ABSTRACT

By

Mark Lowery Russell

Business as mission (BAM) is an emerging term and a developing concept. There has been much fascination in both mission and business circles with the concept of strategically using business to accomplish missional purposes. Conferences and consultations have been held around the world. As a frequent participant it has become clear to me that though the term is ubiquitous in mission circles, there is great disparity in what it means. There has been much talk about BAM in theory, but far less research done on how it works out in reality. The purpose of this study is to take an in-depth look at business as mission in a single cultural context, namely Chiang Mai, Thailand. This research project is based on a multi-year research project involving twelve businesses and 128 interviews. With a focus on cross-cultural missionaries operating businesses, five businesses are featured as detailed case studies.

The research findings demonstrate that there are several key factors that determine effectiveness in arriving at business and ministry objectives. Most interestingly, those BAM practitioners that have a single focus on producing conversions are remarkably less effective in generating conversions than missionaries who have multiple goals for the BAM enterprise. Furthermore, there are demonstrable differences between BAM enterprises that partner with local ministries and those that do not in terms of ministry impact according to stated goals. Tremendous variation was found among BAM enterprises regarding experience, strategy, and results. The most striking criterion

that directly impacted ministry and business objectives was the level of cross-cultural adaptation. Those with high levels of cultural adaptation had more spiritual influence on their employees and a more satisfied and stable workforce that resulted in more productive businesses. Those with low levels of cultural adaptation had significantly less spiritual impact on their employees and had tremendously higher employee turnover, resulting in tumultuous and unprofitable business environments. Several other issues emerged, that BAM practitioners and mission agencies should consider as well, such as soundness of business model, relationship of business and ministry strategies, and the Thai Buddhist conversion process.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL SHEET

This Dissertation, Entitled

THE USE OF BUSINESS IN MISSIONS IN CHIANG MAI, THAILAND

Written by

Mark Lowery Russell

and Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy (Intercultural Studies)

has been Read and Approved by the Undersigned Members of

the Faculty of the E. Stanley Jones School

of World Mission and Evangelism

Asbury Theological Seminary

_____

Terry C. Muck, Mentor

Michael A. Rynkiewich, Reader

Russell West, Reader

March 10 2008

THE USE OF BUSINESS IN MISSIONS IN CHIANG MAI, THAILAND

Mark Russell

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the

E. Stanley Jones School of World Mission and Evangelism

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Asbury Theological Seminary

Wilmore, Kentucky

March 10, 2008

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Though my name is written on this dissertation as its sole author, everyone who has done

this knows that they cannot take credit for everything in it. I offer my deepest

gratitude to:

The Lord Jesus Christ for His work in my life and for his protection and love as He has

guided me down my life's path.

My beautiful wife, Laurie who deserves more than I can ever give her as she has

joyfully helped me get through these lean years and has been a wise sounding

board as I processed the observations and data contained therein.

Our children, Noah and Anastasia, who were always positive and supportive as I

worked long hours and never grumbled and complained about our financial

limitations.

My parents, Lynn and Elaine Russell who instilled in me a love for learning, proofread

papers for countless hours and financially supported me so that I could devote

full-time attention to this project.

Dr. Terry Muck who believed strongly in this project and guided me and mentored me

in a way that only a caring expert could.

Dr. Russell West who gave me an understanding and a passion for leadership that has shaped my life and this project.

Dr. Michael Rynkiewich who gave me an understanding and a passion for anthropology that has shaped my life and this project.

Dr. Howard Snyder who gave me an understanding and a passion for the kingdom of God that has shaped my life and this project.

Dr. Chuck Hunter who gave me an understanding and a passion for communication, particularly cross-cultural communication that has shaped my life and this project.

Kendall Cobb who opened up his company and his life to me. His life and mission is an inspiration to me that challenges and motivates me to bless others.

Dwight Martin who also opened up his company and life to me in an astonishingly transparent way. His passion for the Thai church and his knowledge of business are truly remarkable.

Thammasak Sumettikul and Gene Folz who modeled to me a unique missionary-local business partnership and brotherhood.

Terry Collins whose Ozzie style and his unusual capacity for managing multiple projects and tasks had a genuine impact on me.

Mark Berry whose openness of the challenges of BAM and his constant availability was sincerely appreciated and have prompted me to be the same to others.

Judy Seitz whose editing expertise saved me countless hours and helped me articulate the data in a clear and concise way.

David Brooks who took my ideas and helped me put them into graphs that help to illustrate visually the data.

Everyone else I interviewed and for the countless others who aided me in this project. Unfortunately, you are too numerous to mention by name. But without you and your willful donation of time and resources I never could have accomplished this task. This project has reminded me of how true is that no man is an island!

CHAPTER 1
AN INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

Autobiographical Background for the Study

As an undergraduate student at Auburn University, I felt directionless because I was simultaneously interested in the business world and sensed a strong call to vocational ministry. I was majoring in business management and, as a part of my studies, I traveled to Guatemala to study Spanish. My experience in Guatemala transformed my view of the world. I came back and changed my program to a focus in international business. As quickly as I could, I returned to Latin America to the country of Paraguay where I furthered my studies. Despite my increased interest in other cultures and overseas experiences, I still had no clear direction as to where I was headed vocationally.

At the end of my studies, I decided to go to Russia for one year through a Christian organization to teach ethics in a public school. This experience solidified my calling to overseas Christian ministry. I returned to the States and completed a Masters of Divinity at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. Though I was excited about this direction in my life, I continued to be dismayed and sometimes frustrated that I could not also pursue my interests in the world of business.

Near the end of my studies, my younger brother, Jeff, was approaching graduation at Georgia Tech and was experiencing the same dilemma I had faced years earlier: whether to pursue business or missions. During a worship service, he had an epiphany to

bring his two passions together. Until that point in my life, I had never been exposed to any thoughts on how that might be done. In response to this epiphany, he founded a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to use business professionals to help people in missions help other people.

I have partnered with Jeff to build the nonprofit organization since its inception and have worked in Chile and Germany to develop various projects using business professionals in effective local ministry as well as in cross-cultural missions. Though I originally thought we might be the only people in the world integrating business and missions, I soon learned that scores of people around the world are using business as missions or at least attempting to do so.

Despite the widespread practice, very little scholarly work has been done in the area. I have not found a single Ph.D. dissertation devoted explicitly to the topic.[1] Several dissertations have related tangentially to it such as the use of faith at work or ministry in the marketplace or how churches can prepare lay leaders for effective evangelism at work, but there are none that explicitly deal with the use of business as mission.

---

[1] I have done various searches on EBSCO, ProQuest Dissertation and Theses Database, ATLA Religion, Academic Search Premier, Religion & Philosophy Collection, Religious & Theological Abstracts, and WorldCat. Furthermore, I have interviewed academics and others who have published in the area.

Some scholarly work done has been done in this area, but it is not representative of the amount of activity going on around the world. This dissertation addresses the significant gap between scholarly research and actual practice in this field.

Statement of the Problem

Doug Pennoyer, dean of the school of intercultural studies at Biola University and president of Evangelical Missiological Society, when announcing a call for Business as Mission (BAM) papers, wrote, "To put it bluntly, business as mission (BAM) is a work in progress. It is a field that needs definition, theological clarity, and missiological focus" (Steffen 2006: 1). Simply stated there is a gap between practice and research in the field of business as mission. The goal of this project is to fill that gap and provide the needed definition, clarity, and focus in the sociocultural context of Chiang Mai, Thailand.

My research project focused on *examining* what Christian missionaries are doing in terms of business as a mission strategy in Thailand as well as *understanding* the real-life results of these entrepreneurial endeavors. Four BAM case studies helped me discover the nature and status of missionary-operated businesses in Thailand.

The Christian church has frequently used people with unique skills in the advancement of the gospel in missions. Doctors, nurses, educators, and construction workers along with preachers and teachers have been a formidable group in missions, but business professionals have rarely been used. Like everyone else, they have been given opportunities to participate in missions; however, they have not had much chance to use their unique gifts and skill sets in the advancement of the gospel. As Tetsunao Yamamori and Kenneth A. Eldred write:

> If the traditional Western missionary movement had some flaws this last century, surely one of the most obvious, in hindsight, was its failure to mobilize many Christian business professionals (beyond using their money) for the Great Commission. At the start of a new century and millennium, we can no longer afford this oversight. (Yamamori and Eldred 2003: 7)

The coming years will offer the church a unique opportunity to expand its mission and bring more of its members into mission. To move forward the church needs to examine what some missionary projects are accomplishing already in the area of business as mission.

Four problems emerge as the product of the ineffective use of business professionals in Christian mission. First, the church has lost the services of a large percentage of the Christians who could contribute. Second, the business professionals who have engaged in intercultural mission have been often forced to work in roles for which they are lesser gifted and qualified, resulting in ineffective ministry and frustrated professionals working as traditional missionaries. Third, many business ministries that have been attempted in the mission field have had minimal results because the people running the businesses are more qualified as traditional missionaries rather than as businesspersons, resulting in frustrated missionaries working as professionals. Fourth, the work that has been done by doctors, nurses, and others has been focused in humanitarian relief, which tends to reach only the most displaced and desperate segments of a society. Figure 1.1 graphically demonstrates how first business professionals have limited options and the business community is rarely served effectively.

By promoting creative uses of business professionals in missions, the missions community will provide long-term solutions to these ongoing problems. First, there will be a greater avenue for participation in missions for those in our congregations. The

missions community can rightly encourage participation from business professionals on the grounds that their unique skills and gifts will not be neglected and they are needed to meet the unique task of advancing the gospel in the current global situation. Second, the business ministries that result throughout the world will be of a high quality because they will be done by people who are truly qualified for the job and not simply looking for an excuse to obtain a visa.

Business Professional

Sit at home

Go into missions and do something unrelated

Business Community

Frustrated missionaries

No one at all

Business Professional   **Business Community**

Using more people to serve more people in a more effective way.
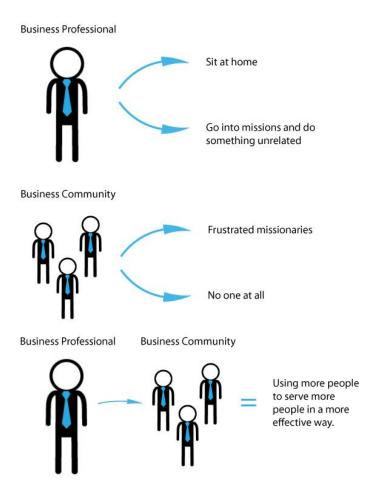
Figure 1.1. Business professionals in mission.

Third, since business professionals have not been fully engaged in mission in their area of interest and expertise, the Church has to do its work without their participation.

This has led to the Church using a reduced set of people to reach a restricted group of people (i.e., the most displaced and desperate segments of society[2]). However, by engaging business professionals the Church will use and expanded set of people to reach an expanded group of people. Businesses have "a remarkable capacity to touch virtually every person on the face of this planet" (Johnson 2003, 87). By using business professionals to reach the business community, the Church will be using more people to serve more people in a more effective way.

I have found no published research projects that compare several BAM enterprises operating within a single cultural context.[3] The published reports have been case studies of singular companies from various countries. The variables and contexts of these case studies have been very different from one another. Researchers have not controlled the cultural context in their comparisons as this study does.

---

[2] The fact that relief and development focuses on certain aspects of society should not be interpreted as saying that the contributions of these professions and the strategy of relief and development are not significant and important. Rather, the point of this argument is for the missions community to expand our approaches so that medical, business, and other professionals as capable of contributing meaningfully to Christian missions in their unique areas of expertise. They are complementary and mutually enhancing when approached correctly.

[3] Just as I did in searching for Ph.D. dissertations, I have done various searches on EBSCO, ProQuest Dissertation and Theses Database, ATLA Religion, Academic Search Premier, Religion & Philosophy Collection, Religious & Theological Abstracts, and WorldCat. Furthermore, I have interviewed academics and others who have published in the area.

Table 1.1. Research Propositions, Research Questions and Theoretical Framework

Research Propositions	Research Questions	Theoretical Framework
Generating start-up capital and means of financial sustainability in BAM projects are not as straightforward as in normal business operations (Rundle and Sudyk, 2007; William, 2007)	What is the nature and status of the businesses' financial arrangements?	Rundle and Sudyk's funding a kingdom business model
In cross-cultural contexts it is best for business as well as ministry to be done in a culturally sensitive and contextually appropriate manner (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 1998; Hofstede 1997; Dorfman et. al. 1997; N. Mejudhon 1997; U Mejudhon 1997).	What is the nature and status of the cultural contextualization of the BAM projects?	Nantachai Mejudhon's Thai contextualization model
The use of business for socio-spiritual purposes holds both promise and peril (Ewert 2006; Stevens 2006; Pointer and Cooper 2006; Rennstich 1988; Collins 2005; Dees 2007; Dees and Anderson 2003; Eldred 2005).	What is the nature and status of the social and spiritual impact of the BAM projects?	Ken Eldred's Kingdom Business framework

Research Propositions

Three theoretical assumptions inform this study and are the bases for my research questions.

Proposition #1

Generating start-up capital and means of financial sustainability in BAM projects are not as straightforward as in normal business operations. Many BAM projects are not "for-profit" in the traditionally understood sense because they rely on volunteer labor and/or donated funds and/or other means of support. Steven L. Rundle and Thomas Sudyk (2007) identify four different ways that BAM projects are funded. These models reflect the use of donations and the fact that missionaries tend not to receive their income from the business, which can create awkward dynamics. Abiir William, a Chinese businesswoman in the Middle East, writes, "I will not accept money from either mission agencies or churches. They almost always look at the business as a means to get into a country rather than a ministry in itself. Their financial involvement might be more a hindrance than a blessing" (2003: 51).

Proposition #2

In cross-cultural contexts, business as well as ministry is best done in a sensitive and appropriate manner.

Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars argue that what works in America will not necessarily and probably will not work in another cultural context (1997: 12-15). Hofstede follows this and says that management theories and practices are culturally grounded and cross-cultural managers must adapt to the local context in order to be effective (1997: 224-31). Dorfman et al. surveyed Western and three Asian countries and found that many aspects of leadership were culture specific (1997: 232-42). That is neither leadership nor followership, nor for that matter, organization, exist independent of specific cultural settings, practices, and values.

In the context of ministry in Thailand, Nantachai Mejudhon (1997) and Ubolwan Mejudhon (1997) argue that cross-cultural ministers of the gospel must portray the characteristics, preferences, and values of the Thai people in order to be relevant to the Thai and effective in mission. They argue for a ministering in meekness in the Thai context.

Proposition #3

The use of business for socio-spiritual purposes holds both promise and peril. Integrating business and missions can enhance the quality of people's lives, show them how to be Christ-followers, and be a catalyst for transformation. On the negative side, integrating business and mission can be a financial drain, or it can produce a financial gain but be a poor witness and a means of exploitation of other people.

Karl Rennstich tells how the cross was simultaneously a symbol of Christ as well as a symbol of profits in reference to the mathematical plus sign (1988). Steven Pointer and Michael Cooper note that wealth frequently brings suspicion and the pursuit of money often leads to a decline in spiritual passion (2006: 174-76).

Norm Ewert, professor of economics at Wheaton College, says that several potential dangers lie within the fledgling movement. The primary danger he sees is that it is simply "a new venue through which to export American individualism, American values, consumerism, and American business ideology" (2006: 75). The second danger is that BAM will serve "as a fig leaf for doing any business an entrepreneur desires" (75). He gives an example of a company that promoted itself by starting a venture in the former Soviet Union to support the local church but actually funneled all the profits back

to the U. S. and left basically nothing for the locals. The third danger that Ewert cites is that the business community will not adhere to sound development principles and practice (75).

Ewert seeks to counter these dangers with a paradigm that he calls business as integrated mission (BAIM). BAIM is essentially using business to bring into reality the beliefs of the kingdom of God. Ewert gives five important principles for BAIM. The first is stewardship. The second principle is justice. The third is the biblical concept of shalom. The fourth is the promotion of dignity and community. The final one is to have business practices consistent with development principles and practice (68-75).

J. Gregory Dees, the Faculty Director of the Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship at Duke University's Fuqua School of Business, writes, "social entrepreneurship can include social purpose business ventures, such as for-profit community development banks, and hybrid organizations mixing not-for-profit and for-profit elements, such as homeless shelters that start businesses to train and employ their residents" (2007: 1). Income-generating projects can lead to successful social ends. Dees writes:

> The social mission is explicit and central. This obviously affects how social entrepreneurs perceive and assess opportunities. Mission-related impact becomes the central criterion, not wealth creation. Wealth is just a means to an end for social entrepreneurs. With business entrepreneurs, wealth creation is a way of measuring value creation. 2-3)

Foster and Bradach point out that many profit-oriented social ventures become so focused on the social aspects that they do not actually generate profits and actually lose a lot of money (2005). They tell of one organization named Bridgespan that wanted to employ local youth by creating and selling bottles of salad dressing. They sold the bottles of salad

dressing for $3.50 and believed that they were making a profit; however, a closer analysis revealed that the cost of making each bottle was $10.33. The venture was losing money badly (2005: 5-6).

Jim Collins says, "We must reject the idea—well-intentioned, but dead—that the primary path to greatness in the social sectors is to become 'more like a business'. Most businesses—like most anything else in life—falls somewhere between mediocre and good" (2005: 1). He goes on to recognize the confusion over inputs and outputs that forms one of the primary differences between business and the social sectors. He writes, "In business, money is both an input (a resource for achieving greatness) *and* [original emphasis] an output (a measure of greatness). In the social sectors, money is *only* [original emphasis] an input, and not a measure of greatness" (2005: 5).

Dees and Anderson say that for-profit social ventures can be successful, but they have many inherent challenges. In defining for-profit social ventures they say they are "legally incorporated as for-profit entities and explicitly designed to serve a social purpose" (2003: 2). The potential benefits of for-profit social ventures are that they (1) promote efficiency and innovation (2003: 5), (2) leverage scarce public and philanthropic resources (2003: 5-6), (3) respond quickly to demand (2003: 6), and (4) improve access to skilled personnel (2003: 6). They note, however, that there are also several challenges such as (1) differences in metrics and measurability affect management decision-making and external credibility (2003: 7), (2) combining objectives from two different fields makes it difficult to build an integrated organization (2003: 8), and (3) competitive markets may drive out inefficient social preferences (2003: 9). Thus, for these reasons a

research proposition of my project is that the merging of business and mission holds both promise and peril.

These research propositions are the basis of my research questions. After the data was collected it was compared and contrasted with these research propositions.

Research Questions

1. What is the nature and status of the businesses' financial arrangements?

2. What is the nature and status of the cultural contextualization of the BAM projects?

3. What is the nature and status of the social and spiritual impact of the BAM projects?

These research questions are built on my research propositions and serve as the basis for determining the appropriate theoretical framework for the research.

Theological Assumptions

The primary purpose of this dissertation is to conduct empirical research of business in missions as it is occurring in a singular cultural context; it is not to build a theological foundation for business in missions. Nevertheless, it is necessary to state clearly some formative theological assumptions to guide the reader:

1) God ordained humans to work by modeling work and instructing humans to work in Genesis 1. A fundamental part of our human experience is productive work and this is part of our original created design.

2) In Genesis 1:28, God said to Adam and Eve, "Fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living

creature that moves on the ground." This phrase of subduing and ruling over the earth is a commissioning and command of humans to steward the creation's resources responsibly and spiritually. Business is a contemporary corollary of this mandate to care for, steward and produce from creation.

3) Work is not a result of the curse placed on humanity after the Fall in Genesis 3. Work occurred beforehand and has divine and spiritual purposes.

4) Though business has a spiritual purpose, it is frequently a means of oppression and a vehicle of corruption. Work and business are arduous and difficult and operate imperfectly due to the Fall in Genesis 3.

5) The value of work is demonstrated in the fact that Jesus spent the vast majority of his earthly life working as a carpenter.

6) Business has a place in missions as illustrated by the Apostle Paul who worked as a tentmaker on his missionary journeys.[4]

---

[4] For a more detailed look on the role of tentmaking in the Apostle's missionary work as well as a biblical basis for business in missions see my article, Russell, Mark. 2006. The biblical basis for the integration of business in missions in Tom Steffen and Mike Barnett (eds.). *Business as mission: From impoverished to empowered*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.

