a body have been growing in Bible knowledge, and become more grounded in the faith, and more stable in

³⁶ Swanson/Amoy/9Dec1861, Mess/1862/pp. 86-87.

³⁷ AR-FMC, Mess/1862/p. 187. On these statistics, Amoy was adjudged the most fruitful field in China.

³⁸ *Constitution* (1840), 2.3.1.

³⁹ In addition to the rationale given in 4.1, our discussion includes the EP also because of the 'confusion of ownership' between the two Missions (see 6.4).

⁴⁰ Doty/Amoy/2May1857, 723CM/Bx1.

⁴¹ Smith/[Amoy]/c.Nov1857, Mess/1858/p. 146.

⁴² See 6.7 on LMS admission policy.

⁴³ Sandeman/Amoy/2Jun1858, Mess/1858/p. 285.

⁴⁴ Talmage/Amoy/23Jan1860, 723CM/Bx1.

Christian character and conduct' while still retaining the 'spirit of prayer which from the beginning has been a marked feature in the piety of these Chinese Christians'.⁴⁵

Aside from general Christian quality, the missionaries were also quite impressed with Chinese evangelistic zeal. Both Missions observed that the 'brethren in general' found it 'a privilege according to ability and opportunity to witness publicly for Christ'⁴⁶ and 'seemed quite untrammelled by the false shame and formalities that restrain many at home from making known the gospel to others'.⁴⁷ In early 1859 there was joy over 'the growing missionary spirit' among the RCA members.⁴⁸ Commenting on both quality and zeal, field reports from 1860-1861 revealed great missionary satisfaction over 'the order and piety of the Chinese Christians, and their zeal as "fellow-helpers to the truth."⁴⁹

Workers. Beside the general membership the missionaries also found pleasing the performance of the native workers. Apart from outright praise,⁵⁰ the progressive nature of the missionary assessment was subtly displayed in their evolving nomination from 'colporteurs' (1857) to 'helpers' (1859-61) to 'evangelists' (1862).⁵¹ Especially commended was the native labours which 'planted' the church at Chiohbe and did the local work amidst 'persecutions and threatenings' while the over-worked RCA missionaries were limited to occasional visits.⁵² Noting the outstanding performance of '[o]ur excellent Evangelist there' Doty half-jokingly suggested he 'be ordained, as the bishop of the street Church'.⁵³ Possible reasons for setback in missionary confidence were two EP disciplinary cases in 1859, i.e. the suspension of young Kang who had been chapel-keeper and then assistant⁵⁴ before being de-posted for opium-smoking; and the dismissal of Tek-iam the Anhai assistant who admitted to the medicinal use of opium.⁵⁵ However there is no evidence that these *actually* did serious damage to the missionaries' general respect for the workers *as a class*.

Self-propagation. In continuity with pre-1856 times, self-propagation was one item which contributed greatly to missionary confidence in the converts. Expectedly it became a matter for pride and was among the first things to be told newcomers (like Smith who immediately wrote home that the progress in Banlam 'has mainly been through native agency'⁵⁶). Indeed in the *geographical expansion* of the work, the Chinese were actually leading the missionaries. From Pechuia onward, the foreigner 'was the means of first imparting the knowledge of the Saviour, but

⁴⁵ Doty/Amoy/9Dec1861, 723CM/Bx1.

⁴⁶ Doty/Amoy/15Sep1857.

⁴⁷ Smith/[Amoy]/c.Nov1857, Mess/1858/p. 147.

⁴⁸ Talmage/Amoy/7Jan1859, 723CM/Bx1.

⁴⁹ APGS/1861/p. 85.

⁵⁰ Doty/Amoy/15Sep. 1857.

⁵¹ Talmage/'Annual tabular view for the year 1857', Talmage/Amoy/23Jan1860, Talmage/Amoy/23Feb1861, Talmage/Amoy/24Feb1862, 723CM/Bx1; AR-BFM/1859/p. 4; CI/29:51/16Jun1859/p. 202c2.

⁵² Doty/Amoy/2May1857, Ostrom/Amoy/8Dec1859. 723CM/Bx1.

⁵³ Doty/Amoy/22Mar1858, 723CM/Bx1.

⁵⁴ Douglas/Amoy/16Jun1859, Mess/1859/pp. 285f; Douglas/Pechuia/14Jul1860, Mess/1860/p. 347.

⁵⁵ Burns/Amoy/31Aug1859, Mess/1859/pp. 381f.

⁵⁶ Smith/[Amoy]/c.Nov1857, Mess/1858/p. 147.

it was the converts who spread the glad tidings from village to village and from town to town'.⁵⁷ Even the 'long journeys' often taken by the missionaries to open 'new regions' were 'suggested by the advice or prayerful desires of the native Christians'.⁵⁸ Furthermore as missionaries would open a preaching hall only if there was 'a prepared people',⁵⁹ the work done by the Chinese before the missionaries first arrived and during the latter's absence was critical in determining whether stated work should begin. Concrete instances from our period are not lacking. Aside from the opening of Chiohbe by Pechuia natives, the local work at Maping was done by the Chinese.⁶⁰ Thus visiting in May 1856 Douglas was greatly 'refreshed...to see such a work done entirely by native Christians'.⁶¹ In like fashion, the message was carried from there to Kangkhau (RCA)⁶² and also Liongbunsi (EPM) where inquirers started attending the Maping meetings in early 1862. Even before the 'first'⁶³ missionary visit to Liongbunsi (Nov), Chinese efforts had generated a mass conversion with practically the entire village observing the Sabbath and rid of 'idols' and ancestral tablets.⁶⁴ Native initiative was again shown when the Anhai work was started by the 'repeated urgings' of a preacher.⁶⁵ Also it seems the Chinese were ahead of the missionaries in desiring to open Tong-an (EPM).⁶⁶ Finally the successful opening of Chiangchiu was entirely by the Chiohbe church and its local work at least up to the Taihoey event was to 'a very large extent' done by natives.⁶⁷

In view of the evidence, Swanson was not wrong in his perception that the work in *all* EP stations partook of a very large element of self-propagation on the part of both native workers and convert/members.⁶⁸ Not wrong but incomplete, for it would be more accurate to include all RCA stations outside Amoy (viz. Chiohbe, Kangkhau and Chiangchiu). Little wonder then that the missionaries highly regarded the natives for their self-propagation efforts and accomplishments.

Self-government. Adding to the missionary confidence in the *office-bearers* were three things, viz. demonstrated ability in self-government, adherence to the strict admission policy and continuing personal growth. After more than a year of 'self-government', the RCA missionaries found the Sinkoe officers 'very faithful and efficient'.⁶⁹ Doty was particularly satisfied that the eight men had not only won 'the confidence and regard' of the members but had also discharged their duties 'with such care, wisdom, faithfulness and efficiency which no other system of means

⁵⁷ CAF/pp. 194-195. Speaking of the 19th century EP converts collectively (i.e. including those outside Banlam) Johnston said that '[a]lmost every member strives to bring in those "that are without"' and the 'aggressive' evangelistic spirit resulted in '[t]he large proportion of members in the Church hav[ing] been brought in by the personal influence of the former converts' (CAF/p. 357).

⁵⁸ CAF/p. 195.

⁵⁹ CAF/p. 195.

⁶⁰ Previously Burns and some RCA converts visited once. Burns/Amoy/8May1854, Mess/1854/p. 266.

⁶¹ Douglas/Amoy/23May1856, AR-SA/1856/pp. 14f.

⁶² Talmage/Amoy/30Apr1860, 723CM/Bx1.

⁶³ I.e. after Burns' visit of 1854 which seemingly created no lasting impact. See Dale, *Missions*, p. 5.

⁶⁴ CAF/pp. 125ff; Dale, *Missions*, p. 5.

⁶⁵ Douglas/Amoy/2Jul1857, Mess/1857/p. 347.

⁶⁶ Douglas/Amoy/21Aug1856, AR-SA/1856/p. 7.

⁶⁷ Ostrom/Amoy/3Jun1861, Doty/Amoy/11Mar1862. 723CM/Bx1.

⁶⁸ Swanson, *Sketch*, pp. 13,14-15.

⁶⁹ Talmage/Amoy/10Jul1857, CI/28:19/5Nov1857/p. 74c3-4.

within our power could have reached'.⁷⁰ With such confidence in the Chinese, the missionaries looked forward to appointing an inland Consistory.⁷¹ In this manner therefore the able performance of the Sinkoe Consistory gave the missionaries the confidence required to organise Chiohbe in 1859, thus making another step toward the Taihoey.

Aside from church government in general, the missionary confidence in the Chinese was also boosted by observing how the strict admission policy was maintained by the elders at Amoy and inland.⁷² Likewise in the matter of membership quality control, the elders won the commendation of both the missionaries and the BFM who interpreted the record-breaking number of disciplinary cases in 1859 as proving Chinese reliability in 'the oversight and discipline of the Churches'.⁷³

Finally the continuing personal growth of the officers was consolation to the missionaries that 'power' did not lead to stagnation or abuse. After a two-year absence, Doty returned to find the officers at Amoy and Chiohbe much improved in 'knowledge and ability' being able to make judgments with '[m]uch enlightened and reliable discretion and prudence'.⁷⁴ It is significant to note that this observation pertained to the state of affairs prevailing just a few months before the Taihoey event.

Self-support. Beside self-government, the other breakthrough in this period which further enhanced the missionaries' high regard for the Chinese was in self-support. In May 1859 the Amoy church decided to support two men to evangelise Amoy Island.⁷⁵ For thinking this a novelty⁷⁶ Douglas exposed his ignorance of the shortlived Chinese domestic missions in 1853. Beside supporting two 'evangelists' the church also took the initiative to build a boat for them.⁷⁷ Later as part of the separate accounting arrangement of Sinkoe and Tekchhiukha (Jun1861), each church took on the support of one worker.⁷⁸ Meanwhile inspired by Amoy, Chiohbe led by its new Consistory resolved to half-support a worker. The limited support was more than compensated for by the knowledge that the church was small and 'composed of the poor of this world'.⁷⁹ However in 1860 Chiohbe took on the full support of its worker.⁸⁰ The net result therefore was *all* the organised churches of the RCA had attained a certain degree of self-support by 1862.

⁷⁰ Doty/Amoy/15Sep1857.

⁷¹ Talmage/Amoy/10Jul1857.

⁷² Doty/Amoy/16Aug1858, 723CM/Bx1; Swanson/Amoy/7Apr1862, Mess/1862/pp. 216f.

⁷³ AR-BFM/1860/pp. 19,20,21.

⁷⁴ Doty/Amoy/9Dec1861, 723CM/Bx1.

⁷⁵ Rapalje/Amoy/30Jun1860, 723CM/Bx1.

⁷⁶ Douglas/Maping/1Aug1859, Mess/1860/p. 20.

⁷⁷ Ostrom/Amoy/18Jul1859, 723CM/Bx1.

⁷⁸ Talmage/Amoy/4Jul1861, 723CM/Bx1.

⁷⁹ Talmage/Amoy/15Jun1859, 723CM/Bx1.

⁸⁰ Ostrom/Amoy/1Jun1860, Talmage/Amoy/23Feb1861, Talmage/Amoy/24Feb1862, cf. Talmage/Amoy/23Jan1860. 723CM/Bx1.

Furthermore the church-supported workers quickly won missionary admiration for their faithfulness.⁸¹ More significantly their successes both surprised and impressed the missionaries. Regarded as the fruit of the Amoy domestic mission was Kangthau⁸² whose first baptism occurred in August 1860.⁸³ Its quick establishment into an official RCA out-station⁸⁴ constituted official missionary affirmation of the Chinese evangelistic project. Likewise the opening of Chiangchui was credited largely to the Chiohbe-supported worker who took up residence there in April/May 1861.⁸⁵ In fulfilling the long-held missionary desire to occupy Chiangchui, this achievement helped much to increase the Westerners' high regard for the Chinese.

In the Amoy and Chiohbe domestic missionaries, we see the synchronisation of self-support and self-propagation. But since the decision to launch such work was made by the Chinese churches in a context of independent though not unguided determination, neither was the aspect of self-government missing. Therefore the matter contained all the basic elements of the Talmage ideal.

To sum up this Section, we see that the quantitative and qualitative requirements for organising the Taihoey were met by 1862. The increase in the number of organised churches made possible the move toward a higher level of ecclesiastical organisation. Quality-wise, there was no major setbacks in the build-up of missionary confidence in the Chinese converts and workers. On the contrary there was real progress in self-government, self-propagation and self-support, or, significant advancement toward the Talmage ideal.

6.3. Devolutionary necessity

In this Section we show that (a) the formation of the Taihoey was motivated by devolutionary concerns, i.e. its *immediate* cause was the practical requirement for a higher juridical body in order to decide disciplinary cases and its *long-term* cause was the need to ordain native pastors; and (b) the timing of its formation was not governed by choice but extraordinary circumstances, explaining why no resolution was passed to ordain pastors in 1862.

The cause of the Taihoey relates to two devolutionary needs. The first was so the churches 'may receive the benefit of higher judicatories than the consistories of single churches.'⁸⁶ As it happened, the disciplinary cases of the father and son from Sinkoe was one cause of the Taihoey. Two reasons sustain this. One, although giving little details about the cases, Doty connected them to 'a move further towards a Classis'⁸⁷ suggesting they were unusually serious or complicated enough to require settlement in a higher court. Two, in the same letter Doty mentioned only the disciplinary need without any reference to pastoral ordination, thereby exposing it as an

⁸¹ Talmage/Amoy/30Apr1860, 723CM/Bx1.

⁸² Doty/Amoy/9Dec1861, 723CM/Bx1.

⁸³ Talmage/Amoy/30Aug1860, 723CM/Bx1.

⁸⁴ Ostrom/Amoy/23Nov1860, Talmage/Amoy/23Feb1861. 723CM/Bx1.

⁸⁵ Ostrom/Amoy/3Jun1861.

⁸⁶ Talmage/Amoy/30Apr1860, 723CM/Bx1.

⁸⁷ Doty/Amoy/11Mar1862, 723CM/Bx1.

independent cause of the Taihoey. Aside from the Sinkoe cases, Pechuia and Chiohbe also sought advice on disciplinary matters.⁸⁸ But they were *not* on the agenda *beforehand* and therefore could not have constituted part of the cause. At any rate, the disciplinary action on the Sinkoe cases was the only exercise of ecclesiastical authority at the meeting.⁸⁹

Aside from disciplinary needs, the Taihoey was also motivated by the missionary belief that the church is 'fully organized' only when native pastors are set over them.⁹⁰ Its devolutionary function derived from the RCA Constitution which provided that only a Classis may ordain pastors.⁹¹ For wanting Chinese pastors the missionaries gave two related reasons. First, missionaries were unfit to be 'permanent pastors' among the Chinese and could continue in China only as evangelists and foundation-layers.⁹² The pastorate properly belongs to Chinese 'who are themselves one with the people to whose spiritual wants they are called to minister.'⁹³ The ideal of self-reliance explains why a church was not reckoned 'fully' organised unless she had her own pastor. Second, the missionaries wanted pastors because they intended to devote 'more entirely' to evangelistic work in new fields and to the training of native workers.⁹⁴ In sum, until there be natives ministers, foreigners were compelled to function as interim pastors;⁹⁵ but the missionaries wanted to get back to their proper work, thus Chinese pastors were needed to free them for such.

Actually pastoral ordination was the *long-term* motivation of the Taihoey while the juridical need was merely the *immediate* cause. The reason is the missionary desire for pastors was much older than Doty's recent connection of the Sinkoe disciplinary cases with a higher court. The desire revealed itself quite clearly in the events leading up to 1862. First, the matter of calling a pastor was laid before the Chinese in 1860,⁹⁶ two candidates being elected the following year.⁹⁷ In contrast it was in 1862 that a connection was made between the forthcoming Taihoey and the disciplinary cases.⁹⁸ Second, the Theological Class, which had been meeting quite irregularly since Doty left, quickly resumed regularity in May 1861, no doubt to hasten the preparation of potential pastoral candidates.⁹⁹ Third, the refusal of the overworked¹⁰⁰ Talmage to take a long-overdue furlough was largely traceable to the said work of preparation. To the suggestion that he leaves after Doty and Kip arrive, Talmage was unamenable¹⁰¹ because the training work was practically

⁸⁸ Ostrom/Amoy/7Apr1862, AER.

⁸⁹ Doty/Amoy/11Mar1862; Talmage, *History and ecclesiastical relations of the Churches of the Presbyterian order, at Amoy, China* (NY, 1863) pp. 26-27.

⁹⁰ Talmage/Amoy/30Aug1860, 23Feb1861. 723CM/Bx1.

⁹¹ E.T. Corwin, *A Manual of the Reformed Church in America*, 3rd ed. (NY, 1879) p. 67.

⁹² Doty-Talmage-Joralmon/Amoy/17Sep1856/pp. 28-29,30-31; Talmage/Amoy/30Aug1860, Ostrom/Amoy/23Nov1860, 723CM/Bx1.

⁹³ Rapalje/Amoy/18May1861, 723CM/Bx1.

⁹⁴ Ostrom/Amoy/23Nov1860, Ostrom/Amoy/18Jul1861, Kip/Amoy/25Mar1862, 723CM/Bx1. Cf. AR-BFM/1873/p. 9 as cited in RCC/p. 113.

⁹⁵ Talmage/Amoy/30Apr1860, 723CM/Bx1.

⁹⁶ Ostrom/Amoy/23Nov1860, 723CM/Bx1.

⁹⁷ Peltz/NY/5Mar1862, AER; Doty/Amoy/9Dec1861, 723CM/Bx1.

⁹⁸ Doty/Amoy/11Mar1862, 723CM/Bx1.

⁹⁹ Rapalje/Amoy/18May1861, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁰⁰ Ostrom/Amoy/8Dec1859, Talmage/Amoy/30Apr1860. 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁰¹ Talmage/Amoy/4Jul1861, 723CM/Bx1.

dependent on him alone.¹⁰² Even after consultation with colleagues convinced him that certain duties justify a furlough, he persisted in staying¹⁰³ until forced to leave by domestic circumstances (*infra*). Lastly, the *pre-Classis* meeting of 1861 (itself clearly a deliberate move toward the Taihoey) was assembled to hear work reports and, more significantly, to discuss the possibility of Chiohbe calling a pastor. Attended by the missionaries and representative elders from both Missions, the 'informal' meeting which exercised no ecclesiastical authority was 'the nearest approach to a Classis, that we have yet had'.¹⁰⁴ All these pointed to the long-term determination to ordain native pastors.

Having discussed the cause of the Taihoey, we now look at its timing and why it did not resolve to ordain pastors despite the strong missionary desire to do so. In fact the Taihoey was organised in haste because the sudden death of Mrs. Talmage (10Feb)¹⁰⁵ made the departure of Talmage and his four children 'an immediate necessity'.¹⁰⁶ Even with Doty around, the imminent absence of Talmage was a cause of extraordinary concern. Not only were the missionaries at a loss about how to continue the preparation of the pastoral candidates,¹⁰⁷ the impending removal of the RCA's visionary leader threatens to retard if not arrest the devolutionary process. Later when the impact of his absence was actually felt, Doty blurted out that 'Talmage on the ground would be worth ten present [sic] young men and new recruits'.¹⁰⁸ As a result of his imminent departure, the first Taihoey meeting was hastily scheduled so as to include Talmage before he sailed in mid-April.¹⁰⁹ Adding to the urgency was the uncertainty of his return date. All these forced the meeting to cover more ground than it would have under normal circumstances. Likely because the missionaries well knew the pastoral examinations to be premature, their aim was declared to be diagnostic¹¹⁰ not definitive. In view of the above, the Taihoey's non-decision on pastoral ordination should not be interpreted as a renegading on the devolutionary objective. The missionaries tried what they could but the pastors-elect were unready.¹¹¹ And all because the Taihoey was forced to be held sooner than expected.

In this Section we have argued that the Taihoey was immediately caused by the need for a higher church court but found its long-term cause in the missionary desire to have Chinese pastors in order to achieve the 'full' organisation of the church and free the foreigners for proper missionary work. We have also argued that the *hurried* birth of the Taihoey hindered any decision to ordain pastors so that such non-decision did not imply the giving up of the Talmage ideal. Here only two things need be added. First, since the long-term cause related to pastoral ordination, it

¹⁰² Doty/Amoy/11Mar1862, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁰³ Talmage/Amoy/14Aug1861, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁰⁴ Talmage/Amoy/4Jul1861, 723CM/Bx1. Later Talmage called this the 'first formal meeting of all the churches...' (*History*, p. 26).

¹⁰⁵ Doty/Amoy/10Feb1862, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁰⁶ Doty/Amoy/11Mar1862, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁰⁷ Doty/Amoy/11Mar1862, Doty/Amoy/24Mar1862. 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁰⁸ Doty/HK/4Dec1864, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁰⁹ Ostrom/Amoy/7Apr1862, AER.

¹¹⁰ Ostrom/Amoy/7Apr1862, AER.

¹¹¹ Swanson/Amoy/7Apr1862, Mess/1862/pp. 216f.

may appear the main mover was *only* the RCA missionaries. In fact it was *both* the RCA missionaries and their Chinese churches as we shall see later. Second, the pastoral matter relates to the Talmage ideal in another fundamental way. The linking factor was self-support which in the contemporary missionary definition consisted in the financial sustenance of the ministry of the church including the pastor's salary.¹¹² Thus having native ministers in 1863 was equated with having 'self supporting churches'.¹¹³ Because the Taihoey was needed to have pastors, it became the preparatory step to self-support. Therefore the devolutionary function of the Taihoey relates to both the having of native pastors and the attainment of self-support. Its formation was nothing than devolutionary necessity.

Having explained the motivation of the Taihoey, we proceed to the other question, viz. why a *union* 'Classis'. I.e., whereas a 'Classis' was properly the next step in church organisation, is union *essential* to devolution? If yes, why was union not mentioned when the Talmage ideal was first expressed (1848)? In fact, one wonders whether union was even thought of at that time.

In response, two preliminary remarks are helpful. First, strictly speaking, there is nothing to be said for union as an essential feature of the native church. That is, the Church of Christ in China (formed 1927) would not be less an indigenous church if it consisted of only one Protestant denomination. The transfer of ecclesiastical authority from Mission to Church is by itself a complete transaction, apart from any preceding/simultaneous merger between pre-existing groups within the latter party. The task therefore is to explain *why there was union when such was not required by the devolutionary process*. Second, while the ideal expressed in 1848 did not include the feature of union, *neither did it disallow union*. This is important for it implies that union did not alter the nature of devolution, that both could actually co-exist. As to whether Talmage thought of union in 1848, one can only speculate although the extant evidence points toward the negative.

But what motivated union? It was the result of a network of factors, viz. historical cooperation, common vision, denominational compatibility and methodological similarity.

6.4. Historical cooperation

The chief motivation for union was the peculiarities of the RCA-EP relationship during 1850-62. This Section argues that (a) the RCA-EP cooperation during the pre-Pechuia period played only an indirect role in the matter of union, and (b) the *major* events contributing toward organic union were the Pechuia-Chiohbe entanglement, the Sinkoe event and the Chiangchiu-Emungkang entanglement. How matters progressed from the *confusion of ownership* to the *sense of oneness* and *fact of union* will be traced.

Pre-Pechuia. Although both Young and Burns cooperated with the Americans, the RCA-EP relationship in pre-1854 times contributed to union only in an indirect way. Cooperation

¹¹² The definition applied even after our period, e.g. AR-BFM/1898/pp. 4,5; Dale, *Missions*, p. 21.

¹¹³ Ostrom/Amoy/20Feb1863, 723CM/Bx1.

started with Young who took over Doty's school and in mid-October 1850 moved into Talmage's house.¹¹⁴ Clearly the advantage of connecting medical and educational work with his own preaching labours was not lost to Talmage. For Young an extra benefit of the liaison was the availability of the medicinal supply left with the RCA by Cumming.¹¹⁵ Collaboration also extended into the realm of literary work.¹¹⁶ However since Young did not personally have a church formation objective, he cooperated with the RCA only in medical, educational and literary work. For preaching needs, he was as ready to avail of LMS help.¹¹⁷ More significantly, in his last China year, his employees were baptised into LMS churches.¹¹⁸ Thus for endeavours more directly connected with church formation, Young was in closer cooperation with the Congregationalists than the RCA. From the perspective of union, this means that (discounting other factors) as far as the work of Young is concerned, the likelihood of an EP-LMS combination was greater than an RCA-EP one. However this likelihood was offset by later events (*infra*).