7) Business properly conducted according to God's purposes can be a powerful vehicle for positive social contributions and can create contexts for effective missions activities.[5]

Theoretical Framework

In order to analyze the data that I gathered in a systematic fashion, my research used three analytical lenses: (1) Rundle and Sudyk's BAM financing model, (2) Ubolwan Mejudhon's Thai contextualization model, and (3) Ken Eldred's Kingdom Business framework.

Rundle and Sudyk's Financing Model

In order to understand the funding and ongoing financing of BAM projects, I analyzed the case studies using Rundle and Sudyk's financing model. They identify four different types of funding models:

---

[5] For the reader desiring a more detailed look at the theological foundations of business, please see the following: Novak, Michael. 1996. *Business as a Calling.* NY, Free Press. 256 pp.; Stevens, R. Paul. 2000. *The Other Six Days: Vocation, Work and Ministry in Biblical Perspective.* Grand Rapids, MI.: Eerdmans. 289 pp.; Stevens, R. Paul. 2006. *Doing God's Business: Meaning and Motivation for the Marketplace.* Grand Rapids, MI.: Eerdmans. 251 pp.; Volf, Miraslov. 2001. *Work in the Spirit: Toward a Theology of Work.* Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock. 252 pp.

1. The first type is the missionary-funded business in which the missionary and/or mission agency owns the company. Typically it is started with funds from the missionary's personal reserves or by raising donations from financial supporters.

2. The second type is the nonprofit holding company, which is generally a spin-off from a church or mission agency. This setup is usually used because running the business causes tax complications and requires more oversight than the original holders of the company could give.

3. Privately-owned and funded businesses are the third type. These organizations generally result when mission agencies have formed an alliance with missional business professionals and matched them with kingdom-minded investors.

4. The fourth type is a hybrid of two or three of the other types (2007: 1-7).

Nantachai Mejudhon's Thai Contextualization Model

Nantachai Mejudhon argues that *meekness* is the best approach to contextualizing Christian discipleship in Thailand. Furthermore, he says that this way of meekness is consistent with scriptural teaching and the model of Jesus in the Gospel accounts. Research confirmed the hypothesis implicit in the thesis statement. Meekness is an important core of Thai culture (N. Mejudhon 1997). Mejudhon identifies eight primary differences between the cultural values of the Thai and Americans[6]:

1. The concept of time is different. Americans tend to believe that time is valuable. Thais tend to move much slower and not to pay as much attention to time (70-71).

2. The concept of work and play is different. Americans tend to separate work and play and view them as independent. Americans value competition in work and play. Thais tend to believe that work should be as enjoyable as play and value cooperation over competition (71-74).

3. The concept of youth versus age is different. Americans tend to value youth and do not show as much respect for their elders as do the Thai. Thai young people must

---

[6] A more extensive evaluation of Thai cultural characteristics and contrasts and comparisons with American culture are made in Chapter 3.

make gestures of respect, and Thai law prevents children from suing their parents. To honor one's parents throughout life is one of the highest virtues in Thailand. Younger people should not be in a position of authority over an older person (74-76).

4. The concept of equality versus hierarchy and rank is different. Americans value equality. It is one of the central themes in the founding of the nation; however, hierarchical relations are the center of Thai culture. Knowing other people's status and placing them accordingly and is very important in Thai culture (76-80).

5. The concept of material versus spiritual is different. Americans accumulate goods as a measure of success and wealth; however, Thai culture values spiritual growth over amassing wealth. Material possession can even be viewed as a sign of poor spiritual health and as a disruption to society. Simplicity is valued (80-81).

6. The concept of change versus tradition is different. Thais and Americans believe in change; however, Americans view it as more compulsory than do Thais. Thais do not like conflict, and change tends to bring it about. Therefore, they do not like change nor value it in the same way Americans do (81-84).

7. The concept of independence versus dependence is different. Americans value self-reliance; however, Thais have a strong view of dependency. The Thai social network is very closely knit together, much more so than the American social network (84-86).

8. The concept of confrontation versus indirection (avoidance) is different. Americans easily bring problems out into the open and discuss them in a frank and candid manner so that everyone knows where someone stands. However, when issues are confronted directly, it is viewed negatively in Thai culture. Thais avoid direct confrontation in order to preserve surface harmony. In Thailand people must talk around

subjects in order to avoid open confrontation. Americans naturally confront problems in a direct way (86-88).

Mejudhon offers six main applications for effective contextualization in the Thai context that together communicate the concept of meekness:

1. The Christian communicator should have positive attitudes toward Buddhism and Thai culture.

2. The Christian communicator should have genuine and sincere relationships with Buddhists.

3. The Christian communicator should present the gospel showing benefits and help instead of confrontation and threats.

4. The Christian communicator needs to allow more time for the diffusion of the gospel.

5. The Christian communicator needs to have indigenous strategies for communication of the gospel.

6. Missionaries and Thai Christians should play appropriate roles in Thai culture if they are to develop their relationship with the Thai and become insiders (397-403).

Ken Eldred's Kingdom Business Framework

While researching the BAM projects, I looked at them through the lenses or framework of Ken Eldred's work in defining the potential, obstacles, and objectives of BAM projects. Eldred argues that BAM is a preferred strategy for mission because it

1. Is a model for self-sustainable missions,

2. Brings much needed expertise, technology, and capital,

3. Creates jobs,

4. Builds the local economy and blesses the nation,

5. Provides access to locations that would otherwise be closed,

6. Presents the gospel by word,

7. Presents the gospel by deed,

8. Enables local funding of the church,

9. Can be a valuable partner for other missions efforts, and

10. Taps into an underutilized but highly capable resource in the Church

(2005: 49-51).

He addresses several obstacles to BAM:

1. Transformation—people do not recognize the holistic reality of the ministry of

Jesus,

2. Work— professional ministers top a vocational hierarchy,

3. Business—people frequently suspect commercial enterprise,

4. Profit—people are skeptical about making money, and

5. Wealth—due to false teachings such as the "health and wealth gospel" and the

"poverty gospel," people have many misconceptions regarding the Bible's teachings on

wealth (66-69).

Eldred says the objectives of BAM are:

1. Profitability and sustainability (155-58),

2. Local job and wealth creation (158-61),

3. Advancing the local church and building spiritual capital (161-63).

While the objectives are constant, conditions are varied and no single way of doing things is applicable in all situations (171).

Delimitations

In order to limit the study, the research focused on a single geographical location: Chiang Mai, Thailand. The reasons for selecting Chiang Mai, Thailand are six fold:

1. Chiang Mai has many missionaries using business as a mission strategy, allowing me to access intriguing case studies as well as more easily determine the differences and similarities among the BAM projects.

2. Thailand is an "open" country, meaning that missionaries do not have the security concerns of restricted access nations. Though many missionaries still try to keep a low profile and some are very security conscious, Thailand is more open than many places.

3. Due to Thailand's tolerance of Christian missionaries and its openness to entrepreneurial business development, many different types of BAM projects have surfaced, allowing me to research different types of businesses in close proximity to one another.

4. A focus on a single context is desirable because of the number of complex variables involved in operating businesses in developing parts of the world.

5. I have traveled in various parts of Thailand and have had extended contact with many BAM practitioners there.

6. Chiang Mai is a relatively small city with a strong logistical infrastructure, creating an effective atmosphere for start-up businesses and for research. I could research

numerous projects without significant time-delaying challenges as one would face in other parts of the world or even in Bangkok.

Definition of Key Terms

Definitions of the following terms are provided in order to bring clarity to the research project:[7]

Business as Mission (BAM)

Several terms are used for business as mission, generally referred to by the acronym BAM. R. Paul Stevens helpfully lays out five ways that business and mission are related (2006, 80)[8]:

1. Business *and* mission—two isolated activities,

---

[7] Several terms are used to refer to the integration of business and mission, such as "kingdom entrepreneurship," "kingdom business," "holistic business," "Great Commission companies," "kingdom companies," "entrepreneurial tentmaking," and "business as mission" (see Yamamori and Eldred 2003: 7). In this project I use business as mission (BAM) as an umbrella term for the use of business in missional activities. More specifically I use Social Business Venture (SBV) as a term that relates to a particular project with a strong social mission; however, I provide definitions for three of the more common terms in the literature, namely (1) Business as Mission, (2) Kingdom Business, and (3) Great Commission companies.

[8] Stevens credits Sunki Bang of Seoul, Korea, for this framework.

2. Business *for* mission—using the proceeds of business as a way of financing mission

3. Business *as a platform for* mission—work and professional life as a means of channeling mission throughout the world.[9]

4. Mission *in* business—hiring nonbelievers and offering chaplaincy services with a view to leading them to Christ.

5. Business *as* mission—business as a part of the mission of God in the world.

Therefore, BAM rightly understood places tremendous value in business and its purposes in furthering God's mission on earth. The BAM issue group at the Lausanne Consultation in 2004 wrote:

> All Christians have a calling to love and serve God with all of their heart, soul, strength, and mind, as well as to love and serve their neighbours. God calls people to work for his kingdom in business just as certainly as He calls people to work in other kinds of ministry or mission ventures. (Tunehag, McGee, and Plummer 2005: 289)

---

[9] Business *as a cover for* mission is distinct from business *as a platform for* mission. Business as a cover means quite simply that the company is a shell or a fake whose purpose is merely to obtain necessary permission to reside in a country. All serious BAM practitioners and advocates resoundly condemn this approach; however, from personal experience I can sadly say that it still exists and, in fact, BAM is frequently (inaccurately) understood as a missions cover. Business as a platform simply means that the business is a means to other missional ends. Frequently, missionaries engage in business because circumstances cause them to pursue this approach. Nevertheless, real businesses are operated (Barnett 2005: 209-44).

BAM is distinct from but related to two other similar paradigms, namely tentmaking and marketplace ministries. Marketplace ministry is "focused on taking the gospel to people where they work, preferably through the witness of co-workers and professional colleagues" (Tunehag, McGee, and Plummer 2005: 289). BAM includes these elements as it is focused on working *within* a business such as marketplace ministry but is also concerned with working *through* a business. BAM is "intentional about the 'to all peoples' mandate, and seeks out areas with the greatest spiritual and physical needs" (Tunehag, McGee, and Plummer 2005: 290). Tentmaking is essentially marketplace ministry in an international cross-cultural setting.

Kingdom Business (KB)

Tetsunao Yamamori defines KB as "doing biblical ministry of integrating proclamation (word) and social service (deed) through business and entrepreneurial strategies" (Yamamori 2006). In his book *God is at Work*, Eldred gives two definitions of kingdom business: (1) "for-profit business ventures designed to facilitate God's transformation of people and nations" (2005: 60) and (2) "for-profit commercial enterprises in the mission field of the developing world through which Christian business professionals are seeking to meet spiritual, social and economic needs" (2005: 61).

Great Commission Company (GCC)

Another common term for BAM projects is the GCC, coined by Rundle and Steffen (2003). They define a GCC as "a socially responsible, income-producing business managed by kingdom professionals and created for the specific purpose of glorifying God

and promoting the growth and multiplication of local churches in the least-evangelized and least-developed parts of the world" (41).

Micro-Enterprise Development (MED)

A common strategy for income generation in developing nations is what is called micro-enterprise development, which "involves activities such as funding, training and mentoring to promote the development of business among the economically disadvantaged" (Eldred 2005: 185).[10] Definitions on MED are varied; however, it is typically defined as a business started with a loan below $1,000 (Yamamori 2006).[11]

Small and Medium Enterprise (SME)

Definitions on SME are varied; however, it is typically defined as a business started with a loan between $1000 and $50,000 (Yamamori 2006).[12] SME's form the

---

[10] Most MED practitioners do not consider MED a subset of BAM but rather as its own separate field. Yamamori states that MED belongs to the field of relief and development (Yamamori 2006).

[11] Eldred defines it as below $5,000 (Eldred 2005: 186). Yamamori differs from Eldred in defining these categories. This is probably because Yamamori is primarily involved in developing areas of poverty while Eldred's career has been predominantly in large corporations. Though the defining number can seem somewhat arbitrary, I follow Yamamori's definitions because they provide the most precision for the majority of SBV operations.

[12] Eldred defines it as between $5,000 and $100,000 (2005: 216).

bedrock of most economies. In the United States SMEs added 75 percent of all

employment between 1990 and 1997 (Case 2001). In Japan SMEs constitute 70 percent

of all employment (Yamamori 2006 and Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of

Japan 2007).

Overseas Private Equity (OPE)

OPE pertains to the development of large and established companies. OPE's are

businesses started with an investment between $50,000 and $1,000,000 (Yamamori

2006).

Triple Bottom Line

Triple bottom line is a developing term that refers to multiple goals of a business

in response to the conventional wisdom that a business has one bottom line, namely

financial profits. The new triple bottom line[13] is focused on reaching financial, social, and spiritual goals.[14]

Research Methodology

The methodology of this research project is the case study research approach, specifically a multiple-case study embedded design based on Robert Yin's methodology (Yin 2003: 40). Yin says that the case-study method is "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (13). He adds that it:

> Copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result relies on multiple sources of evidence with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as

---

[13] The Lausanne 2004 BAM issue group writes, "The real bottom line of business as mission is ADMG—*ad majorem Dei gloriam*—for the greater glory of God" (Tunehag, McGee, and Plummer 2005: 346).

[14] In the global business literature, the triple bottom line refers to having economic, social, and environmental goals (Savitz and Weber 2006). Developing a quadruple bottom line of financial stewardship, creation care, social impact and spiritual influence would be worthwhile. However, due to the relatively small size of most SBVs, for my purposes, I have chosen not to incorporate the environmental (creation care) aspect of the business. Hopefully, in the future, further research will be done to assess the environmental effects and contributions of SBVs in such a way that warrants listing it as a separate measure as is done in the emerging business literature.

another result benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis. (13-14)

A multiple-case study decreases the potential "vulnerability" of a single-case approach and increases the "analytic" and "direct replication" benefits (Yin 2003: 53). The multiple-case approach is based on a "replication logic" and not "sampling logic" (47).

Robson adds that flexible strategies "are appropriate for exploratory work" (2002: 90). Creswell notes, "The two primary characteristics of this design are [a] constant comparison of data with emerging categories and [a] theoretical sampling of different groups to maximize the similarities and the differences of information" (2003: 14).

The project used an embedded design, meaning multiple units of analysis within each case. This setup is contrasted with a holistic design, which uses just a single unit of analysis (Yin 2003: 40). An embedded design is necessary to research social business ventures because of the triple bottom line of financial, social, and spiritual goals.

The purpose of this project is to examine and understand how things are done in BAM projects. What Robert E. Stake says is helpful: "Coming to understand a case usually requires extensive examining of how things get done, but the prime referent in case study is the case, not the methods by which cases operate" (1994: 245).

This project is a multiple-case approach because it involved the study of multiple businesses that fit the selection criteria of the project. Regarding the number of case studies, Yin says:

> When using a multiple-case design, a further question you will encounter has to do with the *number* of cases deemed necessary or sufficient for your study. However, because a sampling logic should not be used, the typical criteria regarding sample size also are irrelevant. Instead you should think of this decision as a reflection of the number of case replications…. For example, you may want to settle for two or three literal replications when the rival theories are grossly

different and the issue at hand does not demand an excessive degree of certainty. (1997: 51)

Using Yin's logic, the number of case studies was not predetermined. However, I aimed to start with three and increase those dependent on how many I needed to obtain sufficient case replications.

Case Study Selection Criteria

In order to select my case studies, I had the following four criteria:

1. The businesses selected for study have the primary purpose of engaging in mission, though the definition of mission may vary for each business.

2. The businesses are founded and/or led by an expatriate Christian who self identifies as a missionary.[15]

3. The businesses are distinct from one another in what type of business they are engaged.

4. The businesses have Thai employees and are seeking to bring Christian Thais into leadership.

---

[15] Neal Johnson and Steve Rundle state that one of the things that differentiate BAM from other forms of Christian enterprise development is that in BAM the business is generally founded and managed by expatriates who then hire local people (2006: 25).

Data Collection Strategies

The data of my research is collected through the following methods: (1) qualitative interviews, (2) participant observation, (3) numerical data, and (4) published reports.

Qualitative Interviews

The bulk of my research comes from qualitative interviews with the following groups of people:

1. Expatriate missionaries engaged in business. These people self-identify as cross-cultural missionaries; however, they may not be officially associated with a mission agency. These people are involved in operating a social business venture. The goal of the qualitative interviews is to get an "insiders" perspective of the BAM projects.

2. Expatriate missionaries not engaged in business. These people are colleagues of expatriate missionaries engaged in business; however, they are not involved in operating a social business venture. The goal of the qualitative interviews is to get an "outsiders" perspective of the BAM projects.

3. Local employees of the BAM project. These people are local (non-expatriate) citizens. The goals of the qualitative interviews are to (1) understand how the local employees think about the BAM project, (2) understand how it impacts their lives, and (3) discover what their understanding is of the mission.

4. People who have converted to Christianity as a result of the BAM projects. These people have somehow come into contact with the BAM project and were directly

influenced to become followers of Christ. The goal of the qualitative interviews is to determine what conditions led to the persons' decisions to become Christ followers.

5. Outside observers. These people are people in the local community who are not involved in the BAM project. They are local church leaders, other expatriates, local community leaders, local business owners, local and expatriate business professionals and other residential citizens. The goals of these interviews are to determine the perceptions of others toward the BAM project and the impact of the BAM projects on people not involved with them.

Participant Observation

While doing my field research, I also spent time in each of the BAM organizations. The goal of this participant observation was to observe their operations and use these observations as a basis for further exploration.

1. Organizational structure: Through participant observation, I strove to determine if the organizational structure reflects their stated goals, for example, if they say they want local involvement but practice with paternalistic attitudes. The goal of this research was to determine what impact the organizational structure has on the achievement of organization's goals.

2. Organizational location and facilities: Through participant observation, I strove to determine if the organization's location is beneficial to the triple bottom line, for example, if anything about the location impedes or enhances the organization's stated goals or if employees are put in inadequate or too elaborate working conditions. The goal

of this research was to determine what impact the organizational location and facilities have on the achievement of the organization's goals.

 3. Interpersonal interaction: During participant observation I intentionally observed the relationships between Christians and non-Christians, between managers and subordinates, and between missionaries and non-missionaries. Regarding the observations, I observed specifically how much of the work is done by the expatriate missionaries and how that work is integrated with the stated social and spiritual goals of the enterprise. The goal of this research was to determine what impact interpersonal interaction has on the achievement of organization's goals.

 4. Bible studies, church worship services or other religious gatherings: I also participated in and observed any Bible study, church worship service, or other religious gathering related to the BAM organization. The goal of this participant observation was to understand the relationship between the BAM project and spiritual operations, for example, whether they have Bible studies at the place of business and if employees are required to attend? I also noted whether other local Christians not affiliated with the business were involved.

Numerical Data

 As a part of my research, I also analyzed the numerical data maintained by each organization.

 1. Financial: The first type of numerical data is financial. This approach permitted a review of the company's balance sheet, income statements, and cash flow statements. Although some of my case studies did not have the data in this form as a typical

business, the important elements that make up these statements were analyzed including a review of the primary expenses, accounts receivable, accounts payable, inventory levels, and so forth. The goal of this research was to determine if the BAM project is profitable, sustainable (mix of donation and internal capital generation), or unsustainable (insufficient financing to exist long-term).

2. Social: The second set of numerical data relates to the social impact of the organization. This data is composed of whatever quantitative tools the particular organization uses to measure its social impact. The goal of this research is to seek to determine if the organization is having a positive, negative or essentially neutral social impact.

3. Spiritual: The third and final set of data relates to the spiritual influence of the organization. This data is also composed of whatever quantitative tools the particular organization uses to measure its spiritual influence. The goal of this research was to determine if the organization is having a positive, negative or essentially neutral spiritual influence. [16]

---

[16] Several of my case study leaders were reluctant or unable to show me their financial records and other numerical data. In the situations where quantifiable data was not available, I relied on qualitative interviews and participant observation.

Published Reports

As a part of my research, I reviewed published reports relating to the organization.

1. Policies: I reviewed the organization's policies and other published statements such as mission statement and vision statement.

2. Newsletters: I reviewed newsletters written to inform supporters of the events of the BAM organization. The goal of this research was to know more about the history of each organization.