For his part Burns had ever since been always cooperating with non-EP agents whether in Amoy or elsewhere.¹¹⁹ Peculiarly he was quite reluctant to cooperate with his EP colleagues. Douglas recalled how Burns often said, 'Do not let anyone be sent to co-operate with me: I co-operate with others.'¹²⁰ After expressing joy about the prospect of another missionary coming in 1854, Burns quickly followed with a warning against any expectation of him working with the new agent or vice-versa.¹²¹ Note that this was during the Pechuia breakthrough when help would supposedly be welcomed. The reservation about working with EP agents likely explains why after the 1854 break-away,¹²² Burns still remained at the RCA place.¹²³ Again in 1855 he not only refused to immediately accompany Douglas to Amoy but later looked to Sandeman to assist Douglas.¹²⁴ In fact his second extended stay in Banlam (1858-59) materialised not because of his initiative but of extreme circumstances¹²⁵ even as the 1862-63 visit was likewise motivated.¹²⁶ Johnston's complaint about Burns' 'inability'¹²⁷ to cooperate with EP colleagues was not unknown to Burns but he refused to change his ways. Riding upon the original stipulation that he be allowed full liberty, Burns further warned that 'were I to be forced into any fixed system of co-operation

¹¹⁴ Young/Amoy/17Dec1850.

¹¹⁵ Cf. Young/Amoy/5Sep1852, Mess/1852/p. 373; Young/Amoy/11May1853, Mess/1853/pp. 287-288.

¹¹⁶ E.g. Young/Amoy/17Dec1850; Young/Amoy/5Sep1852, Mess/1852/p. 372. Cf. Young/Amoy/15Apr1851, Mess/1851/p. 213. See also Doty's use of Burns' *Pilgrim's Progress*. Burns/Amoy/16May1853, Mess/1853/pp. 290-291.

¹¹⁷ E.g. Young/Amoy/6May1852, Mess/1852/p. 283; Young/Amoy/11May1853, Mess/1853/pp. 287-288. Cf. use of LMS buildings in Mess/1853/pp. 142-144.

¹¹⁸ Burns/Amoy/3Mar1854, Mess/1854/p. 218; Young/Amoy/6Jul1854.

¹¹⁹ E.g. Burns/Amoy/8Jan1852, Bx118/F5; Burns/Amoy/9Mar1852, Mess/1852/pp. 219-221;

Burns/'Shanghae'/24Aug1855 and 13Dec1855, Bx119/F5.

¹²⁰ Douglas, in Burns, *Memoir*, pp. 586-587.

¹²¹ Burns/Amoy/3Mar1854, Mess/1854/p. 218.

¹²² I.e. when the Kek-lai school was returned to the RCA, the EPM having obtained *its own quarters*.

¹²³ Burns/Amoy/3Mar1854, Mess/1854/p. 218.

¹²⁴ Burns/Shanghai/3Oct1855, Mess/1856/pp. 21-22.

¹²⁵ I.e. Sandeman's death and the Pechuia troubles.

¹²⁶ The third extended visit (22Apr1862-Aug1863) was after the birth of the Taihoey, thus falls outside our interest. See Burns, *Memoir*, ch19.

¹²⁷ CAF/p. 92. Cf. WHP/p. 19.

with your other missionaries, I am sure I should be a trouble to them rather than a help.'¹²⁸

Swanson summarised it all by saying Burns' labours at Amoy were 'pretty equally divided' among the RCA and LMS missionaries.¹²⁹

In retrospect, however, both Young and Burns aided the cause of union in less obvious ways. In that Young's objective (non-church formation) complemented that of the RCA (church formation), he was able to work harmoniously with the Americans. Moreover there was no indication of any loss of cordiality before or after the 1854 break-away. In Burns' case, little cooperation with EP agents allowed more opportunity to work with the RCA. With both men leaving behind a record of rather pleasant cooperation between the two Missions, the liaisons helped pave the way for later cooperation and union. In this sense therefore the inter-Mission relations during this period helped the cause of union in an indirect manner.

Pechuia-Chiohbe. The Pechuia opening started a series of cooperative efforts which contributed directly to later union. The significance of Pechuia is that the work transferred hands more than once, resulting in the *confusion of ownership*. For the RCA the first turnover was Burns-to-RCA. This matter requires some clarification. While Pechuia was an instance of RCA-Burns cooperation, the venture was not his initiative. Thus even though Burns assumed the house rent and later also supported the two RCA native agents,¹³⁰ he never regarded the affair as the RCA assisting him but rather the reverse. Attesting this is his early expectation of more RCA reinforcements¹³¹ and the eventual turnover of Pechuia wholly to the Americans. This is hardly unexpected since he had never seriously entertained church-planting or pastoral work. But the significance of Pechuia was that Burns *did participate* in the work and was the *first missionary* associated with it. Both points were key in understanding why the RCA considered Pechuia as originally an EP work. Before Johnston could begin 'active labour'¹³² the oversight of Pechuia had been transferred by Burns to the RCA. When Johnston managed to get it back, the Americans did not see any impropriety in the act, one reason being that Burns' participation at the beginning made it an EP work.¹³³ Note that in terms of ownership, the decisive factor was neither the initiator of the work nor the partner who furnished more labour (which in both cases would be the RCA Chinese). Rather it was the first *Westerner* to supervise the work. In that period of mission history, the missionaries were simply unready to consider any form of native leadership over themselves.

After the Burns-to-RCA transfer, there was the RCA-to-Johnston transfer. As mentioned before, Johnston's reason for wanting Pechuia was his desire for an EPM 'trophy' which the home Church could boast of.¹³⁴ The third transfer occurred shortly before Johnston left China when the

¹²⁸ Burns/Amoy/9May1854, Mess/1854/p. 267.

¹²⁹ Swanson, *Sketch*, p. 6.

¹³⁰ Burns/Amoy/3Mar1854, Mess/1854/p. 218.

¹³¹ Burns/Amoy/3Mar1854, Mess/1854/p. 218.

¹³² Burns/Amoy/1Jul1854, Mess/1854/pp. 314-315.

¹³³ See 2.3.5.

¹³⁴ See 2.3.5.

'missionary brethren' kindly 'offered to take all my work off my hands'.¹³⁵ The last was when the RCA returned Pechuia to Douglas in autumn 1856.¹³⁶ Relatedly sometime after getting Pechuia, Johnston handed Chiohbe to the RCA in reciprocation.¹³⁷ But since the Chiohbe work was started by EP Pechuia, this only compounded the *confusion of (not over) ownership*. Thus for 1855 Douglas reported that EP adult converts numbered 47 with 25 at Pechuia and 22 at Chiohbe.¹³⁸ As the latter was then an RCA station we see as early as this time the blurring of ownership.¹³⁹ In later years the *confusion of ownership* was further complicated by the common practice of EP converts from Pechuia and Maping joining the communion services at Chiohbe.¹⁴⁰ As this was believed to be the main reason why the three congregations 'feel very much as one church', it was once considered whether to organise them as 'one church' with one Consistory.¹⁴¹

Whether Johnston anticipated it or not, the Pechuia-Chiohbe entanglement led to a major and permanent shift in EP ecumenical relations. That is, the turning point in RCA-EP relations actually started with Johnston not Burns (though both were involved with Pechuia). It was Johnston who made the RCA the main ecumenical partner of the EPM and this 'policy' became permanent. Unlike Young, Johnston had had his Amoy contacts join the RCA church. From autumn-winter 1854 we may cite To-a (EP student) and at least two or three adults in whose conversion Johnston's assistants had played some part.¹⁴² In his first annual report, Johnston was most generous in giving credit to Doty and Talmage. Although acknowledging also the LMS agents, it was politely explained that the latter 'have had fewer opportunities of assisting' the EP work.¹⁴³ In addition to wanting Pechuia as a 'trophy', Johnston had other practical reasons for desiring RCA partnership. For one, he needed the RCA missionaries to execute the baptismal procedures and other pastoral duties. But more fundamentally, the four assistants he acquired in 1854 were RCA converts.¹⁴⁴ Or, his very legwork derived from RCA muscles, without which even general (non-Pechuia) EP work could hardly be done.

In summary the Pechuia-Chiohbe entanglement established the RCA-EPM relationship in a unique manner. The resultant *confusion of ownership* permanently animated the church formation work of both Missions. This cooperation soon became one chief consideration behind the EPM participation at the Sinkoe event which was an important moment for union (*infra*). Therefore the Pechuia-Chiohbe entanglement contributed to the cause of union in a foundational manner.

¹³⁵ Johnston/Amoy/1May1855.

¹³⁶ See 2.3.6.

¹³⁷ It has been suggested the Pechuia-Chiohbe division at this time constituted the 'first marking off of spheres of responsibility' (comity) among the three Missions. So Rev. T.W.D. James, 'Missionaries of the Amoy Mission. English Presbyterian Church. 1850-1942' (13-page typescript) p. 2. PFS1/Bx84/F3. This is indeed a possibility. See the geographical division of Banlam by the 3 Missions in Rev. L. W. Kip, 'E-mng si-ui e te-to [Map of Amoy and vicinity]'. JAH/W88-315/Bx1/'Maps, Amoy, China, n.d.' (folder).

¹³⁸ CAF/pp. 111f.

¹³⁹ Cf. Mess/1864/p. 210 (Chiohbe included among list of EP stations).

¹⁴⁰ Talmage/Amoy/16Jul1858, Talmage/Amoy/10Mar1859. 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁴¹ Talmage/Amoy/16Jul1858, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁴² Johnston/Amoy/5Sep1854; Johnston/Amoy/7Dec1854, Mess/1855/pp. 82-84.

¹⁴³ Mess/1855/pp. 143-146.

¹⁴⁴ See 4.3 ('Johnston').

Sinkoe event. One can hardly over-emphasise the significance of the Sinkoe event for union. As the only EP agent at the time, Douglas' wholehearted participation effectively constituted wholesale EPM endorsement of the RCA action. The subsequent FMC approval¹⁴⁵ further assured the EPM that its direction was correct. But more significantly Douglas was not a mere guest at the occasion, for he took part in the voting process.¹⁴⁶ Thus virtual union had already taken place albeit involving only one person from the EP side. But since the EP converts were inland and the helpers were in a sense an extension of his personality, the symbolic status of Douglas took on another dimension, i.e. he also embodied the EP converts. In other words, Douglas was the embodiment of both the EP Mission and its native members.

Furthermore the correlation of the Pechuia-Chiohbe episode and the Sinkoe event yields an interesting picture. Of his motivation in joining the Sinkoe event, Douglas cited Pechuia noting that 'our relations are so intimate that *all our members* at [Pechuia]' were baptised by RCA missionaries.¹⁴⁷ But in fact until then Douglas was quite dependent upon American assistance. Like Johnston he was routinely reliant upon hired RCA converts. That these men were on loan status was just recently illustrated by the RCA retrieval of his 'best' evangelist for assignment at Chiohbe.¹⁴⁸ The picture that emerges is this: The first EP church (Pechuia), the RCA's first inland church (Chiohbe) and the first organised RCA church (Sinkoe) were all the result of some form of RCA-EPM cooperative effort.

But the significance of the Sinkoe event does not end in itself. For afterwards, Douglas was invited to all the Consistory meetings.¹⁴⁹ This in turn led to the *regular* participation of EP missionaries in other important sessions such as the annual meeting of the Amoy congregations in 1860¹⁵⁰ and 1861.¹⁵¹ But the relationship was reciprocal. Talmage was also invited to EP church disciplinary meetings as well as to the organisation of the Pechuia church.¹⁵² In 1860 he and Ostrom were at the election meeting in Maping.¹⁵³ Reflecting on the smooth-going cooperation just after the Sinkoe event, Talmage revealingly wrote: '...it may be expedient hereafter for the Churches under our care and those under the care of the English Presbyterian Mission, to become united in one body, as there seems to be no serious difference of views between us.'¹⁵⁴ Between the Missions, this is the earliest expressed thought of union. The Sinkoe event therefore was not only in itself a basic factor for union, but also served to trigger other events -- i.e. Douglas' involvement with the Sinkoe Consistory and the first appearance of the idea of union -- which were contributive to actual union later.

¹⁴⁵ Mess/1856/pp. 336-337.

¹⁴⁶ Doty-Talmage-Joralmon/Amoy/17Sep1856/pp. 32-33.

¹⁴⁷ Douglas/Amoy/23May1856, Mess/1856/pp. 337-338 (italics original).

¹⁴⁸ Douglas/Amoy/1Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 118-119.

¹⁴⁹ Douglas/Amoy/23May1856, Mess/1856/pp. 337-338.

¹⁵⁰ Rapalje/Amoy/30Jun1860, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁵¹ Talmage/Amoy/4Jul1861, 723CM/Bx1. Douglas and Swanson 'took part as usual on such occasions'.

¹⁵² Grant/Amoy/8Oct1859, AR-SA/1859/pp. 19-20; Talmage/Amoy/30Apr1860, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁵³ Rapalje/Amoy/6Apr1860, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁵⁴ Talmage/Amoy/30May1856.

Like the Sinkoe event, the RCA idea of an RCA-EP union was not unrelated to the Pechuia-Chiohbe entanglement and the resultant *confusion of ownership*. Four months later, the first full-length discussion of a *union Classis* appeared in the 36-page letter of the American mission to the General Synod.¹⁵⁵ At the time the RCA was lacking two organised churches in order to form a Classis. Although there was optimism that organised churches would increase,¹⁵⁶ the missionaries were conscious that union could hasten Classis formation.¹⁵⁷ Nevertheless they were not given to taking the quicker course, being more concerned with letting home know the problems they faced regarding Classis formation.¹⁵⁸ Far from implying RCA uninterest in union, this only means things were unready for organic union *at that time*. For they were attentive to one problem which would arise in regard to any Classis formation *in the future*, viz. whether the RCA and EP churches should then be separated despite the long-standing RCA-EP intimacy and the ‘oneness’ of their churches.¹⁵⁹ Because of this *sense of oneness* the RCA missionaries saw ‘no sufficient reason’ for separation and believed the same view to be held by the Chinese and the two home Churches.¹⁶⁰ It is very significant that the problem was phrased in such a way that the *fact of union* was assumed with separation as the contingent rather than vice-versa, proving that as early as this time the Americans were already influenced by the *confusion of ownership* generated by the Pechuia-Chiohbe entanglement. In later writings the same phrasing of the problem was sustained.¹⁶¹

The Sinkoe event is significant for union not only because it revealed the remarkable RCA-EPM unity of mind and action. Given its standing as the first step in ecclesiastical devolution, it may be said that no one Mission was more a midwife than the other. In other words, both were in a sense parents to the first organised Chinese church even if the RCA credit was vastly greater. In addition the Sinkoe event provided the possibility for the continued cooperation of both Missions in the life of the new Consistory. This pleasant experience of working together in turn stimulated the first thought of an RCA-EP union. Building upon the Pechuia-Chiohbe entanglement, the Sinkoe event shifted the missionary mind from the *confusion of ownership* to a *sense of oneness* and a conviction in the *fact of union*. In this manner the Sinkoe event contributed to the 1862 union.

Chiangchiu-Emungkang. For the union cause, the Chiangchiu-Emungkang entanglement is significant because the two works involved pre-planned *church formation*, thus furthering the *confusion of ownership* and the *sense of oneness* as well as increasing the substance of the *fact of union*.

¹⁵⁵ Doty-Talmage-Joralmon/Amoy/17Sep1856.

¹⁵⁶ Doty-Talmage-Joralmon/Amoy/17Sep1856/pp. 20-21.

¹⁵⁷ Pp. 24-25.

¹⁵⁸ Pp. 24-35.

¹⁵⁹ Pp. 31-34, cf. pp. 3-4.

¹⁶⁰ Pp. 33-34.

¹⁶¹ E.g. Doty-Talmage-Joralmon/Amoy/23Dec1857, AER; Talmage/Amoy/30Apr1860, 723CM/Bx1; Talmage, *History*, pp. 12,14,20,23-24,26. Also Doty/Amoy/10Sep1863/pp. 9-10; Kip/Amoy/7Oct1863; Rapalje/Amoy/7Oct1863; Blauvelt/Amoy/7Oct1863/p. 8. AER.

Chiangchiu was successfully opened by Chiohbe in 1861.¹⁶² Knowing that the poor Chiohbe converts could not sustain additional expenses should the work prosper, and aware also of the decreasing income of the BFM, the Americans looked to the EPM who were ready to assist financially. There was little uneasiness in taking this option because the work of both Missions 'continues very much united, so that it makes indeed very little difference who furnishes the funds for a chapel...'¹⁶³ After consultation, it was decided each Mission should bear half the expense of the 'joint-station' and endeavour to share the work equally.¹⁶⁴ 'To simplify the work' the RCA took primary responsibility for the station which effectively placed the congregation under the Chiohbe Consistory.¹⁶⁵ The plan was to labour together until there be two congregations and each Mission could take one. Originally to be tried for a year,¹⁶⁶ this cooperation extended to 1865.¹⁶⁷ At least until November 1861, EP missionaries were doing more work than their RCA counterparts. But there was assistance from the Chiohbe elders, beside whom 'the rest of the native agency has been very much mixed.'¹⁶⁸ Later during c.1862-63 the Americans took on a greater role until the EP assumed it again in 1864.¹⁶⁹ With respect to union, the Chiangchiu endeavour allowed both Missions to 'work as one'¹⁷⁰ thereby furthering the *confusion of ownership*.

Similar yet a bit different, Emungkang started as a joint effort but was expected to end up an EP church. At the Amoy suburb the work started with the aim 'to form the nucleus of a new congregation'.¹⁷¹ All the while the EPM was paying for the physical quarters, viz. the first rented house, the site leased in 1860, and the larger site obtained later for the chapel.¹⁷² On the other hand, the several Christians who comprised the nucleus were RCA converts/contacts.¹⁷³ Even the boatman (a key contact) was an inquirer at Sinkoe before the preaching station was opened.¹⁷⁴ When the new chapel opened in 1862, RCA members still comprised a good part of the congregation. While the EPM covered the expense and had operational oversight, the congregation was 'a limb of [Sinkoe] and ecclesiastically under the care of its Consistory.'¹⁷⁵ Although the Americans were not 'the immediate agents' in the work,¹⁷⁶ RCA elders did no little work.¹⁷⁷ Thus

¹⁶² Talmage/Amoy/24Feb1862, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁶³ Talmage/Amoy/4Jul1861, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁶⁴ Douglas/Amoy/21Nov1861, Mess/1862/pp. 81f. Cf. Douglas/Amoy/9Oct1861, Mess/1862/p. 17.

¹⁶⁵ Talmage/Amoy/24Feb1862, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁶⁶ Kip/Amoy/25Dec1861, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁶⁷ Swanson/Amoy/10Oct1865, WR/16Dec1865/pp. 994-995, PFS1/Bx94/F1/I53.

¹⁶⁸ Douglas/Amoy/21Nov1861, Mess/1862/pp. 81f.

¹⁶⁹ Douglas/Amoy/6Feb1864, Mess/1864/pp. 211-212.

¹⁷⁰ Talmage/Amoy/24Feb1862, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁷¹ Douglas/Amoy/24Nov1860, EPMF/Douglas.

¹⁷² Swanson/Amoy/7Apr1862, AR-SA/1862/pp. 15f; Swanson/Amoy/19May1862, Mess/1862/pp. 285f.

¹⁷³ Mess/1861/p. 143. Talmage/Amoy/23Feb1861, Talmage/Amoy/24Feb1862, Doty/Amoy/17May1862. 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁷⁴ Ostrom/Amoy/3June1861, 723CM/Bx1; Swanson/Amoy/3Jun1861, Mess/1861/pp. 281f.

¹⁷⁵ Doty/Amoy/17May1862, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁷⁶ Doty/Amoy/5Nov1862, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁷⁷ 1861 statistics, Douglas/c.Jan1862, EPMF/Douglas. Cf. 'The movement was greatly needed. But your Mission has never had men and money to meet that need. But connected with our church were *native brethren* who were proved men and whom the Lord had owned and blessed working on to deposit the gospel leaven. Our Scotch brethren have the means to meet the demands. The house of God is established and the pure gospel of God's free

in the 1861 statistical report, the four baptised members were included in the RCA membership roll.¹⁷⁸ When Emungkang was finally organised in 1863, it was Doty who ordained the four office-bearers¹⁷⁹ even as the RCA sacrificially allowed its own members to help constitute it. From the above we see that the EPM provided the financial capital while the RCA a good part of the human capital (converts/contacts and native leaders). Speaking of Emungkang, Doty asked the BFM, 'Is this Dutch or is it Scotch? Or is it neither?...Should you leave us here to slice up piece meal the body of Christ for the sake of a cherished theory?'¹⁸⁰ The *confusion of ownership* is all too clear.

By early 1861 the *confusion of ownership* had reached such a state that the *sense of oneness* justified the presentation of the *combined* statistics of both Missions. Thus drawing upon the Chiangchui-Emungkang entanglement, Douglas ended the 1861 report remarking, 'The two Missions being so closely connected in their operations, it is considered best to give the statistics of the two missions in this connected form.'¹⁸¹ With this the FMC concurred, saying that '*from the outset* the co-operation between [the RCA] and our own missionaries has been so close and intimate that *in the case of some of the stations* it is difficult to give statistics which shall distinguish the separate agencies'.¹⁸² Whereupon the FMC for the first time (1862) published joint RCA-EP statistics (for 1860-1861). Meanwhile like Douglas, the RCA report for 1861 also gave combined statistics and on the same rationale ('Our work is so interwoven...').¹⁸³ Here we see the Missions displaying unity in action (combining the statistics) and thought (justifying such combination). Preceding the said RCA report was Doty's letter of December which discussed EP work in rather extensive details and commented with pride that '[w]e are all of one, and in all matters relating to church organization, growth, extension, &c. - we are one, and without violence it is just impossible to be otherwise.'¹⁸⁴ Indeed things had progressed from the *confusion of ownership* to a *sense of oneness* with the *fact of union* symbolised by the combined statistics.

However our research has uncovered another possible motivation behind the combination of RCA-EP statistics. The question arises whether this invalidates the 'close cooperation' argument. The matter originated in 1859 when the EPM received a request for field statistics from home but was unable to furnish any. Douglas explained there was

'...none to send, at least none worth sending. The fact is that all our work is in such a transition state that any statistics would exhibit no cheering view: [sic] e.g. the class of young men in my house has almost quite dried up, mainly from the young men finding suitable employment; then at Pechuia and Maping the work has been cleansing and strengthening not at all extension; indeed by discipline and death I believe the numbers of the visible church at these stations are much smaller

grace is preached...' Doty/Amoy/17May1862, 723CM/Bx1 (italics added).

¹⁷⁸ Rapalje/Amoy/24Dec1860, 723CM/Bx1; 1861 statistics.

¹⁷⁹ Kip/Amoy/2Feb1863, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁸⁰ Doty/Amoy/17May1862, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁸¹ 1861 statistics.

¹⁸² Mess/1862/p. 187 (italics added).

¹⁸³ Talmage/Amoy/24Feb1862, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁸⁴ Doty/Amoy/9Dec1861, 723CM/Bx1.

than last year; but now there are more hopeful signs but not such as could even be hinted at in a Statistical table.’¹⁸⁵

For his disinterest in statistics Douglas may have found some justification in Hamilton’s 1857 report to Synod. The FMC convener put the Amoy church membership at 360 adults although he confessed ‘only a small portion of these who can be reckoned as the immediate results of our own agency, either directly or more remotely...’¹⁸⁶ In counting the converts of all three Missions, Hamilton justified by saying the ‘state of the Mission brotherhood’ was such that ‘they have all such things in common’ and that the right attitude is to attribute the increase of converts to ‘[God’s] doing, rather than to discriminate the instrumentality, and “number the people.”’¹⁸⁷

Nevertheless the fact that the combined statistics of the 1862 FMC report included also the year (1860) immediately after the home request for field statistics suggests some connection between the two. Doubtlessly the ‘inflated’ numbers looked good to home, thus helping to relieve the pressure brought upon the EPM by the request. However as far as union is concerned, the ‘pressure’ motivation (if any) does not negate the *fact* of ‘close cooperation’. In other words, the ‘pressure’ motivation can seriously damage the argument from ‘close cooperation’ only if the latter was based on fabricated reports. But that definitely was not the case, since we have seen abundant evidence of RCA-EP cooperative labours.

Unlike the Pechuia-Chiohbe entanglement, the Chiangchui-Emungkang entanglement involved *deliberate and planned* attempts at church planting. In actually taking things a step beyond Pechuia-Chiohbe, the Chiangchui-Emungkang cooperation effectively furthered the *confusion of ownership* to such a state that both Missions took to reporting combined statistics. Such reportage was no less than a testimony to their *sense of oneness* and a declaration of the *fact of union*.

Our historical survey shows how the RCA-EP cooperation moved from complementarity to parity to singularity. Because the EPM started out at Amoy with no church formation objective, Young and Burns were able to *complementarily* assist the Americans. This was followed by the period of parity or help between equals. Just like the previous period, there was no real competition, much less conflict of interests. For when EP church work began with Johnston, it was based inland before the RCA had Chiohbe. After there was Chiohbe, the Americans did the Pechuia work on behalf of the EPM until Douglas took over. Meanwhile in Amoy, Douglas’ labours ‘have mostly been identified with those of the American missionaries’,¹⁸⁸ a pattern of

¹⁸⁵ Douglas to Mr. Barbour, Amoy/20Sep1859, EPMF/Douglas (underscorings original).

¹⁸⁶ Mess/1857/p. 149.

¹⁸⁷ Mess/1857/p. 149. The final phrase was an allusion to King David’s counting of his fighting men which act brought divine punishment upon the Israelite nation. See 2 Samuel 24:1-25 and 1 Chronicles 21:1-30.

¹⁸⁸ Smith/c.Nov1857, Mess/1858/p. 146. Cf. Douglas/Amoy/20Sep1859, EPMF/Douglas.

collaboration true also of other EP agents.¹⁸⁹ Finally came the period of singularity or the two acting as one. Both at Amoy (Emungkang) and inland (Chiangchiu), pre-planned pioneering work was undertaken on a joint basis. Thus from 1850 onward and especially since 1854, the historical experiences of RCA-EP cooperation formed a crescendo toward the 1862 union.

In this Section we have seen that by providing a record of pleasant cooperation, the RCA-EP relationship in the pre-Pechuia period played a preparatory or indirect role in the matter of union. Beyond this, the cause of union benefited from three major incidents. (1) By effecting the *confusion of ownership* the Pechuia-Chiohbe entanglement founded a new and permanent RCA-EP relationship paving the way for joint action at the Sinkoe event. (2) Along with Pechuia-Chiohbe, the cooperation at the Sinkoe event and within the new Consistory gave rise to a *sense of oneness* which led to the thought of an *organic* union based on the *fact of union*. (3) The Chiangchiu-Emungkang entanglement furthered the *confusion of ownership* and the *sense of oneness* which started the practice of reporting combined statistics, a symbolic testimony to the *fact of union*.

The *confusion of ownership* is significant, for it gave rise to the *sense of oneness* and supplied the basis of the common missionary conviction about the *fact of union*¹⁹⁰ which was the key rationale for union in the 1856 'Memorial'¹⁹¹ and throughout the 1856-64 controversy with the RCA home Church.¹⁹² The gist was: As we have worked as one, union was already there and 1862 was merely a formalisation of the pre-existing union. Cited as an indicator of the fact of union was the native impression that the RCA and EP missionaries were 'members of one Church'.¹⁹³ Actual cooperation had resulted in *de facto* union before it became also *de jure*. Therefore the RCA-EP historical cooperation was the chief motivation behind the 1862 union.

6.5. Common vision

The first of the three major facilitating factors of union was the common vision of the Chinese church. As the likemindedness of Talmage and Douglas has been discussed (2.5), we now show that the Talmage ideal remained the standard in the post-1856 period, being held also by the agents of both Missions. To do so, we first introduce the missionaries, and then discuss the *leading* roles of Talmage and Douglas.

RCA. On 22nd May 1858 Joralmon left Amoy¹⁹⁴ for health reasons and never returned to China. Rev. and Mrs A. Ostrom with Rev. D. Rapalje reached Amoy on 26th March 1859.¹⁹⁵ In March 1864 Ostrom and his family arrived in America 'greatly shattered in health.'¹⁹⁶ In contrast

¹⁸⁹ Talmage/Amoy/30Apr1860, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁹⁰ E.g. Talmage/Amoy/24Feb1862, 723CM/Bx1 (the RCA and EP churches 'are really one...'); Swanson, 'Talmage', FYC/pp. 272-273.

¹⁹¹ Talmage, *History*, p. 17.

¹⁹² Talmage, *History*, pp. 14,17,18; cf. pp. 20,24,37,57.

¹⁹³ Swanson, 'His missionary career' in Douglas, *Memorials*, p. 64.

¹⁹⁴ Doty/29May1858, 723CM/Bx1; Douglas/'Shanghae'/14Jun1858, Mess/1858/p. 286.

¹⁹⁵ Rapalje/Amoy/6Apr1859, 723CM/Bx1. *Contra* RCC/p. 39.

¹⁹⁶ Sower/N.S.10:1/Jan1865/p. 2c1.

Rapalje 'made the China trip six times'¹⁹⁷ staying on to become an 'old China hand'. After his second wife died, Doty left Amoy for HK with his four children¹⁹⁸ and finally sailed for America on 5th November 1859.¹⁹⁹ In June 1861 he set out for Amoy with Rev. L.W. Kip arriving in September.²⁰⁰ J.E. Watkins and his wife sailed in August 1860 but were believed to have died at sea.²⁰¹ Therefore the RCA men present at the Taihoey genesis were Doty, Talmage, Ostrom, Rapalje and Kip. Shortly thereafter, Talmage and his four motherless children left for HK in transit to NY.²⁰² In late February Rev. August Blauvelt landed²⁰³ just in time to attend the pastoral ordinations with his four colleagues.

EPM. Rev. David Sandeman arrived at Amoy in early December 1856 but died of cholera in July 1858.²⁰⁴ His demise occasioned Burns' second extended stay in Amoy from mid-October 1858 to October 1859. Rev. George Smith reached Amoy in November 1857 but eventually stationed in Swatow.²⁰⁵ Rev. Alexander Grant landed in April 1858²⁰⁶ but went to Singapore in May 1861²⁰⁷ where he later left the PCE on doctrinal grounds.²⁰⁸ In November 1859 Dr. John Carnegie arrived but took some time to finally decide to settle in Amoy.²⁰⁹ Mainly a medical professional he was little involved with the internal life of the Chinese churches. Revs. Wm.S. Swanson and H.L. Mackenzie came on 2nd July 1860²¹⁰ but the latter joined the Swatow work in February 1861.²¹¹ Thus of the six new EP men who arrived over a five-year period, only Swanson was involved in Banlam church work by 1862. At the Taihoey genesis, only Douglas and Swanson were present. With Douglas leaving afterwards²¹² and Rev. Hugh Cowie arriving in January 1863,²¹³ the EPM contingent at the pastoral ordinations were Swanson and Cowie.

Talmage and Douglas. Here we argue that (a) these two men were each *the* leader of his Mission, (b) both shared the Talmage ideal as the theoretical motivation for forming the Taihoey and succeeded in winning the following of their colleagues, and (c) therefore the common vision of both Missions facilitated union.

¹⁹⁷ RCC/p. 22.

¹⁹⁸ Talmage/Amoy/8Nov1859, 723CM/Bx1; ECGMin/4Jan1860.

¹⁹⁹ Douglas to Mr. Barbour, Amoy/8Nov1859, EPMF/Douglas.

²⁰⁰ ECGMin/5Jun1861; Kip/Amoy/19Sep1861, 723CM/Bx1.

²⁰¹ ECGMin/3Jul1861, cf. 3Jul1860.

²⁰² Swanson/Amoy/7Apr1862, Mess/1862/pp. 216-217. It was early 1865 when he sailed for China.

Sower/N.S.10:2/Feb1865/p. 10c3; cf. Jan1865/p. 2c1.

²⁰³ Blauvelt/12Feb1863/p. 7(4Mar entry), 723CM/Bx1.

²⁰⁴ Mess/1858/pp. 350-351; so too AR-SA/1861, Mess/1862/p. 51.

²⁰⁵ AR-FMC, Mess/1858/p. 148; 1862/p. 51; Burns/Amoy/25Nov1858, Bx119/F5; Douglas/Amoy/17Dec1858, Mess/1859/p. 87.

²⁰⁶ Grant/Amoy/17Apr1858, Mess/1858/pp. 225ff.

²⁰⁷ AR-SA/1861, Mess/1862/pp. 49-51; cf. Grant/Singapore/22Aug1861, Mess/1861/p. 350.

²⁰⁸ AR-FMC, Mess/1862/pp. 188-189; WHP/p. 47.

²⁰⁹ AR-SA/1861, Mess/1862/p. 51; Douglas to Mr. Barbour, Amoy/21Nov1859, EPMF/Douglas; Mackenzie to Dr. Hamilton, Amoy/16Jul1860, Mess/1860/p. 317.

²¹⁰ Swanson to Dr. Hamilton, Amoy/16Jul1860, Mess/1860/p. 315; Mackenzie to Dr. Hamilton, Amoy/16Jul1860, Mess/1860/p. 316.

²¹¹ WHP/pp. 259-260, cf. pp. 55-56.

²¹² Mess/1862/p. 285; cf. Burns/Amoy/18Aug1862, Mess/1862/pp. 352-353. He returned to Amoy in December 1863. Douglas/Amoy/21Dec1863, Mess/1864/p. 87.

²¹³ Kip/Amoy/2Feb1863, 723CM/Bx1.

Within the RCA, Talmage occupied a unique and outstanding position. In terms of status, he was senior to all except Doty. The other three missionaries came to Amoy more than a decade after Talmage made his first landing. However in terms of influence and leadership, he was clearly ahead of Doty as evinced by his being elected moderator at the Sinkoe event²¹⁴ as well as the first Taihoey meeting.²¹⁵ Indeed he was 'a born organizer' who took 'the first steps' in the formal organisation of the congregations.²¹⁶ To his junior contemporaries Talmage's natural leadership was no less than impressive even though he was not defect-free.²¹⁷ Even in his youth, that quality was already exhibited, as tacitly confirmed by his brother Thomas.²¹⁸ Not only was his leadership confined to the administrative aspect, it also extended into the realm of ministry skills. As Swanson later testified, Talmage was the model 'preacher to the Chinese' among the younger missionaries.²¹⁹ No doubt this ability may be attributed to both his innate scholastic ability (shown from the village school at Boundbrook to Rutgers College and to the Theological Seminary)²²⁰ and to his extensive endeavours in developing the Romanised colloquial. In short, Talmage had practically everything working to make him the natural moral leader among the RCA missionaries. It was but little effort for him to maintain the visionary leadership of the Mission.

On account of his seniority, Douglas easily became the head of the EPM.²²¹ Burns the only man who could compete for the position on the basis of status was disinterested and away most of the time during 1856-62. In April 1861 Swanson was still struggling with language learning²²² and thus could not yet commence full missionary labour. But aside from his seniority, Douglas was able to win the respect of his colleagues via his concern for them, his humility and diligence as well as his 'self-denial and deference to the opinions of others [so] that they can work lovingly together'.²²³ Furthermore like Talmage, leadership qualities were not lacking in Douglas who during his student years had organised 'a strong [temperance] society' at the Free Church College (Edinburgh, 1851-55) and then later another such society in 'the University'.²²⁴ Thus at the 1862 event Douglas was the virtual embodiment of the soul and mind of the EPM, just as Talmage was for the RCA.

What gave direction to the Talmage-Douglas leadership was the common vision of the independent native church. In this regard the unity of thought was so strong that between the two Missions, it is 'difficult to say who were foremost in pressing the idea...[for a]ll were equally

²¹⁴ Talmage/Amoy/30May1856. For his part Doty chaired the morning prayer meeting, a non-administrative session.

²¹⁵ Swanson to Mr. Matheson, Amoy/7Apr1862, Mess/1862/pp. 216-217.

²¹⁶ Swanson, 'Talmage', FYC/p. 272.

²¹⁷ See e.g. Swanson, 'Talmage', FYC/pp. 261,262,264,270,275.

²¹⁸ FYC/p. 44. Thomas wrote the 'Introduction' to the biography by Fagg.

²¹⁹ Swanson, 'Talmage', FYC/p. 271.

²²⁰ FYC/pp. 43ff, FYA/p. 75. A Seminary professorship would have been his were it not acknowledged the Amoy mission would suffer tremendously if he were removed.

²²¹ Doty/Amoy/29Sep1858, 723CM/Bx1.

²²² Swanson/Amoy/9Apr1861, Mess/1861/p. 228.

²²³ Swanson, 'His missionary career', in Douglas, *Memorials*, pp. 66-67.

²²⁴ Douglas, 'Memorials', p. 7.

convinced and strove together for the one great end'.²²⁵ The best evidence for this is the enthusiastic participation of *all* the missionaries at the Taihoey event. Furthermore there was the absence of opposing views or some alternative church vision coming from any member of either Mission. In this light, when Swanson later wrote that the aim of foreign missions was 'to raise up a native Church, self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating',²²⁶ he was re-stating the Talmage ideal. Nothing substantially new was being presented even if the terminology appeared more developed than if he were to express it in 1862 or than he did in 1877.²²⁷

Inasmuch as the Taihoey was the next organisational stage after the Consistory and a necessity for pastoral ordination, its formation was a devolutionary move being the progressive out-working of the Talmage ideal within the context of Presbyterian polity.²²⁸ For both Missions therefore the Talmage ideal constituted the *common* theoretical motivation of the Taihoey's formation. Although this common element is valuable for not disrupting the journey towards union, its mere existence did not historically initiate that journey. That was achieved by the historical cooperation of the Missions. Thus for union, the commonness of church vision was a facilitating factor.

6.6. Denominational compatibility

The second major facilitating factor was denominational compatibility. Both Missions were adherents of Reformed/Calvinist theology and Presbyterian polity. Reporting about the Sinkoe event, Douglas stressed the RCA was 'almost absolutely identical both in doctrine and government with ourselves'.²²⁹ Consistent with this claim, the transaction was interpreted as the building up of 'an ecclesiastical body, holding the grand doctrines enunciated at Westminster and Dort, and the principles of Presbyterian polity embraced at the Reformation by the purest Churches on the continent and in Britain'. On the basis of this shared heritage and Douglas' personal participation at the occasion, the human credit for the 'infant Church' was given to the missionaries of 'two *different (though not differing)* Churches' from Britain and America.²³⁰ In the 1862 FMC report, it was again stressed the two Churches shared 'almost identical' theology and church polity.²³¹

For both Missions, denominational compatibility also eliminated the possibility of any home objection. Among the reasons for the dissolution of the working relationship with the ABCFM in 1857 was the RCA desire to reproduce among the mission churches the 'substantive

²²⁵ Swanson, 'Talmage', FYC/p. 272.

²²⁶ Swanson in Johnston, *Report* (1888) I:pp. 229-231. The three-self formula was also used by Pitcher of the aim of all three Missions (IA/pp. 238f).

²²⁷ Swanson, 'The Presbytery of Amoy, China. An historical sketch' Mess/1877/pp. 83-84.

²²⁸ More in 6.6.

²²⁹ Douglas/Amoy/23May1856, Mess/1856/p. 338.

²³⁰ Douglas/Amoy/23May1856 (*italics added*).

²³¹ AR-FMC, Mess/1862/p. 187.

elements of our polity'.²³² For the EP the commonness of form was important because of the importance attached to Presbyterian liturgy at home.²³³ The home concern to preserve Presbyterianism explains the repeated emphasis by Douglas (*supra*) and the Americans²³⁴ on the RCA-EP affinity in theology, polity and order. The shared tradition also accounts for the ease with which the two Missions were able to share liturgical forms. Thus in using the RCA forms for baptism, communion and excommunication at Pechuia,²³⁵ Douglas was not acting from mere convenience at the expense of preference/principle. Also when it was noted the election and ordination of the Pechuia office-bearers followed RCA forms and order²³⁶ one may recall the earlier EP observation that the Sinkoe ordination ceremony was 'exactly like our own'.²³⁷

Furthermore the denominational factor also reinforced the RCA-EP intimacy. Thus even though Johnston was cordial toward all the other missionaries he nevertheless felt a greater affinity with Doty and Talmage remarking that 'it would be difficult for my colleagues and myself to find a ground of dispute with them, or the Synod of Dort, by whose decrees they are bound'.²³⁸ Not that the denominational factor implied the alienation of the LMS, for even after the Sinkoe event, relationships among the three Missions remained cordial.²³⁹ All still joined the weekly missionary prayer-meeting,²⁴⁰ the monthly prayer concert²⁴¹ and the annual united prayer week²⁴² as well as in holding the English service for the foreign community.²⁴³ Furthermore the three Missions also cooperated in the joint-support of Carnegie in 1861.²⁴⁴ Also the comity of mission was rarely transgressed.²⁴⁵ Comparatively at Fuzhou, inter-Mission relations were not always pleasant and more so after the CMS withdrew from the comity of mission.²⁴⁶ However although the EP continued to have *occasional* cooperation with the LMS²⁴⁷ the relationship with the RCA was much closer.²⁴⁸ Perhaps the most telling instance was how the LMS chapel at Chiangchiu²⁴⁹

²³² Harris, *Nothing but Christ*, pp. 151-152. Cf. AR-BFM/1857/pp. 8-15; 'Separation from the ABCFM. Papers, 1857-58' (folder), RCAA/709BFM/Papers 1832-1913; Talmage, *History*, pp. 33-34.

²³³ See Mess/1852/p. 282; 'Presbyterian and Episcopal worship', Mess/1851/p. 283.

²³⁴ E.g. Doty-Talmage-Joralmon/Amoy/17Sep1856/pp. 30-31; Talmage/Amoy/15Jun1859, Ostrom/Amoy/18Jul1859, Talmage/Amoy/8Nov1859, Ostrom/Amoy/8Dec1859, Talmage/Amoy/30Apr1860, Talmage/Amoy/30Aug1860. 723CM/Bx1.

²³⁵ Douglas/Amoy/21Aug1856, AR-SA/1856/p. 5; Douglas/Amoy/16Jun1859, Mess/1859/pp. 285-287.

²³⁶ Ostrom/Amoy/18Jul1859, Doty/Amoy/20Sep1859, Talmage/Amoy/8Nov1859. 723CM/Bx1.

²³⁷ Douglas/Amoy/23May1856, Mess/1856/p. 338.

²³⁸ Johnston/Feb1854, Mess/1854/p. 163.

²³⁹ Sandeman/1Aug1857, Mess/1857/p. 348. At Taihoey in spring 1878, two LMS delegates were present. Swanson/[c.Mar1878], CAF/p. 227.

²⁴⁰ E.g. Smith/c.Nov1857, Mess/1858/p. 146; Ostrom/Amoy/8Dec1859, 723CM/Bx1.

²⁴¹ Talmage/Amoy/23Feb1861, 723CM/Bx1.

²⁴² E.g. Talmage/Amoy/7Jan1859, in Doty/5Apr1860, 723CM/Bx1; Douglas/Amoy/23Jan1862, EPMF/Douglas; Maxwell/c.4Jan1864, Mess/1864/p. 123.

²⁴³ Joralmon/Amoy/30Jul1856; Ostrom/Amoy/8Dec1859. 723CM/Bx1.

²⁴⁴ Ostrom/Amoy/23Nov1860, Talmage/Amoy/1May1861. 723CM/Bx1.

²⁴⁵ MacGillivray, *Century*, p. 367. The comity pre-dated 1890 (WHP/p. 252) but its date of origin is unknown.

²⁴⁶ Carlson, *Foochow*, pp. 96f. Cf. Stock's apology in *Story*, pp. 239-241.

²⁴⁷ E.g. Sandeman/1Aug1857, Mess/1857/p. 348; Douglas/Amoy/7Apr1858, Mess/1858/pp. 223f; Douglas/Anhai/26Nov1859, EPMF/Douglas.

²⁴⁸ E.g. Grant/Amoy/17May1858, Mess/1858/p. 254.

²⁴⁹ Ostrom/Amoy/13Jan1862, 723CM/Bx1 (opened 'recently'). Cf. Douglas/Amoy/6Feb1864, Mess/1864/pp. 211f.

symbolised an *independence* in contrast to the RCA-EP *cooperation* within the same city.²⁵⁰ Here we see two factors, viz. denominational compatibility and historical cooperation, working together to enhance the RCA-EP intimacy.

In the matter of inter-Mission relations, the denominational factor also explains why the LMS did not join the 1862 union. Even before the Sinkoe event, the American missionaries had found 'some important (though not essential) differences...[relating] chiefly to ecclesiastical polity' and therefore thought it practically better to form a distinct organisation from the LMS.²⁵¹ Douglas was more specific in saying it was because '[the LMS] is *Congregational* in its constitution, and has no elders except the European missionaries'.²⁵² Although the LMS had ecumenical beginnings²⁵³ and a policy not to promote any particular form of church order and government,²⁵⁴ its Banlam churches during our period did not have lay or 'ruling' elders.²⁵⁵ During the controversy with the home Church in 1857 the RCA missionaries expressed their 'Bible-based' conviction in Presbyterianism and gave the assurance that no party 'can turn us over to Congregationalism'.²⁵⁶

Even so, RCA polity was not perfectly identical with the EP's. Unlike the usual PCE Session, RCA deacons were present at Consistory meetings and allowed to speak but could vote only on pecuniary matters.²⁵⁷ However this singular 'compromise' on the part of the EPM met no objection from home. Perhaps a brief account of the concurrent PCE interest in church union is helpful.

Even before the Sinkoe event, the subject of union was already being promoted within the PCE. In his well-received speech at the 1854 Synod, Dr. M'Crie stressed the necessity to recover the early Reformation model of inter-church union.²⁵⁸ Shortly afterwards a write-up appeared in the *Messenger* protesting the 'guilt of a sectarian spirit' and 'praying' that the union of Christians being 'the brightest feature, the distinguishing glory of our age' be extended worldwide.²⁵⁹ However the EP union vision in the nineteenth century was *exclusive involving only parties belonging to the Presbyterian tradition*. Thus the Synod speech of Dr. M'Crie also emphasised that Presbyterianism was the right form of church polity.²⁶⁰ Also in 1855 the joint Conference (Manchester) of the PCE and the United Presbyterian Church expressed delight at the prospect of

²⁵⁰ Since no information on the date of the three-Mission comity could be found in the records, we can make no claims regarding its applicability to our period. See *E-mng si-ui e te-to (Map of the Amoy region)*, n.d., JAH/W88-315/Bx1/Maps; F.P. Joseland, 'Our missionary districts. Amoy and Chiang-chiu' ChronLMS/1899/p. 53; MacGillivray, *Century*, p. 367; RCC/pp. 63,91.

²⁵¹ Doty-Talmage-Joralmon/Amoy/17Sep1856/pp. 16-17.

²⁵² Douglas/Amoy/23May1856, Mess/1856/pp. 337-338 (italics original).

²⁵³ See W. Ellis, *The history of the LMS* (London, 1844) I:ch1-ch2; C.S. Horne, *The story of the LMS* (London, 1908) ch1.

²⁵⁴ Ellis, pp. 14,26n,30f,35f,38f; Horne, pp. 16f.

²⁵⁵ Macgowan, *Christ*, pp. 149-151. Cf. Mess/1863/p. 189.

²⁵⁶ Doty/Amoy/7Oct1857, 723CM/Bx1.

²⁵⁷ Douglas/Amoy/23May1856, Mess/1856/pp. 337-338.

²⁵⁸ Mess/1854/p. 148.

²⁵⁹ Mess/1854/p. 216.

²⁶⁰ Mess/1854/p. 148.

‘an eventful union without any surrender of principle’,²⁶¹ i.e. without compromising Presbyterian principles. During the 1850s-1860s the *Messenger* was quite attentive to other *Presbyterian* union efforts in Scotland, Canada, England and Australia.²⁶² The 1864 Synod discussed the matter of ‘union with other *Presbyterian* churches’ and concluded in a positive consensus.²⁶³ The narrow Presbyterian ideal was also revealed in 1862 when the justification given for soliciting the help of the Free Church Assembly and the Irish Assembly was ‘the extension of our common Presbyterianism in England’.²⁶⁴

The implication of the Presbyterian exclusivity of the PCE union vision is that the Taihoey being a Presbyterian union posed no grounds for objection from a denominational standpoint. The crucial point was that both Missions were Presbyterian and together agreed that there should not be two Presbyterian Churches in Banlam.²⁶⁵ The single point of difference in polity was not regarded an essential compromise of the Presbyterian heritage. In other words, the one minor difference did not negate denominational compatibility.

In this Section we have seen how denominational compatibility contributed toward union. The ‘almost identical’ theology, polity and liturgy of the two Missions made union both possible and desirable. Alongside this inclusive function was the excluding effect which eliminated the LMS from the union. In addition the denominational factor also enhanced the RCA-EP intimacy. Finally we also see how the imperfect identity of polity was not a hindrance to union for the EPM-FMC-PCE whose chief concerns were Presbyterianism and missions. To close this Section, we add just one more point on the denominational factor. Because the common church polity designated the Classis as the next organisational stage, a procedural synchronisation was made possible which collapsed together structural advancement and ecclesiastical union.