3. E-mails: I reviewed e-mails written by members of the organization to supporters and others outside of the organization.

4. Memos: I reviewed intra-organizational memos that could be electronically or traditionally communicated.

Ethics Statement

Due to the importance of ethics in research, I had a standard operating procedure for the interviews. These seven steps were followed:

1. Each interviewee was informed that participation is voluntary.

2. Because participation was voluntary, participants had the right to withdraw at any time.

3. The nature and purpose of the study was clearly communicated in writing.

4. I offered a clear description of the use of the data.

5. The identity of the participants was protected if they so desired. In these cases, an alternate name was given for them and/or their organization in all published reports.

6. Participants were informed of their right to have a copy of the results.

7. All data collected is stored in a locked filing cabinet and/or electronically in a password secure operating system.

Significance of the Work

This research project is in position to provide a significant contribution to missiological knowledge, reflection, and practice both for the scholarly academic community as well as for field-based practitioners. The study of organizations using business as mission to meet financial, social, and spiritual goals will be significant to the field of Christian mission in the following ways:

1. This research project is one of the first significant research projects in an emerging practice. It helped deepen the understanding of the reasons for and effectiveness of this emerging practice.

2. Most of the work that has been done has not been focused on a singular cultural context. When BAM research is done comparing BAM projects in different cultural contexts, the number of variables make focusing on commonalities difficult. By focusing on a singular cultural context, this research project helped to improve understanding of the commonalities of BAM projects.

3. This research project helped provide an understanding of the financial realities faced by businesses in a developing country. Some people think a business should be fully funded internally, meaning money that the business itself produces. Others think that external funding, such as donations, is appropriate. The research in this area strengthened financial stewardship of valuable mission resources.

4. This research project helped provide an understanding of how business can be effective in meeting social goals. This research project deepened understanding of when and how business can and should be conducted to meet holistic missional goals of social transformation.

5. This research project helped provide an understanding of how business can be effective in meeting spiritual goals. This research project deepened understanding of when and how business can and should be conducted in order to influence people spiritually to become followers of Jesus Christ.

6. This research project helped provide an understanding of how BAM projects relate to mission agencies, how BAM can and should relate to mission agencies, as well as how mission agencies can support BAM projects.

7. This research project helped provide an understanding of how BAM projects relate to local churches, how BAM can and should relate to local churches, as well as how local churches can support BAM projects.

Conclusion

This project is a multiple embedded case study project focusing on the sociocultural context of Chiang Mai, Thailand. There are three theoretical frameworks which are used to analyze the funding model, the level of cultural contextualization, and the overall approach and strategy of each enterprise. The goal of this project is to fill the gap between the level of practice and research in the field of business as mission.

CHAPTER 2
A REVIEW OF THE RELEVANT LITERATURE

Business as mission is an emerging missionary practice. The way it is practiced

and understood today is a fairly recent phenomenon. In this chapter we will review the

most recent and relevant literature in the field as well as some work related to historical

BAM work. In 1999 a group at the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies in the U. K. coined

the term, business as mission (Johnson and Rundle 2006: 24). Historians Heinz Suter and

Marco Gmür note that trade has been a means for spreading the gospel throughout church

history, often as an intentional strategy. They write, "History furnishes hard evidence that

business, trade and solid Christian professionalism have been used of God in order to

transmit the Gospel message along the regions of the silk routes, probably starting from

as early as the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:9) … and continuing up until the fifteenth

century" (Suter and Gmür 1997: 21).

Howard Owens says that the Nestorians "were Christians who supported

themselves by their business and who had a zeal for sharing their faith" (2006: 135). As

they spread the gospel across Asia, they became what Paul E. Pierson called "one of the

most passionate missionary branches of the church" (2000: 675). While Paula Harris

notes that their missionary strategy probably involved clerical and lay strategies (2000:

165), John Stewart says that both clergy and laity would have financially supported

themselves through business (Owens 2006: 137). Samuel Hugh Moffett notes that

Nestorian missionaries accompanied Arab embassies to China in order to take advantage of "Arab sea and trade routes to the Far East that were superior to the long and arduous hardships of the Old Silk Road. Due to Nestorian missionaries' extensive experience in China, Muslim Arabs employed them as interpreters and advisers" (Moffett 1998: 297).

William Carey engaged in numerous work related, income-generating projects, including spending six years as a manager of an indigo plant (Drewery 1979: 62). He injected India with a work ethic that is described by Vishal and Ruth Mangalwadi as revolutionary (1999: 115-17). Dwight Baker notes that organizational structures of businesses influenced Carey and he patterned the formation of mission agencies after commercial joint-stock companies (Baker 2003: 167-202).

Another historical example is the Basel Mission Trading Company, started in 1815 as the Basel Mission Society (Suter 2003: 191). The first president, C. G. Blumhardt, developed a model whereby the missionary would not only be trained in theology but also in a trade (Schlatter 1916: 1: 28). These missionaries came to be known as "craftsmen-theologians" (Rennstich 1985: 52-53). This ministry philosophy turned into a fruitful reality. The craftsmen-theologians went far and wide and founded a number of profitable and high quality businesses. One of their missionaries even invented Khaki cloth as a way to tolerate the withering and burning sun in India (Wanner 1959: 263-264). This company grew dramatically in terms of economic production and profits (Suter 2003: 189). However, "profits shall not be the main goal of the company" was a guiding principle. The goal was to be salt and light and provide living examples of authentic Christianity through business (Schlatter 1916: 1: 390).

William Danker brings to light that the Moravians expected their missionaries to be able to support themselves through business enterprise (2002: 32). Count Zinzendorf, the leader of the Moravians, did not want to combine missions with colonization, so he had the missionaries work independently. He would send them out in pairs and they would earn an income as they traveled. The goal was not to save money for the sending church but to "teach the people the dignity of labor" (Danker 2002: 32).

Max Weber (1904) writes about the Protestant work ethic among the Puritans. Through the years economists have discussed Weber's perspective but have ignored the relationship of business to missions for the Puritans. Steven Pointer and Michael Cooper point out that the planting of churches and evangelistic outreach to the Native Americans was of central concern to the Puritans and that work was "as much a spiritual expression as it was an economic function" (2006: 170-71). They assert that the relationship between business and missions for the Puritans in the seventeenth century Bay Colony was "a thoroughly intimate and integrated one at all levels" (2006: 173).[17] These historical accounts are not the same as what is happening in contemporary settings. They

---

[17] Some have valid criticisms of the Puritans' use of business in missions. Pointer and Cooper note that their ministry was never successful among the Native Americans because they appeared to care more about the land than the people inhabiting it (2006: 176).

demonstrate, nevertheless, that missionaries through the years have used economic means in spreading the gospel.

Most of the relevant literature has been written in recent years. Mats Tunehag notes that BAM is a worldwide phenomenon:

> I have travelled and worked in about half the countries of the world. One can truly say that BAM is NOT a Western phenomena or concept. It also became very clear through the Lausanne BAM think tank in which we had people from all continents giving all kinds of cultural, socio-economical, historical, theological and ecclesiastical perspectives on Business as Mission. (Tunehag 2003: 3)

Rennstich writes about the Chinese Christians in Malaysia as a worthy example. For them, Christian belief and economic progress were, from the beginning, in tight connection (1978: 247). Through the work of these Chinese economical and evangelical pioneers, economic progress and mission function interdependently in all pioneering mission work (248-49). According to Rennstich who worked among them, the relationship of the economic activities with their evangelical mission resulted in clarity that "their religion did not come from their culture and their job was not separate from the spiritual" (250).

However, not all historical incidents of business as mission have such a pleasant result. There is a long history of business overriding mission interests, particularly during the period of colonialism. Paul Hiebert has pointed out that during the colonial era there existed a 3-C paradigm, namely Christianity, civilization and commerce (Hiebert: 1994, 76-77). Commerce was the heartbeat of colonialism. The colonizer would seek to exploit the colony's natural resources, create new markets for themselves, and extend their way of life beyond their national borders. Missionaries with their confused ethnocentric

mentality sometimes served (both knowingly and unknowingly) the exploitative purposes of the colonizers.

The British East India Company was founded in 1600 and utilized clergy from its inception. Initially, the clergy did not concern themselves with the indigenous peoples but rather, spiritually looked after the English traders (Wright: 1965, 57). The trading companies valued their presence as a moral restraint on the traders. Traveling far from home, many of the men would otherwise easily succumb to temptation that could be detrimental to work. Keeping everyone in line for the good of the company was the primary concern of these clergy. However, according to the trading companies, an additional advantage for having them on board was that they could function as a kind of good insurance against calamity (Wright: 1965, 58).

Some commentators note the potential to influence people at the highest levels of society. John P. Cragin notes, "GCC personnel play golf and dine with those who influence the lives of thousands, sometimes millions" (2004: 103). Others note that the greatest influence happens within the company. Rundle and Steffen mention one company that has expanded to two factories and has $3.1 million in revenues. Of its 300 employees, 90 percent have become Christians, and they have started reaching out to their community. The results are eight planted churches, one of which has grown to 400 members (2003: 109-23).

Others write about the changes in approach and philosophy. One missionary after deportation notes:

> We came to realize that if we were to have a viable ministry, we needed a viable reason for being in the community. If we are adding value to a society in the form of education, creating jobs, bringing in capital, or enhancing people's lives, it is

unlikely we will be deported for doing evangelism and church planting. (Lai 2003: 58)

Some missionaries have become frustrated with the approach of some mission agencies toward business as solely a means for access. Many of these business missionaries have discontinued working for or in partnership with mission agencies. William, a Chinese businesswoman in the Middle East, writes, "I will not accept money from either mission agencies or churches. They almost always look at the business as a means to get into a country rather than a ministry in itself. Their financial involvement might be more a hindrance than a blessing" (2003: 51). She notes that finances are an important concern saying, "In running a business, however, you need to consider the possibility that you might actually lose money. In our idealistic enthusiasm, we often assume we will make money. This is not always the case, unfortunately" (2003: 52). Stanley Davies, Executive Director of Global Connections, writes, "We need job makers not job fakers" (2001: 5).

Legally operating a profitable business in many parts of the world is difficult. One BAM practitioner in China writes:

> Some laws in China are simply irrelevant, contradictory or unreasonable.… To follow these rules would make tasks such as purchasing needed equipment nearly impossible. Still other laws require you to get approval from twenty-seven ministries just to put up a small factory—a task that takes several years if you follow the letter of the law. (Chan 2003: 35)

Johnson and Rundle write about what a business needs to be considered a legitimate BAM project. They present a two-part test that analyzes *the purpose and practice* of a company to see if it qualifies as a legitimate BAM enterprise (2006: 19). For example, a company could be founded with a wonderful purpose such as reducing unemployment in an area of poverty; however, it could not be run according to Christian principles. This

contradiction would disqualify it from being considered a BAM enterprise. Likewise a company could operate according to Christian principles and even have a positive social impact but not draw attention to Jesus, thus disqualifying it from being categorized as a BAM enterprise (28). They argue that, when done well, BAM challenges traditional views: (1) only a few people are called into "ministry" or "missions," (2) this calling requires special ministerial training, and (3) ministry is best pursued within a nonprofit organization (34).

One of the most influential books within the BAM movement is *Great Commission Companies* by Rundle and Steffen, respectively a business and a mission professor at Biola University. They give three reasons why some hesitate to adapt to the developing paradigm. First, many Christians believe that "work" distracts from or steals time from "ministry." Second, many people believe that businesses either make money or provide a service to society but cannot do both. A third reason is that the combination of business and missions can produce difficulties concerning an organization's nonprofit status and its tax exemption (2003: 18-19).

Rundle and Steffen also make the case that BAM should be done according to a clearly defined concept of holistic mission. They give four assumptions that are the foundation of their concept of holistic mission. The first is that God created people to do good works. The second is that opportunities to share good news are created when people do good works. The third assumption is that holistic mission responds to people's physical needs but not only that. The fourth is that holistic mission strives to bring people into the Christian family but does not stop there helping them to mature as disciples of Christ (35-36).

Their work gives good practical implications for GCCs based on five years of research, while also acknowledging the inherent complexity of combining business and missions in developing parts of the world. For example, they note:

> It might be tempting to say that "a GCC should never lay off workers" or "a GCC should always use local sources" but a company that fails because of an oversized payroll or because it tolerated inferior materials does no one any good in the long run. (160)

Quite wisely, instead of giving hard and fast rules, Rundle and Steffen list general principles for GCC managers to follow. First, GCCs should do no harm, meaning that they should be the most socially responsible of companies and should strive to reduce costs to the host country. Second, GCCs should choose the right industry. For example, GCCs should try not to compete with locally produced goods by importing products. Third, GCCs should help the local economy modernize, meaning not simply doing what people are already doing but seeking to do something that improves the local technology and infrastructure. Fourth, GCCs should be incubators, meaning they should intentionally seek to improve their firms and their partner firms. Fifth, GCCs should be local philanthropists. In other words they should be as generous as possible with wages and should work with other organizations to redistribute profits within the local situation as effectively as possible for the common good (61).

Rundle and Steffen also argue that business is uniquely situated to help a hurting world. In their book they give seven reasons. First, awareness of poverty is at an all-time high and more people than ever want to partner with the business community to improve their standard of living. Second, a well-run business can grow the economy, develop the society, and give spiritual hope. Third, travel is becoming increasingly easy but working

as a missionary is becoming increasingly more difficult. Fourth, businesses are becoming

more globally aware and are interested in internationally integrating their operations.

Fifth, employment gives people a dignified way to support their family and their local

church. Sixth, BAM gives a way for Christian laypeople to integrate their faith and work.

Seventh, a business is a place where life is real and values, ideals, and principles are lived

out (2003: 75-76).

     In *Holistic Entrepreneurs in China*, Kim-Kwong Chan and Tetsunao Yamamori

list five models for how Christians are operating in business within China. The first is the

"Christian witnessing" model. This strategy is to bring one's values and faith into the

workplace with the aim of being a "beacon of truth" as one's influence spreads (2002:

59-64). The second is the "business-turned mission" model, which deals with people who

use an intentional evangelistic strategy in their workplace or in their interactions with

business partners (65-72). The third is the "bridgehead" model, referring to foreigners

who use business as a means to enter the country. They perform normal business

although the business is a "bridgehead" that establishes their residence in the country and

gives them opportunities to influence others with the gospel (73-78). The fourth is the

"communal living" model, referring to companies that primarily employ Christians. The

company functions as a community as well as a corporate witness to the surrounding

community (79-89). The final example given is the "ecclesiastical self-supporting"

model. The Chinese government prohibits the collection of offering during worship

services and does not allow a Chinese church to receive financial support from outside of

China. Therefore, churches have meager resources and need to generate income to sustain

operations. This model pertains to businesses operated by a church in order to provide for its expenses (91-96).

David R. Befus, president of Latin America Mission, has written a very helpful book that lists five basic paradigms for ministry through productive economic activity (2003). He calls the first "ministry service businesses." These businesses have the purpose of producing profits in order to cover the cost of an affiliated ministry. Examples that Befus gives are a school and a hospital that were founded by missionaries. The purpose of the school and the hospital is ministry, but they also charge for their services in order to sustain themselves. They also use this income to allow for ministry among people who are not able to pay for the services (22-23).

Second is "ministry endowment enterprises." This model is similar to the first; however, the focus is on running a profitable business that then supports a ministry. The ministry location may be close to the company or in another country. While the business is also run as a ministry, the primary focus is generating income for a ministry that cannot produce income itself. Befus gives examples of a Costa Rican farm that provides over $200,000 to children's ministries and a taxi service run by the Scripture Union of Lima, Peru, that funds a portion of their ministry costs. Entrepreneurial missionaries and donors started both of these projects (2003: 23-24).

A third paradigm is the "tentmaking enterprise." Befus uses this model as a practical way to mobilize missionaries from Latin America to the rest of the world. Befus goes on to explain that the purpose is not just to generate revenue or to create a platform, but to combine these benefits into real ministry. Befus mentions one Mexican family that works in a predominantly Muslim country. Through their tentmaking enterprise they are

able to provide a major portion of their monthly income while also creating a context for ministry (2003: 25-26).

"Business incubators" provide the fourth paradigm that Befus proposes. The aim of this model is job creation, either for church members or a specific people group or population segment. The idea is to help people who need income or employment but do not have the experience or training to be economically productive. Befus cites an example of a ministry started by an entrepreneurial missionary in Mexico City. Through this ministry street teenagers are taught how to make puppets and stuffed animals. Through their business activities, the teenagers are able to support themselves and get off the street. Over time they pay for the equipment provided, reimburse start-up funds used, and provide finances for future enterprises (2003: 26-27).

The fifth paradigm is "micro credit programs." Befus has had extended experience with this model through his experience with the aforementioned Opportunity International. A micro credit program is a "revolving loan program for people who have a business idea, and usually some experience, and who, with additional capital, can generate funds to pay back the loan with interest" (2003: 27-28). Befus explains two difficulties with this model. The first occurs when the goal of integration in ministry and the focus on providing true help to the poor is lost. Second, many Christian loan organizations do not want to work in conjunction with local churches for fear that their loan repayment rate will decrease. Nevertheless, Befus strongly advocates for the integration of a local ministry with the activities of loan programs. He gives an example of one such program through a Latin America Mission affiliate ministry in Barranquilla, Colombia. The program was started through a local church after many unsuccessful

attempts to work with other Christian organizations. The program generates small loans of around $350 per family for families who have been displaced due to the ongoing Colombian civil war and the program is integrated with outreach ministries from the local church (27-29).

Stevens (2006) has written a good text that outlines some of the theological framework of BAM. He disputes "the hierarchy of holiness" that places missionaries and pastors at the top of the ecclesiastical pyramid and businesspeople and economists at the bottom (2006: 2). He argues that Christians are to partner with God in all of his endeavors. They partner with *God the Creator*, who is still creating new things; they partner with *God the Redeemer* by fixing, mending and transforming; and, finally, they partner with *God the Consummator* by working to bring the human story to a beautiful end. Stevens says that all work mandated by God, synchronized with God's purpose, and done in his virtuous way matters to God (6-10).

Stevens argues that Christians are called by God to develop creation's potential in the cultural mandate in Genesis 1, and, as a corollary of the cultural mandate, business is a "legitimate part of undertaking the stewardship of creation to make a human imprint on the earth" (2006: 23). He argues that business should be perceived as "full-time ministry" (58).

Stevens affirms that the marketplace is a "mission field" but says it is more than that and argues that work in the marketplace is an integral aspect of God's mission in the world (2006: 79). He contends that God's mission is to establish the kingdom of God, and the whole people of God (not just clergy) are involved in this mission (84-87). Business serves this mission in that it provides a place for individual witness, an avenue

for church planting, an instrument of social service, a space to create community, and a means for battling destructive powers (87-99).

Eldred argues that business is an integral part of God's work in the world, is important in its own right, and is an instrument for sustainable transformation (72). He addresses the importance of spiritual capital for social transformation. He argues that spiritual capital creates economic value. For example, honesty and trust reduce the need for expensive supervision and, therefore, lower transaction costs. Eldred contends that the spiritual capital that is pumped into an economic system will naturally make the system more successful. He argues, "We shortchange a nation if we introduce laws that facilitate commerce and teach principles of accounting and yet fail to equip the nation with the means to establish a spiritual capital base on which to build its economy" (113).

Michael Baer (2006) describes a kingdom business as vocational, intentional, relational, and operational. Vocational means that business is an authentic calling from God. Intentional means that God has a unique purpose for each business. Relational means that relationships are where Christ is glorified. Operational means that a kingdom business is managed with excellence.

CHAPTER 3
AN OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORICAL, RELIGIOUS, ECONOMICAL, CULTURAL,
AND LOCAL CONTEXTS OF THE STUDY

Context of Thailand

In order to frame the context of where the research took place, this chapter gives

some dedicated attention to the history and present economic and spiritual situation in

Thailand.