6.7. Methodological similarity

The last major factor facilitating union was methodological similarity, i.e. the policy of strict admission and membership quality control. Since the pre-1856 RCA practice has been discussed (Ch3), we shall show its continuity in 1856-62, then explain the remarkable EPM similarity in this matter.

RCA. In the post-1856 period the RCA continued to uphold its strict baptism/admission standard. Still in operation were the requirements of knowledge, heart-change,²⁶⁶ opium-abstinence and Sabbath-keeping.²⁶⁷ Other criteria appeared in the form of causes of disciplinary

²⁶¹ Mess/1860/pp. 199-201.

²⁶² E.g. Mess/1854/pp. 241f; 1855/pp. 60f; 1857/pp. 255f,295f; 1860/pp. 314f; 1864/pp. 160f.

²⁶³ Mess/1864/pp. 214-215 (italics added).

²⁶⁴ Mess/1862/p. 376.

²⁶⁵ Doty-Talmage-Joralmon/Amoy/17Sep1856/pp. 15-16; Swanson, ‘His missionary career’ in Douglas, *Memorials*, p. 64.

²⁶⁶ E.g. Talmage/Amoy/16Jul1858, Doty/Amoy/4Sep1858, Doty/17May1859, Ostrom/Amoy/8Dec1859, Talmage/Amoy/23Feb1861; cf. Rapalje/Amoy/6Feb1862. 723CM/Bx1.

²⁶⁷ Talmage/Amoy/14Aug1861, 723CM/Bx1.

action which included ‘unholy living’,²⁶⁸ taking a wife without a proper marriage,²⁶⁹ gambling,²⁷⁰ usury,²⁷¹ suicide attempt,²⁷² ‘idolatry/Mariolatry’,²⁷³ ‘uncleanness’,²⁷⁴ etc. The practice of delaying admission remained at work.²⁷⁵ Likewise to maintain membership quality control, disciplinary actions were frequently taken. In 1856-57 there were four excommunications at Amoy and one at Chiohbe.²⁷⁶ Four more cases were registered at Amoy in 1858-59²⁷⁷ and 13-14 suspensions during 1857-59.²⁷⁸ From 1860 to 1863 there were five excommunications including one at Chiohbe²⁷⁹ and 20 suspensions including eight at Chiohbe.²⁸⁰

A few times however we find the missionaries ready to entertain exceptional cases. Thus in May 1861 Tho and his wife from Kangthau were baptised at Sinkoe despite their greatly limited knowledge. With consideration for their illiteracy, both the missionaries and the Consistory found sincerity satisfactorily compensating for knowledge deficiency.²⁸¹ Also in the case of the Kangthau barber’s mother who was admitted at Sinkoe on the basis of her ‘change of heart’, her irregular attendance²⁸² makes the non-mention of the element of doctrinal knowledge somewhat conspicuous. Another form of exception relates to the policy of not giving monetary assistance to inquirers, as it was *not* applied in 1859 to Hong Khi (not the EP worker).²⁸³

But such instances do not negate the fact that the RCA *normally* maintained its stringent policy. To begin with, cases like the above were few and all were exceptional in character. The dispensation of doctrinal knowledge was applied because of illiteracy on the part of the candidates (including presumably the barber’s mother). Furthermore there was no indication the other admission criteria were relaxed. In the case of Hong, financial assistance was given on account of illness caused by extreme poverty and the lack of winter clothings. Aside from the fact that the amount given was just for warm clothes, it seems by the time the missionaries already had a good idea of his sincerity, so that the risk of making a ‘rice-Christian’ was somewhat remote.

Therefore there was a general continuity of the policy of strict admission and membership quality control within the RCA from Pohlman (1840s) until the Taihoey event.

²⁶⁸ Rapalje/Amoy/6Apr1860, 723CM/Bx1.

²⁶⁹ Ostrom/Amoy/8Apr1861, Talmage/Amoy/14Aug1861, 723CM/Bx1.

²⁷⁰ Ostrom/Amoy/8Apr1861, 723CM/Bx1.

²⁷¹ Talmage/Amoy/14Aug1861, 723CM/Bx1.

²⁷² Talmage/Amoy/14Aug1861, 723CM/Bx1 = same lady in Ostrom/Amoy/18Jul1861, 723CM/Bx1.

²⁷³ Talmage/Amoy/14Aug1861, 723CM/Bx1.

²⁷⁴ Rapalje/Amoy/6Feb1862, 723CM/Bx1.

²⁷⁵ E.g. Doty/Amoy/16Aug1858, Doty/Amoy/5Nov1858, Talmage/Amoy/30Apr1860, Rapalje/Amoy/18May1861, 723CM/Bx1. Cf. ‘We still have a large number of inquirers, many of whom we trust may be received in *due time*.’ Talmage/Amoy/30Apr1860, 723CM/Bx1 (*italics added*). Hoping soon to admit five or six into the Chiohbe church, the missionaries knew that ‘several more [inquirers] are well spoken of, but we must of necessity use a *great deal of caution*.’ Kip/Amoy/25Dec1861, 723CM/Bx1 (*italics added*).

²⁷⁶ Doty to Anderson, Amoy/15Sep1857; AR-BFM/1858/p. 11.

²⁷⁷ AR-BFM/1859/p. 4; 1860/p. 19, cf. 1859/p. 11.

²⁷⁸ Doty/15Sep1857; AR-BFM/1858/p. 11; 1859/p. 4; 1860/p. 19.

²⁷⁹ AR-BFM/1862/p. 11; 1864/p. 13.

²⁸⁰ AR-BFM/1861/pp. 13,14; 1862/p. 11; 1864/p. 13. There were four restored members at Amoy in 1860.

²⁸¹ Rapalje/Amoy/18May1861, 723CM/Bx1.

²⁸² Ostrom/Amoy/3June1861, 723CM/Bx1.

²⁸³ Talmage/Amoy/20Apr1859, 723CM/Bx1.

EPM. We begin our discussion with Johnston under whom EP church work was first done. As he was linguistically incompetent during his Amoy times²⁸⁴ the task of admission was wholly done by RCA colleagues following the American admission standards. Yet Johnston expressed no dissatisfaction about the RCA way of doing things. Thus in commenting on the converts baptised during the first quarter of 1855, he implied that ‘the proofs of progressive knowledge and experience manifested’²⁸⁵ were weighty considerations for admission. Likewise counting as merits on the part of Chinese Christians were ardent Sabbath-keeping (Hey Sew, Tan Bu-siat) and resolute dissociation with ‘idolatry’ to the extent of ‘leaving the paternal roof, to which every Chinaman clings so fondly’ (Tan Khey).²⁸⁶ Also the young Kang-lo was baptised by Doty (Nov1854) only after he had reformed from opium addiction.²⁸⁷ Of his anti-opium position Johnston kept no secret even after he left Amoy.²⁸⁸ Furthermore if his later writings mean anything at all, Johnston did seem to have shared the RCA policy with sincere conviction. Thus later looking back over 50 years of EP work, he declared approvingly that the strict admission policy implied the likelihood to be greater that fewer converts had been admitted than should have been²⁸⁹ and that even the impressive church growth of 1872-96 had not been at the expense of that policy.²⁹⁰ Along the same line he commented with reference to the early work of the Canadian Presbyterian mission at Tam-sui that their ‘chief danger is in trusting to the *mere* profession of faith...without requiring the evidence of works’.²⁹¹ That Johnston affirmed a strict admission policy is therefore unequivocal.

On his part Douglas was able to converse in the Amoy tongue only in early 1856 at the earliest.²⁹² The first baptisms officiated by him at Pechuia occurred later in August.²⁹³ Until then the examination and admission of applicants were done by the Americans. But the records revealed a Douglas in agreement with the RCA admission policy. The first time we get the impression²⁹⁴ that he was examining baptismal applicants on his own is during the visit to Maping in mid-May 1856. After interviewing the 13 inquirers Douglas maintained it ‘necessary to delay their admission till they are more fully instructed and more tried in their adherence to the gospel’.²⁹⁵ The following month Douglas was with Talmage at Pechuia where five male adults were baptised including one ex-opium smoker who gained admission only ‘after long trial of his conversion and of his steadfastness’.²⁹⁶ That same day twelve applicants from Maping and another

²⁸⁴ See 4.3.2.

²⁸⁵ Johnston/c.Mar1855, Mess/1855/p. 198.

²⁸⁶ See Johnston/c.Mar1855, Mess/1855/pp. 197-198.

²⁸⁷ See Doty to Burns [in Britain], Nov1854, Mess/1855/pp. 180-181.

²⁸⁸ [Johnston], *The opium trade in China* (Leeds, 1858). PFS1/Bx94/F2/I1.

²⁸⁹ CAF/pp. 345-346.

²⁹⁰ CAF/p. 374, cf pp. 372-374.

²⁹¹ CAF/p. 379 (italics original).

²⁹² See Douglas/Amoy3Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 119-120.

²⁹³ See Douglas/Amoy21Aug1856, AR-SA/1856/p. 5.

²⁹⁴ We can only speak of *our impression*, for Douglas did not mention having any RCA missionary or Chinese companion with him in the interview room.

²⁹⁵ Douglas/Amoy23May1856.

²⁹⁶ Douglas/Amoy19Jun1856, Mess/1856/pp. 338-339.

four from Pechuia were denied until such time when ‘they have been more fully tried and examined’.²⁹⁷ Highlighting the strictness was the fact that among those from Maping were three (presumably aged) men who came on hired chairs because they could not walk the seven/eight-mile journey. In both cases we see some reference to the dual test of knowledge and sincerity. On an earlier occasion Douglas also exhibited an attitude toward religious sufferings which was identical to that of the RCA missionaries. Positive value was seen in the religious persecution at Chiohbe and Pechuia (started Jul1855) which he believed to have revealed the converts’ readiness to suffer for their faith and to have resulted in ‘the increased zeal of the infant Churches’.²⁹⁸ Douglas was especially impressed with the Pechuia cloth-merchant whose zero resistance to an officer of the mandarin intending plunder effectively disarmed the latter who left without doing any harm. Therefore whether alone or in company with some RCA missionary Douglas clearly operated with the American policy.

Even after August 1856 the same strictness was upheld by the EP missionaries themselves at *all* their stations, viz. Pechuia,²⁹⁹ Maping,³⁰⁰ Anhai,³⁰¹ Kangkhau,³⁰² Chiangchiu³⁰³ and Emungkang.³⁰⁴ The need for some proof of a real ‘heart-work’ was still required, as illustrated by the case of Lampeng from Pechuia. Though he was for long a candidate with exemplary knowledge and conduct, ‘yet from some reason which we could hardly express, neither we nor the elders felt warranted to admit him’. It was only after a quarrel showed him ‘the sinfulness of his heart’ and ‘his need of salvation’ that he was baptised.³⁰⁵ Likewise the delayed admission of the ‘self-righteous’ man of Anhai³⁰⁶ reminds us of the rich tea merchant whose ‘self-righteousness’ was condemned during Pohlman’s time.

Sabbath-keeping continued to be ‘the great outward *sign*’ of the true convert.³⁰⁷ Breaking with ancestral worship and all forms of ‘idolatry’³⁰⁸ including the refusal to contribute to such related festivals³⁰⁹ was the norm among EP members, just as the prohibition of ‘making articles for idolatrous use’.³¹⁰ As ‘a stringent rule’ opium-users were not admitted.³¹¹ Thus although his sincerity was ‘very soon’ confirmed, the ‘very old man’ who ‘was one of the earliest candidates’ at Maping died without being admitted for the singular reason that he was unable to cease the

²⁹⁷ Douglas/Amoy/19Jun1856.

²⁹⁸ Douglas/Amoy/3Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 119-120.

²⁹⁹ E.g. Douglas/Amoy/16May1857, Mess/1857/p. 253; Swanson/Amoy/3Jun1861, Mess/1861/pp. 281f.

³⁰⁰ Douglas/Amoy/4Sep1858, Mess/1858/p. 386.

³⁰¹ E.g. Douglas/Amoy/21Nov1861, Mess/1862/pp. 81f.

³⁰² Douglas/Amoy/20Apr1860, EPMF/Douglas.

³⁰³ Douglas/Amoy/9Oct1861, Mess/1862/p. 17.

³⁰⁴ E.g. Swanson/Amoy/31Jul1862, Mess/1862/pp. 377f.

³⁰⁵ Douglas/Pechuia/15Jun1860, EPMF/Douglas.

³⁰⁶ Douglas/[Chiangchiu]/17Jul1861, Mess/1861/p. 321.

³⁰⁷ Douglas/Amoy/9Oct1861, Mess/1862/p. 17 (*italics original*).

³⁰⁸ Douglas/Amoy/6May1857, Mess/1857/p. 251; Burns/‘Cheoh-Bey’/19Apr1859, Mess/1859/pp. 221f.

³⁰⁹ Swanson/Amoy/21Sep1860, Mess/1860/pp. 380f.

³¹⁰ Douglas/Amoy/16Jun1859, Mess/1859/pp. 285f.

³¹¹ Douglas/Amoy/4Sep1858, Mess/1858/p. 386.

medicinal use of opium.³¹² Although Douglas knew of his several ‘strong’ attempts to stop and had ‘reason to believe that it was a similar effort which hastened his death’, the EP policy was never compromised throughout the long and dramatic trial.

The policy of delayed admission was similarly observed. E.g. it was after a ‘long probation’ that Wat of Pechuia gained admission (1856).³¹³ The time-test was also applied to the father and son from Chiangchui who in early 1858 came to Amoy ‘chiefly, if not solely’ to learn about Christianity.³¹⁴ By May the father looked hopeful, his religious knowledge ‘having advanced considerably’ but still it was deemed ‘time alone can test the reality of the work in his soul.’³¹⁵ In the case of the son, the missionaries were also hesitant in proclaiming him a true convert even though he continued to observe the Sabbath after returning inland. When Douglas expressed the suspicion that such ‘may be only filial obedience’,³¹⁶ we see again the Pohlman principle of guilty/insincere-unless-proven otherwise. Again, in 1861 Douglas found several ‘very decided cases of real heart-work’ but nevertheless delayed admission for the sake of caution, especially as these were to be ‘the first stones’ laid in Chiangchui.³¹⁷ Eventually it was in the following January that the first baptisms took place.³¹⁸ For the same reason the admission of the first Kangkhau members was postponed.³¹⁹ The delay principle was similarly applied at Maping.³²⁰

Likewise operant was the principle of delay-if-in-doubt, as happened to the Maping middle-ager who though ‘fully approved of by the Church’ had to wait about a year until his ‘secondary wife’ had been disposed of. The case was in fact ‘put off’ because ‘we could not absolutely command him to put her away without due regard to the placing of her in circumstances free from temptation’ but neither are ‘we’ unaware of ‘the difficulties attending the admission of such a person into the Church’ although ‘we could find no scriptural authority for excluding him...’³²¹ Even if the doubt here was not about candidate sincerity or knowledge but rather missionary uncertainty about the proper course of action, the principle was the same: Delay if in doubt, any doubt at all.

Like the RCA the concern of the EPM was by no means limited to the pre-admission condition of the candidates but included also their post-baptismal quality.³²² Perseverance amidst persecution was still regarded an evidence of faith. E.g. for their faithful church attendance despite suffering theft and other persecutions, the Maping converts won missionary commendation.³²³ In contrast the failure of the Chiohbe house-seller to attend church after release from a two-year

³¹² Douglas/Amoy/4Sep1858, Mess/1858/p. 386.

³¹³ Douglas/Amoy/23May1856, Mess/1856/p. 338.

³¹⁴ Smith/Amoy/11Feb1858, Mess/1858/pp. 147f.

³¹⁵ Sandeman/Amoy/2Jun1858, Mess/1858/p. 285; cf. Doty/Amoy/22Mar1858, 723CM/Bx1.

³¹⁶ Douglas/Amoy/20Oct1858, Mess/1859/p. 22.

³¹⁷ Douglas/Amoy/9Oct1861, Mess/1862/p. 17. Cf. Douglas/Amoy/21Nov1861, Mess/1862/pp. 81f.

³¹⁸ Douglas/Amoy/23Jan1862, EPMF/Douglas.

³¹⁹ Douglas/Amoy/20Apr1860, EPMF/Douglas.

³²⁰ Swanson/Amoy/9Apr1861, Mess/1861/p. 228.

³²¹ Douglas/Amoy/7Apr1858, Mess/1858/pp. 223f.

³²² E.g. Mess/1858/p. 149.

³²³ Sandeman/Amoy/10Apr1857, Mess/1857/p. 227. Cf. Douglas/Amoy/6May1857, Mess/1857/p. 251.

imprisonment was interpreted as proving the man lacked 'the love of Jesus'.³²⁴ Active preaching was deemed another sign of true faith, as in the case of the Soatau woman baptised in 1857.³²⁵ The concern for membership quality control occasioned many disciplinary actions, e.g. Pechuia (1859),³²⁶ Maping (1860)³²⁷ and especially later at Anhai (1862-64).³²⁸ In 1861 there were three suspensions and one excommunication at Maping while Pechuia had one suspension.³²⁹

Possible evidence to the contrary came from Swanson who mildly criticised Douglas for being 'sometimes less suspicious of [Chinese] than perhaps he should have been'.³³⁰ However one is left uninformed whether the specific referent was to his dealings with church members or outsiders or baptismal applicants. It is not at all unimaginable that a paternal figure should exhibit leniency or laxity toward his 'children in the faith'. Nor that the plea of a needy outsider should pull the cords of humanly compassion. At any rate, since Swanson was unclear about his referent, the proper course is to conclude on the strength of positive evidence that it was unlikely Douglas would lower his guard in the matter of church admission.

Like the denominational factor, methodology was a reason both Missions felt less affinity with the LMS. Because the Americans highly valued their strict admission policy, they were quite critical of the lax standards of Gutzlaff, the RCA Arcot Mission and the LMS at Shanghai, Canton and Amoy.³³¹ As illustrated by the case of the 1848 baptisms about which the RCA missionaries expressed good reservation,³³² the Amoy LMS on the whole were not as austere. Consider also the tea-dealer who after hearing the preachings of LMS missionaries at Young's house for just 'a few weeks' applied for baptism and was admitted.³³³ Although by 1861 the LMS had become 'more careful',³³⁴ the denominational gap persisted to prevent organic union with the Congregationalists.

Thus the EPM maintained practically the same standards of admission and quality control as the RCA. Moreover cases of some RCA-examined candidate being baptised by the EPM³³⁵ implies a pre-existing consensus on methodology. In fact the same policy was maintained even beyond 1862 including at new stations, e.g. Anhai,³³⁶ Khiboey³³⁷ and Liongbunsi.³³⁸ Certainly methodological similarity facilitated intimate cooperation. At the same time sustained cooperation helped ensure methodological continuity. Inasmuch as methodology hindered close cooperation

³²⁴ Sandeman/[Amoy]/1 Aug 1857, Mess/1857/p. 348.

³²⁵ Douglas/Amoy/6 May 1857, Mess/1857/p. 251.

³²⁶ Douglas/Amoy/16 Jun 1859, Mess/1859/pp. 285f; Grant/Amoy/8 Oct 1859, Mess/1860/pp. 19f.

³²⁷ Douglas/Amoy/20 Apr 1860, EPMF/Douglas; Talmage/Amoy/30 Apr 1860, 723CM/Bx1; Grant/Amoy/8 Dec 1860, Mess/1861/pp. 84f.

³²⁸ Douglas/Gospel Boat/2 Jun 1862, Mess/1862/pp. 287f; Douglas/Amoy/21 Dec 1863, Mess/1864/p. 87; Douglas/Amoy/6 Feb 1864, Mess/1864/ pp. 211-212; Douglas/Amoy/7 Jul 1864, Mess/1864/pp. 346f.

³²⁹ Talmage/Amoy/24 Feb 1862, 723CM/Bx1.

³³⁰ Swanson, 'His missionary career' in Douglas, *Memorials*, pp. 62-63.

³³¹ Talmage/Amoy/5 Jul 1861, Doty/Amoy/5 Apr 1862, 723CM/Bx1. Cf. the EP's critical attitude toward the lax policy of the Canadian Mission in Formosa (CAF/pp. 378f).

³³² See 3.3.

³³³ Young/Amoy/11 May 1853, Mess/1853/pp. 287-288.

³³⁴ Talmage/Amoy/5 Jul 1861, 723CM/Bx1.

³³⁵ E.g. the nephew of Deacon Chu-kak at Pechuia. Grant/'Bay Pay'/9 Mar 1860, Mess/1860/p. 185.

³³⁶ E.g. Swanson/Amoy/31 Jul 1862, Mess/1862/pp. 377f.

³³⁷ E.g. Swanson/Amoy/28 Mar 1864, Mess/1864/p. 208.

³³⁸ E.g. Douglas/Amoy/4 Aug 1864, Mess/1864/p. 376; Maxwell/'Baypay'/20 Sep 1864, Mess/1864/pp. 410f.

with the LMS in church work but fostered intimacy with the EPM, it was a facilitating factor of union.

The *major* likenesses between the Missions above should be seen as part of a larger picture of commonality. The missionary ranks were characterised by an unusual degree of mental agreement and social harmony. For instance, there was solid agreement over the 'term' question³³⁹ on which a consensus among China missionaries was achieved neither in 1877 nor afterwards.³⁴⁰ In addition, the three senior missionaries had long China careers-- Doty (1844-64), Talmage (1847-89), Douglas (1855-77)-- which enabled them to see things through, i.e. see through the work as well as see through the China context in which they worked. Coupled with likemindedness, this allowed for visionary, methodological and executive continuity. Aside from the mental, there was the social harmony which existed within each Mission³⁴¹ making possible not only *concerted* unilateral action but also bilateralisms. There were no disrupters of unified teamwork like Shandong's Crawford³⁴² or Fuzhou's Peet.³⁴³ By their own grateful confession, both Missions believed a key factor contributing to Banlam's success to be the smooth interpersonal relations which existed among the missionaries.³⁴⁴

More significantly, both Talmage and Douglas were as united in the matter of union as they were about the ideal church. Swanson did not hesitate to proclaim that 'to them more than to any others do we owe almost all that is distinctive there [Amoy] in union and in methods of work.'³⁴⁵ Writing after the Taihoey event, Ostrom revealed how his views were changed after arriving in China and that 'the views of the mission' were those which Talmage '[had] so frequently expressed during the last few years...'³⁴⁶ This RCA consensus was especially valuable in the face of strong home opposition.³⁴⁷ In other words, the union project was spearheaded by the leading member of each Mission and received unanimous missionary support.

6.8. Conclusion

In this Chapter we have seen that the formation of the Taihoey was preliminary to the objective of ordaining Chinese pastors. With the latter regarded the final step in devolution on the local church level, both the Taihoey event and the ordinations of 1863 were properly the last stages in the realisation of the Talmage ideal among the RCA Amoy churches. For union, historical cooperation was the chief motivator while the major facilitating factors included a common church vision, denominational compatibility and methodological similarity. In the

³³⁹ Talmage, 'Should', p. 437.

³⁴⁰ *Records 1877*, p. 471. The issue still plagues present-day Chinese Churches.

³⁴¹ E.g. Doty/Amoy/7Oct1857, 723CM/Bx1; Swanson, 'His missionary career', in Douglas, *Memorials*, pp. 66-67.

³⁴² See Hyatt, *Our ordered lives confess* (1976) pp. 3-62.

³⁴³ Carlson, *Foochow*, p. 66.

³⁴⁴ Doty/Amoy/7Oct1857, 723CM/Bx1; Swanson, 'His missionary career', in Douglas, *Memorials*, pp. 66-67.

³⁴⁵ Swanson, 'Talmage', FYC/p. 274.

³⁴⁶ Ostrom/Amoy/22Nov1862, AER.

³⁴⁷ E.g. Rapalje/Amoy/22Apr1862, Doty/Amoy/17May1862. 723CM/Bx1.

phenomenon of the Taihoey, we see therefore the interaction of pre-intention (devolution) and circumstance (union). The latter provided an extra developmental dynamic to the former, modifying it without altering its essence, thereby enhancing the progressive quality of the final outcome.

Chapter 7

Assessing Banlam: Merits, limits and credits

7.1. Introduction

In this last Chapter, we assess the Banlam accomplishment as discussed in earlier Chapters. The argument is that the Banlam achievement had its merits and its limits; that it did better than certain south China Protestant missions in the nineteenth century but never met twentieth century ideals; and that the Chinese and the missionaries share the credit for the Banlam achievement although the RCA missionaries get a larger share than the EPM. The foci of evaluation are self-propagation, self-government, self-support and union (7.2-7.5). For each item, we pay special attention to merits and limits. Afterwards we examine the respective contributions of the missionaries and the Chinese with respect to devolution and union, seeking to assign credit to whom it is due (7.6). Then we offer certain comparative perspectives on the Banlam achievement (7.7). The final Section concludes the dissertation and presents some suggested areas for future research (7.8).

7.2. Self-propagation

Merits. Since extended discussion has been previously held about Banlam self-propagation, we limit ourselves to a few important comments. First, we have seen the extensive amount of self-propagation work done by the Chinese as well as the successes of both personal and ecclesial efforts. Second, self-propagation can hardly be said to be an episodic phenomenon peculiar to our period. In fact it became a persistent feature of the union Church even into the twentieth century. When Banlam constituted almost a third of the total Chinese Protestant population in 1864, the growth was largely attributed to native self-propagation.¹ In 1882 the Hakka mission was begun with a \$200 subscription.² On account of linguistic difficulties, the work was later turned over to the RCA Mission and then to EPM Swatow. Nevertheless the Banlam sustenance of it for eighteen years³ exhibited great self-propagation zeal. Another instance was the Amoy Island station jointly maintained by the Amoy churches (1893f) and still ongoing in 1905. By that year, work among the coastal islands had yielded six stations (Quemoy, Tangsoan, others). Meanwhile home mission fund receipts for 1904 registered \$1,314.63 and the year ended with a balance of \$760.64.⁴ Third, Banlam domestic missionary endeavours also became the model of self-propagation for other EP Missions. In particular the Hakka mission inspired Swatow's Namoa

¹ Mess/1864/pp. 122,121.

² Talmage, *Sketch*, pp. 10,11; WHP/p. 240; MacGillivray, *Century*, pp. 369-370.

³ Mess/1900/pp. 270f.

⁴ MacGillivray, p. 370.

mission (1891) and possibly also the work of the South Formosa Presbytery (1886).⁵ Therefore Banlam self-propagation deserves no mean merits. For prevailing throughout our period and beyond as well as for its inspirational effect, it became a lasting feature of Protestantism in south China.

Limits. The first limit was geographico-linguistic. Self-propagation efforts were mainly exercised within South Fujian where a local *lingua franca* dominated. In terms of geographical confinement, the sending of Siboo (Pechuia) to Singapore was at the request of the Free Church there⁶ just as the extension into Formosa was an EPM initiative;⁷ thus neither was properly self-propagation. In terms of language, the Hakka mission was given away mainly because of linguistic difficulties. The other limit was financial which we shall detail later. Suffice it to say here that self-propagation efforts undertaken on an *organised self-support* basis suffered retrenchment more than once for economic reasons.

7.3. Self-government

Merits. First of all, the installation of 'elders' in 1856 is significant, for it was the first instance of devolution at the highest level of non-clerical individual office and authority within Presbyterian polity. Whereas the LMS preceded in having deacons,⁸ the RCA 'ruling elders'⁹ were the first of its kind in Banlam. Even if there were no pastors until 1863,¹⁰ the lay elder was an equal of the ordained minister as far as ecclesiastical standing is concerned. For this reason the installation of elders was considered a real attainment in self-government.¹¹ With this, another dimension was added to the requirements for baptism/admission, viz. the 'unanimous consent' of the elders.¹² Previously Chinese did occasionally have a say about accepting applicants. For instance, the Pechuia inquirer was turned down by the missionaries in February 1854 at the advice of the Amoy converts who were previously preaching there (*supra*). Likewise the first baptisms at Chiohbe had to gain the consensus of the missionaries and the evangelists.¹³ However there were two important distinctions. One, the said cases involved the inland where the missionaries were unable to supervise well, so that they had to rely on locally-stationed workers for more accurate personal assessment. Two, the most significant difference is that in the pre-Consistory period, Chinese opinion was for missionary reference and not of a determinative nature. In contradistinction the elders were considering cases of applicants *in Amoy* and their judgment were *binding* in effect.¹⁴ The same applied at Chiohbe.¹⁵ Beside admission, the elders exercised

⁵ WHP/p. 249.

⁶ More in Dale, *Missions*, pp. 59f; WHP/pp. 529f.

⁷ WHP/ch5.

⁸ Douglas/23May1856, Mess/1856/p. 338.

⁹ Ostrom/Amoy/22Nov1862, AER. Cf. Mess/1863/p. 189.

¹⁰ 29th March. Blauvelt/Amoy/10Apr1863, 723CM/Bx1.

¹¹ Mess/1862/p. 188.

¹² Joralmon/Amoy/30Jul1856.

¹³ See CAF/pp. 93-96.

¹⁴ E.g. Doty/Amoy/29May1858, Talmage/Amoy/16Jul1858, Doty/Amoy/22Nov1858. 723CM/Bx1.

authority also in matters of discipline.¹⁶ Therefore in ordaining elders in 1856, the RCA missionaries were *consciously* creating a real power-sharing situation. Not only was the situation 'something altogether new as regards those chosen to rule and those to be ruled',¹⁷ it was novel as well to those who had opted to henceforth co-rule.

Second, the missionaries did not condition self-government upon any form of self-support in 1856, which made possible the *inauguration* of political devolution even before there were pastors. By 1862-63 when the two elements were linked, the Chinese already had sufficient ability and training in financial giving to make the next devolutionary move.

Third, the Taihoey was a progressive devolutionary move toward self-government on another level. Its formation was the legal requirement for ordaining pastors, or, for the 'full' organisation of the local church. Even if the missionaries were the only ones qualified to perform ordination rites,¹⁸ they sat in the Taihoey as equals with the elders. At its next meetings the Taihoey assumed the authority to examine and ordain pastoral candidates as well as to organise a new church.¹⁹ As a statement of ecclesiastical independence and sovereignty, these authority-claims carried a political significance that can hardly be overstated.

Fourth, confirming the ecclesiastical authority of the Taihoey, the missionaries recognised the full ministerial parity of the native pastors.²⁰ Thereafter the latter took 'full charge' of their churches, presiding at Consistorial meetings where decisions on admission and discipline were made with or without consulting the missionaries.²¹ Thus was completed the process of devolution at the local church level.²²

Lastly, the missionary leadership thrived more on *positive* rather than negative motivation. Acting independently of the BFM, Talmage and Doty set out to realise their shared ideal of the native church. Afterwards Doty explained the Sinkoe event was not only 'in accordance with the teachings of the Sacred Scriptures' but also '[g]uided by the necessities of the case'.²³ For the missionaries the exceptional character of the first Consistory in Banlam justified a situational suspension of certain procedural norms. For sure there was some precedent in RCA history. The organisation of the first Dutch Reformed congregation in North America at a mill loft in New Amsterdam (1628) by Jonas Michaelius departed from the normal procedure whereby a committee from the sponsoring Classis (Enkhuizen, Holland) was to examine the candidates, supervise the election of officers and then officially declare the church organised.²⁴ The episode was no doubt familiar to Doty and Talmage who graduated from the denominational Seminary at New

¹⁵ E.g. Ostrom/Amoy/13Jan1862. 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁶ E.g. Doty/Amoy/20Feb1862, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁷ Doty/Amoy/15Sep1857.

¹⁸ Kip/Amoy/7Oct1863/p. 3, AER.

¹⁹ Talmage, *History*, pp. 27-28; Kip/Amoy/2Feb1863, 723CM/Bx1.

²⁰ Talmage, 'Ecclesiastical relations' FYC/p. 296; Doty/Amoy/10Sep1863 (= 'Thoughts and Conclusions')/p. 4, AER; Kip/Amoy/28Mar1864, 723CM/Bx1.

²¹ [AR-AM]/Amoy/31Dec1863, 723CM/Bx1.

²² AR-BFM/1862/p. 12.

²³ Doty/Amoy/15Sep1857.

²⁴ G.F. De Jong, *The Dutch Reformed Church in the American Colonies* (1978) pp. 17ff.

Brunswick. Likewise surely known to them was Abeel's 1838 book in which he used the ex-Brahmin as his mouthpiece to argue, 'Even the grosser forms of church government, as they exist in Christian lands, cannot at first be introduced under all circumstances among the heathen. The missionary is at times obliged...to model his materials, not according to prescribed rules, but to existing exigencies.'²⁵ For Abeel the mission theorist the matter of church government belongs to the category of the situational and contingent. Therefore the assertion of exigential prerogative by the Banlam missionaries with regard to church organisation was an incarnation of Abeel's principle and a recapitulation of the spirit which gave birth to the Dutch-American Church in the New World more than two hundred years earlier.

In contrast the indigenous church movement of the 1920s thrived on *negative* motivation. Thus following the Guomindang-Gongchandang split in 1927, the cessation of the anti-Christian movement brought the indigenisation movement to an end.²⁶ Even the formation of the Church of Christ in China gained some impetus from the Boxer uprising, the weakening of Western optimism following the First World War and the anti-foreignism/Christianism of the May Fourth movement.²⁷ Similarly Chinese autonomy from the missionaries during the Japanese occupation came about not by affirmative Protestant action.²⁸ But in mid-nineteenth century Amoy, anti-foreignism/Christianism was somewhat weak (unlike the 1920s) and no politically-motivated foreign occupational forces existed (unlike the Japanese period). In a sense, it may be argued the closed interior and missionary shortage constituted negative motivation; but the fact is that these did not bring about like devolution in other missions. Thus the occurrence of ecclesiastical devolution in Banlam cannot be explained other than by some form of positive motivation on the part of the missionaries and the Chinese.

As previously explained, the positive motivation of devolution was the Talmage ideal. Yet the primary genius of Banlam was not the invention of that ideal. By the mid-1840s, the Three-self idea (not formula) was already known to Rufus Anderson.²⁹ Shenk ventures further by claiming the idea was 'conventional wisdom' by that decade.³⁰ Rather Banlam's genius lies in the willingness of the missionaries to 'let go' (in contrast to the Sandwich Islands Mission) and their refusal to maintain a structural hierarchy between themselves and their Chinese equals (in contrast to Anderson's advice to the Armenian Mission).³¹ A key difference between Anderson and Talmage is that one was an armchair theoretician-executive prodding his field agents to get things done while the other was a self-motivated field-based implementor getting things done. Just as

²⁵ *Missionary Convention*, p. 90.

²⁶ Chao, 'Chinese'.

²⁷ Positive inspiration derived from the China missionary conferences (1877, 1890, 1907), Edinburgh 1910 and subsequent Continuation activities, the National Christian Conference (1922) and the various pre-1927 union movements.

²⁸ Brook, 'Toward independence'.

²⁹ Harris, *Nothing*, pp. 75-76, 113.

³⁰ W.R. Shenk, 'The origins and evolution of the Three-selves in relation to China' IBMR/1990/p. 28. Cf. *idem*, 'Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn: A special relationship?' IBMR/1981/pp. 170-171; Williams, *Ideal*, pp. 2-9.

³¹ See Harris, *Nothing*, ch8.

17th century Rome had to deal with missionary opposition to the raising up of a native clergy and bishops in Portuguese Africa, India and Brazil as well as Spanish Philippines and America,³² so too Anderson and Henry Venn³³ struggled against their missionaries in the making of indigenous churches. In Banlam however the missionaries were taking the lead in doing just that.

Therefore both the Sinkoe and Taihoey events as well as the pastoral ordinations involved real power transfer. For this reason they were truly historic moments in 'political' devolution within an ecclesiastical context. Such feats were facilitated by the transplantation-friendly³⁴ and devolution-friendly³⁵ character of Presbyterianism. While Congregationalism may claim similar advantages, Episcopalianism in China and elsewhere encountered more difficulties at devolution³⁶ and the first Chinese bishop was consecrated only in the twentieth century.³⁷

Limits. However to say simply that the Chinese gained 'self-government' is not accurate enough. For the devolution started in 1856 did not at the same time reach full consummation. First, the transfer of ecclesiastical leadership and authority was not total, for the resultant state was a case of power-sharing between the missionaries and the Chinese elders.

Second, although acting as co-governors with the Chinese elders in 1856, the missionaries still monopolised the unique role, function and authority of the pastor. In the absence of natives appointed to the latter post, the matter could not be helped. The recency of formal theological training and the irregularity of its execution meant that the first 'graduates' could not be expected so soon. Where the pastoral function and authority (even if only partially) were not passed on to some native, the absence of a pastor becomes a limitation upon devolution. Thus even with the advent of Chinese representation in church government, the missionaries still maintained the leadership, i.e. they shared the *positional* leadership but continued to be the *actual* leaders.

Third, even after there were pastors the Consistorial chairs were not immediately transferred to them.³⁸ Also the earliest records we found of a Chinese moderator of Taihoey dated from 1865 and 1866,³⁹ even so, the post shifted between missionaries and natives in the 1870s.⁴⁰ On their part, the Chinese pastors still regarded the missionaries as 'special teachers and guides' which set-up the missionaries found in 'every way desirable'.⁴¹ Consider: The native leaders met in Taihoey carrying out its functions 'with our co-operation, and under our supervision' so that they

³² C.R. Boxer, 'The problem of the native clergy in the Portuguese and Spanish empires from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries', *Studies in Church History* 6 (1970) pp. 85-105.

³³ Williams, *Ideal*, pp. 22-51.

³⁴ Mess/1864/pp. 244f.

³⁵ H.F. Wallace (EP Swatow): 'In these times [1920s] there is reason to be thankful that the Presbyterian system affords a method of transferring responsibility, safe from the jars that some other Missions have suffered.' WHP/p. 360.

³⁶ E.g. E. Stock, *The history of the Church Missionary Society* (1899) 2:295,589-594; T.E. Yates, *Venn and Victorian Bishops abroad* (1978) pp. 89-92,108-109,177-188; M. Warren, *To apply the Gospel. Selections from the writings of Henry Venn* (1971) pp. 67-68; *idem*, 'The Church of England as by law established -- Unfit for export?' in L.S. Hunter (ed), *The English Church* (1966).

³⁷ G.F.S. Gray, *Anglicans in China* (1996).

³⁸ Doty/Amoy/17May1862, 723CM/Bx1; Doty/Amoy/2Oct1862, AER.

³⁹ Rapalje/Amoy/8Jun1865, 723CM/Bx1; AR-SA/1867/p. 8, PFS1/Bx94/F5.

⁴⁰ 'Annual report of Presbytery' (1873), PFS1/Bx9/F1/I3.

⁴¹ Rapalje/Amoy/7Oct1863, cf. Kip/Amoy/7Oct1863/p. 4, AER.

were 'being trained' for full self-government in the future.⁴² Clearly the degree of self-government attained in our period fell short of the Talmage ideal.

Fourth, by limiting devolution to the intangible, the missionaries continued to hold control over the physical centres of ecclesiastical life, i.e. the chapels. But it should be fairly said that were the missionaries to dispose of their 'owned' and rented premises, it is doubtful whether the Chinese would be able to purchase or take over the rentals. Even if no purchase be involved, one is still uncertain if the converts would be willing or able to shoulder the perennial maintenance of the 'owned' properties. Relatedly one wonders whether the Chinese were able to assume the support of the Mission-employed agents and the financial sustenance of the inland work. In fact the missionaries believed the general membership to be economically weak (*infra*) which is one good reason why there was no property transfer. But there was actually a simpler explanation, viz. although the Sinkoe lot belonged *legally* to Ong, it belonged *actually* to the BFM (or earlier, ABCFM) which also owned all Mission properties. Thus any decision over ownership did not rest with the missionaries.

Fifth, the missionaries refused to be accountable to the Taihoey as a church court.⁴³ Although the latter may revoke their membership, it was no less an anomaly⁴⁴ when certain *full* members of an ecclesiastical body were outside its disciplinary authority. When Talmage claimed this arrangement 'rests on the will of [the Taihoey]',⁴⁵ he had no more support for this than that he *assumed* the Chinese would think like him, since the matter had never been actually discussed.

Sixth, although pastoral leadership was devolved in 1863, missionary leadership did not terminate. Rather it continued and took on an additional dimension. It continued in the majority of the churches and stations which still had no native pastors. It took on another dimension when the missionaries effectively assumed the new 'semi-official post' of mentor/adviser to the pastors. Thus during 1864 'from time to time' Doty and Kip held 'special exposition of the New Testament epistles' for the pastors.⁴⁶ Reporting the erection of the Theological Hall in 1870, the CFM reiterated its policy on the 'maintenance of the gospel in the Foreign Field [*viz.*]: we look for the planting of churches not to the missionaries from America, but to a Native Pastorate *under the care of our Evangelists.*'⁴⁷ As pioneers/evangelists who desired to occupy all Banlam, the missionaries had no reason to want to be pastors of local congregations. But there was good reason to be 'supervisors' of pastors. Though both groups were peers in positional standing, both also knew they were not of perfectly equal status. Although the Chinese played a role in evangelisation and church life, the missionaries still retained great influence in terms of opinion and advice, or, moral leadership. Thus as the local congregational space opened for Chinese

⁴² Kip/Amoy/7Oct1863/p. 3, AER.

⁴³ Talmage, 'Ecclesiastical relations of Presbyterian missionaries specially of the Presbyterian missionaries at Amoy, China', FYC/pp. 297-298,300; Talmage, *History*, pp. 41-42.

⁴⁴ Doty-Talmage-Joralmon/Amoy/17Sep1856/pp. 27-28; Dale, *Missions*, p. 14.

⁴⁵ Talmage, FYC/p. 297.

⁴⁶ AR-BFM/1865/p. 17.

⁴⁷ APGS/1870/p. 119 (*italics added*).

leadership, missionaries moved upwards to regional/denominational leadership position. Since the nation-wide Conferences of 1877, 1890 and 1907 were *missionary* conferences,⁴⁸ there was some national leadership space for foreigners but none for the Chinese. That came only after 1907 when the missionary establishment voluntarily invited natives to board the leadership vessel. But that was precisely what the Banlam missionaries had done half a century earlier.

Seventh, self-governmental devolution was never completed in the nineteenth century. The Sinkoe devolution involved only one congregation while only two of the five organised churches had pastors in 1863. Furthermore even though the Taihoey agreed in April 1862 that the missionary element was to 'gradual[ly] withdraw as the churches are passed over to the charge of Native Pastors',⁴⁹ the 'anomaly' originally meant to be 'temporary' and applied only to the 'infant' Church⁵⁰ eventually outlasted the nineteenth century. Fifty years later, the transition of the 'infant Church' toward 'full self-government' was still ongoing.⁵¹ Missionary supervision was still regarded a necessity for the native Church (and perhaps also for the 'benefit' of the home Churches).

Lastly, though hitherto we use the term *Classis* quite freely (just as later RCA accounts did), the American missionaries did not consider the Taihoey a *full-scale* Classis. Thus the pastors-elect were examined by the missionaries while 'the body, as such, took no part...'⁵² Likewise the ordinations were done 'on the authority of the missionaries.'⁵³ In fact there was divergence in understanding about the nature of the Taihoey of spring 1862. For Rapalje there were yet no 'native classes' six months after the pastoral ordinations.⁵⁴ The same belief was held by Kip who reckoned the Taihoey a 'Provisional Classis' which hopefully 'will in time grow to be a fully organized Classis...'⁵⁵ In contrast to this 'conservative' view, Talmage regarded the Taihoey of spring 1862 'an incipient Classis' which in autumn 'became a real Classis, not fully developed as a Classis in a mature Church, but possessing the constituent elements and performing the functions of a Classis.'⁵⁶ The principle at work here was *function makes essence*. The plurality of reckoning signifies the Taihoey as a novelty which each person interpreted in his way. As a new phenomenon, it lacked a standard definition and could only be interpreted by the known category of Classis. Nonetheless some ambiguity remained as to its very nature, thus opening the room for divergent interpretations. Interestingly the EP missionaries did not regard the Taihoey as anything less than a Presbytery/Classis. Considering that the PCE accepted the Amoy Presbytery without reservations while the American Church initially opposed it, the 'conservative' missionary

⁴⁸ See J.C. Gibson, 'The part of the Chinese Church in mission administration' CR/1912/pp. 349f.

⁴⁹ Ostrom/Amoy/7Apr1862, AER. Cf. Doty/Amoy/10Sep1863 (= 'Thoughts and Conclusions')/pp. 5-6, AER who said the 'temporary' Mission-Church relation was to be replaced by the permanent Pastor-Church relation.

⁵⁰ Talmage, FYC/p. 297.

⁵¹ Dale, *Missions* (1907) p. 14; Dale, *Opened* (1913) p. 21; A.L. Warnshuis, *Sketch of the Amoy Mission, China* (1906) p. 18.

⁵² Talmage, *History*, pp. 26-27.

⁵³ Kip/Amoy/7Oct1863/p. 3, AER.

⁵⁴ Rapalje/Amoy/7Oct1863, AER.

⁵⁵ Kip/Amoy/7Oct1863/pp. 3,4-5, AER.

⁵⁶ Talmage, *History*, pp. 26-28.

interpretation was possibly a case of ‘pulling the punch’ on the home Church during the height of the controversy in 1863. At any rate, the main point was that the Taihoey of *spring 1862*, although a devolutionary advancement, was not regarded a full Classis by all parties.

7.4. Self-support

Merits. The foundation of Banlam self-support was native liberality. During 1857-61 RCA Chinese benevolent contributions⁵⁷ were:⁵⁸

| | <i>Sinkoe-Tekchhiukha</i> | <i>Chiohbe</i> | <i>TOTAL</i> |
|------|---------------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| 1857 | | | \$ 164.38 |
| 1858 | | | 206.77 ⁵⁹ |
| 1859 | \$ 315.76 | \$ 105 | 420.76 |
| 1860 | 341 | 136 | 477 |
| 1861 | 471.33 | 200.29 | 671.62 |

For comparison purposes, the 1876 per capita contributions at AMEM Fuzhou was \$0.80, APM Shantung \$1, LMS Amoy \$1.35 and RCA \$1.84.⁶⁰ The RCA performance was said to be the best among the six ‘principal’ Protestant societies in China.⁶¹ Earlier in 1860 the average annual giving of the RCA was already more than \$2 per communicant.⁶² After some time of economic recovery in the post-Taiping period, the RCA-EP giving stood at \$1.48/member.⁶³

Making Banlam liberality more impressive was the fact that poverty was prevalent among most of the members⁶⁴ including those in Amoy. Interestingly though the first baptised converts were not from among the poor. About twenty years before his baptism, Ong Hokkui had started a business which ‘realized a competent subsistence for himself and [his] family’.⁶⁵ Although he later abandoned the original business on religious grounds, his ability to ‘purchase’ the Sinkoe lot (*infra*) suggests a good measure of means and possibly also the investment of his capital in some other profitable way. In the case of Lau Unsia, the store he inherited from his late brother placed him above the have-nots even as we wonder if he was as well off as Ong. This phenomenon has certain research implications to be discussed later (7.8).

However among the general membership in Amoy and inland, poverty was a serious problem⁶⁶ as evinced by the institution of the poor collection (*infra*). In 1854 Talmage mentioned how the ‘heathen’ were often astonished at the fluent preaching of the converts who were ‘from

⁵⁷ Calculated by Chinese year. Talmage/Amoy/23Feb1861, Sower/1861/p. 23.

⁵⁸ Talmage/31Dec1857, Talmage/Amoy/15Jun1859, 723CM/Bx1; AR-BFM/1860-1862.

⁵⁹ Included Chiohbe. AR-BFM/1859/p. 12.

⁶⁰ *Records 1877*, pp. 480,294-295,297; ChronLMS/1878/pp. 256-257. Comparison is not made of the EPM figure (\$0.81) which was for all-China and Formosa.

⁶¹ I.e. AME North, CMS, LMS, AP North, EPM, RCA. ChronLMS/1878/pp. 256-257.

⁶² MacGillivray, *Century*, p. 378.

⁶³ ‘Annual report of Presbytery’ (1873).

⁶⁴ E.g. Doty/Amoy/15Sep1857; Swanson, *Sketch*, pp. 10f.

⁶⁵ CRep/15:7/Jul1846/p. 357.

⁶⁶ AR-BFM/1859/p. 11, 1860/p. 21. Talmage/Amoy/23Jan1860, Rapalje/Amoy/19Jun1862. 723CM/Bx1.

the lower walks of life', uneducated and 'perhaps' illiterate.⁶⁷ However not all of the converts were without education as Doty discovered during his visit to Pechuia in March 1854⁶⁸ and also as shown in the person of those who were appointed school teachers.⁶⁹ Yet the having of education and the possession of wealth were altogether two different matters. In sum, throughout our period poverty characterised the general membership which made native liberality look even nobler to the missionaries.