Historical Overview

Thailand, known as Siam until 1939, has a long history. The legendary foundation

of Ayutthaya came in 1351. This Thai kingdom existed until 1767 (Baker and

Phongpaichit 2005: xv-xvi). King Ramathibodi I (Uthong) founded Ayutthaya as the

capital of his kingdom in 1350 and absorbed Sukhothai, 640 kilometers to the north, in

1376. Over the next four centuries, the kingdom expanded to become the nation of Siam,

whose borders were roughly those of modern Thailand, except for the north, the kingdom

of Lannathai. Ayutthaya was friendly towards foreign traders, including the

Chinese, Indians, Japanese, and Persians, and later the Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, British, and French, permitting them to set up villages outside the city walls (1-25).

In 1782, the kingdom established a new capital in Bangkok. King Yotfa, Rama I ascended the throne. In 1822 they signed the first trade treaty with Britain (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 37). In 1855 they signed the Bowring treaty (65), which was an agreement between Siam and Britain that achieved commercial and political aims that earlier British missions had failed to gain and which opened up Siam to Western influence and trade. The treaty lifted many restrictions imposed by Thai kings on foreign trade, such as a 3 percent duty on all imports and the lack of permission for British subjects to trade in all Thai ports.

Colonial Times in Thailand

Thailand was never under colonial rule, a fact that the Thai people are very proud about. They deftly negotiated with foreign powers to maintain their independence but also to have ongoing relations with these powers (Wyatt 2003: 225). King Chulalongkorn, Rama V ascended the throne in 1868. In 1874 the Anglo-Siam Treaty was created over Chiang Mai to control colonial loggers. Additionally, lawmakers established an edict limiting slavery. Anyone born a hereditary slave from 1868 onwards would gain freedom at the age of 21. Furthermore anyone born after 1868 could not sell himself or be sold into slavery after reaching 21 (208).

In 1893 French gunboats threatened Bangkok in what was called the Paknam Incident. The earlier 20th century saw several revolts. The Ubon phumibun revolt

occurred in 1901 and the Phrae revolt and a revolt by the southern states followed in 1902 (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 102-04).

In 1909 the Anglo-Siamese Treaty finalized Siam's boundaries. King Vajiravudh, Rama VI ascended the throne in 1910. During this time frame, Siam became a nation of smallholder peasants due to the release of forced labor as well as the integration of the economy with colonial enterprise. Wilderness, such as the Chaophraya Delta, was transformed into paddyfields. This rice economy supported the majority of the population and was the engine of the national economy. Unfortunately, it also pushed the peasantry away from the political life of the nation and into rural villages (139).

The Rise of Nationalism

An entrepreneurial elite emerged among Chinese immigrants in the early twentieth century. They frequently maintained links to the places from where they came; however a new community infrastructure developed contributing to the development of a burgeoning middle class. Education and business success expanded people's possibilities. Also, a mixed Thai-Chinese society broke down some of the older traditions (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 105-11).

Nationalism developed as commoners pushed for an end to the exploitation of the old elite as well as the colonialists. They argued that the nation-state's purpose was the wellbeing of its citizens, requiring more public services, such as education and health. In 1932 people who primarily believed in the state's ability to transform the nation socially and economically from above began a revolution, which allowed for the military to take over and promote a strong state vision minus the monarchy. The monarchy was restrained

by a constitution and no serious discussion ever occurred about a move to a republic form of government (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 120).

The idea of a restrained monarchy was temporarily discredited with the fall of the Japanese. The name Thailand was even changed back to Siam for three years at the end of WWII. The war changed Thailand in two ways: (1) It created a "war" economy with deeper government involvement, and (2) it brought Thailand into more complex international politics, most specifically with the USA (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 167).

After the war, the USA recruited Thailand as an ally and base for the Cold War in Asia. Through the influence of the USA, the Thai government emphasized economic development through private enterprise, releasing many entrepreneurs who had been bound under the colonial structures. From the late 1950s, the Thai economy grew at a sustained average of 7 percent per year, one of the fastest rates in the developing world (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 200).

During the last twenty-five years of the twentieth century, Thailand's society changed at unprecedented speed. During the American era, a foundation of urban capitalism was laid. Big business families built off this foundation and grew in wealth and social prominence. A new white-collar middle class embraced Western-influenced consumer tastes and concepts of individualism. Furthermore, capitalism pulled workers into the urban areas (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 229).

This time also brought about the coming of mass society in Thailand. Private transportation became a viable option for many people. Roads and infrastructure were developed. National mass media created a social mirror through which society viewed

itself, causing the imagined unity of the nation to fragment. This reflection revealed the innate diversity, complexity, and divisions of Thai society (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 263).

Religious Overview

Buddhism, especially Theravada Buddhism, is the state religion. The majority of Thai people are Buddhists. The constitution states that the king is to be a Buddhist and the Upholder of Religions professed by Thai in the country. Nevertheless freedom of worship has always been legally granted. The constitution affirms that the state shall not deprive a person of any right to practice a religion different from that of others.

In Buddhism, one's life does not begin with birth and end with death; rather, an individual lives a chain of lives. These lives are conditioned by volitional acts (karma) committed in previous existences. Karma can be referred to essentially as the law of cause and effect, which means that selfishness and craving result in suffering and compassion and love bring happiness and good things. In order to find peace of mind, they believe one must eliminate desire. Buddhists seek to attain perfection through Nirvana. Nirvana can be defined as a state in which a person simply is; he or she is completely at one with his or her surroundings (Harvey 1990: 12).

Buddhism is a way of life for a people. It is an "all-encompassing, multileveled life-style, the instrument of a people's identity and cultural continuity" (Lester 1973: 1). Theravada Buddhism comes from *vada* (way) and *thera* (elders), meaning the way of the elders. Monks who wished to follow Buddha to enlightenment developed Theravada Buddhism. Mahayana Buddhism, another significant branch of Buddhism, is more

focused on the universal salvation of all peoples. In this version of Buddhism, enlightenment is a means to an end but not the end itself as it is for Theravada Buddhism (12).

Theravada Buddhism has become strong in Thailand. People believe that to be Thai is simultaneously to be Buddhist. Theravada Buddhist values shape the basic social, economic, and political patterns of life for the Thai (Lester1973: 13). Theravada Buddhism is based on the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha. The Buddha is the founder of Buddhism. The Dhamma is what the Buddha taught through his life and his word. These teachings are not definitive statements about the nature of reality or a system of intellectual ideas. Rather, they should be viewed as a path for traveling and as directives toward self-discipline in thinking, speaking, and acting, as instruments of mediation, resulting in total discipline of body, feeling, and mind (15).

Sangha literally means the gathering and can refer to the entire following of the Buddha, both lay and monastic. It is more commonly referred to the gathered body of Bhikkhus. The Bhikkhus are a sort of ultimate group of followers who, while not necessarily severe ascetics, are required to be rigorously self-disciplined. It refers to the higher level of two levels of ordination required by the Buddha. In order to become a Bhikkhu, one must be a male, not under twenty years of age, have the permission of parents or wife, be free of debt and disease, be a freeman, not be employed by the government, and have his own alms-bowl and robes (Lester1973: 16).

Theravada Buddhism finds stability and unity in its strong focus on the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha; nevertheless, due to ongoing changes in society it also faces pressure to change. Most notably, urbanization is causing changes. Village life is

fundamentally different than urban life. The village is more rural and connected to the earth and the natural environment in general. It is more personal and less complex. In contrast urban society is impersonal and decidedly complex and offers little in the way of serious engagement with the natural environment (47).

Economical Overview

Thailand: Economy and Politics by Chris Baker and Pasuk Phongpaichit (2005) gives significant historical background information on economic and political issues in Thailand. Two hundred years ago, at the start of the nineteenth century, Siam (now Thailand) was essentially an open frontier and Bangkok was a small, relatively new port city. The hinterland was practically empty.

Two large forces of people helped to create contemporary Thai society. First, agriculturalists, that is, peasants, moved to the interior because it had no land shortage, landlords, or colonial revenue officialdom. The hinterland peasants grew from a few hundred thousand to around 40 million. Most were independent smallholders and by 1980 five million farms were in Thailand. In the 1960s the peasantry represented 80 percent of the population. In order to prevent the growth of a landholding nobility, the king worked to establish a system that allowed for the growth of free peasantry. By 1983 only around 10 percent of the land was in the hand of landlords. Most of the villagers never saw a government official because simply taxing items as they flowed through the urban Chinese and the port areas was deemed easier and less risky politically (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 12).

Second, Bangkok expanded greatly, largely by virtue of entrepreneurial migrants from the south China coast. Bangkok (and Thailand) has been generally open. Chinese immigrants migrated without persecution, which was different from other southeast Asian contexts. Thai rulers had sought out Chinese immigration to expand Thailand's economic capabilities. Between 1820 and 1950, around four million southern Chinese came to Thailand with approximately 40 percent staying permanently. The Chinese came to dominate the urban centers, and political controls were gradually placed on them. Originally the court had relied on Chinese entrepreneurs, using their skills to govern outlying areas. They established "tax farms" that supported the rulers. Not wanting to create an atmosphere conducive to independent business, the rulers eventually favored the Chinese's chief Western rivals and denigrated Chineseness (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 15).

The large number of peasants created an atmosphere conducive to an absolutist state. The current Thai monarchy was established in the late 19th century but suffered a revolt in 1932 led by urban businessmen and intellectuals. They criticized the practices of the monarchy saying that it squandered talent, fostered corruption, and was inefficient, which led to an altering of the monarchy system although the monarchy was left in place. The dissidents thought that democracy would soon flourish; however, in the leadership vacuum and the increasing political and social chaos, military powers rose to dominance. In the 1940s, these military powers formed an alliance with the monarchy. The monarchy was established as a figurehead or symbol of a hierarchically ordered nation. The king was not the absolute ruler but was seen as the source of absolute power (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 17).

In general the political system also suppressed any sign of official organization among the masses whether they were rural or urban, meaning that the elite had to look outside of the country for technology and capital. Paradoxically the elite wanted to become a "modern" country, which was complicated to do since the system had sustained a large peasant population. Furthermore, this strategy made Thailand very vulnerable to aggressive forms of international capital (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 19).

In addition, the peasants strengthened themselves in the years of "isolation." They developed a culture very distinct from the larger culture and a lot of their identity was wrapped up in resisting the urban influences, particularly government control and taxation. In the 1950s transportation infrastructure was established that linked the rural areas with the urban areas, leading to peasant revolts in the 60s and 70s (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 20).

In the 19th century in an attempt to maintain its position of power, the crown sought to ensure that the peasantry would be loyal or forced to be loyal. They sought to form an absolutist royal state with the foundation being the peasantry. The Crown pronounced the king as absolute ruler of a peasant nation. All peasants were pronounced to be Thai and Buddhist. King, Buddhism, and Thai culture formed a sort of trinity. Thai's economy functioned under this monarchial arrangement until the 1950s. At this time the U. S., in the context of the cold war, served as a patron for Thailand. Nevertheless, when this support came to an end, the Thai economy faced another crisis and was forced to rely on the state for survival support (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 22).

Colonial firms came to Thailand, primarily in the form of specialists that made up for areas that were declining in eastern trade areas. In the 1940s and 50s, these firms fled due to the chaos of war. The Korean War was the time of a long period of economic growth. General Sarit ruled Thailand until 1963. During his reign, he established an alignment of domestic capital, state support, and U. S. influence. The U. S. gave economic advice and loans to fund investments in human resources and infrastructure. Although the U. S. provided a steady flow of capita, (it was Thailand's largest foreign investor), the amount was relatively minor for the U. S. Thailand never got the capital injunction of Latin America and was never really an "economic colony" of the U. S., but a political outpost that was part of a strategy to win the cold war (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 25).

The 70s brought two revolts. The first was similar to the revolt of 1932 in that it was a product of businessmen and professionals working to create a framework for democracy to "supersede dictatorship." The king handled this revolt by distancing himself from the military rulers and legitimized political change. In the late 70s, a broader social reaction came against the exploitations of the political economy associated with the U. S. involvement. Workers, peasants, and students demanded more rights (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 28).

During the Vietnam War, Thailand was used as a R&R location for US soldiers and had a great affect on the Thai economy and set the definition of economic development through hotels and brothels, which put the infrastructure in place for the global sex trade (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 162). At the end of the Vietnam War, U. S. support dried up and the Thai economy became increasingly more open to the rest of

the world. The rise of the Japanese economy benefited them as Japanese came seeking supplies produced by the Thai labor force. In the latter half of the 80s, Thailand began to export throughout Asia, helping Thailand's GDP to double within five years. Thailand became increasingly more open to the international economical activities enabling unparalleled growth and caused many laborers to be taken from the agrarian sector (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 30).

In the 90s white-collar business professionals thought that economic growth and globalization would enable Thailand or at least urban Thailand to make a rapid transition to a modern society. In 1991 they were behind a coup that removed provincial politicians and installed as premier a technocrat-businessman who concentrated on economic issues. In 1992 and 1997, they marched in the streets to prevent military officials from seizing control and exercising power (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 32).

Unfortunately, financial liberalization in the under-regulated international scene resulted in a distorted economy, resulting in intense injections of foreign capital that led to overinvestment in several areas leading to a financial crisis in 1997. This financial crisis led to two million layoffs and severe reduction in wage earnings and resulted in what the authors call a "fire sale" orchestrated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Overseas partners bought out many firms and Thai domestic capitalism was "orphaned." The U. S. criticized them as "bad capitalism created by state policy." The Thai rulers did not defend themselves against this criticism and relied on big business to help rebuild the market and revive local entrepreneurship (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 34).

Thailand has a long history and an ancient culture; however, its contemporary situation is very much the creation of two major movements in the last 150 years. The

first was the expansion of peasants in agriculture. The second is the migration of Chinese laborers. Though Thailand has been influenced by regional and global shifts, its culture and economy have maintained a largely internal flavor. The most recent economic crises have raised questions as to whether or not Thailand's local entrepreneurship sector is developed enough to take Thailand to the next level. Four "interlocking debates" define Thailand's future:

    1. Can Thailand's domestic capitalism survive given the increasing imbalance in command of capital, technology, and organizational expertise between the large corporations of the developed world and local entrepreneurs?

    2. Can parliamentary democracy work as long as a large peasant electorate serves as foundation for patronage-dominated politics?

    3. Must Thailand's rural peasant culture be changed by the advance of urbanization and globalization in order for Thailand to thrive?

    4. Should the rural and urban masses organize themselves for mass political action in order to avoid continuing to be "largely excluded" from national politics?

Cultural Overview

In order to understand Thai culture and how it compares/contrasts with western culture, Craig Storti's cross-cultural framework will be used.

<div align="center">

Craig Storti's Building Blocks of Culture

</div>

Craig Storti, in his cultural analysis, builds off the work of E.T. Hall as well as others such as Geert Hofstede, Alfred Kraemer, Fons Trompenaars, Charles Hampden-

Turner, and Harry Triandis. Storti is the author of several books, but the following relies

his 1999 work *Figuring Foreigners Out*. It is an especially important work for the way it

defines the building blocks of culture. These four building blocks are (1) concept of self,

(2) personal versus societal responsibility, (3) concept of time, and (4) locus of control.

Concept of Self

Storti defines the concept of self through the polar opposite dimensions of

individualist and collectivist, which is illustrated by how cultures "divide up the spoils."

For example, a collectivist culture would divide money generated from a project evenly

among all the people in the group without consideration of time expended or

performance. An individualist culture, on the other hand, would weigh the time expended

by each member of the group as well as each person's performance. Therefore, if one was

dividing $10,000 among a group of five people, the collectivist culture would give $2,000

to each person, but the individualist culture might give $4,000 to one, $2,000 to another,

$1,500 to two people and $1,000 to the person who performed and/or worked the least.

Storti says, "People from more collectivist cultures believe that their own security and

well-being ultimately depend on the well-being and survival of their group.… People

from more individualist cultures believe rewards should be directly commensurate with

one's level of effort" (24).

In an individualist culture, people identify first and foremost with the individual

self and the needs of the individual are satisfied before that of the group. Storti says,

"Independence and self-reliance are stressed and greatly valued, and personal freedom is

highly desired" (25). In a collectivist culture, the primary group (usually the immediate

family) is the smallest unit of survival, not the individual self. They tend to see the well-being of the individual as being based on the survival and success of the group. No culture is exclusively one or the other, but these polar definitions serve as a basis for diagnosis and understanding.[18]

Personal versus Societal Responsibility

Storti defines personal versus societal responsibility through the polar opposite dimensions of universalism and particularism. Stori explains, "Universalists tend to feel that right is right, regardless of circumstances, while particularists tend to feel that circumstances must be taken into account" (37). For example particularists are more willing to perjure themselves if the lies would protect friends; hence, the "particulars" of the case determine the right course of action. Universalists would say that perjury is wrong regardless of whom they are trying to protect reflecting their belief in absolutes that are applicable in all situations regardless of circumstances. Particularists believe that the circumstances determine how to act in a certain situation and that what is right in one situation may not be so in another.

---

[18] Storti is here using very generalized categories in order to have a conversation regarding macro-categories. In local contexts the categories can become a lot more complex than they are here described.

Another aspect of this distinction is that universalists tend to have an objective view of reality whereas particularists tend to have a subjective view. In universalist cultures favoritism and nepotism are negative characteristics and objectivity, referred to as logic of the head, is a positive trait. Particularists view things subjectively rather than objectively. Connections, favoritism, and working with an "ingroup" are considered a societal norm. Preferential treatment is expected for friends. Personal feelings should influence decisions. Particularism is referred to as logic of the heart.

Concept of Time

Storti defines the concept of time through the polar opposite dimensions of monochronic and polychronic. Regarding monochromic dimension, Storti says:

> Time is a commodity; it is quantifiable and there is a limited amount of it. Therefore, it is necessary to use time wisely and not waste it. There is a premium on efficiency, hence a sense of urgency in many matters. (1999: 55)

On the other hand, in polychronic cultures, "Time is limitless and not quantifiable. There is always more time, and people are never too busy" (55).

Locus of Control

Storti defines the locus of control through the polar opposite dimensions of internal and external locus of control. Cultures that have an internal locus of control respond affirmatively to the statement, "What happens to me is my own doing." The majority of Americans (89 percent) affirmed this statement, choosing it over, "Sometimes I feel I don't have control over the direction my life is taking," which 65 percent of

Chinese chose. Americans have a strong internal locus of control expressed in American expressions such as, "Where there's a will there's a way" expressing Americans' belief that the individual has the power to overcome all obstacles.

Regarding cultures with an internal locus of control, Storti says, "The locus of control is largely internal, within the individual. There are very few givens in life, few things or circumstances which have to be accepted as they are and cannot be changed" (68). In contrast cultures with an external locus of control believe, "The locus of control is largely external to the individual. Some things in life are predetermined, built into the nature of things. There are limits beyond which one cannot go and certain givens that cannot be changed and must be accepted" (68). One Southern Arabian proverb expresses external locus of control: "Caution does not avert the decree of fate" (71).

Styles of Verbal Communication

In addition to the four building blocks of culture, Storti also addresses different styles of verbal communication expressed through the two poles of directness and indirectness. Storti asserts that these differences "probably account for more cross-cultural misunderstandings than any other single factor" (1999: 91). The cultures that tend to be indirect are also high context and collectivist. In contrast, "Direct cultures tend to be less collectivist and more individualist than indirect cultures" (92).

In collectivist and high context cultures, Storti states that groups are well connected and well established. They share experiences and have an intuitive understanding of one another; therefore, they do not need to be so direct. They can afford to be indirect. In low context, individualist cultures the groups are not well connected or

well established. People do not share as many experiences and do not have such an intuitive understanding of one another. Therefore, people need to be direct and "spell things out" for one another.

Collectivist cultures also value harmony, so they would not want to have direct confrontation with other people which would be perceived as destroying the harmony. Individualist cultures do not value harmony as much and, as such, will be more apt to confront another person directly. Due to their value of harmony, people from collectivist cultures will not say no directly but will say yes and perhaps give a subtle hint that it is not really a yes (Storti 1999: 94)

Storti says that in direct cultures, "People say what they mean and mean what they say; there is not need to read between the lines; it's best to tell it like it is; people are less likely to imply and more likely to say exactly what they are thinking; yes means yes" (Storti 1999: 97). In contrast, in indirect cultures, Storti says:

> People don't always say what they mean or mean exactly what they say; you have to read between the lines; people are more likely to suggest or imply than to come out and say what they think; you can't always tell it like it is (what if that upsets the other person?); yes may mean maybe or even no. (Storti 1999: 97)

These styles of verbal communication also carry with them the importance that the culture puts on "face." "Face" is the reputation of a person. To lose face results in embarrassment and a lost of standing in the community. In direct, individualist cultures, face is not that important.