In terms of self-support, the Chinese were generally ready to do as they were able. In the sphere of evangelistic work, domestic missions were undertaken in 1853 and 1859-65. In 1859 the challenge to support a home missionary was exceeded when an elder's proposal to send out two men instead of one was adopted by the church.⁷⁰ In addition, self-support in *local* evangelistic work took the form of the Amoy congregations renting a (third) chapel (1860),⁷¹ Pechuia contributing a third of an assistant's salary (1860),⁷² Maping electing a preacher while subscribing 'a very liberal sum' (by their ability) toward his monthly expenses (1861)⁷³ and Anhai choosing Song to be their evangelist among the surrounding villages while subscribing 'nearly a dollar' toward his monthly salary.⁷⁴ Another area of self-support was educational work. During 1858-c.1864 some of the church schools were wholly or partially Chinese-supported (*infra*). From 1863 the Amoy churches undertook the support of their pastors. While acknowledging that Chinese giving in 1867 was still 'small', Talmage nevertheless confessed that ability-wise the Amoy churches outdid any church he knew 'whether in Christian or heathen lands' and were 'very far in advance' of most missionary churches.⁷⁵

Limits. First, despite willingness, the Chinese lacked financial ability. Consequently self-support projects were often short-lived. Consider domestic missionary work. Even before 1862, the missionaries had foreseen that having pastors would imply the retrenchment of other self-support efforts,⁷⁶ especially the defrayment of three stations.⁷⁷ Doubtlessly inspired by the separate accounting of the two churches as well as by the new experience of having pastors, native contributions in Amoy reached a peak in 1862 (\$1,006.44) but was followed by a slump in 1863 (\$591.12) and fluctuation during 1864-67.⁷⁸ Due to the economic difficulties caused by the Taiping war, native support of the domestic missionaries ceased in 1865.⁷⁹ The only exception was

⁶⁷ Talmage/18Aug1854, MH/Feb1855/pp. 41-46.

⁶⁸ Doty mentioned some 'young men of some education' at Pechuia who were actively preaching to others. Doty/20Apr1854.

⁶⁹ See 4.4.3.

⁷⁰ Talmage/Amoy/15Jun1859, 723CM/Bx1.

⁷¹ Talmage/Amoy/23Feb1861, Talmage/Amoy/24Feb1862. 723CM/Bx1. In 1861 the landlord took back the chapel.

⁷² Douglas/Pechuia/15Jun1860, EPMF/Douglas.

⁷³ Swanson/19Jun1861, Mess/1861/pp. 282f.

⁷⁴ Douglas/9Oct1861, AR-SA/1861/p. 7.

⁷⁵ AR-BFM/1868/p. 9.

⁷⁶ Doty/Amoy/9Dec1861, 723CM/Bx1.

⁷⁷ AR-BFM/1863/p. 14.

⁷⁸ I.e. \$930.87, \$662.27, \$805.79, \$654.82. AR-BFM/1863-68.

⁷⁹ AR-BFM/1866/pp. 21,22.

Chiohbe which continued to give 'a small sum' each month toward the salary of an evangelist. Nevertheless for continuing to pay their pastors, the churches were still reckoned self-supporting.⁸⁰

Another case of short-lived (partial) self-support was education. In 1854 the Chinese were asked to bear one-fourth of school expenses.⁸¹ By 1858 the RCA had three schools for boys including one at Chiohbe. At Amoy one was sustained by the voluntary offerings of Christians and missionaries while the other entirely by Mission funds.⁸² Things improved in 1861 when one became fully supported by the natives who were also half-supporting a school for girls while the Chiohbe school was jointly supported by Mission and church.⁸³ The silence on schools in the next BFM report heralded the deteriorated state of 1863 when only the Amoy schools survived.⁸⁴ For certain from 1864 onward, both became totally Mission-supported.⁸⁵ This matter is only partly explained by Chinese lack of interest in 'the education of their children'.⁸⁶ As earlier mentioned, the Taiping insurgency restricted native finance.⁸⁷

Second, the Amoy native contributions actually included the personal offerings of the missionaries and occasional foreign visitors.⁸⁸ This missionary participation started since or just after the poor collection began.⁸⁹ Since missionary and native outputs were never distinguished, the most we can say is that *native* contributions were 100% native in management but not in origin.

Third, the missionaries did not devolve the expenses of chapel upkeep and regular worship. For such, the native contributions were never intended. For instance, the 1857 receipts were expended for the poor and toward one school.⁹⁰ Again, although the balance of Amoy benevolent contributions was in the black for 1861 (\$127.12), the beneficiaries were domestic missions, the poor and the schools.⁹¹ Meanwhile until 1864 the Americans continued to pay for the 'public worship' expenses at Amoy and to subsidise the schools.⁹² At Chiohbe some contributions went toward communion expenses but only because there was no local school to subsidise.⁹³ By 1876 the working expenses of the BFM-owned church buildings in Amoy were shouldered by the native church.⁹⁴ Although it is unclear exactly when this practice commenced, it was not during our

⁸⁰ AR-BFM/1866/p. 25.

⁸¹ Doty/20Apr1854.

⁸² Doty/Amoy/10Feb1858, 723CM/Bx1.

⁸³ Talmage/Amoy/24Feb1862, 723CM/Bx1; cf. AR-BFM/1862/p. 11. In contrast the three schools at Pechuia, Maping and Emungkang were 'mostly sustained' by the EPM.

⁸⁴ AR-BFM/1864/p. 14.

⁸⁵ AR-BFM/1865/p. 16, 1866/p. 21.

⁸⁶ AR-BFM/1864/p. 14.

⁸⁷ E.g. AR-BFM/1865/pp. 13-16, 1866/pp. 21,22.

⁸⁸ E.g. AR-BFM/1859/p. 12, 1866/p. 22.

⁸⁹ MH/1853/p. 162.

⁹⁰ Talmage/31Dec1857, 723CM/Bx1.

⁹¹ Doty/Amoy/16Jun1862, 723CM/Bx1.

⁹² Rapalje/Amoy/9Feb1861, Doty/Amoy/5Jul1862, Doty/Amoy/12Feb1863, Semi-annual account current (4Jan1865). 723CM/Bx1.

⁹³ AR-BFM/1863/p. 15.

⁹⁴ Talmage, *Records 1877*, p. 296.

period. At the time of union, Pechuia and Maping were funded by the EPM while the RCA-connected churches were receiving Mission subsidies.⁹⁵

Fourth, there was a class of expenditures which were not fully devolved. These included renting/constructing the pre-1862 chapels, building/maintaining the boats and supporting the Mission-recruited evangelists and the theological students. The Sinkoe chapel was totally financed from America.⁹⁶ Although for legal reasons the lot was actually bought by Ong Hokkui 'for less than \$550', it was soon perpetually leased to the Mission which quickly reimbursed Ong and assumed the annual tax obligation.⁹⁷ With both site and construction at \$1,300,⁹⁸ the cost of the Tekchhiukha chapel was mainly if totally funded from America.⁹⁹ Likewise the Chiohbe chapel was funded by the Mission.¹⁰⁰ Similarly the Pechuia rent and room-enlargement were paid by the EPM.¹⁰¹ Eventually the site and construction costs¹⁰² were met from Britain¹⁰³ and one Amoy foreign businessman.¹⁰⁴ Beside chapel costs, regular EPM expenses included the Gospel Boat with its boatmen and the evangelists.¹⁰⁵ The first RCA boat was given by Burns who built and initially sustained it with his personal funds. After Burns left and his funds ran out, the Americans sustained it with \$100 per year.¹⁰⁶ Likewise the Mission helpers and theological students were all Mission-supported.

Exceptionally the Chiohbe converts rented a temporary chapel at Chiangchiu in May 1861.¹⁰⁷ Later the purchase of the building (\$425) was funded almost equally by missionary (54%) and native (46%) sources. The Chinese output was possible only because it was a concerted effort of all the various congregations.¹⁰⁸ Just as Amoy native contributions partly went toward domestic missions but not local worship expenses, the congregations supported the Chiangchiu building as a domestic missionary project. Another exception was Maping renting a house in 1856¹⁰⁹ but the initiative was shortlived as the EPM soon assumed the costs of the 'chapel'.¹¹⁰

We identify the above as a class of expenditures because the missionaries regarded these as part of *their work as evangelists and foundation-layers*. For instance, the Sinkoe chapel project was never made a Chinese responsibility, not because of their economic situation or the size of

⁹⁵ Talmage, *History*, pp. 25-26.

⁹⁶ AR-AB/1847/p. 167; Doty/16Mar1848, CI/19:3/27Jul1848/p. 10c2-3.

⁹⁷ Pohlman/Amoy/18Dec1847, CI/18:42/27Apr1848/p. 16c3-5.

⁹⁸ Talmage/Amoy/23Jan1860, 723CM/Bx1.

⁹⁹ Doty/Amoy/20Sep1859, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁰⁰ Doty/17Jan1855, MH/1855/pp. 186-187; Talmage, CI/26:48/29May1856/p. 189c6.

¹⁰¹ Doty-Talmage-Joralmon/Amoy/17Sep1856/p. 10; Johnston/1May1855, Mess/1855/pp. 243-245.

¹⁰² Douglas/Amoy/3Dec1856.

¹⁰³ Mess/1856/pp. 51,51-53,122,153,155; 1857/pp. 149-150.

¹⁰⁴ Douglas/1Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 118f; Mess/1856/p. 155.

¹⁰⁵ E.g. Douglas/1Jan1856, Mess/1856/pp. 118f.

¹⁰⁶ Ostrom/Amoy/1Jun1860, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁰⁷ Douglas/[Chiangchiu]/17Jul1861, Mess/1861/pp. 320-321.

¹⁰⁸ Doty/Amoy/6Jan1863, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁰⁹ Matheson, *Narrative*, p. 16.

¹¹⁰ Douglas/Amoy/6May1857, Mess/1857/p. 252; Douglas/Amoy/7Apr1858, Mess/1858/p. 224;

Douglas/Amoy/4Sep1858, Mess/1858/p. 386; Douglas/Amoy/19Apr1859, Mess/1859/p. 221.

their membership (though either was a valid excuse). Rather the *fundamental* rationale for Mission financing was Pohlman's 'rule' that every missionary should have his own chapel for *primarily* evangelistic rather than pastoral use.¹¹¹ As an instrument to facilitate preaching to 'the heathen',¹¹² the Sinkoe chapel was regarded as properly a Mission investment designed to help make converts, and therefore its existence could sensibly *precede* that of converts/church. This is therefore the main reason why the construction of the Sinkoe chapel was undertaken as a project of the Mission rather than of the converts.

In the case of the Tekchhiukha chapel, the situation differed greatly. In 1859 there was already a congregation of substantial size (c.80) to justify a larger and permanent chapel. Moreover convert-making in Amoy was no longer the singularly dominant missionary concern it was in 1849 for various reasons, viz. there were also pastoral and training tasks, the work had spread inland, five Mission helpers were based in Amoy.¹¹³ Most importantly, with even worship expenses still in the Mission account, the Chinese were in no position to pay such a huge construction bill in so short a time. In this case therefore Chinese financial ability was a real limiting factor. At Pechuia, the same factor was at work and the membership was smaller (c.47 in 1856). However since the missionaries could have chosen to postpone chapel constructions until Chinese financial ability improved, the fact that they did not suggests we must go beyond the financial factor and reckon with missionary self-consciousness as foundation-layers of the Chinese Church. For the stability of church life and work, there is every practical benefit in *owning* a chapel.¹¹⁴ Thus in addition to Chinese economic capability, the Tekchhiukha and Pechuia chapels were not made Chinese projects also because the missionaries regarded them part of their foundation-laying task.

The same rationale applied to the Mission helpers and theological students. Seeing themselves as evangelists, the missionaries regarded the helpers as 'our right arms [by] which we are enabled to reach forth with the gospel where it is quite impossible for us to go personally or at best only occasionally on account of want of health and strength and of pressure of engagements in Amoy itself.'¹¹⁵ Just as the Chinese evangelist was the extension of the missionary personality/functionality, so too the chapel and boat were the foreign evangelists' accessories. By the same logic, the Amoy-supported missionaries were provided a Chinese boat as part of their evangelistic equipment.¹¹⁶ Regarding the theological students, the work of training a native agency had always been understood as part of foundation-laying with a view to seeing the native Church someday stand on her own.

¹¹¹ CRep/15:7/Jul1846/p. 356. As the baptiser of the two men in 1846 (p. 358), the author was Pohlman.

¹¹² CRep/15:7/Jul1846/p. 357.

¹¹³ Talmage/Amoy/23Jan1860, 723CM/Bx1.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Ostrom/Amoy/5Jun1863, 723CM/Bx1.

¹¹⁵ Doty/Amoy/7Oct1857, 723CM/Bx1.

¹¹⁶ Ostrom/Amoy/18Jul1859, 723CM/Bx1.

For the reasons above, the natives were not asked to assume responsibility for the said class of expenditures. Expectedly as the Church grew in later times, the demand for self-support advanced. But in our period, the missionaries saw no compelling reason to devolve these expenditures upon the natives.

Lastly, self-support was not fully attained in the nineteenth century. This is true even by the common missionary definition, i.e. supporting a pastor. In the Taihoey report of 1873, only three out of the fourteen churches/preaching-stations had native-supported pastors.¹¹⁷ By 1888 the RCA had eight organised churches but only five were self-supporting.¹¹⁸ Neither was self-support at the local church level fully attained in 1905.¹¹⁹ On the EP side, the FMC announced in spring 1863 that both self-government and self-propagation had been attained to some level at *all* the stations¹²⁰ but did not say the same of self-support. By 1894, only eight self-supporting churches/groups of churches existed among its fifty-three churches/preaching-stations.¹²¹

Beside external factors, a key internal limitation was the size of the church population. Liberality without quantitatively substantial resources is insufficient for long-term self-support or short-term capital-intensive projects. Thus significant native participation in buying the Chiangchui house was possible only because 'several Chinese Churches'¹²² joined in doing so. Likewise the Khiboey (EP) chapel was built by the converts with financial assistance from other congregations (c.1864).¹²³ Later Khiboey could call a pastor only because it united with Kiolai and two/three other congregations in doing so (1880).¹²⁴

7.5. Union

Merits. As the first of its kind in the modern Protestant missionary movement, the 1862 union was a major achievement. In this organic union of two distinct groups of churches (even if self-consciously one), the Western national elements in a sense dissolved themselves. As a later expression beautifully captured the essence, the Taihoey churches were 'not one half American Reformed and the other half English Presbyterian, but all equally and only Chinese.'¹²⁵ Eventually in 1892, the Taihoey divided into two to form the Synod of South Fujian (1893) which held its first meeting at Kolongsu in 1894.¹²⁶ The attendance at this gathering reflected the state of devolution: sixteen pastors, nineteen elders and eight missionaries. There was further symbolism in choosing as moderator the senior pastor Iap Hancheng. The Banlam Taihoey and Synod proved to be the

¹¹⁷ PFS1/Bx9/F1/13.

¹¹⁸ AR-BFM/1888/p. 28.

¹¹⁹ Warnshuis, *Sketch*, p. 19.

¹²⁰ Mess/1863/p. 188.

¹²¹ *Our Church in China* (1895) p. 25.

¹²² Doty/Amoy/5Jul1862 (second of two same-dated letters), 723CM/Bx1.

¹²³ Matheson, *Narrative*, p. 42; Swanson, *Sketch*, p. 14. The site was donated by two Christians.

¹²⁴ WHP/pp. 63-64.

¹²⁵ Talmage, 'Should', p. 437.

¹²⁶ Mess/Jun1892/p. 16; 1893/pp. 158f,207; 1894/p. 208.

institutional precedents for the eventual formation of the Tionghua Kitokkao Hoe Hap-it Hoey¹²⁷ comprising all three Missions.¹²⁸ When the local Methodist Conference joined in 1934,¹²⁹ there resulted a post-denominational Banlam Protestantism of which the 1862 union was the beginnings.

Limits. First, the union involved only the two Presbyterian Missions, thus excluding the LMS and the Roman Catholics. On account of intense anti-Catholicism in England and America¹³⁰ as well as among the missionaries,¹³¹ any union with the Catholics was unthinkable. However anti-Catholicism was not a factor in the 1862 union. Understandably it was a stronger motivation in the English-speaking world where there was a Protestant establishment.¹³² But in China the main opponent was 'paganism'. But though unlinked to 1862, RCA-EP anti-Catholicism did mean the Catholics were automatically excluded from union.

Even if the degree of RCA-EP denominational compatibility was not shared by the LMS, a three-Mission union was not impossible as proven in 1920. But then the conditions were quite different. In the twentieth century, all were influenced by the nationwide call for union, especially the wider Presbyterian-Congregationalist union movement, and the intense anti-foreignism/Christianism whose extensity and intensity managed to accelerate various Protestant unions.¹³³ But in our context, the Presbyterian factor was important. Thus despite the RCA missionaries' relatively broader catholicity compared to their home Church's narrow denominationalism, organic union was still confined within Presbyterianism.

Second, the Taihoey event consisted of the organic union of natives churches, not the Missions. Thus after union, Doty remained a BFM agent as exclusively as Douglas was an FMC agent. To begin with, the missionary understanding of the 'fact of union' pertained not to the Missions but to the churches connected with them. Although it was said the Missions worked 'almost as one mission'¹³⁴ the 'confusion of ownership' never applied to them as the object. Talmage clarified best when he wrote, 'Although our missions as such are kept perfectly distinct, we work together as one church, agreeing in doctrine, church government, and church customs and usages. We cannot see any sufficient reason why we and they should not organize the churches gathered by us and them as one Denomination...'¹³⁵ As foundation-layers of the Chinese Church, the missionaries felt it their responsibility to organise one Church or as few denominations as

¹²⁷ C.K. Lee, 'Fayang Minnan Jiaohui jingshen' in *Trinity Church commemorative magazine* (HK, 1989) p. 41. The name is literally *United Chinese Protestant Church*, but missionary literature normally has *South Fukien United Church* or some like variation.

¹²⁸ 6Jan1920 (RCC/pp. 182f).

¹²⁹ Merwin, *Adventure in unity*, p. 73.

¹³⁰ J. Wolffe, *The Protestant crusade in Great Britain, 1829-1860* (1991); *idem*, *God and Greater Britain* (1994) pp. 20-47, 111f; D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in modern Britain* (1989) pp. 101f, 221f; R.A. Billington, *The Protestant crusade, 1800-1860* (1938); D.L. Kinzer, *An episode in anti-Catholicism* (1964).

¹³¹ E.g. Burns/Swatow/15Sep1858, Mess/1858/pp. 384f; Douglas/Amoy/8Jan1861, Mess/1861/pp. 117f; Talmage/Amoy/14Aug1861; Kip/Amoy/25Dec1861, 723CM/Bx1.

¹³² See e.g. M.G. Finlayson, *Historians, Puritanism, and the English Revolution: The religious factor in English Politics before and after the Interregnum* (1983).

¹³³ See e.g. Latourette, *History*, pp. 662-672; Merwin, *Adventure*, ch2; A.R. Kepler, 'Movements for Christian unity' CCYB/1928/pp. 73-89; Chao, 'Chinese'.

¹³⁴ Doty-Talmage-Joralmon/Amoy/17Sep1856/p. 8.

¹³⁵ Talmage/Amoy/20Nov1861, AER (underscoring original).

possible. As *China agents* they were working on the development of the Banlam Presbyterian Church, not the Western Churches or their Missions.

7.6. Credits

Self-propagation. For their zeal and initiatives in self-propagation, the Chinese deserve a great deal of credit. In Banlam it was self-propagation which preceded and led to self-government in 1856. Self-propagation preceded because it initially happened spontaneously at the interpersonal level. Not only did this make self-propagation independent of financial capability and self-government, it rendered the activity structurally free and hard to control. Not that the missionaries took efforts to regulate it, for they were delighted to see its progress. But even were they to try to stop it, the structure-free character of self-propagation would make control extremely difficult if not impossible. When self-propagation took on organised form in 1853 and then with greater steadiness from 1859, its voluntary form never ceased. Because it could be either spontaneous or institutionalised, either voluntary or Mission/church-supported, the space for exercising self-propagation was practically made 'unlimited' by its modal flexibility. For this reason, the termination of the native support of the evangelists in 1865¹³⁶ never did mean the cessation of self-propagation. Finally, comparatively speaking, the RCA-connected churches were ahead of their EP counterparts in terms of ecclesial self-propagation work. Among the EP-connected churches, native domestic missions undertaken with more stability took off only after 1872.¹³⁷

However some credit should also go to the missionaries. First, they played a provocative role. From the start the missionaries had been inculcating upon the Chinese their duty of evangelisation. This the converts took seriously and soon self-propagation was in operation. No doubt missionary encouragement upon Chinese performance provided further psycho-emotional incentive for repeat performances. The value of such intangibles as instructional motivation and psychological reinforcement should not be overlooked. Second, the missionaries also played a supportive role. By employment they made it possible for certain converts to devote all their time to evangelistic work. Also there were the theological students who did part-time field work while engaged in study. For Chinese credit, it certainly helped that the missionaries understood self-propagation to mean the extension of Christianity by Chinese Christians whether Mission-employed or any otherwise.¹³⁸

In sum, as far as self-propagation is concerned, the main credit goes to the Chinese but the missionaries deserved some acknowledgment for their provocative and supportive roles.

Self-support. The Chinese deserved credit for responding to the challenges of self-support. Until 1856 there were the domestic missions (1853) and educational subsidy (1854f). In

¹³⁶ AR-BFM/1866/pp. 21,22.

¹³⁷ See CAF/pp. 216-217.

¹³⁸ See Swanson, *Sketch*, p. 15.

addition, Chinese initiative also launched the monthly collection for the poor (1852) which the missionaries knew about only when asked whether they could join in giving.¹³⁹ During 1856-62 there was marked improvement in Chinese performance. Not only were the poor fund and school subsidy continued, there were new projects which partook of the double nature of self-support and self-propagation, viz. domestic missions (1859f) and the third Amoy chapel (1860).

Generally speaking the RCA converts did better in self-support than the EP churches. However defining self-support as supporting a pastor can sometimes bring misleading impressions. For instance, though Chiohbe was self-supporting in 1873, its annual contribution was actually surpassed by those of Pechuia and Angsoa.¹⁴⁰ But since the first EP pastoral ordination was in 1877,¹⁴¹ the seeming picture was of Chiohbe superseding Pechuia in financial giving. Nevertheless since the Amoy churches were far ahead of any EP church, the position well stands that the RCA did better over-all.

Although the Chinese get chief honours for self-support, the missionaries also deserved credit for certain contributions. First, it was they who from the beginning taught the members 'the duty of supporting ordinances, and the privilege of spending and being spent for others...'¹⁴². Second, the missionaries were ready to pass on the chapels to the Chinese, as revealed in connection with the proposed transfer of the RCA base to Kolongsu. Because the chapel stood on grounds which only partly belonged to the Mission, the disposal of the property was problematic. Finding it unacceptable to deprive the Chinese of their chapel, the Mission declared '[t]he [BFM's] Church property...must necessarily pass over into the hands of the churches here. If we sell their present building we must secure another for them.'¹⁴³ Here we see the nobility of the missionaries who were self-motivatedly willing to transfer not only intangible authority (self-government) but also tangible realty to the natives. That all Mission property belonged to the BFM only declares missionary blamelessness for non-transfer, detracting no credit off the devolutionary intention.

Self-government. First, the missionaries took the initiative to transfer ecclesiastical authority to the Chinese beginning in 1856. Even though Chinese self-propagation was the major factor in convincing the missionaries the time had come to devolve church government, it was the missionaries themselves who committed the first act of devolution in 1856. Thus whether to initiate or hasten devolution, there was need for neither internal agitation on the part of the native Church nor external anti-foreign pressures such as those of the 1920s. Consequently there was a remarkable absence of Mission-Church friction during the entire devolutionary process. This is a rarity in the history of Chinese Protestant devolution.

¹³⁹ MH/1853/p. 162.

¹⁴⁰ 'Annual report of Presbytery' (1873).

¹⁴¹ M'Gregor/Amoy/17Jul1877, Mess/1877/pp. 251f.

¹⁴² Swanson, *Sketch*, p. 10.

¹⁴³ Ostrom/Amoy/5Jun1863, 723CM/Bx1.

Second, although the missionaries desired devolution, they did not sacrifice quality for haste. In 1859 the appointment of the Pechuia officers-elect was delayed to allow examination in fitness for office.¹⁴⁴ When delay resulted in one man being found unsuitable and replaced, the same care was later exercised at Maping.¹⁴⁵ Presumably such missionary caution was an extension of the strict admission policy which both Missions observed zealously.

Third, in organising the Taihoey, the missionaries did not first seek the sanction of church authorities in England and America. As a consequence while the move was able to win remarkable sympathy and support from the PCE,¹⁴⁶ strong protests were registered on the American side.¹⁴⁷ Additional credit should go to the RCA missionaries for standing their ground in unison to the extent of offering their mass resignation.¹⁴⁸ The firmness reaped its reward when the General Synod finally capitulated on a temporary albeit indefinite (!) basis.¹⁴⁹ In putting the welfare of the native Church above the desires of home authorities, the missionaries deserved great commendation.

Fourth, the missionaries observed a policy of non-direction as far as the political management and the devolutionary pace of the native Church is concerned. For instance, during the meetings in 1860 to decide whether to separate the Amoy Church into two, while the Consistory members freely aired their views, the RCA and EP missionaries 'answered the questions proposed to us, and gave such general instruction as seemed called for, but carefully avoided expressing any opinion as to whether the time had come to separate or not.'¹⁵⁰ Likewise at Amoy and Chiohbe in 1861, the foreigners allowed the Chinese full freedom in deciding whether to call pastors and in electing the candidates.¹⁵¹ Although the missionaries thought the chosen two the best fit men, they gave no *directive* advice when one pastor-elect consulted them on 'the path I should take'.¹⁵² A parallel instance of native independence was how the domestic missionaries were first chosen by the Chinese before the names were submitted for missionary 'approval or rejection...before the setting apart' in 1859.¹⁵³ The same deferential spirit was manifested when the Maping congregation received the 'right' to elect the chapel-keeper 'although properly it belongs to us.'¹⁵⁴

The non-direction policy however did not mean the missionaries waited passively for Chinese pro-action. Rather they actively presented matters to the Chinese but took care to let the latter make the decision. In so doing they did not hesitate to offer useful information and to point out possible courses of action. For instance, although the RCA missionaries were convinced their church order was both Scriptural and best adapted to the Chinese, they refused to 'impose' their

¹⁴⁴ Douglas/Maping/1Aug1859, Mess/1860/pp. 20f.

¹⁴⁵ Douglas/Amoy/20Apr1860, EPMF/Douglas.

¹⁴⁶ Mess/1863/189.

¹⁴⁷ APGS/1863/pp. 334-340; CI/34:25/18Jun1863/pp. 97c6,99c3-4,100c3-5; 34:26/25Jun1863/pp. 106c5-107c3.

¹⁴⁸ Doty-Ostrom-Rapalje-Kip-Blauvelt to BFM/Amoy/16Sep1863, AER.

¹⁴⁹ APGS/1864/pp. 490-491.

¹⁵⁰ Talmage/Amoy/30Aug1860, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁵¹ Ostrom/Amoy/18Jul1861, Doty/Amoy/9Dec1861. 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁵² Doty/Amoy/9Dec1861, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁵³ Douglas/Maping/1Aug1859, Mess/1860/pp. 20-21.

¹⁵⁴ Swanson/19Jun1861, Mess/1861/pp. 282f.

views upon the congregation in 1856 but simply presented the various forms of church government.¹⁵⁵ Not knowing what form the converts would choose, they were doubtlessly delighted when the RCA form was picked.¹⁵⁶ Also during the Sinkoe elections in 1857 the missionaries 'did not feel at liberty to impose any plan on the Church' but did present 'the three plans of election mentioned in our constitution'.¹⁵⁷ Clearly the claims of non-imposition derived from the fact that the final choice rested with the membership. Again although the missionaries once thought of organising Pechuia, Chiohbe and Maping into 'one church', this never ensued because it was decided beforehand that the matter 'be left to [Chinese] judgment and desires.'¹⁵⁸ Also in response to the BFM query about pastoral ordination, the missionaries replied that they would not take action, rather waiting until the candidate has been called by a church.¹⁵⁹ Again the foreigners defaulted by choice, leaving the initiative with the Chinese. The same pattern of behaviour occurred in the congregational elections of the pastors in November 1861.¹⁶⁰

Fifth, the missionary-led devolution was in comparative terms more RCA-led than EPM-led. Taking leadership at the Sinkoe event were the two senior RCA missionaries. During the prayer season on election day, Doty was 'called to the chair' although both Talmage and Douglas were also present. During the election session Talmage took the chair and by congregational resolution was authorised to appoint the nomination committees. During the formal ordination in May, Doty preached the sermon while Talmage read 'The Form for Ordination of elders and deacons' before an audience which included Douglas and Joralmon.¹⁶¹ That neither the EPM nor the Chinese were taking the leading role is understandable. The Sinkoe event was really an RCA event even though the entire EPM (=Douglas!) was in attendance. Neither could the converts have taken the leading role. As the missionaries did not expect the membership to reach the size it did in 1856, they had 'never until now, preached much on the subject of Church Government'.¹⁶² Other than the deficiency of knowledge on the said subject, the natives were entirely without experience in such transactions. Thus throughout the whole affair the leadership of the RCA missionaries could not be any clearer. Likewise in the Taihoey event and pastoral ordination, the RCA led the EPM. It was RCA-connected churches which first reached the minimum number for a Classis. Whereupon as in 1856, the RCA took the initiative to form the Taihoey and in the process drew in the EP churches. Therefore not only were the RCA natives leading their EP counterparts in church growth, self-government, self-support and ecclesial self-propagation, the American missionaries were also leading the EPM in terms of devolutionary initiatives.

¹⁵⁵ Doty-Talmage-Joralmon/Amoy/17Sep1856/pp. 17-18.

¹⁵⁶ Pp. 18-19,30.

¹⁵⁷ Talmage/Amoy/10Jul1857.

¹⁵⁸ Talmage/Amoy/16Jul1858, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁵⁹ Ostrom/Amoy/23Nov1860, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁶⁰ Talmage/Amoy/20Nov1861, AER.

¹⁶¹ Talmage/Amoy/30May1856.

¹⁶² Talmage/Amoy/30May1856.

Lastly, the Chinese deserved credit for courageously taking the forward course. For instance, when presented with the matter by the missionaries, the members of Pechuia and Maping made the decision to proceed with church organisation.¹⁶³ More impressively, the formal requests for Consistorial appointment at Chiohbe¹⁶⁴ and Emungkang¹⁶⁵ came from the Chinese themselves. Native initiative was also manifested at Taihoey when the matter of pastoral ordination was brought forward by the Sinkoe elder in an 'spontaneous' manner. Reflecting over 'so healthy a spiritual development' Doty felt 'necessity laid upon us to advance.'¹⁶⁶

Therefore in terms of credit for self-governmental devolution, the missionaries took first honours for 'letting go' of some authority and for showing the Chinese the way forward without pressuring them into it. In response the Chinese took up the challenge with courage and made possible the progress of devolution. Thereby both parties contributed to the peaceful and smooth character of the process.

Union. As far as the Chinese are concerned, they were one Church and knew no otherwise. For this reason full credit for union goes to the missionaries who faced the choice of whether to organise one Chinese Presbyterian Church or two and opted for the former.

But comparatively the RCA deserved more credit. First, it was they who played the initiating role. By inviting the EPM to the Sinkoe event, they set the direction for future relations. Being the first to articulate the idea of union, Talmage drew the line of thinking toward 1862. Having three organised churches, the RCA did not need EP participation to form a legitimate Classis. It was the ideal of Presbyterian solidarity as expressed in union which moved things in that direction. Second, it was the Americans who had to contend with anti-union forces from home and triumphed after so many years of gallant resistance. Aware that compliance with the General Synod resolution of 1857 meant separation from the EP churches, Talmage deliberately postponed 'a full discussion' with the BFM in 1860.¹⁶⁷ Instead he emphasised the prematurity of a Classis at the time¹⁶⁸ while sustaining the pro-union campaign. While maintaining 'our love for our [American] church' the missionaries regarded themselves commissioned to build up not the Dutch-American Church but 'the Church of Christ in China'. As the EPM and the Chinese were uninvolved with the controversy, the RCA bore the full force of the opposition. Such courage and determination should not be overlooked.

¹⁶³ Douglas/Maping/1Aug1859, Mess/1860/p. 20-21; Talmage/Amoy/30Apr1860, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁶⁴ Doty/Amoy/17May1859, Talmage/Amoy/15Jun1859. 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁶⁵ Doty/Amoy/6Jan1863, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁶⁶ Doty/Amoy/6Jan1863, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁶⁷ Talmage/Amoy/30Aug1860, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁶⁸ I.e. even if there were enough RCA churches by 1860, there were just enough RCA missionaries to fulfil the Constitutional requirement of least three ministers (see *Constitution*, 1840, 2.3.1). But with Ostrom ill and absent and Talmage likely to be away a while, the permanency of a Classis faced great risks.

Between the Boards, the FMC should be commended for its progressivism in promptly and gladly recognising the Taihoey. Beyond this, the extra effort taken to initiate communication with the BFM with a view to convincing the latter to do the same¹⁶⁹ also merits special mention.

In sum, the Chinese deserved the most credit for self-propagation and self-support. In the matter of self-government and union, the first honours go to the missionaries, but more the RCA than the EPM. Of course this is comparatively speaking, for both Westerners and Orientals contributed in their own ways to the fulfilment of *each* aspect of the Talmage ideal in 1863.

Of the missionary leadership, it is helpful to note two general features. First, the missionaries prioritised Chinese interests over those of their sending Churches. The RCA did this to the extent of 'violating' their Church Constitution, disobeying the General Synod, resigning their posts and being ready to devolve (if only possible) Mission property upon the Chinese. Likewise the EP missionaries did not ask the FMC first before joining the Sinkoe and Taihoey events. In putting the Chinese first, both Talmage and Doty were guided by the concept of functional efficiency. In 1848, Talmage observed that Chinese Christians 'in some respects, may be more *efficient* than the missionary'.¹⁷⁰ In 1857, Doty wrote that 'the Bible church organization is best suited to promote purity[,] piety[,] *efficiency* and growth among the Lord's people here'.¹⁷¹ Evangelistic efficiency was a guiding principle in the making of the native church from 1856 onwards.¹⁷² Later at the 1877 Conference when confronting the question of the relations among the many Chinese Churches themselves and of these to their founding Missions and Western Churches, Talmage argued that both relations 'should be such as shall best secure their [Chinese Churches] own welfare and *efficiency*' while also expressing his conviction in the 'importance of unity to economy and *efficiency*'.¹⁷³ This conceptual agreement on the part of the missionaries was a *sine qua non* for Banlam devolution and union.

Second, the missionaries led but did not dominate the Chinese. There were no signs of any obsession with holding on to power, control or 'rulership'. Rather there was a remarkable amount of self-motivation in the letting go of these to various degrees. Indeed all along and up to the formation of the Amoy Synod in 1893-94, the missionaries 'took the lead in pointing out the Scriptural authority for these [organisational] arrangements' while 'the steps taken were the independent action of the members of the Church, from their own convictions'.¹⁷⁴ Possessing a rather clear vision of the Chinese Church, the missionaries were consciously leading the Chinese toward that state of affairs. But the Chinese were also moving on their own, as seen for instance in the petition for a pastor in 1861. Not that there was no instruction or persuasion, but that such differs vastly from imperialistic domination or forceful imposition in allowing the other party the

¹⁶⁹ See Peltz to Hamilton/NY/8Jul1863, 723CM/Bx1.

¹⁷⁰ Talmage/12Sep1848, CI/19:28/18Jan1849/p. 109c1-2 (*italics added*).

¹⁷¹ Doty/Amoy/7Oct1857, 723CM/Bx1 (*italics added*).

¹⁷² Talmage, *History*, pp. 13,63-64.

¹⁷³ J.V.N. Talmage, 'Should the native Churches in China be united ecclesiastically and independent of foreign Churches and Societies' in *Records 1877*, pp. 429,430,435 (*italics added*).

¹⁷⁴ CAF/p. 364.

freedom of consent/dissent. Perhaps it is this freedom which makes one somewhat hesitant to identify the Banlam brand of missionary leadership with the cultural imperialism with which China missions are so often associated.¹⁷⁵ Whether it concerns opium importation/smuggling or ancestral worship, there is a great difference between being *compelled* and being *convinced*. This difference applies also between a post-war treaty signed by both victor and loser, on the one hand and on the other hand, a scholarly consensus over an academic issue. The introduction of Presbyterianism in Banlam without denominational subordination to Western Churches should also be considered in this light. By their non-dominating leadership, the missionaries exhibited a humility and a nobility unusual for that particular period of mission history.¹⁷⁶

7.7. Comparative perspectives

Any evaluation of the Banlam achievement requires some reference point. We have chosen to do three comparisons, viz. comparing with RCA-EP aims, with the achievements of certain nineteenth century missions and with some twentieth century ideals.

To compare aims and results, we take the Talmage ideal as the starting point. By 1867 the Banlam missionaries claimed that should they be unexpectedly removed, the churches were ready to independently 'secure their own growth, support, and purity of doctrine.'¹⁷⁷ However the various limits we have noted (many still true in 1867) make us wonder whether this self-assessment was over-optimistic or whether it referred to only some of the churches. Historically that claim was never really tested since the Missions were never permanently removed until after 1949. At any rate the various limits which existed even after the first pastoral ordination imply that the missionaries did not fully realise their dream. Nevertheless significant progress was made in all areas of pursuit. The best gains were in self-propagation, self-government and union. Self-support turned out to be 'the weakest link'.

However solely comparing results and ideals does not yield a full picture. It is useful to also compare the results with other results. Thus from among other nineteenth century Missions, we look at three 'contemporary neighbours', viz. the 'town-mate' (LMS Amoy), the other mainland EPM (Swatow) and one of the century's 'more successful'¹⁷⁸ Protestant missions (Basel's Hakka mission).

LMS Amoy. For LMS China, Amoy was its most successful mission in terms of devolution.¹⁷⁹ In 1870 when no great improvement in devolution was observed among the LMS

¹⁷⁵ See e.g. A. Schlesinger, Jr., 'The missionary enterprise and theories of imperialism', in Fairbank (1974) pp. 336-373.

¹⁷⁶ Our position runs counter to the view of Harris (1991) who relies mainly on the structural theory of imperialism. Without going into a full debate, it suffices to say that by dealing broadly with ABCFM missionaries in China, Harris' work successfully falls into the category of survey-type studies whose general (simplistic) pictures of reality our focused study is aiming to revise and refine.

¹⁷⁷ Van Doren, AR-BFM/1867/p. 11.

¹⁷⁸ J.G. Lutz, *Hakka Chinese confront Protestant Christianity, 1850-1900* (1997) p. 3.

¹⁷⁹ MacGillivray, *Century*, p. 8.

stations in the many eastern lands, Amoy was presented as the *only* exception.¹⁸⁰ However in comparison, RCA work was certainly more advanced. Whereas the first LMS Chinese pastors appeared in 1872,¹⁸¹ the RCA's earliest ordinations were in 1863. Whereas the LMS native missionary society was born in 1892,¹⁸² the RCA counterpart was in 1859. Whereas LMS self-support started in 1866,¹⁸³ the RCA preceded in 1863. Also while the LMS started with the *partial* support of the preacher, RCA pastors started out fully church-supported. The claim of superiority was later made that the LMS aimed at the self-support of both pastors and preachers while '[the Presbyterians] support their preachers with foreign money, and pastors by groups of churches.'¹⁸⁴ While it is true the Chinese Presbyterians started systematic efforts to support the evangelists much later (1913),¹⁸⁵ to compare LMS *aims* with Presbyterian *reality* in the 1890s seems a bit strange. In fact in the 1920s, all three Missions were still subsidising their evangelists.¹⁸⁶ Finally whereas the Amoy Congregational Union was formed in 1870,¹⁸⁷ the Taihoey materialised in 1862. Furthermore the former involved only the churches of one Mission even if the term 'Union' may suggest otherwise. Only in the having of deacons was the LMS in advance of the RCA-EP. Thus whether in devolution or union, the RCA-EP achievement superseded LMS Amoy.

EPM Swatow. Comparatively Banlam was not only ahead but also became Swatow's model.¹⁸⁸ In self-government, the formation of the Swatow Presbytery (1881) and its first pastoral ordination (1882) were inspired generally by the Banlam example and particularly by the visiting Banlam pastors in 1880.¹⁸⁹ Since both Smith and Mackenzie came from Amoy, Swatow was from the first aware of Banlam's devolutionary progress. Subsequent Banlam developments were also not unknown to Swatow. During his five-week visit to Swatow and 'Yam-chau' in 1864, Swanson compared notes with his colleagues there.¹⁹⁰ In 1865/66 Mackenzie attended the Taihoey meeting at Maping finding the proceedings quite impressive.¹⁹¹ The Banlam model was also known to J.C. Gibson whose 1875 visit to Amoy converted him into a leading advocate of the Romanised colloquial and probably also convinced him of the need for parochial schools.¹⁹² In fact the visit of the Banlam pastors in 1880 were deliberately designed by Swatow missionaries to inspire their

¹⁸⁰ LMSReport/1870/pp. 27-28.

¹⁸¹ ChronLMS/May1872/pp. 92f.

¹⁸² F.P. Joseland, ChronLMS/1899/p. 53.

¹⁸³ J. MacGowan, *The history of self-support in the London Mission* (1888). CWML/0251.

¹⁸⁴ Lovett, I:p. 506.

¹⁸⁵ Xu Shengyan, 'Minnan Dahui jiushinian shilue' [90-year outline history of the Minnan Dahui], *Zhonghua Jidujiao Hui zhonghui di-erjie changhui jiniance* (1930) p. 161.

¹⁸⁶ Xu Shengyan, 'Minnan Dahui lilai ziyangli yu jiaohui xianzhuang' [The historical self-support ability and present church condition of the Minnan Dahui], *Wenshe yuekan* (1927) p. 96.

¹⁸⁷ N. Goodall, *A history of the LMS 1895-1945* (1954) pp. 233,238.

¹⁸⁸ In following Banlam's devolutionary course, Swatow deviated (beside 'slight' details) in one respect, i.e. the Gibson-led refusal to have a creed until a 100% Chinese-authored one can be written. J.C. Gibson, 'Memorandum regarding [the] Presbyterian organization of [the] native church in South China' CR/1902/pp. 11,13-14.

¹⁸⁹ Hood, *Mission*, p. 137; WHP/p. 202.

¹⁹⁰ Swanson/Amoy/30May1864, Mess/1864/pp. 318-319.

¹⁹¹ Matheson, *Narrative*, pp. 72f.

¹⁹² Hood, *Mission*, pp. 115-134.

converts.¹⁹³ The advancement of Banlam over Swatow is further seen in the communicant population at the time of Presbyterian formation. The two Missions had a total of 355 members in early 1862 whereas Swatow had 700 in 1881.¹⁹⁴ Partly because of this population difference, Swatow outpaced Banlam in Synodical formation. Whereas the time-gap between Presbytery and Synod (1899)¹⁹⁵ at Swatow was eighteen years, Banlam's was three decades. But this does not topple the over-all leadership of Banlam in self-governmental devolution.

In self-support, period comparison in financial statistics cannot be made due to the lack of reliable data from the early decades of the Swatow Mission.¹⁹⁶ In this absence, perhaps data from the early twentieth century may be helpful for a general impression. Based on 1909 realities, a survey of devolutionary progress in South China revealed that South Fujian (above \$6/member) topped in self-support outgiving Swatow by c.\$2/member (and Manchuria's Irish Presbyterians by c.\$4.50/member!). Apart from educational work expenses, the Banlam Christians (connected with all Missions) were supporting their local church work up to c.80%. This practically matched EP Swatow's self-support status as reported in 1907.¹⁹⁷ Yet the regress of EP Swatow from 80% (1907) to 65% (1930) and 69% (1931)¹⁹⁸ illustrates the fluctuating fortune of self-support and the inadvisability of trend-finding based on scanty statistics. On a surer footing however we may point out that the two Banlam pastors were invited in 1880 to speak specifically on self-support.¹⁹⁹ This suggests that EPM Swatow regarded Banlam in advance of them in this department. Thus whereas we could offer no solid comparative statistics from the early decades of both regions, there is ground for saying Banlam led and inspired Swatow's self-support campaign.

In self-propagation, Banlam's domestic mission stimulated Swatow's Namoa mission (*supra*). Banlam also did better at training up a native agency. The first Swatow theological class of six students first met in 1871 but closed after its second year when the only student remaining with the Mission was appointed to a station outside Swatow.²⁰⁰ Following his Amoy visit (c. April 1873), William Duffus was impressed by the Banlam success in raising up a body of well-trained and earnest preachers in contrast to Swatow's regress in this department of work.²⁰¹ Again then Banlam led and inspired Swatow in self-propagation.

Although its first explicit statement appeared only in 1881,²⁰² Hood assumes the Three-self ideal had always been the aim of EPM Swatow.²⁰³ Refraining from discussing the historical accuracy of Hood's assumption, we stress that Swatow formally adopted the Three-self ideal under the leadership of a second-generation missionary (Gibson) whereas the Talmage ideal was

¹⁹³ Cf. Gibson, 'Memorandum', p. 12.

¹⁹⁴ Hood, *Mission*, p. 141.

¹⁹⁵ WHP/p. 267.

¹⁹⁶ Hood, *Mission*, pp. 145, 322.

¹⁹⁷ Gibson, 'The Chinese Church', *Records 1907*, pp. 11-16.

¹⁹⁸ Hood, *Mission*, p. 296.

¹⁹⁹ Hood, p. 137.

²⁰⁰ Hood, pp. 77-78.

²⁰¹ Hood, p. 78.

²⁰² Gibson, *Mission*, p. 222.

²⁰³ Hood, *Mission*, pp. 4, 257.

expressed during Banlam's pioneering stage when membership numbered less than a handful. In this respect, Banlam again led Swatow.

Lastly although Swatow knew about the Banlam union, no like thing was duplicated there in the nineteenth century.²⁰⁴ Although Swatow was quick in joining ^{the} Reformed-Presbyterian Alliance (1888)²⁰⁵ and in responding positively to the idea of Presbyterian union expressed at the 1890 Conference,²⁰⁶ there was no local union *within* its own region. Its 'post-denominational' church came about only after 1949.²⁰⁷ More positively, Gibson later cited Banlam as a model of 'the building up of one Chinese Church'.²⁰⁸ Interestingly his proposed 'steps towards union'²⁰⁹ were substantially Talmage's ideas from thirty years ago.²¹⁰ Thus in devolution and union, Banlam both led and inspired Swatow.

Basel. The crowning glory of Basel's Hakka mission was the 'success' of Chinese labours. While it was claimed Banlam's work expanded mostly by self-propagation,²¹¹ Basel's *unsupervised* paid native work on an extensive scale was an important difference. At Wuhua, native work carried on independently for a decade before the first missionary visit.²¹² Such practice would never have been allowed in Banlam. In this respect Basel's self-propagation proved more progressive.

But hardly could Basel claim similar success in self-government. After three decades in China, its missionaries still thought it 'premature' to grant independence to any native community.²¹³ Even the choice of elders was monopolised by the missionaries who also did not regard the pastors as equals.²¹⁴ In contrast the Banlam elders and pastors enjoyed real power and greater autonomy, not to mention respect (being treated as equals by the missionaries). Banlam also preceded Basel in having pastors and exceeded the latter in such ordinations. Greatly delaying the appearance of the first Basel pastor (1869) was the need to train and ordain him in Europe.²¹⁵ Congregational inability to pay pastors also prevented new ordinations. In contrast at Banlam, Western ordination standards were dispensed with,²¹⁶ allowing things to proceed as freely as congregational self-supporting ability could cope. Consequently devolution suffered less hindrance. Although the suggestion was made that Chinese youths be trained and ordained in

²⁰⁴ Cf. WHP/p. 264.

²⁰⁵ Hood, *Mission*, p. 143.

²⁰⁶ 'Resolution on Presbyterian union', CR/1891/pp. 9-12.

²⁰⁷ Hood, *Mission*, pp. 276-277.

²⁰⁸ Gibson, *Records 1907*, p. 3.

²⁰⁹ Pp. 3-5.

²¹⁰ Talmage, 'Should', pp. 435f. Cf. Talmage, *History*, p. 66.

²¹¹ E.g. Douglas, *Records 1877*, pp. 348-349.

²¹² Lutz, *Hakka*, p. 4.

²¹³ Lutz, *Hakka*, pp. 238f.

²¹⁴ Pp. 243f.

²¹⁵ Pp. 247f.

²¹⁶ E.g. Doty-Talmage-Joralmon/Amoy/17Sep1856/p. 29.