Storti says, "Telling the truth is more important than sparing someone's feelings; honesty is the best policy; it's okay to say no and to confront people; people don't worry much about saving face; getting/giving information efficiently is the primary goal of the

communication exchange" (1999: 98). In indirect cultures, face tends to be very

important. Storti notes:

> Preserving harmony and saving face are key concerns; the truth, if it threatens
> harmony or someone's face, should be adjusted; one says what one thinks the
> other person wants to hear; it's not always proper to say no, disagree, or confront
> (that disturbs harmony); preserving/strengthening the personal bond is the goal of
> the communication exchange. (98)

To function in a country like this then one would clearly need to understand the value of

face as well as how to communicate and interact appropriately.

Storti's Analysis of the U. S. and Southeast Asia

Regarding the concept of the self, Storti put the US near the extreme of

individualism while Southeast Asia was near the extreme of collectivism (1999: 52).

U. S.	SEA

Individualist	Collectivist

Figure 3.1. Concept of self.

Regarding personal versus societal responsibility, the U. S. was on the extreme

edge of universalist, and Southeast Asia, though not at the extreme edge, showed very

strong leanings to a particularist perspective.

U. S.   SEA

Universalist   Particularist

Figure 3.2. Personal versus societal responsibility.

Regarding distinctions between subjective and objective, Storti put the U. S. on the extreme edge of "logic of the head" and Southeast Asia, though again not at the extreme edge, demonstrates a very strong preference for "logic of the heart" (1991: 95).

U. S.   SEA

Logic of the Head   Logic of the Heart

Figure 3.3. Subjective and objective.

Regarding the concept of time, the U. S. is on the extreme edge of a monochronic and Southeast Asia demonstrates a strong preference for a polychromic concept of time.

U. S.   SEA

Monochronic   Polychronic

Figure 3.4. Concept of time.

Regarding time and other people, Storti put the U. S. at the extreme edge, reflecting a preference for "one thing at a time." Southeast Asia demonstrated a very strong preference for "many things at once."

U. S.   SEA

_____

One Thing at a Time   Many Things at Once

Figure 3.5. Time and other people.

Regarding locus of control, Storti put the U. S. at the extreme edge, demonstrating an extremely strong view of internal locus of control. Southeast Asia reflects a moderate view on this issue, leaning only slightly toward external locus of control.

U. S.   SEA

_____

Internal   External
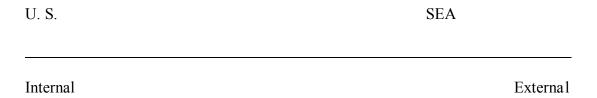
Figure 3.6. Locus of control.

Regarding degree of directness, the U. S. shows a strong preference for direct communication but is not at the extreme edge. Southeast Asia is near the extreme edge, demonstrating a strong preference for indirect forms of communication.

U. S.   SEA

_____

Direct   Indirect

Figure 3.7. Degree of directness.

Regarding the distinctions between high and low context, the U. S. is near the extreme edge of low context while Southeast Asia is near the extreme edge of high context.

U. S.   SEA

_____

Low Context   High Context

Figure 3.8. Role of context.

Regarding the importance of face, the U. S. is near the extreme end, demonstrating that face is not very important. Southeast Asia is at the opposite end, indicating that face is very important.

U. S.   SEA

_____

Face Less Important   Face More Important

Figure 3.9. Importance of face.

Power distance is the term used to describe how hierarchical a culture is. The greater the power distance the less likelihood that a subordinate is able to approach and interact with a person of higher standing. The U. S. has a strong preference for low power distance. Southeast Asia is near the opposite end, indicating a very high power distance in that culture.

U. S.   SEA

_____

Low   High

Figure 3.10. Power distance.

Attitude toward uncertainty is a continuum showing the ability of a culture to live with uncertainty or its preference for security and stability. The U. S. shows an extreme positive attitude toward uncertainty. Southeast Asia demonstrates a very moderate positive attitude toward uncertainty. This attitude toward uncertainty is the only area where both cultures are on the same side of the continuum.

U. S.   SEA

_____

Positive   Skeptical

Figure 3.11. Attitude toward uncertainty.

Attitude toward work reflects whether a culture values achievement or quality of life as the purpose of work. The U. S. demonstrates a strong but not extreme orientation toward achievement. Southeast Asia reflects a moderate orientation for quality of life.

                    U. S.   SEA

Achievement   Quality of Life

Figure 3.12. Attitude toward work.

Key to productivity is a continuum that measures the balance between results orientation or harmony orientation. A results-oriented culture values productivity over harmony. The U. S. has an extreme leaning toward results whereas Southeast Asia has a moderate preference for harmony.

U. S.   SEA

Results   Harmony

Figure 3.13. Key to productivity.

Source of status is a continuum that measures whether status in a culture is ascribed through birth or some other means or is achieved through work or some other measure of performance. The U. S. shows an extreme orientation for achieved status whereas Southeast Asia has a moderate orientation toward it being ascribed.

U. S.   SEA

_____

Achieved   Ascribed

Figure 3.14. Source of status.

Based on Storti's framework, American culture is very different from Southeast

Asian culture, and Figures 3.1 through 3.14 represent a large cultural distance. Of these

fourteen analyzed areas, the U. S. and Southeast Asia were on the same side of the

continuum on only one of them. On eight of the fourteen, both were near the extreme

edge of their preference, reflecting a near opposite perspective on these issues. On one,

the degree of directness, the U. S. demonstrates a strong but not extreme preference while

Southeast Asia still reflects an extreme preference for indirectness. In other areas such as

locus of control, attitude toward uncertainty, attitude toward work, key to productivity,

and source of status, the U. S. demonstrates an extreme preference while Southeast Asia

reflects a moderate preference toward the opposite. In all fourteen areas, at least one of

the cultures reflected an extreme preference. Neither culture reflected a moderate

preference in any single area. Of twenty-eight units of analysis, an extreme preference

was demonstrated twenty-one times, a strong preference twice, and a moderate

preference five times. These findings indicate that cross-culutral interactions between

these two cultures would be the most difficult ones to navigate.[19]

The cultural distance is somewhat magnified as well by the fact that Thailand was

never a colony of a foreign power. Jonathan Harger and Julian Spindler point out, "That

means that—unlike all the others—the Thais have never come under protracted, foreign

domination. Their culture is nearly entirely of domestic manufacture, incorporating

outside influences selectively" (1995: 20).

---

[19] One of the more insightful works that looks into Thai culture is written by Sunatree Komin, a Thai who conducted a government-sponsored ten-year research project on Thai culture. Komin (1991) recognizes nine value clusters in Thai culture: (1) ego-orientation expressed by face-saving, criticism avoidance, and consideration, (2) grateful relationship orientation expressed by reciprocal indebted goodness, (3) smooth interpersonal relationship orientation expressed by being caring, considerate, kind and helpful, responsive to situations and opportunities, self-controlled, tolerant-restrained, polite, humble, calm and cautious, content and socially related, (4) flexibility and adjustment orientation expressed by harmony and balances ego, power, and situation, (5) religio-psychical orientation expressed through a this-world orientation, religious forms of rituals, celebrations, and assimilation, (6) education and competence orientation that is expressed by means to economic end, (7) interdependent orientation expressed by community collaboration assimilation, (8) fun and pleasure orientation expressed by pleasant and smooth relationship, kindness, generosity, sympathy toward others, strangers, and foreigners, and (9) achievement-task orientation expressed through submission and good relation.

Local Overview

The research for this dissertation took place in Chiang Mai, a province and a city in northern Thailand. The province is home to 1.5 million people and over 700,000 live in the metropolitan area of the city.

King Mangrai founded Chiang Mai in 1296. He was attracted to the rich valley and the Ping River, which served as a trade route. He captured the city, renamed it, and made it his "new capital" (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 8). It was the capital of the kingdom of Lanna, which enjoyed a golden age throughout the 15th century. During this age the powerful inland kingdom came to control most of what now constitutes northern Thailand, northwestern Laos, the eastern Shan states of Burma, and Xishuangbanna in southern Yunnan (10).

The city fell to the Burmese forces of King Bayinnaung in 1558. From 1558 to 1774 Chiang Mai was under Burmese control. The fortunes of the city declined because the Burmese exploited the city-state for military purposes in their wars with Ayutthaya. Rebellion brought suppression. Northern Thai forces eventually drove the Burmese out; however the city was weakened to such an extent that it was totally abandoned (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 62).

Chao Kawila of Lampang repopulated Chiang Mai with local people and formally reestablished the city in 1796. Allied to the Siamese Thai, Chiang Mai renewed itself and grew stronger. During the 19th century, increasing Western interests in the teak forests of the north, however, forced King Chulalongkorn (Rama V) of Siam to take over the administration in 1892. In the second half of the century, the first Westerners as well as

large numbers of overseas Chinese established themselves in the valley (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 160).

Chiang Mai remained a quiet city until tourism brought the development boom of the 1970s and 1980s. The last twenty years of the 20th century saw the development of the modern city and consumer work culture (Baker and Phongpaichit 2005: 247). Chiang Mai has become something of a hubbub of missionary activity. When the Chinese government took control of Hong Kong in 1997, many mission agencies were nervous about what the future would hold and chose to relocate their base of operations to Chiang Mai. In response to the surge of foreigners, services and infrastructures were developed to meet the growing need. Grace International School, founded by Gene Folz, also founder of Cornerstone International Group (featured case study), was a part of this phenomenon. As Western-friendly businesses, schools, and English language churches were developed, more missionaries came. Many came when their children became teenagers and the parents wanted them to attend an American-style institution.

On 29 October 2001, six weeks after 9-11, a gunman killed a dozen people at a church in Pakistan. The end result of these attacks was that many missionaries, including an important missionary school, moved out of Pakistan and into Chiang Mai. The last ten years have seen a dramatic rise in expatriates, many missionaries, residing in Chiang Mai as a result of a natural flow of ideas, goods and persons. It started with concerns Chinese control over Hong Kong, then the development of a missionary friendly infrastructure which begets more missionaries which begets more missionary friendly infrastructure which brings in missionaries from all over Asia, particularly when faced with educational

or medical challenging circumstances. This dynamic is graphically demonstrated in figure 3.15.

Hong Kong to China ➡ Missionary Uncertainty ➡ Chiang Mai

Chiang Mai develops missionary infrastructure, schools, churches, counseling center, retreat centers, etc. ➡ MIssionaries continue to relocate to Chiang Mai when faced with other challenges

Figure 3.15. Why missionaries have congregated in Chiang Mai

CHAPTER 4

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS

Getting Started

As described in Chapter 1, this research project focused on one particular geographical context, Chiang Mai, Thailand, which was chosen for the following reasons:

1. Chiang Mai has many missionaries using business as a mission strategy. This circumstance allowed me to access intriguing case studies as well as more easily determine the differences and similarities among the BAM projects.

2. Thailand is an "open" country meaning that missionaries do not have the security concerns that are common in restricted-access nations. Though many missionaries still try to keep a low profile and some are even paranoid, Thailand is more open than in many places.

3. Due to Thailand's tolerance of Christian missionaries and its openness to entrepreneurial business development, many different types of BAM projects have surfaced. This situation means that I can research different types of businesses in close proximity.

4. A focus on a single context is desirable because of the number of complex variables involved in operating businesses in developing parts of the world.

5. I have traveled in various parts of Thailand and have had extended contact with many BAM practitioners there.

6. Chiang Mai is a relatively small city with a strong logistical infrastructure, allowing businesses to be started and providing an efficient research environment in which I could research numerous projects without significant time delaying challenges that one would face in other parts of the world.

Research Challenges

In addition to the interviews that I conducted that informed my case studies, I interviewed people involved in BAM but who did not want their business used as a case study in this project. I also interviewed people who were living and working in surrounding Asian countries and were in Chiang Mai temporarily. These interviews helped me to evaluate which aspects of my research in Chiang Mai were unique to this particular sociohistorical context and which aspects might have broader application. The majority of those people I interviewed were engaged in business in Chiang Mai or nearby areas within Thailand. In many cases, these people allowed me to interview employees and other people connected with their company but did not want me to feature them or their businesses, even if I changed the name. Therefore, publishing their companies as case studies under pseudonyms was not possible. Nevertheless, the learning gleaned from these interviews was very helpful in understanding what worked and what did not. These

findings helped me to see sharp contrasts among the BAM enterprises of which most of the practitioners were not even aware.

Companies or missionaries did not want to be involved in this research project for three main reasons:[20]

1. Security—fear of being exposed as an undercover missionary,

2. Insecurity—fear of poor performance and financial challenges being exposed,

3. Competition—fear of divulging too much information to the other missionary-operated businesses with whom they were in competition.

Despite the fact that Thailand is an open country that has freedom of religion and grants religious activities visas to foreigners, many missionaries were adamant that they must not be known as missionaries for a few reasons. First, Chiang Mai has developed an infrastructure that supports Westerners quite well with Western restaurants, and, for missionaries in particular, Christian schools, and international English-speaking churches. As a result Chiang Mai has become a hub for mission agencies pulling in a lot of missionaries from other countries. I interviewed numerous missionaries who had transferred to Thailand from other Asian countries whose governments were notably more hostile to Christianity. Many of these missionaries had lived for years, even

---

[20] In some cases, all three reasons applied and in others just one.

decades, in these other countries and had become accustomed to hiding their missionary identity and convinced that this concealment oriented approach was superior. Therefore, many of these missionaries were security conscious due to their experiences in other countries.

A second reason for the secrecy preference is that many mission agencies do not distinguish among Asian countries in how they talk to and interact with their missionaries. For example, they still use coded terminology in all meetings, emphasize encryption when using e-mail (because e-mails can get inadvertently forwarded to missionaries in closed and hostile countries), and create an environment that obliges concealment in mentality and reality. Therefore, many missionaries, even though they have never lived and worked in a nation outside of Thailand, have adopted the *cloak and dagger* techniques of their colleagues in closed and hostile countries.

A third reason that missionaries are secretive in Chiang Mai is because they believe secrecy is necessary in order to be effective. Frequently, these missionaries are attempting to reach the middle-class Thais, the most unreached population segment within China. They point out that missionaries have been in Thailand for centuries and have had little to no influence among middle-class Thais. They note that missionaries

have been quite successful among the tribal groups of the north but have relatively no

impact on ethnic Thais. The tribal people are of very low socioeconomical status in

Thailand and are heavily discriminated against.[21]

As a result they argue that missionaries are irrevocably associated in the Thai

mind with the poor and lowly, which, they say, is an automatic impediment to having an

effective ministry. Many of them go into business because they believe that business will

enable them to be accepted by the middle-class Thais. They can then use this acceptance

to influence them with the gospel. They contend that they will lose this acceptance if the

middle-class Thais know that they are missionaries. Therefore, for the sake of the

mission, many missionaries think it is necessary to conceal their missionary identity.[22]

---

[21] As noted in the PACTEC Asia case study, there are the same amount of Christians among the tribal groups as among the Thai, even though there are only one million tribal people and sixty-two million Thais.

[22] Often the missionaries were extremely careful to conceal their missionary identity. For example, I met one missionary in a public restaurant where we openly discussed his ministry. A week later I met with another missionary in the same restaurant and asked him about his ministry. His eyes and body gesture immediately communicated that he was very alarmed. He leaned forward, stared me in the eyes and said, "We never use that word [ministry]." In another meeting behind closed doors in an office across a busy street from the companies' operations and their employees, I asked two missionaries, "So you are with Kerriso [pseudonym]." Kerriso is the name of a platform organization established by a large North American mission agency. I had been connected with these missionaries through their U.S.-based supervisors so they already knew that I was aware of their affiliation with this mission agency. They looked shocked, glanced at one another, and appeared speechless. Finally, one of them said, "We don't want to talk about that."

Insecurity was another reason why groups did not want to be involved in this research project. Interviews and data analysis brought out that these missionaries were concerned about public knowledge of their lack of accomplishments. Often their concern was regarding financial performance. Often, the missionaries had underestimated the costs of running the business and the corresponding difficulty of covering operating expenses through generated income. Sometimes, they had previously had a battle with their mission agency to get the business strategy approved. It would not be helpful for these missionaries to now admit that things were not going so well. Other times, they had raised funds from friends and family and did not want to anger those who might believe the missionaries had overpromised and underdelivered.

Other times, the insecurity had to do with their missional results, generally relating to conversions. Usually, these missionaries evaluated their ministries and believed that others would evaluate their ministries according to the number of conversions. Because they had little or no conversions, they did not want to be evaluated through the case study research process or be included in a document that others might be able to access. Even though the use of pseudonyms was always an alternative, they did not feel comfortable with the evaluation.

The third reason the missionaries would not participate as a case study is due to competition. Being involved in this research process, they believed, would inevitably mean that their competitors would gain an advantage by having access to the information. Many of these businesses were in competition with other missionary-operated businesses. Even though I contended that I could use pseudonyms and that any published report would be at the minimum a year in the future, they still were not comfortable being

involved. A few pointed out that I could intentionally or inadvertently divulge the information before publication. Several said that they had been through similar processes and that the people who talked to them then used the information to start a competing business. In other words, a missionary talked to another missionary about a business, then copied the business strategy and created a competitor. One missionary peppered our interview with, "When you open your business in Chiang Mai." I explained repeatedly that I had no intention of moving to Chiang Mai much less starting a business there. However, he had apparently been so burned through past experiences that he did not believe me. Several times, I interviewed competitors who were not aware that I had interviewed the other. In one situation they both accused the other of corporate espionage. In two other cases, I explained that I had interviewed their competitor. In both cases each side tried to win me to their side. In short, competition was fierce in Chiang Mai, which caused several missionaries operating businesses not to want to participate as a case study.[23]

---

[23] Later in this chapter, I address in more detail the dynamics of competition. The purpose of the discussion here is simply to say that it was a significant research challenge.

The Five Phases of This Research Project

This research project was conducted in five phases. The first phase consisted of networking and snowball sampling completed via e-mail, phone interviews, and in-person interviews in the United States prior to my arrival in Thailand in May 2007. The second phase was conducted within the first two weeks of my arrival in Thailand in May 2007. In this phase, I investigated the business operations that emerged from the networking and snowball sampling process and selected case studies that fit my specific research criteria. The third phase consisted of in-depth, on-site research of the selected BAM projects as well as in-person interviews with other BAM practitioners in the area. This phase lasted for three months from May to August 2007. The fourth phase consisted of continued monitoring of the selected BAM projects via e-mail and phone interviews once I returned to the States after departing Thailand. This phase lasted from August to November 2007. This phase also included analysis of written documents obtained during or after my visit to Thailand that gave me insights into my case studies, business in Thailand, and BAM practice in Chiang Mai. The fifth and final phase consisted of on-site research back in Thailand in November 2007. This phase involved confirming validity of data analysis with the case studies, addressing confidentiality issues, and concluding the monitoring phase of the research process. Including the last two phases in the research process enabled me to have a "bird's-eye" view of the respective operations for a total of six months. This long-term perspective was very helpful as many possibilities and problems emerged during this time frame that would have been missed had these research phases not been included. Figure 4.1 demonstrates the five research phases.

Phase 1: Networking and Snowball Sampling

Using established contacts to explore potential research subjects is a common research procedure referred to as "networking" (Robson 2002: 53-54). I communicated with my contacts in Thailand, who served as a "convenient sample". Robson notes, "Convenient sampling involves choosing the nearest and most convenient persons to act as correspondents. The process is continued until the required sample size has been reached (265). I told my contacts what type of business I was seeking, and asked what they knew. Through the networking process, I exchanged 148 emails with 47 different people, conducted 11 phone interviews, and four in-person interviews prior to arrival in Thailand in May 2007.

Figure 4.1. The five research phases.

The purpose of this first phase of interviews and e-mails was to engage in snowball sampling, a process when interviewees are "used as informants to identify other members of the population, who are themselves used as informants, and so on" (Robson 2006: 265-66). As Robson notes, "Snowball sampling is useful when there is difficulty in identifying members of the population, e.g. when this is a clandestine group" (266).