England,²¹⁷ neither the missionaries nor the FMC regarded it seriously. By 1905 Basel had one pastor²¹⁸ and RCA thirteen²¹⁹ while the EP in 1894 already had eight.²²⁰

Lutz thinks Basel's linkage of self-support with self-governance a major obstacle to the attainment of the latter.²²¹ Where Lutz argues negatively,²²² our research provides positive evidence that in Banlam de-linkage *did actually* liberate both self-government and self-support unto varying degrees of realisation. The 1856 devolution did not involve the transfer of any property/institution and hence the duty to maintain such financially. The only 'transfer' was of ecclesiastical leadership and authority via the creation of a group of Chinese officers. Thus native inability to sustain educational work was irrelevant in 1856 (and 1862). Furthermore as no pastoral appointment was involved, the matter of ministerial support was never an issue. Since the Sinkoe event involved no new financial obligation upon the church, Chinese financial ability was neither a facilitation nor an obstruction. In other words, regardless of how one defines it or how the missionaries understood it, self-support was a non-factor in 1856. Even so, Chinese financial initiatives did create some impact. The missionaries were not unaware that despite their general poverty the Christians were generous within their limits especially in helping the poor within the believing community and in doing domestic missionary work. These active displays of Christian generosity and charity certainly improved the already-good impressions of the natives on the part of the foreigners, thereby adding to the Westerners' confidence in them. In the end, not only was Chinese financial *ability* a non-factor in the devolution of 1856, Chinese financial *performance* was in fact a positive factor in enhancing their standing in the eyes of the missionaries.

\ In the Taihoey event, Chinese financial ability was a crucial factor. While various self-support efforts in 1856-62 did their share in impressing the missionaries, it was the readiness to support pastors (1861f) which proved critical in hastening the Taihoey. Even as retrenchment in other areas of self-support was anticipated, the news of Chinese readiness was no small delight to the missionaries who were only too conscious that pastoral ordinations signify a simultaneous attainment in self-support and self-government. Thus when native finance counted in 1862, it was not a hindrance to devolution. While on finance, we may add that, comparatively, Basel communicants gave \$0.41/capita²²³ in 1908 while the Banlam figure for 1909 was above \$6/member.²²⁴

The matter of self-government also relates to the strict admission policy on account of which the Banlam missionaries had good respect for and confidence in their Chinese. To no mean degree did this facilitate devolution. In contrast Basel was not as strict in admission and worker

²¹⁷ Mess/1855/p. 242.

²¹⁸ *Records. China Centenary Missionary Conference* (1907) p. 775.

²¹⁹ AR-BFM/1906/p. 103. The EP in *all-China* had thirty-four (*Short report of the FMC*, 1915, p. 3).

²²⁰ *Our Church in China*, p. 25.

²²¹ Lutz, *Hakka*, pp. 244f.

²²² I.e. what assurance is there that de-linkage will *surely actualise* progress in *both* self-government and self support in *Hakkaland*?

²²³ Lutz, *Hakka*, p. 245.

²²⁴ CMYB/1910/pp. 195f.

quality control. For instance, after a decade of *purely* native work, the first Basel missionaries visited Wuhua and baptised about one hundred people!²²⁵ Oft-repeated doubts about the authenticity of the conversion of both evangelists and converts²²⁶ also indicate no little missionary diffidence about the natives' Christian quality. Perhaps there was some residue of Gutzlaff in Basel.²²⁷

Eventually when Hakka autonomy came in the 1910s-20s, it was not by Basel's design. With the missionaries ejected off the mainland for political reasons, the Chinese were left on their own.²²⁸ Thus what the peaceful times of the nineteenth century did not produce, wartime twentieth century did. The need for such extreme external pressures contrasts greatly with the relatively self-motivated character of Banlam devolution.

Finally Banlam union was not duplicated by Basel in the nineteenth century.²²⁹ In sum, Basel bested Banlam in self-propagation although at the cost of convert quality while Banlam bested Basel in self-government, self-support and union.

Twentieth century. Compared with the more 'enlightened' aspirations of the twentieth century, the Banlam devolution definitely falls short. Already we have mentioned the many limitations of the Banlam achievement in terms of the Talmage/Three-self ideal and union. But the indigenisation movement of the 1920s entertained an even more comprehensive vision and pursued an equally large project. The *Declaration of the National Christian Conference* in 1922 contained nine articles explaining the concept of a Chinese church.²³⁰ The objective of indigenisation was defined in the broadest sense conceivable encompassing both cultural and organisational/institutional dimensions.²³¹ Measured against these, the Banlam devolution has two major shortcomings. First, it was purely *ecclesiastical* in nature. The primary/full responsibility for educational work was not devolved in the nineteenth century. In 1863 there was no RCA/EPM medical work. The transfer of the control of these institutions came only in 1945f.²³² Both the Sinkoe and Taihoey events were *church* events, or more specifically, one a *local church* event and one a *regional Presbyterian church* event. Second, the Banlam devolution was purely *political* in nature. There was a major transformation in the power structure of the Church but no equiponderant transformation of the Gospel into Chinese cultural terms. Or using Daniel Bays' self-confessedly 'oversimplified' terms, there was some 'indigenization' but not 'inculturation'.²³³ Or, in our preferred language, there was some devolution but not inculturation.²³⁴

²²⁵ Lutz, *Hakka*, p. 4.

²²⁶ Lutz, *Hakka*, p. 241.

²²⁷ Cf. J.G. Lutz and R.R. Lutz, 'Karl Gutzlaff's approach to indigenization: The Chinese Union', in Bays (1996) pp. 269-291.

²²⁸ Lutz, *Hakka*, pp. 255f.

²²⁹ By 1910 Basel had federated with the Rhenish and Berlin missions. CMYB/1910/p. 196.

²³⁰ See S. F. Yang, *Zhongguo Jidujiao shi (History of Christianity in China)* (Taipei, 1958) pp. 293-294.

²³¹ Cf. also e.g. K.T. Chung 'The yearnings of the Chinese Church' CMYB/1925/pp. 86-89; D.Z.T. Yui, 'The indigenization of the Y.M.C.A. in China', CMYB/1925/p. 165.

²³² WHP/pp. 559-561,584.

²³³ 'The rise of an indigenous Chinese Christianity' in Bays (1996) p. 265n.

²³⁴ On 'inculturation', see Arrupe's definition in P. Schineller, 'Inculturation: a difficult and delicate task'

In terms of devolution in self-government and self-support, we may consider the proposals of Gibson, a key figure in EPM Swatow (1874-1919) and the Centenary Conference (1907).²³⁵ Gibson suggested that (a) devolution begins with the pastoral duty, (b) followed by the external relations of the Chinese Church (including property matters and disputes between Chinese parties); (c) in finances, let the missionary administer Mission funds while the Chinese their own subscriptions; (d) in theological education and pastoral training, prolonged missionary involvement was expected.²³⁶ In 1862 Banlam we find that (a) was accomplished in only two out of five organised churches. In terms of (b), property ownership was not devolved but the burden of dispute-settlement was shared with the elders. Lastly both (c) and (d) were true of Banlam.

Yet in Gibson's proposals, one does not see the fullness of the Talmage/Three-self ideal. Rather there was more a statement of *how to* attain that ideal. This brings up two important aspects of devolution. First, its historical definitions. Warneck wrote that by the late nineteenth century the Three-self ideal was conventional wisdom for the Protestant missionary movement.²³⁷ Although the ideal had not been *fully* achieved anywhere, 'in several mission fields they are at least in the position of approximating to the attainment of it.'²³⁸ This estimation relates to terminological definition. It seems the terms *self-government* and *self-support* had a stable conceptual definition and a *fluid* operational definition. Users did not apply a term univocally but meant it in diverse degrees at various occasions. For instance, commenting on the domestic missionaries, Douglas said 'a beginning has been made of the self-supporting principle'.²³⁹ Yet later Doty declared that with pastors placed over them, the Amoy churches will likely become 'entirely self-sustaining',²⁴⁰ thus suggesting *full* self-support was only to begin. However after church-supported pastors were installed, Ostrom assessed that the Tekchhiukha congregation was only 'in a great measure self-sustaining'; thus *not* fully self-supporting.²⁴¹ Also it was noted the (largely self-sustaining!) congregation was financially incapable of acquiring a church building should they lose the existing one.²⁴² Even later in 1910 when some South China congregations were fully paying their local church expenses, the situation was still considered 'a far cry to complete self-support' mainly because higher education was practically all foreign-financed. Thus it was clarified self-support could only be spoken of 'in a limited sense...[i.e.] the ability of local congregations to pay the expenses of their local church work.'²⁴³

Actually it was this definitional fluidity that allowed missionaries and Board/Societies to speak of any Three-self achievement at all. At times the fluidity no doubt opened the door for

IBMR/20:3/1996/p. 109.

²³⁵ Hood, *Mission*, ch3.

²³⁶ Gibson, 'Part', pp. 352-354.

²³⁷ G. Warneck, *Outline of a history of Protestant missions* (1901) pp. 140f,348f.

²³⁸ Warneck, p. 348.

²³⁹ Douglas/Maping/1Aug1859, Mess/1860/p. 20.

²⁴⁰ Doty/Amoy/9Dec1861, 723CM/Bx1.

²⁴¹ Ostrom/Amoy/5Jun1863, 723CM/Bx1.

²⁴² Ostrom/Amoy/5Jun1863.

²⁴³ CMYB/1910/p. 197.

interpretational ambiguity whether intended or unintended. Yet this does not justify a blanket conclusion about the honesty/precision of general missionary reportage. Each case must be judged by its merits. Perhaps Hollis' remark on another subject is helpful here: 'Every human formulation is in the terms of the thinking of a particular age and society. It employs certain dated categories and asks its questions in those forms which are within its own inheritance and relevant to its own needs.'²⁴⁴

In its fullest sense the Three-self ideal was never attained in Banlam or all-China during the pre-PRC era.²⁴⁵ This was true despite the waning of the old position²⁴⁶ which linked self-government with self-support.²⁴⁷ Even during the Japanese years, there was autonomy from Western missionaries but not 'autonomy from the state'.²⁴⁸ Neither has the ideal been achieved after 1951, for the new government took the place of Western Missions as the financier of the Chinese Church.²⁴⁹ Furthermore it is doubted whether full *self*-government exists or ever existed under the new regime.²⁵⁰

Second, in practice, ecclesiastical devolution is by any count a *process*. To do it justice, the Banlam achievement must be placed in the proper historical and processive perspectives. It is very significant that in 1856 the process was *set in motion*. Despite the absence of Chinese pastors, the accessibility of the eldership to non-clerics allowed for the state of power-sharing. Consequently the long theological training course awaiting pastoral candidates did not serve to delay the installation of native co-governors of the church. Most importantly, the phenomenon of partnership in leadership was something new in its time and also a real devolutionary advancement. That the missionaries should continue to be the *actual* leaders was inevitable. The 'anomalous' missionary membership in the Taihoey was likewise deemed acceptable only because the arrangement was intended to be temporary.²⁵¹ Thus the missionaries were doing their best in the situation. There was no transfer of 'owned' property, for the missionaries themselves had *nothing* to hand over. There was no transfer of educational institutions, for the missionaries thought the natives unready to assume such financial burdens. There were only elders because no convert yet qualified to be a pastor. This raises the question of prematurity. One may say that if the RCA missionaries had waited a little longer, the devolution may have been more complete. That is, there could also be the devolution of pastorates to some theological graduates; more *aged* converts to fill the elderships; a larger membership able to undertake self-support, inherit and maintain properties, institutions, workers and the inland work; etc. In reply, we say that delay at

²⁴⁴ M. Hollis, *The significance of South India* (1966) p. 40.

²⁴⁵ E.g. J.M. Yard, 'Self-support-is it growing?' CMYB/1925/pp. 94-96; C. Lacy, 'Self-support in the Chinese Church', IRM/1939/pp. 246-251.

²⁴⁶ E.g. S.L. Baldwin, 'Self-support of the native Church', *Records 1877*, pp. 283-293.

²⁴⁷ R.M. Cross, 'The problem of Mission-Church relationship in Peking', CR/1925/pp. 106-110.

²⁴⁸ Brook, 'Toward', pp. 335f.

²⁴⁹ N.H. Cliff, 'A history of the Protestant movement in Shandong province, China, 1859-1951' (PhD diss., Buckingham, 1994) pp. 434f.

²⁵⁰ See Lambert, *Resurrection* (1994).

²⁵¹ Talmage, FYC/pp. 297,300-301.

most means a *relatively more complete* devolution in one action. But this need not be the case, for devolution as a process is really a series of actions. To withhold one ripe action only in order to wait for another to ripen is to deny devolution itself, for the same rationale can actually justify an indefinite postponement or non-devolution itself. By letting the devolution process begin at the soonest moment without at the same time sacrificing their own principles and standards, the RCA missionaries were to be commended for making what they believed to be the best out of what existed in 1856 and 1862-63. As far as ecclesiastical devolution is concerned, the actions then were *inaugural* in nature. As a beginning, they were incomplete but not insignificant. Perhaps what Merwin said of the Church of Christ in China applies also to Banlam: Despite many limitations 'the direction was right'.²⁵²

Relatively speaking, union did better than devolution in Banlam. Whereas the Talmage ideal was never fully attained in 1862 or afterwards, the aim of organic union was. In 1934 A.R. Kepler²⁵³ lauded Banlam as 'one of the rare places in the Christian world where denominationalism has been entirely eliminated.'²⁵⁴ It did not matter that the Catholics were excluded, for that was precisely the Protestant intention.²⁵⁵ Thus in Banlam, union in fact preceded the full realisation of the Talmage ideal.

In this Chapter, we have argued that the Banlam achievement had both merits and limits, that it surpassed other Protestant missions in nineteenth century south China but did not attain twentieth century ideals; and that both Chinese and missionaries shared the credit for the Banlam accomplishment, although the Americans deserved more than the British missionaries.

7.8. Concluding remarks

In this dissertation, we have argued that since 1848 the Talmage ideal guided the devolution programme of the Banlam missionaries. In this pursuit, the Americans preceded the EPM. Actual moments of devolutionary progress were motivated immediately by Chinese Christian quality and quantitative church growth. In contrast, ecclesiastical union was not in the 1848 blueprint; rather it came about as a result of the peculiar RCA-EPM cooperative relationship in 1850-1862. Thus design (Talmage ideal) and circumstance (union) were both at work in the Banlam phenomenon. Despite its many limits and failure to satisfy twentieth century demands, the Banlam achievement properly retained its merits, being more progressive than any China mission in 1863.

Indeed for no mean accomplishments was Banlam celebrated. In China, she had the first Protestant church building,²⁵⁶ the first organic union of churches, the first *bona fide* Presbytery²⁵⁷

²⁵² Merwin, pp. 212-213.

²⁵³ General Secretary (1927-34), Church of Christ in China.

²⁵⁴ Merwin, p. 73. Cf. WHP/p. 480.

²⁵⁵ E.g. Douglas, *Records 1877*, pp. 447-448; Gibson, *Records 1907*, pp. 29-30, 415.

²⁵⁶ RCC/pp. 25f; WHP/p. 15.

and the first church to gain autonomy 'for a fairly large group of Christians'.²⁵⁸ In terms of the pursuit of the Talmage/Three-self ideal, she still had a long way to go in 1863 but was most advanced among Protestant Missions. Her devolution preceded even the To Tsai Church (present-day Heyi Church) which in 1888 became the first congregation in colonial Hongkong to achieve full independence of its founding mission.²⁵⁹ Indeed in many ways Banlam was ahead of her times. When the PCE Synod adopted the resolutions of the Edinburgh Conference (1886) on 'Co-operation in Foreign Missions', it is hardly a surprise since the materials were almost all practically a rehearsal of the Banlam model.²⁶⁰ However the influence of Banlam in nineteenth century China was quite limited. Had its domestic missions not been confined to a narrow geographico-linguistic sphere, perhaps its influence would have enlarged. As it happened, its best impact was via EPM lines to Swatow and Formosa. Ironically it was in the West rather China that Banlam was admired and celebrated in pre-1877 times.²⁶¹ However as interest in the 'Chinese Church' grew significantly (1907f), Banlam became known better as a precedent, a model and an inspiration.²⁶² In the many interdenominational gatherings which took place beginning with the Centenary Conference and leading up to the birth of the Church of Christ in China (1927), not infrequently was South Fujian held up as the pioneering model for a nation-wide church union²⁶³.

Some areas for future research

First, to what extent did the RCA missionaries and Rufus Anderson influence each other conceptually on the subject of the indigenous church and devolution? Is there any relationship between Anderson's ideology on the one hand and on the other hand, Pohlman's methodology, the parochial school system and the Talmage ideal?²⁶⁴ These pertain particularly to the period of the BFM-ABCFM working relationship (1832-57) during which the Mission maintained regular correspondence with Boston. After 1857, were there discernible Andersonisms or neo-Andersonisms in RCA Banlam?

Second, devolution progressed well among *all three* Missions at Banlam. What does this imply? Was it RCA-EP influence upon LMS Amoy? Or was it something about Banlam itself or its people as Jacob Speicher suggested?²⁶⁵

Third, to what extent did Banlam influence EPM Swatow and Formosa in terms of devolution and union? While we have briefly touched on Swatow, there is certainly much more to

²⁵⁷ Not simply 'the first Presbytery' (WHP/p. 47). See Talmage/Amoy/23Nov1861, AER; Talmage, *History*, p. 60.

²⁵⁸ Latourette, *History*, pp. 259,366.

²⁵⁹ C. Smith, *Chinese Christians: Elite, Middlemen, and the Church in Hong Kong* (1985) p. 183.

²⁶⁰ *Actings and Proceedings of Synod* (1888) p. 22. On only one point can we imagine some Banlam reservation, viz. that self-government 'naturally' follows self-support.

²⁶¹ E.g. Sower/Jan1865/p. 2c1; AR-SA/Jan1867/pp. 3-4. Cf. Fleming (1916) pp. 48-59.

²⁶² E.g. W.A. Mather, 'Some verified principles of self-support', CR/1922/p. 27.

²⁶³ E.g. CMYB/1918/p. 77; CR/1923/p. 513; RCC/p. 186.

²⁶⁴ See Harris, *Nothing*, ch2,ch5, p. 113.

²⁶⁵ CMYB/1910/pp. 195-196.

be done in this direction. The case of Formosa should also be interesting since both devolution and union did transpire and the native Presbyterian Church survives to this day.

Fourth, a comparative study with Manchuria would surely be interesting.²⁶⁶ We have not done this mainly because it was not a 'contemporary neighbour', i.e. the geography is not neighbourly while contemporaneity is denied by its rather late 'blooming' (e.g. union Presbytery formed 1891, first pastoral ordination 1896, Synod organised 1907).²⁶⁷

Another area for research is women's work. We know little about the female dimension of Banlam Protestantism. The role and contribution of the lady missionaries, the Bible women (1879f)²⁶⁸ and the female converts deserve greater attention.

Then also there is the Banlam Confession of Faith drawn up by the missionaries, pastors and elders and adopted by the Taihoey in 1876.²⁶⁹ To what extent the eight-article doctrinal statement represents inculturation is a question of interest to historians, missiologists and theologians.

Seventh, an aspect of our study need to be located within the context of the scholarly discussion on resistance/receptivity to Christianity.²⁷⁰ The current 'consensus' is that the receptive parties were those somehow alienated,²⁷¹ marginalised,²⁷² oppressed/subordinated and lacking internal mechanisms for collective resistance to Christianity,²⁷³ or crisis-stricken,²⁷⁴ in sum, those with some weakness or deficit. It is therefore interesting that the first converts (1846) were neither Mission employees²⁷⁵ nor from among the poor²⁷⁶ thus hardly 'rice-Christians'. In fact their baptism was delayed largely due to the missionary suspicion that they might have 'sinister motives, and expect some worldly profit by their connection with missionaries'.²⁷⁷ Not only did they gain no material benefit from admission, Ong put up the front money for the Sinkoe lot. In this the Mission benefited from the convert rather than the reverse. However economic non-marginalisation does not automatically mean they were not marginalised in any other way. But the extant evidence yields no suggestion they were.²⁷⁸ The implication of this and like cases for the resistance-receptivity discussion is therefore something requiring further study.

²⁶⁶ See WHP/p. 431.

²⁶⁷ See A. Fulton, *Through earthquake, wind and fire. Church and mission in Manchuria 1867-1950* (1967).

²⁶⁸ RCC/pp. 131f.

²⁶⁹ Warnshuis, *Sketch*, pp. 17f; WHP/p. 233.

²⁷⁰ R.R. Covell, *The liberating Gospel in China* (1995) pp. 263f.

²⁷¹ P.A. Cohen, 'Christian missions and their impact to 1900' in *The Cambridge history of China* (1978) X:pp. 559f.

²⁷² See J. Shepherd (plains aborigines in Taiwan), N. Diamond (Hua Miao) and N. Constable (Hakka) in Bays (1996).

²⁷³ T'ien Ju-k'ang, *Peaks of faith* (1993).

²⁷⁴ A.F.C. Wallace, *Religion: An anthropological view* (NY, 1966) pp. 30-37; as cited in Covell, *Liberating*, pp. 268-269.

²⁷⁵ Cf. the first convert of ABCFM Fuzhou. E.C. Carlson, *The Foochow missionaries, 1847-1880* (Harvard, 1974) pp. 66f.

²⁷⁶ Cf. D. Cheung, 'The growth of Protestantism in China: The role of the Chinese Christians, 1860-1900' (M.A. thesis, London, 1997) pp. 20f.

²⁷⁷ CRep/1846/p. 359.

²⁷⁸ See CRep/1846/pp. 357-361.

Then there is the much studied subject of Chinese anti-foreignism. Were the relatively amicable Sino-foreign/missionary relations in Amoy sustained after 1860? How does this relate to the thesis that the missionary played a critical role in fostering the growth of anti-foreignism in post-1860 China?²⁷⁹

Also, we have seen how the friendly attitude toward foreigners in Amoy spared the work from any major disruption. Meanwhile the inland work experienced much persecution.²⁸⁰ Is this town-country dissimilarity related to the fact that Protestant growth in Amoy exceeded that in the interior? In contrast, anti-foreignism was intense in Fuzhou city where growth was dismal while local receptivity in the outstations made for encouraging conversion rates.²⁸¹ Likewise EPM Swatow experienced greater success in the outstations.²⁸² A study of the pre-1860 treaty ports and their inland vicinities may shed more light on the nature and dynamics of anti-foreignism in city/town-vs-country terms and would supplement the great attention showered on post-1860 anti-foreignism/Christianism.

The last suggested research area concerns the uniqueness of Banlam. Over against many generally held perceptions about China missions, it stood peculiar. Consider Chinese non-antagonism in Amoy, the absence of missionary preoccupation with quantitative church growth, the lack of complaints about rice-Christians within the churches, the progressive character of devolution and union, etc. Yet despite its significance, Banlam was a small part of the Protestant enterprise so that our overall picture of nineteenth century devolution/union was little changed by it. Yet *its very fact* tells us one case did exist and as early as mid-century. The question then is: Beside Banlam, where else?

Finally our research project has come to its end. Yet in another sense, the study of Banlam devolution-union has merely just begun. We have undertaken a quite meticulous and detailed investigation, yet have not gone beyond the first two decades of that history. We have sifted through the missionary sources rather comprehensively, but still long for the contemporary Chinese view(s) of that primitive period. We have offered conclusions, yet these are out-numbered by the areas we have found to require further research. Nevertheless, the value of our study remains. Many previously unknown details of a story hitherto largely untold have been unveiled. An in-depth analysis of the first case of devolution-union in China has been offered. The larger picture of Chinese mission/church history has been further refined. A gap in the scholarly literature on the indigenisation of Christianity in the Eastern world has been filled to a humble extent. Finally

²⁷⁹ So e.g. P.A. Cohen, *China and Christianity: The missionary movement and the growth of anti-foreignism, 1860-1870* (1963).

²⁸⁰ E.g., 5.4.2.

²⁸¹ See Carlson, *Foochow*, ch5-ch6; Stock, *Story*, pp. 39-40,49-50,293-294.

²⁸² Hood, *Mission*, p. 136. Cf. pp. 56-68,82-83.

toward a global history of Christianity, our study locates another piece in the puzzle while also standing as a gateway and an invitation to further research by others who appreciate the value of understanding an important part of our past for the making of a better future.

GLOSSARY

Amoy colloquial

Pinyin (English translation)

Banlam Chonghoe

Minnan Zhonghui (South Fujian Synod)

Banlam Hap-it Kaohoey

Minnan Heyi Jiaohui (South Fujian United Church)

Baypay/Bepi/Behpih

Maping (Horse peace/flat)

Chiohbe

Shima (Stone Pile)

Haihong

Haifang or Haifeng tongzhi (a mandarin rank)

Kolongsu¹

Gulangyu (Drum wave island)

Pechuia

Bai Shui Ying (White Water Camp)

Sinkoe

Sinjie (New Street)

Tangwa

Tong-an (Together/common peace)

Tekchhiukha

Zhushujiao (Bamboo tree foot)

Tionghua Kitokkao Hoe Hap-it Hoey

Zhonghua Jidujiao Hui Heyi Hui
(lit., United Chinese Protestant Church)

Tionglo Taihoey

Zhanglao Dahui (Elders' Great Assembly)

Wahai

Anhai (Peace sea)

¹ In the literature, sometimes *Kulangsu*, *Kolongsoo*.

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