Phase 2: Selection of Case Studies

As a result of the pre-arrival networking and snowball sampling process, I made appointments for twelve in-person interviews during my first week in Thailand. This second phase had two main purposes:

1. To ascertain whether or not the communicants fit my research criteria, and

2. To determine whether or not they were willing and able to engage in the research process.

Ascertaining whether or not the communicants fit my research criteria was important as the term business as mission (BAM) means many different things to many different people and an on-site interview and analysis were necessary to ensure that what

lay behind the initial conversations was not just a shell or a mere sideline hobby. As mentioned in Chapter 1, my research selection criteria were as follows:

The businesses selected for study have the primary purpose of engaging in mission, though the definition of mission may vary for each business.

The businesses are founded and/or led by an expatriate Christian who self identifies as a missionary.[24]

The businesses are distinct from one another in what type of business they are engaged.

The businesses have Thai employees and are seeking to bring Christian Thais into leadership.

While it may appear that one could find out via e-mail and phone interviews whether or not Thai Christians are involved in the business, it was actually more complicated. For example, one person communicated via e-mail that his companyhad Thai employees and that they were seeking to bring them into leadership. Nevertheless, an on-site visit revealed that there were no Thai Christians in the company and involving them was only an idea rather than a current reality. This inconsistency was also true for

---

[24] Johnson and Rundle state that one of the things that differentiate BAM from other forms of Christian enterprise development is that in BAM the business is generally founded and managed by expatriates who then hire local people (2006: 25).

the way many people characterized their business operations. Several of my communicants oversold what they were doing. Furthermore, because my third reason required that there be some variation in style of businesses was an integral aspect of the research project, I had to have a solid understanding of what was truly being done. It was not possible to discover this over the phone or internet. On-site visits were necessary to determine the appropriate fit for the research project. During this initial snowball sampling and selection phase, I did on-site visits to twelve different BAM companies and conducted eighteen in-person interviews.

Determining whether or not potential research subjects were willing and able to engage in the research process was necessary because several potential complications arose in attempting to do thorough research of these companies. In the beginning I had two primary research concerns:

Getting BAM practitioners to put aside their security concerns and be open and willing to be an object of a research investigation was difficult. Many missionaries operating businesses do so because they do not want to be viewed as missionaries. Revealing their missionary purposes is perceived as hindering their strategic method. Other missionaries are fearful of increased scrutiny from governmental inspections if they are not viewed as normal business operators.

Getting BAM practitioners to be open regarding their financial status and situation was difficult. Similar to many businesses, they do not like people knowing that they are making "too much" money or that they are losing money. Revealing their financial reality could also cause the company to lose competitive advantage.

To determine the extent of these potential research challenges and to hedge their potential effects, I had to build trust through in-person interviews and on-site analysis. Both of these issues were larger and more extensive than I had previously thought. Small business operators and missionaries tend to be suspicious of research, concerned about security, and generally have a hard time seeing how they will benefit from the process. For missionaries who are operating small businesses, these complications are magnified. Nevertheless, getting to know people on a personal basis substantially helped to build trust and encouraged many business missionaries to work very cooperatively with me.

After visiting these twelve businesses and conducting eighteen on-site interviews as well as reviewing published materials such as Web sites and newsletters, I formally asked six businesses to partner with me as case studies in this research project. Initially all of them agreed. Unfortunately, however, after extensively researching one of the businesses, security concerns arose that prevented the data from being a published part of this project.[25] Figure 4.2 shows the five selected case studies.

The case studies were selected because they fulfilled my specific research criteria, we had developed a positive, mutually beneficial relationship, and they were willing to

---

[25] Though I cannot report on them as a case study nor reference the organization or its line of work, the findings from this part of the research informs my summary findings chapter.

cooperate with me at the level necessary to fulfill the stated objectives of this research

project. Though I initially only had one criterion for diversity in the sample, namely that

they are involved in separate industries, after arrival in Thailand I realized the benefit of

having as heterogeneous a sample as possible.

QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Figure 4.2. The five selected case studies.

One factor is that competition among businesses, even missionary-operated

businesses, emerged as a significant research challenge. Robson says that heterogeneous

samples are a result of "a deliberate strategy of selecting individuals varying widely on

the characteristic(s) of interest" (Robson 2002: 266). To lessen concerns over

competition, I constructed a heterogeneous sampling strategy so that the businesses not

only varied by industry, but also in terms of nationality, denominational identity, and

business purpose. This diversity not only assuaged some of the concerns over competition but also enabled me to investigate BAM in Chiang Mai through a range of situations.

Yin states that, in case study research, the idea is not to get a certain sample size but to look for replication (Yin 1997: 47). Creswell notes that in research one needs to have a "theoretical sampling of different groups to maximize the similarities and the differences of information" (Creswell 1994: 12). Therefore, my study benefits from the fact that I have created a diverse body of case studies because this diverse body impedes artificial replication caused by the situation where the various operations manifest similarities simply due to their homogenous characteristics.

Phase 3: On-Site Research of Case Studies and Other BAM Practitioners

In this third phase, I commenced research of my selected case studies which involved a complete overview of the operations as detailed in Chapter 1. As explained in Chapter 1, I analyzed each of the case studies through three theoretical frameworks: (1)

Rundle and Sudyk's BAM financing model, (2) Mejudhon's Thai contextualization

model, and (3) Ken Eldred's Kingdom Business framework.[26]

The research process had a flexible design and was definitely an organic process.

I sought information from all levels of the organization: interviews with the founding

missionary, managers, Thai employees, missionary colleagues, Thai employees who

converted to Christianity, as well as informal interviews during a Bible study gathering or

organization event. I also sought input from outsiders who were familiar with the

organization or the people operating the organization. Many of these interviews were

very effective as they gave me insights that produced a new set of questions. On occasion

the insider/outsider information was obviously in conflict. Though I was not always in a

position to determine precisely what had happened or what was going on, this interaction

enabled me to get a deeper and more thorough look at many of the organizations. Most of

these outsider perspectives were offered on an anonymous basis, and I interviewed

several of them numerous times.

I also interviewed other people in each of my case studies, generally the lead

person, several times. Creswell notes that research includes "the constant comparison of

data with emerging categories" (Creswell 1994: 12). Therefore, on many occasions I

---

[26] These three lenses are discussed more extensively in Chapter 1.

repeated interviews to compare the data and isolate the similarities and differences of

emerging categories. Figure 4.3 notes the number of people interviewed and the number

of interviews conducted as well as categories for the people interviewed.

Total Interviews	People Interviewed	Missionaries Interviewed	Missionaries in Business Interviewed
128	104	35	29

Managers Thai Employees	Other Thais	Thai Christians
66	3	26

Figure 4.3. Interviews conducted.

During this phase, I became continually exposed to various other BAM projects

and practitioners. I was clearly not able to conduct extensive case study level research of

every one of these operations, but I did interview thirty-eight people involved in BAM

projects who were not a part of my case studies and of whom I became aware only after

commencing research of my case studies.[27] I classify this group of people differently than the aforementioned people who gave me outsider perspectives to my case studies because these thirty-eight people did not give me specific information about my case studies; rather, they provided insights into their practical experiences, the challenges they faced, and BAM in Chiang Mai. These interviews gave me significant insights into the overall process and the various dynamics of BAM in Chiang Mai.

At times, I felt as if I had stepped into a real-life soap opera as many practitioners openly complained about one another, talked about how the other was detrimental to the work of the kingdom, and accused one another of a litany of wrongdoings. The most common complaint was that they stole trade secrets and spied on one another. These findings on the competitiveness among missionaries in BAM enterprise and other insights from these interviews are included in the final chapter of missiological insights. Thankfully, though, a lot of good things are happening and some contrasts became clear between the companies that were constantly struggling and those that were spiritually fruitful, socially beneficial, culturally relevant, and financially sustainable.

---

[27] These people would be a result of convenience sampling and the snowball networking process described earlier in the chapter.

Interviewing Thai employees had to be done in a culturally knowledgeable and sensitive way. To offset the complications of the direct-indirect communication gap, the meekness of the Thai people, their hierarchical orientation, and other aspects, I chose a four-point strategy. First, I chose a religiously heterogeneous sample from each company. The employees selected included non-Christians who had worked at the company for a long time, Christians who had converted to Christianity after working at the company for a long time, Christians who had worked at the company a long time, Christians who had worked at the company a short time, and Christians who had converted after working at the company but had only been there a short time. I also interviewed one Thai non-Christian who did not work at the company and had never previously attended a meeting at this company. Selecting a heterogeneous sample would create an environment for the maximum diversity of answers possible. Under these conditions, if I could not get honest feedback, then at least I could probably get diverse feedback that would allow me to diagnose deeper, underlying difficulties with the meetings.

The second step in my offsetting meekness strategy was not to ask what this person thinks but to ask this person what he or she thinks others think. In other words when talking to Paveena, I did not ask Paveena what Paveena thinks but asked Paveena what Aran thinks. This communication technique allows for Paveena to communicate indirectly what she thinks, which is what Thais are culturally accustomed to doing. The Thai are more than willing to share what they think and will be quite negative. They will, however, generally only do so in such an indirect manner.

Third, I gave the interviewees a blank sheet of paper and an envelope addressed to me. I told them that they could submit anything they wanted to me in an anonymous

fashion. Again my goal here was to create an indirect method of communication and added the condition of anonymity in hopes of creating a more effective atmosphere for arriving at what people truly thought. Expatriates in corporate offices had told me that under some circumstances this method could be effective.[28]

The fourth and final step was to involve my Thai translator as my partner in the interviews. My translator had an extensive background of working with native English speakers, was familiar with the cultural differences, and was well informed of the objectives and goals of my research. I explained to her that I wanted her to be alert and help me to determine any underlying issues that were not coming to the surface. These four steps gave me confidence that I would be able to work through the Thai cultural preference for meekness and indirect communication process in order to get a thorough

---

[28] I followed this practice in all of my interviews but never got an anonymous letter and, in general, did not find them necessary. The situations in which other people mentioned receiving anonymous letters tended to be very hostile conditions in which the point of the letters was to invoke emotional damage. Nevertheless, I believe that presenting the possibility to my interviewees assured them that I was seeking the truth. While the Thai in all of my interviews definitely followed the indirect communication pattern, I found ascertaining their general feelings and thoughts about their work environments rather easy. Doing multiple interviews in each location helped but, in general, the tones of the interviews were consistent throughout an organization. If an organization had problems, they came out fairly quickly and easily. Also I discerned when people were intentionally giving superficial answers more easily than anticipated. For example, when interviewees were "going through the motions," their answers were somewhat flowery and not very full of substance. An interviewee might start the interview talking in very flowery fashion about how wonderful the company and the manager are but just a few minutes later subtly reveal frustrations.

perspective on the dynamics in each interview. This offsetting meekness strategy is demonstrated in Figure 4.4.

Offsetting Meekness

Step 1	Religious Diversity
Step 2	Ask interviewees what others think (indirect)
Step 3	Anonymous submission (indirect avoidance)
Step 2	Translator at interview

Figure 4.4. Offsetting meekness.

Phase 4: Ongoing Monitoring and Data Analysis

Phase four occurred after I returned from my initial trip to Thailand in August 2007 and lasted until my second trip in November 2007. This three-month gap gave me the opportunity to analyze much of the data I obtained during the trip but was unable to analyze sufficiently while there. It also created a time lapse in which I could observe the results of the short-term plans of the various businesses. The primary means of monitoring the organizations during this period was through a basic, monthly e-mail exchange. Sometimes the reports triggered follow-up e-mails and, on five occasions, phone interviews. Knowing that my case study partners had already committed a lot of valuable time and energy to this project, I kept the monitoring to a minimum and the monthly e-mail form as simple as possible. Despite these necessities, the monitoring

period was very profitable and enabled me to gain valuable insights that otherwise I would not have been able to receive. Table 4.1 shows the five questions that served as a basis for the monthly monitoring. Generally, the respondents gave brief but informative responses; however, on occasion, the communications gave them the opportunity to articulate in an extensive manner what was going on in the process. Later, many of them told me that the writing of the e-mails helped them to see clearly what was really going on around them.

Table 4.1. Questions for Monthly Monitoring

What is the best thing that has happened this month in your business and/or ministry?
What is the greatest challenge you or your company has faced this month?
What would you do differently if you could have?
What do you need to happen in the next month?
Do you have any special prayer requests?

Yin states that three general strategies for analyzing case study data (2003: 111-15). For this research, the most appropriate strategy is reliance on theoretical propositions, which have been put forth through the theoretical frameworks. Yin endorses specific analytic techniques once data are gathered from case studies (2003: 120-22). For this research, the techniques of explanation building and cross-case synthesis were utilized (2003). Explanation building is appropriate for understanding why the nature and status of the businesses are the way they are.

Yin suggests the following series of iterations in the process (2003: 121-22):

1. making an initial theoretical statement or an initial proposition;

2. comparing the findings of an initial case against such statements or propositions;

3. revising the statement or proposition;

4. comparing other details of the case against the revision;

5. comparing the revision to the facts of a *second, third, or more* cases; and,

6. repeating this process as many times as needed. During the process researchers are wise to consider other "plausible or rival explanations" (2003: 122).

Creswell also suggests a helpful "general process" that can be integrated with my case study approach for data analysis and interpretation (2003: 190-95). First, he suggests researchers *organize and prepare the data*. Second, researchers are to *read through all the data* to obtain a general understanding of the case. Third, through a *coding process*, researchers begin a detailed analysis by organizing the material into "chunks." Fourth, researchers *describe* the interview data gathered from the case generating a small number of themes or categories. Fifth, researchers start thinking about how to *represent* the

findings in a case study narrative including the development of graphs, figures, and tables. Finally, they *interpret* that data and share the lessons learned.

My essential method to distill and analyze the data for each case included the following steps:

1. keeping a full record of all interviews[29];

2. reading, rereading and evaluating all interviews, reports, and materials gleaned from research;

3. reading over all interviews, reports, and materials looking for general themes and patterns;

4. "chunking up" the data according to the general themes, issues, categories that pertained to my study's propositions; and,

5. basic coding of the data and then drawing out specific insights or quotes. I endeavor to describe and analyze each case "as is" so that each case can stand on its own.

---

[29] Many of my interviewees did not want to be recorded; therefore, a literal transcription of the interviews was not possible in all cases. Robson states that it is "essential that you *take a full record of the interview* [original emphasis]. This can be from notes made at the time and/or from a recording of the interview" (Robson 2002: 274). During all interviews I took extensive notes even when recording because I knew that technology is both a blessing and a curse. When a recording was not possible, I made a full record of the interview from the notes I took during the interview.

Phase 5: Concluding Research of Case Studies in Thailand

For this final phase, I returned to Thailand in November 2007 to bring an end to the ongoing monitoring of the case studies. During this time I reconnected with the directors and managers of all my case studies.[30] I interviewed them again to understand better what had transpired during the off-site monitoring phase of the research project. I also went over the rough drafts of the case studies to ensure accuracy, to fill in missing information gaps, and to confirm that confidentiality expectations were being met.

During this on-site review, I also interviewed (or re-interviewed) other employees, most notably three who had become Christians after working seven years in BAM companies. I also interviewed several other people involved in BAM projects outside of my case studies whom I had interviewed extensively during phase three of the research. Phase five gave me a fuller view of what was going on in the companies and allowed me to answer questions that emerged during data analysis and after reflection on my on-site research experiences. This return trip significantly enhanced the research findings and allowed me to confirm the validity of many of the emerging categories through the research process.

---

[30] Unfortunately, during this time I was not able to connect with Terry Collins, the director of the Thai Leadership Development Centre, because he and his wife Robyn had to return to Australia due to health problems.

CHAPTER 5
CASE STUDY OF ASIA COMMUNICATIONS AND TRAINING SERVICES
COMPANY

Introduction

In this chapter I will present the case study of Asia Communication and Training

Services Company. The first part of the chapter is a descriptive narrative of the case taken

from the data collected during the research process. The second part is an analysis of the

case study through the three theoretical frameworks selected for the study.

Asia Communications and Training Services Company is an American operated

printing company based in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Kendall Cobb, an American who grew

up as a missionary child in Madagascar and Germany, cofounded the company in 1999

with his father, Alvin Cobb, and cousin, Walter Nigh. Asia Communications and

Training Services Company goes by the acronym ACTS Co. and anyone familiar with the

Bible will understand the double meaning. ACTS was the acronym of choice for the

name because it is a narrative recounting of the missionary passion and vision of the early

church and the book has no end, or, as Kendall says, "There is no amen" (Cobb 2007a).

According to the founders, the mission of the book of Acts lives on and ACTS Co.

aspires to be a part of that ongoing mission. The name and purpose of the organization

are tightly intertwined, just as its business and mission are (Cobb 2007a).

Alvin Cobb was an independent missionary supported by his church, Bible Way Tabernacle in Middleton, Idaho. Kendall followed in his father's footsteps and also became an independent missionary through the same church. In 1986 Kendall moved to Hong Kong where, among other things, he became a middleman in underground publishing, supplying Christian missionaries and pastors with Christian materials generally Bibles, printed in Chinese. When he learned of a need for materials, he would approach a Chinese printer and after cursory greetings would have an interesting conversation:

Kendall: We need 1,000 copies of this book (handing a Bible to the owner of the printing company).

Owner: This is an illegal book. I can't print this.

Kendall: What kind of surcharge would there be?

Owner: Around 25 percent. After all, I'll have to do it at night and I only have one other person whom I trust enough to work with me on this.

Kendall: Deal. (Cobb 2007a).

Through these experiences, Kendall developed an extensive network of Christians who needed published materials. As the years passed, he learned not only more about the printing business in Asia but "also became increasingly convinced of the necessity and power of the written word to spread the gospel message into the darkest corners of Asia" (Cobb 2007a).

In 1995 Kendall and his family relocated from Hong Kong to Idaho for three years. In July 1998, Kendall and Alvin moved to Chiang Mai, Thailand, and shortly after arriving received a large purchase order for printed materials from World Missionary

Press. The order was so large Kendall and Alvin realized that it could partially subsidize the purchase of their own printing equipment. Though Alvin still had to invest in the enterprise, this large purchase order helped to get things going. Instead of using other printers, as Kendall had done in China, they started their own printing company with their own equipment (Cobb 2007a).

Using their extensive networks of missionaries and the growing expatriate community in Thailand (discussed in Chapter 3), ACTS Co. quickly became a profitable enterprise, serving missionaries who carried their printed documents throughout Asia, including but not limited to Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Turkmenistan, India, and Bhutan. As of November 2007 they had printed over 5,000,000 documents in thirty-four languages (ACTS Co. 2007).

After a few years in Thailand, ACTS Co. started to develop a local client base and expanded into the Thai market while continuing to serve the English-speaking expatriate community, particularly missionaries. ACTS Co. grew progressively through the years but experienced a moral crisis in 2003 that disrupted operations. Through this time period, Kendall gained majority control of the company (70 percent). Unfortunately, sales dropped during this period as missionaries, unclear of what was going on, decided to discontinue working with Kendall. Over time, however, Kendall was able to rebuild trust and most clients came to see the crisis situation as an isolated case uncharacteristic of the organization or what it represented.

The stated goal and aim at ACTS Co. is expressed in their motto "to print for those who serve" (Cobb 2007b). They say they are providing quality work with a competitive price, in the shortest amount of time (Cobb 2007b). This motto is based on

their desire to "help those who basically help others, however, not limited just to this aspect" (Cobb 2007b). Though their primary mission is still *to provide Christian literature to Christian organizations around Southeast Asia* approximately 20 percent of their business comes from non-Christian-related businesses in Thailand and they are serving businesses and churches in environments as diverse as corporate America and rural villages in Laos (Cobb 2007b).

They are different from most other printing services because "[o]ur driving factor is not for getting rich or making a name for ourselves. Our driving factor is to be a part of a project that will bless others for years and years to come, through the printed Word" (Cobb 2007b).

They state openly that they are "a Christian service provider, and have been blessed to serve many organizations, individuals and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that follow the teachings of the greatest man who ever lived, Jesus Christ" (ACTS Co. 2008). They also make clear that they serve those organizations, individuals, companies and NGOs that do not consider themselves Christian, or who have projects that are not Christian based, whether business or humanitarian. However, to preserve the Christian mission of the organization, they reserve the right not to print anything they find that is detrimental to the overall well-being of people.

From a business perspective this openness gives them what is called "brand control." From a ministry perspective their openness means that they only support projects that are congruent with their overall Christian mission. For example, ACTS Co. will not print materials that promote Buddhism from a Buddhist point of view. They do print materials that explain or promote the understanding of Buddhism, but not materials

that are seeking to advance the cause of Buddhism. This means that they print materials on Buddhism that helps Christians to understand Buddhism better, but will not print materials that serve to promote Buddhism or could be use as tools to proselytize people to become adherents of Buddhism (Cobb 2007c).

One of the passions of ACTS Co. is to help Asian-based missionaries succeed in raising funds and retaining donors. Many faith missionaries who live on the donations from individual supporters are on tight budgets with not a lot of discretionary spending available for glossy newsletters and prayer cards. By understanding their unique needs and offering high-quality printing at a reasonable price, ACTS Co. is able to help them succeed. One missionary acknowledged that for years they had used black and white newsletters in order to avoid extra costs. After consulting with Kendall and realizing the potential of higher quality materials, they decided to print an eight-page color newsletter. Their monthly income jumped 40 percent following the mail out of the new newsletter. ACTS Co. frequently offers such first-time clients a reduced price, so they can personally experience the additional benefits without being concerned about higher costs. Once they realize that their approach is truly a win-win, value-creating opportunity, they become long-term clients.

In the beginning, Kendall says that they started with a "missionary mentality," which he described as "not enough attention to the financial and technical aspects of the business" (Cobb 2007c). They tended to give things away and thought they should not "make money." They wanted to help people and the idea that it was "wrong to make money and help" was something that they had to overcome. They had to learn to reorient

themselves in order to "be professional in business and not just in the mission" (Cobb 2007c).

Four main changes were required in order to move away from the "missionary mentality." The first was beginning to understand how a well-functioning profitable business actually enhanced the missionaries they aspired to serve. An example is the aforementioned benefits of quality products for their customers in being able to retain donors and raise funds. Serving more people with high-quality merchandise with reasonable margins obviously helped their business (Cobb 2007c).

Second, they realized that they would frequently give quotes to people and not follow up to find out why the people never did business with them. They have realized that follow-up is essential for retaining customers. Third, in a culturally related observation, they realized that the Thai business culture highly valued appropriate dress. Thai business people have more formal and stricter cultural expectations for business attire than is common in many informal and laid-back business environments in the United States. To reach that market and to be considered an appropriate manager by subordinates, they had to learn to dress appropriately (Cobb 2007c).

A fourth and yet another culturally related observation is that Kendall noticed that the Thai do not view cleanliness of their operating environment in the same way as Westerners. However, maintaining printing equipment as well as a safe and efficient working environment required that ACTS CO. Ltd. be conducted according to strict cleanliness guidelines. In this case and contrary to the last point, the expatriate managers of ACTSCO Ltd. made a conscious choice to expose the Thai to a culturally different approach. They were able to operate contrary to the culture effectively because they

understood it was culturally different and knew they had to explain their reasons and help implement the new approach to cleanliness (Cobb 2007c).

Through the years they have become more intentional about the business side and have become increasingly more successful. Previously, they had no annual objectives nor an organizational mission statement and a nonprofessional family member had always handled the accounting. Although ACTS Co. had come a long way from where they were, they were still seeking to progress in terms of their business sophistication. They had sought out and contracted with a consultant, Paul Rakowski, a retired project manager from IBM, to review their processes, procedures, policies, and organizational statements in order to become more effective in their operations. They hired a professional accountant to manage their books, created a new marketing position, and hired another administrative staff employee. Their most profitable month in their nine-year history was June 2007. Things are on the way up for ACTS Co. In October 2007 they added two new employees, raising the total to twenty-six and purchased a high-quality, high speed color photo copier that will allow them to service small quantity clients with purchase order needs of under twenty copies (Cobb 2007e).[31]

---

[31] ACTS Co. has 26 employees. As of February 2008 25 of them are Christians. Eight have converted to Christianity through their involvement with the company. The others were Christians at the time they were hired.

In July 2007, ACTS Co. made a bold move into a new business area by buying a radio station. Chiang Mai has a large expatriate community who like to listen to English radio because understanding Thai is difficult for them; in addition many Thai business professionals living there also listen to English radio in order to improve their foreign language. Despite a large market for local English radio in July 2007, only one English language radio station was available. The call letters of this radio station spell out an obscene word that refers to women's breasts. The language and music of the radio station are sexually explicit (Cobb 2007e).

ACTS Co. not only saw a business opportunity to meet a large market with another radio station but also saw a legitimate ministry opportunity, namely exposing Thai business professionals and Western expatriates to a English language alternative to the single sexually explicit English language radio station available (Cobb 2007d). To accomplish this goal ACTS Co. bought a secular radio station with three partners, with ACTS Co. having 50 percent ownership in the acquisition. Kendall had had a long-standing business relationship with the owner of the radio station who frequently coordinated concerts in Chiang Mai by supplying him with brochures, posters, and other printed material necessary for promoting and coordinating the events. ACTS Co. purchased the radio station, upgraded the transmitter so that it would have a 30 km radius, and implemented new technology so that the radio station could be broadcast over the Internet. They began the process of changing the radio station from a secular Thai radio station to a Christian English language station. After a couple of months, the English language radio was on from 5:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. and the music was approximately 50 percent Christian. They are currently looking for a Thai radio manager

who will finish the process of changing the radio station over to English language and Christian music.

To complement its printing business, ACTS Co. started a second company called ACTS Multimedia Co. that produces short videos. Primarily, they will aim to develop promotional videos for Christian missionaries and organizations. This new venture has three Thai investors who own 70 percent of the company. In Thailand, foreigners from a nation with an amity agreement with the Thai government can own 100 percent of a company; however a foreign controlled company cannot own land. Because this company has majority Thai ownership, it can own land. They have purchased a five-acre lot where they hope to move ACTS Co.'s printing offices in the future.

For nine years ACTS Co. has rented the same building—a large facility that has three addresses and three different landowners. In September 2007 a Thai man purchased one-third of the building and immediately informed ACTS Co. that within the next six months they would have to move out of the building. The building was three years old when they moved in, and ACTS Co. were the first occupants. In retrospect, Kendall says if they could have chosen differently, they "may have purchased the building in the beginning." The threats turned out to be empty when the new landlord realized he would have great difficulty renting out one-third of a building. The story is representative, however, of the challenges and changes that come with doing business, especially in a developing country, and the need for ACTS Co. to secure more permanent facilities they can control.

Case Analysis

To analyze the case, I return to my three research questions and the accompanying theoretical framework.

Research Question #1

My first research question is, "What is the nature and status of the businesses' financial arrangements?" The research proposition that undergirds this question is as follows: Generating start-up capital and means of financial sustainability in BAM projects are not as straightforward as in normal business operations. The theoretical framework that I used to analyze the financial arrangements of the businesses was Rundle and Sudyk's funding a kingdom business model.[32]

Of the four types of funding proposed by Rundle and Sudyk, three are worth mentioning in reference to ACTS Co. The first type of missionary funding model is the missionary-funded business when the missionary and/or mission agency owns the company. Typically it is started with funds from the missionary's personal reserves or by raising donations from financial supporters. The third type is privately owned and funded.

---

[32] For more information on my research propositions, question, and theoretical framework, see the relevant discussion in Chapter 1.

These businesses are generally formed when mission agencies form an alliance with missional business professionals and match them with kingdom-minded investors. The fourth type is a hybrid of two or three of the other types.

In the case of ACTS Co., the missionaries fully own the company and started it with their own funds and funds generated from the business. Therefore, it meets the missionary funding model, the first type, proposed by Rundle and Sudyk; however, they have received outside investing periodically from missional business professionals, reflecting the third model proposed by Rundle and Sudyk. Therefore, in summation, ACTS Co. is actually the fourth model, the hybrid, mixing both the first and third types articulated by Rundle and Sudyk.

ACTS Co. has a few unique characteristics concerning its funding model. First, independent missionaries sent out by their local church founded it. As a result they do not have some of the complicating factors, such as who pays for what and who controls what, faced by other missionaries who belong to larger, more established mission agencies. ACTS Co. has been able to avoid the murky situations concerning ownership and control that emerged in many of the other missionary-operated businesses in Chiang Mai. The company is incorporated in Thailand completely separate from the mission agency and is a legal for-profit entity. This for-profit status distinguishes them from the second Rundle and Sudyk type, the nonprofit holding company. The independent status of the missionary and the clear organizational distinctiveness of the business have created a streamlined autonomous opportunity for the business.

Second, the owner/operators progressively became more involved in printing and started the company somewhat serendipitously after receiving a large order and realizing

that this order and some of their personal financial reserves could purchase equipment and get the company going. The advantageous start to the business meant they had no serious complications regarding start-up capital. Unlike other situations in which people have an idea but no money, ACTS Co. did not have to hassle with complicated financing situations that, for other missionaries operating businesses, have created convoluted ownership arrangements in which relationships have become strained.

Third, the expatriate manager missionaries get their personal salaries through donations from financial supporters outside of Thailand. ACTS Co. has sufficient cash flow to pay appropriate salaries but has chosen not to do so. This external support makes it distinct from a truly independently operated for-profit business in which the owners, managers, and everyone else receive their salaries from the operations of the business. This arrangement benefits ACTS Co. because it frees up cash for reinvestment, creation of jobs, and distribution to employees. Personally, Kendall says, "It makes it clear in my mind that I am working for the Lord and not for money."

Some other missionaries operating businesses have faced complications with similar types of arrangements because as the business progresses, the mission agency wants ownership or control because they are working on "mission agency time" as they are still receiving personal funds through the mission agency. Nevertheless, this situation has worked well for ACTS Co. and probably will continue to work well because, as just mentioned, their independent missionary status means that they work with less people who know them better than in a lot of the larger mission agency situations.

Research Question #2

My second research question is, "What is the nature and status of the cultural contextualization of the BAM projects?" The research proposition that undergirds this question is as follows: In cross-cultural contexts, business as well as ministry should be done in a culturally sensitive and contextually appropriate manner. The theoretical framework that I used to analyze the cultural contextualization of the business operations was Mejudhon's Thai contextualization model.

Mejudhon argues that meekness is the best approach to contextualizing Christian discipleship in Thailand. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Mejudhon identifies eight primary differences between the cultural values of the Thai and Americans.[33] Here I will work through these eight primary differences and how ACTS Co. dealt with them.[34]

Concept of time. Americans tend to believe that time is valuable whereas the Thai tend to move much slower and not pay as much attention to time. One of the key cultural findings in regards to ACTS Co. was that they appeared to know intuitively what aspects of Thai culture they should respect and what they should change. In all interviews

---

[33] A more extensive evaluation of Thai cultural characteristics and contrasts and comparisons with American culture are made in Chapter 3.

[34] These eight primary differences were not presented to ACTS Co., any of its employees, or anyone else whom I researched. One of my goals was to see how expatriates and Thai explained and articulated the differences. One of my chief findings, as reported in the final chapter, is that no one had clear categories or the terminology to describe the differences. Therefore, the following is drawn from implication and response to open-ended questions.

with both managers and employees, the interviewee addressed the concept of time. The primary issue was that they, meaning ACTS Co., needed to be more future oriented. Many of the Thai employees communicated that they need to learn to be more future oriented and not be so lackadaisical about time and timelines. ACTS Co. operated with more of an American understanding of time but had managed to get cooperation from the Thai employees by carefully and convincingly persuading them of their need to do so.[35]

Concept of work and play. Americans tend to separate work and play and view them as independent whereas the Thai tend to believe that work should be enjoyable like play. In every company I interviewed the majority of the Thai employees talked about *sanook*, a Thai word translated as fun. Enjoying life, having fun, and playing are very important concepts for them. ACTS Co. did not demonstrate that they had taken *sanook* as seriously as the Thai employees would have liked.

Concept of youth versus age. Americans tend to value youth and do not show as much respect for their elders as do the Thai. Age orientation did not appear to be an issue at ACTS Co.

---

[35] Future planning emerged as an important cultural concept in the BAM operations I researched and is discussed in more detail in the missiological implications chapter.

Concept of equality versus hierarchy and rank. Americans value equality. It is one of the central themes in the founding of the nation whereas hierarchical relations are the center of Thai culture. The ACTS Co. did a good job of fusing these two by creating a family-type atmosphere. The family atmosphere created an atmosphere of equality while maintaining status and rank distinctions appropriate for Thai culture and the operations of a for-profit business. Every Thai employee actually used the term *krôp krua* or family when describing the company and frequently said *pôr* or father when referring to Kendall. The atmosphere was so warm and positive that my translator said, "If I ever have to work in a company again, I want it to be ACTS Co. They truly are a family." She translated for me in numerous settings and only this time did she say something so positive and enthusiastic.[36]

Concept of material versus spiritual. Americans accumulate goods as a measure of success and wealth; however, Thai culture values spiritual growth over amassing wealth. Material possession can even be viewed as a sign of poor spiritual health and as a disruption to society. Simplicity is valued. This cultural difference appeared to cause no problems. ACTS Co. placed a high value on quality but did not equate it with wealth.

---

[36] The expression of the company as a *krôp krua*, or family, emerged as an important concept in the BAM cases I studied and is discussed in the missiological implications chapter.

Money, while not viewed negatively, was also not held in high esteem. These views came from ACTS Co.'s Christian convictions and were naturally congruent with Thai culture. Their views on money are expressed through the fact that Kendall still does not draw a salary from the company and all profits are donated to ministries or reinvested in the company.

Concept of change versus tradition. Thais and Americans believe in change; however, Americans view it as more compulsory than do Thais. Thais do not like conflict and change tends to bring it about. Managing conflict was a challenge for ACTS Co. as there was some expressed frustration over the time expenditure required to produce change in the Thai context; nevertheless, potential negative effects of mishandling conflict appear to have been avoided because of the sensitivity and awareness that change occurs slowly.

Concept of independence versus dependence. Americans value self-reliance whereas the Thai have a strong view of dependency. A classic mistake that American managers make in cultural contexts such as Thailand is that they give an order then walk away. To interact extensively over a task for an American could be perceived as micromanaging; however, detailed management is expected in cultures such as Thailand. The family culture created at ACTS Co. demonstrates that they have worked from an independent framework to an interdependent one. For example, many Thai employees shared that they feel comfortable interacting with their supervisors in the same way they would a family member. They frequently cited that they felt like a part of a family and did not feel isolated. The primary thing that the Thai employees said about ACTS Co. was that they felt like part of a group, an indication of an interdependent orientation.

Concept of confrontation versus indirection (avoidance). Americans easily bring problems out into the open and discuss them in a frank and candid manner so that everyone knows where someone stands. Thais, however, avoid direct confrontation in order to preserve surface harmony. In ACTS Co. history, they have had only three employees leave, and all three of them returned. This employee retention rate is an amazing testimony in a country where a constant complaint of expatriate managers is high employee turnover. Two of the employees left for family-related health reasons and returned when their personal life situation allowed for it. The third employee left without explanation. Two weeks later, she came back and explained that she had left because she wanted to move from a secretarial job to a marketing-related job. This incident is a classic example of how indirect communication works and how it causes complications for expatriate managers. Though a one-time incident, to avoid future similar occurrences, ACTS Co. will need to create an atmosphere that allows for preventive, indirect communication so employees can voice concerns without simply quitting their jobs.

Mejudhon offers six main applications for effective contextualization in the Thai context that together communicate the concept of meekness. Again I will outline these six areas and address how ACTS Co. dealt with them:

Application 1. The Christian communicator should have positive attitudes toward Buddhism and Thai culture. The ACTS Co. has a strong respect and positive attitude toward Thai culture. Though they do not necessarily have a positive attitude toward Buddhism, they do not have an antagonistic one either. For example, Buddhism was never directly criticized and employees were not pressured to cease practicing Buddhism.

ACTS Co. communication strategy was to promote the Christian faith, but in a way that did not attack Buddhism and in a way that affirmed Thai culture.

Application 2. The Christian communicator should have genuine and sincere relationships with Buddhists. All relationships at the ACTS Co. seemed to be genuine and sincere, with no significant differences emerging in the relationships between Buddhists and Christians compared to Buddhist-Buddhist relationships or Christian-Christian relationships.

Application 3. The Christian communicator should present the gospel showing benefits and help instead of confrontation and threat. ACTS Co.'s weekly Christian meeting (discussed in more detail at the end of this chapter) was more substantive and no presence of confrontation or threat was detected and the practical present life benefits of the gospel were very clear.

Application 4. The Christian communicator needs to allow more time for the diffusion of the gospel. Three ACTS Co. employees have become Christians after serving with the company for seven years, demonstrating that ACTS Co. allows a significant amount of time for the diffusion of the gospel.

Application 5. The Christian communicator needs to have indigenous strategies for communication of the gospel. The business setting at ACTS Co. naturally created a context for sharing the gospel in a way that was appropriate for contemporary Thai culture.

Application 6. Missionaries and Thai Christians should play appropriate roles in Thai culture if they are to develop their relationship with the Thai and become insiders. The ACTS Co. business setting created a context through which the expatriate

missionaries and the Thai employees developed natural relationships and the missionaries were insiders to a reasonable degree.

ACTS Co. is very strong in terms of their cultural contextualization, a major reason why they have been able to have significant results in business and in ministry. The family culture created resulted in a method of operations that was congruent with Thai culture and created an effective, efficient, and profitable workplace. This Thai culture-friendly environment also gave space for people to pursue gospel understanding at their own pace and in their own time. The evangelistic results are very impressive when compared with other similar operations. Though they did not articulate clear categories of cultural understanding, ACTS Co. appears to understand Thai culture intuitively, and their commitment to genuine spiritual leadership enables them to be productive financially and spiritually.

Research Question #3

My third research question is, "What is the nature and status of the social and spiritual impact of the BAM projects?" The research proposition that undergirds this question is as follows: The use of business for socio-spiritual purposes holds both promise and peril. The theoretical framework I used to analyze the social and spiritual impact of the businesses was Eldred's kingdom business framework. Before I delve into Eldred's framework, some preliminary observations are in order.

Social impact. ACTS Co. did not have a clear, organized social and spiritual ministry plan like many other BAM projects. Nevertheless, the company demonstrated

many ways in which they are having a positive social impact and spiritual influence through their operations.

 Hiring practices. A critical component of any company is who they hire. Some countries have laws that govern and require diverse hiring practices. Even though Thailand does not have these types of laws, ACTS Co. has consciously chosen to have a maximum social impact through its hiring practices. Like all companies ACTS Co. cannot afford to hire and pay employees who cannot or will not perform their duties in a manner that produces efficient operations. However, many people who could do a certain job are not given a legitimate opportunity because of their ethnicity or a physical disability. ACTS Co. chooses to give these people a chance with many positive results. First, since the deaf people have been shut out of the economic processes as a result of their disability, ACTS Co. brings people into the economic processes who without intentional intervention would not find a place to work. Second, the Thai economy benefits because it reduces the pool of unnecessary and involuntarily unemployed people. Third, such actions serve as a "witness" through the company to the employees and the surrounding community.

 One of the ways that they have implemented diverse hiring practices is by hiring eight deaf workers. Physical disabilities are varied and knowing how to respond to them is difficult. However, ACTS Co. has approached it by simply hiring people whose physical disability does not impede them from doing the task at hand. A deaf person could not do some tasks, so their disability limits their vocational opportunities and could prevent some employers who would like to provide work to them from doing so. By

giving deaf people a job, ACTS Co. has performed a genuine social service, helping not only these people but the larger community as well.

The company also seeks to have culturally and ethnically diverse hiring practices. To date the employees come from a wide range of cultures and backgrounds, including tribal groups, namely Burmese, Chinese, Hmong, Karen, Khmu, Lisu, Lahu, and Rawang. The diversity of employees shows that the company is seeking to make a significant social impact by promoting racial heterogeneity and by involving tribal groups, who are often neglected from the economic processes as a result of racial discrimination, in the operations of the business as employees.

Many Thai companies that do hire members of the tribal groups do so because they can work them excessively and pay them lower than the legally required minimum wage. ACTS Co., however, involves the employees from tribal groups as legitimately remunerated employees who work legal and humane hours, which has several positive benefits. First, the employed tribal people are treated well and humanely. They receive an income that allows them to sustain themselves and the job gives them free time to pursue other endeavors. Second, the local community is helped because the tribal people are integrated into the economic processes and are not forced to engage in dehumanizing jobs that are socially destructive. Third, the company serves as a "witness" to the other employees and the local community that God cares for everyone and that everyone deserves dignified employment.

Above and beyond the legal requirements. Navigating legal requirements is difficult for almost every company. This legal navigation is even more complicated in another cultural context, especially when that cultural context is a developing country

with laws that are difficult to understand and sometimes contradict one another and where many other business operators regularly engage in activities that break the law or seek out creative financing options that allow them to avoid legally doing what is expected of them. As just mentioned in the case of employing workers from nearby tribal groups, many business operators do not pay the legally required minimum wage. Though underpaying employees is illegal, this law is not regularly or easily policed. The tribal workers have no means to protect themselves or pursue legal action. Therefore, many businesses just break the law and do what they want. ACTS Co. believes that these laws exist for a reason, all people, regardless of ethnicity, deserve a living wage, and businesses should obey all laws.

Paying employees the legal required minimum wage is a rather simple straightforward case for the Christian in business. Many other cases, however, are not as obvious. For example, Thailand's common practice, as well as in other countries, allows companies to do whatever they can to avoid paying taxes. Many times tax evasion is blatantly illegal; other times it is not clear what the law requires and sometimes avoiding some taxes is technically legal yet contradictory to the purpose and spirit of the laws. One such ambiguous circumstance faced by ACTS Co. was with their initial investment in Thailand. The Thai government placed a value added tax (VAT) of 7 percent of the initial investment that totaled 109,000 Baht (≈$3,500). ACTS Co. could have created a foundation as a legal way to get out of paying this tax. However, they believed strongly that paying the tax was the right thing to do and paid the tax regardless. Since this initial decision, they have consistently paid all taxes, duties, and VAT payments in accordance with the most rigorous interpretation of Thai law.

By following the laws and paying their taxes in an unusually generous way, ACTS Co. is positively impacting the society in a number of ways. First, they are giving the Thai government money that it needs to build up the social capital of the country for the good of its citizens and visitors. Second, they are helping to build up trust in a socio-economical context that really needs it. Third, ACTS Co. is serving as a "witness" to its employees, the government, and the surrounding community by paying its taxes in timely and socially responsible manner and abiding by the laws of the Thai government.

Many people might think that giving money to the government when they can avoid doing so is detrimental to business operations. Though undoubtedly at times missionaries and other business operators are faced with situations in which abiding by a particular law, such as paying taxes, would financially hurt the company, a careful analysis would demonstrate otherwise. In addition to the social good that is done through their proactive obedience to the Thai government, ACTS Co. also receives several positive benefits demonstrating that doing the right thing is the best thing:

1. Litigation/costly oversight avoidance: In interviews with other missionaries, they complained constantly of governmental intervention. Though even other missionaries who genuinely strove to follow all laws and rules had the same problem, it was a frequent complaint from missionaries who dismissed Thai law as untenable. Many of these people saw absolutely no connection between their disregard of Thai law and the amount of time they had to "waste" with the resulting problems. ACTS Co. avoided these costly and time-consuming entanglements by showing the government that they were going to be good citizens.

2. Supplier/partner trust: Successful partnerships are built on trust and trustworthiness. ACTS Co. has been able to navigate and expand their business through a variety of partnerships. They have been able to do so because they have a reputation for being trustworthy.

3. Customer loyalty: One of their most strategic partners is their customers. By abiding by all laws, they avoid the potential fallout of losing customers who would not want to do business with a company that does not abide by the laws of the land. The desire to deal with a law-abiding company is not only true their missionary customers but also to Thai citizens who recognize that corruption exists but respect and are loyal to those who do not engage in it.

4. Employee performance: In interviews ACTS Co. employees frequently expressed that they felt a lot of freedom and security in their jobs because of the high ethical standards. One employee mentioned, "I am able to focus on my job because I am not scared of losing it." Another said, "In my last job, I always felt pressured to do the wrong thing. I never felt comfortable there and was always making mistakes."

5. A good night's sleep: Breaking the law and avoiding taxes can create stress that is disruptive to one's quality of life. One of the practical benefits of doing the right thing is that life is more peaceful and sleep is better.

Faith influence. The most obvious instrument of faith influence at ACTS Co. was through an obligatory weekly workplace Bible study/worship service for all of its employees on Thursday morning starting at 8:30. The service was allotted forty-five minutes of company time. In keeping with Thai style but contrary to standard operating procedures of American businesses, the meetings frequently ran over the allotted forty-

five minute time slot. These meetings vary somewhat in their procedure but generally involve prayer, some songs of worship, and a sermon. A guest preacher delivers the sermon. Translation is provided for the deaf workers. If necessary, Thai translation is also provided if the preacher does not speak Thai.

After visiting ACTS Co., I realized that I had two assumptions regarding workplace Bible study/worship service meetings: (1) these meetings should be voluntarily attended, and (2) they should be basic in terms of just presenting the essentials of the gospel in a seeker-friendly kind of way. I assumed that meetings should be voluntary because obligatory meetings would carry a sense that the gospel was being "forced" on the people or have some type of oppressive and counterproductive effect. That the message and form should be basic was because I assumed that was the best way for people of other religions and nonchurched backgrounds to hear and understand the gospel message in way that would produce a positive response.

ACTS Co. workplace Christian meetings defy both of these expectations. First, they are obligatory for all employees. Kendall has a hard-line stance: "Everyone who works for me will attend these meetings" (Cobb 2007a). Second, they would not be described as basic or simple in the way I had assumed they should be.

On the day I attended, the meeting had all the characteristics of a worship service in a mature church setting, including prayer and singing. The sermon, delivered in English by Pastor Nathan, an articulate and passionate expatriate from Nagaland, India, and translated into Thai by his Thai wife Pao, was long and hard hitting, making clear that God expected a radical commitment from all who were listening. Nathan showed a broad rhetorical range, demonstrating passion and emotion in his delivery. He pointed out

explicit sins of which those in the audience might be guilty and told them not only that Christ would forgive them of these sins but also provided practical solutions for how they could avoid those sins. The sermon addressed a broad range of topics but did not feel random. Rather, Nathan told stories and paraphrased Scriptures that had the central point and goal of creating change in the lives of the people listening.

I truly enjoyed the sermon and the meeting in general, but I am a committed Christian accustomed to church meetings and like analyzing sermons and drawing life applications from them. I wanted to know how others would think or feel about this weekly experience.

Due to my two operating assumptions regarding workplace Christian meetings, I was a bit skeptical thinking that the obligatory and hard-hitting nature of the meetings might be counterproductive. Knowing that the Thai are inherently meek and generally unwilling to complain negatively and directly about something in a workplace where they still work, I thought ascertaining the truth might be difficult. Immediately following the meeting, I was able to interview Nathan and Pao as well as a number of employees utilizing the offsetting meekness strategy described in Chapter 4.

The results of the interviews caused me to reevaluate my previous assumptions that workplace Christian meetings should be voluntary and basic in nature. No one in the interview process gave any indication that they did not like going to the workplace Christian meetings. Two of the employees became Christians after working for ACTS Co. for seven years. They pointed to the meetings as an opportunity where they could learn about the gospel and evaluate it over a period of time to determine what their response would be. The fact that they had the freedom to work in the company for so

long without making any personal changes demonstrates that they were honest in saying that the gospel was not "forced" on them. One employee who had worked at ACTS Co. for eight years and was a "nonpracticing Buddhist" said that he "didn't really pay attention but didn't mind the meetings either" (Anupap 2007a). When I returned in November 2007, I learned that he had made a public profession at a workplace meeting (Anupap 2007b). Another non-Christian employee stood up at the end of a weekly meeting and gave thanks for all of the things he is learning from Pastor Nathan.

In companies where workplace Christian meetings were voluntary, employees gave some negative feedback. The predominant negative feedback mentioned peer pressure to attend even if the meeting was labeled as "voluntary." One interviewee, a non-Christian said, "People look at me weird if I decide to not go" (Nee 2007). Others said that they went because they wanted to honor their boss but expressed some frustration over "giving up their lunch hour." (Kaeo 2007).

ACTS Co.'s obligatory approach offset both of these complaints. Peer pressure is not an issue, which can be quite a powerful impediment to honest acceptance of the gospel when meetings are obligatory. Required meetings do not have a negative effect on the employees for three apparent reasons. First, they are done "on the clock," meaning they are during the workday and employees are remunerated for the time they spend in the meetings, thus eliminating any frustration of giving up an extra hour or having an additional work requirement outside of working hours.

Second, ACTS Co. does not then try to shrink an eight-hour workday into seven or expand the workday to nine hours. ACTS Co. has consciously and deliberately chosen to give up this work time and does not try to recuperate it by pressuring its employees to

work faster or longer. These aspects of their strategy appear to be quite helpful in staving off built-up resentment or other negative effects stemming from the requisite nature of the meetings.

Third, the Christian emphasis of the company is embedded into the organizational culture. Although, as mentioned earlier, ACTS Co. does not have an articulated plan for establishing an organizational culture, the Christian purposes are deeply ingrained and felt by all. ACTS Co. has preserved this culture since the company's founding by being open about it with all employees and the general public. This openness has two practical and beneficial effects: (1) all employees are fully informed of the expectations and culture of the organization, and (2) all employees who join are either supportive of or at least not antagonistic toward the expectations and culture of the organization.

These three aspects of ACTS Co.'s strategy for workplace Christian meetings served to offset any potential negative fallout from requiring employees to attend them. Contrasting their strategy with that of other companies in Chiang Mai who had voluntary lunchtime meetings, the obligatory workday meetings demonstrated much less employee dissatisfaction and frustration. This revelation caused me to reevaluate my preexisting assumption regarding obligatory workplace Christian meetings.

My second interest had to do with the content of the meeting. The sermon was full of biblical reference—to the point and challenging for mature Christians. I was concerned that the content would be too much for the non-Christians and be detrimental to their receptivity; however, closer evaluation through the post-meeting interviews showed me once again that my preexisting assumptions and concerns were not valid in this particular context. With the exception of one interviewee, the aforementioned long-term employee

who is a nonpracticing Buddhist, all of the employees said that they enjoyed and learned a lot from the services. Most of the employees were able to specify actual learning as well indicating that they had internalized and personalized the content from past meetings. From my analysis, three aspects of ACTS Co.'s operations creates an environment conducive to such content rich sermons and workplace meetings:

1. ACTS Co. has virtually no employee turnover, which means that employees are there for an extended period of time. This time enables them to process the knowledge and information at their own pace and level.

2. Many of the employees are Christians; therefore, they learn and grow through the content presented.

3. The workplace meeting is not the one single approach that ACTS Co. uses to influence its employees with the gospel. The Christians communicate and translate some of the learning to the non-Christian employees.

By creating and fostering natural conversations in the workplace, the content from the weekly meetings serve as a context in which to start discussions about the gospel message. Therefore, by not relying purely on the weekly meetings, ACTS Co. has enhanced the effectiveness of the meetings in terms of communicating the gospel to the employees.

Douglas Hick's Model of Respectful Pluralism and ACTS Co.

Douglas Hicks has developed the model of respectful pluralism for handling religion in the workplace in pluralistic societies so that people of other religious faiths are

not ostracized or marginalized.[37] In Hicks' words, "The essential framework of respectful pluralism, based upon dignity and equal respect, can be stated in the form of a principle and three limiting norms" (2003a: 5). He adds that the guiding principle is what he calls presumption of inclusion. Organizations, businesses, and corporations should allow all people to express their religious, spiritual, cultural, political, and other commitments at work and not restrain or limit them as presumed under a secular understanding of the workplace.

The first limiting norm is non-degradation. Religious leaders in pluralistic workplaces should not disrespect other people through the use of degrading speech or symbols or other means of communication. The second limiting norm is non-coercion. Religious leaders in pluralistic workplaces should not use their power, position, or organizational influence to impose their religious beliefs on others. The third limiting norm is nonestablishment. Religious leaders in pluralistic workplaces should not seek to advocate for their religion to be considered the established religion of the workplace. Neither should they seek to create a generic religion to be the established one. Rather, the

---

[37] Hicks, associate professor of Leadership at the Jepson School of Leadership at the University of Richmond, originally published this model in a peer-reviewed journal article that I use as my primary source (see Hicks 2003a; 2003b).

workplace should be a location where all are free and able to speak and practice their faith in an atmosphere of equal respect (Hicks 2003a: 6).

ACTS Co.'s evangelistic strategy fulfills quite well the principle of inclusion advocated by Hicks as well the first two limiting norms of non-degradation and non-coercion. However, in some respects it violates the third limiting norm of nonestablishment. It does not completely violate this limiting norm, for Hicks' primary assertion is that everyone should be free and able to speak and practice their faith in an atmosphere of equal respect. ACTS Co. is a Christian company in that its managers are Christian and seek to operate the company according to Christian standards, 80 percent of its customers are Christian organizations, it requires attendance at a weekly Christian meeting, and it self-identifies as a "Christian" company. Eldred points out that businesses are not "Christian" but that people are (Eldred 2005: 31). Eldred's point is true; however, the ACTS Co. model would fulfill the qualifications of a faith establishment model in Hicks' framework due to the aforementioned attributes.

I have supported Hicks' model and still think it is applicable in many pluralistic environments (Russell 2007: 91-93). However, the ACTS Co. case demonstrates the capacity to have an established religion in the workplace if done according to the principle of inclusion and with the limiting norms of non-degradation and non-coercion. ACTS Co. never demonstrates degradation or coercion and, in fact, appears to work quite strongly to the contrary. As noted earlier, most of the employees used the term "family" when referring to the company and the term "father" in reference to Kendall. The Buddhists felt quite comfortable there and demonstrated no perception of religious pressure despite being in an overt Christian environment. They did not ever indicate that

they were coerced, and the fact that Buddhists worked at ACTS Co. for multiple years when they had other viable employment opportunities demonstrates that coercion is not a factor.

While ACTS Co. is thoroughly Christian and does not publish religious materials that are presented from the Buddhist standpoint, it had created a respectful atmosphere in which employees genuinely felt free to follow their own consciences and beliefs. Therefore, ACTS Co. serves as a positive model for how to create a respectful workplace that has a particular religious and not distinctly pluralistic orientation. However, it should be noted that this could only really be said to apply to the Thai context. Due to their rank-status orientation, employees would not think it appropriate to criticize management and their decision to have a weekly religious meeting on company time. In a more rights-based, egalitarian culture, like the USA for example, the same reaction would not be expected and that could hinder the effectiveness. Thus Hicks' model could still apply in cultures of an egalitarian-pluralistic orientation, but not necessarily in those with the rank-status orientation.

Eldred's Kingdom Business Framework and ACTS Co.

As stated previously, each case was analyzed through the kingdom business framework articulated by Eldred in his book, *God is at Work*. Eldred argues that BAM is a preferred strategy for mission.

Is a model for self-sustainable missions. ACTS Co. is self-sustaining and is growing financially. Although Kendall still receives donations for his salary from the States, he could draw the same salary from the business. They choose, however, to pour

that money back into the business so that they can expand services, further their influence, and serve more people. Therefore, the operation would definitely qualify as self-sustaining.

Brings much-needed expertise, technology and capital. ACTS Co. was founded by foreign direct investment, so it did bring much-needed capital. Although Thailand has other printers, ACTS Co. did bring missing expertise for the Asian and English-speaking markets, particularly Christian organizations.

Creates jobs. ACTS Co. has twenty-five employees whom they have hired through their company. Not only have they created jobs but they have created jobs that pay people appropriately, treated them humanely, and given them a place where they feel at home which is why ACTS Co. employees very rarely leave.

Builds the local economy and blesses the nation. "Bless" was a common word used by Kendall and other people associated with the ACTS Co. This concept permeated the organization and was like a shining light on a cloudy day. ACTS Co. has so far been financially successful and this success has helped to build up the economy accordingly.

Provides access to locations that would otherwise be closed. Being in Chiang Mai, Thailand, the ACTS Co. is not directly creating access to a location that is officially and legally "closed" to Christian missionaries or the Christian message. However, their literature is used in many countries that are closed.

Presents the gospel by word. Through its weekly Christian meetings and in conversations, ACTS Co. regularly presented the gospel through verbal proclamation.

Presents the gospel by deed. Interviews with employees indicated quite strongly that ACTS Co. management presented the gospel quite powerfully and positively through

their lifestyles. As mentioned, all of the employees who converted to Christianity mentioned that a primary reason for their conversion was their observance of the lives of their Christian colleagues. Some other missionaries criticized ACTS Co. because of the 2003 moral crises in which Kendall assumed leadership of the company. However, no employees or anyone close to the organization understood the moral crisis to be an ongoing problem.

Enables local funding of the church. ACTS Co. funds the local church directly and indirectly. By creating wealth as well as Christians, the company is empowering local Christians to fund their local church efforts. However, the profit of ACTS Co. is designated to six local ministries: (1) a local deaf ministry, (2) two Thai pastors working on the border with Burma, (3) a Thai/Western missionary couple, and (4) two other Chiang Mai-based ministries operated by local Thai. These ministries need a stable financial base.

Can be a valuable partner for other missions efforts. The ACTS Co. has served as a valuable partner for other missions efforts. The most obvious example is through its weekly Christian meeting. Missionaries and local preachers are given an opportunity to connect with and speak to people who would not normally be in church. They also raise funds for other special ministry projects such as a current project distributing Bibles in Burma. They have currently distributed 50,000 Bibles and are pursuing extra funds to distribute another 16,000 at the cost of 95 cents each.

Taps into underutilized but highly capable resources in the church. The ACTS Co. founders would not be categorized as underutilized business professionals as is the intent of this characteristic. They were missionaries who used the printed word to

advance their mission and this aspect became more sophisticated and expanded with time to the point of becoming a legitimate business operation that is the chief focus of their ministry. However, they are starting to utilize business professionals for consulting and service enhancement operations. Therefore, this utilization of human resources is an emerging aspect of their mission.

Eldred addresses several obstacles to BAM.

Transformation—People do not recognize the holistic reality of the ministry of Jesus. A misunderstanding of the holistic ministry of Jesus did not appear to be a hindrance at ACTS Co. No dichotomy in their understanding of the gospel was expressed in the interviews and when they said, "Bless," it carried very much the same implication as Eldred's transformation.

Work—Professional ministers lead the vocational hierarchy. Although the ACTS Co. did not demonstrate a deep, theological understanding of work, neither did they demonstrate any sort of vocational hierarchy with remunerated ministers at the top.

Business—Commercial enterprise frequently raises suspicion. As mentioned earlier, ACTS Co. was started with a "missionary mentality" that was suspicious of business enterprise. However, over time this mentality has changed and the positive potential of business has been understood.

Profit—Some Christians are skeptical about making money. Similar to the point above, the ACTS Co. has come to see profit as necessary to sustainability and their overall ministry.

Wealth—Due to false teachings such as the "health and wealth gospel" and the "poverty gospel," people have many misconceptions regarding the Bible's

teachings on wealth. The ACTS Co. gave no indication of excess wealth. The workplace was nice but not elaborate. Kendall still had his salary paid for and overseen by a nonprofit board in the U. S. and wealth was perceived as something positive that could be used for ministry and to improve people's lives but not as an end all indication of God's blessing.

Eldred says the objectives of BAM are

1. Profitability and sustainability—The ACTS CO. is profitable and sustainable;

2. Local job and wealth creation—The ACTS CO. has created local jobs and wealth; and,

3. Advancement of the local church and the increase of spiritual capital—Through its partnerships and business services, ACTS CO. is advancing the local church and building up spiritual capital in Thailand.

Conclusion

ACTS Co. is an impressive case study in the sense that they are very strong in all three of my areas of analysis. They have a sound funding model in which they are profitable, sustainable, and expanding into other areas; however, expansion always brings concern. Other successful BAM businesses that expanded into new areas frequently suffered financially. The future of the radio station and the print and copy center will be interesting. The ACTS Co. demonstrates strong contextualization that has produced a loyal workforce, something of an anomaly in Thailand. They have had a very positive social influence by producing a vital company and have strong spiritual influence as demonstrated through the number of employees who have converted to Christianity as

well as the empowerment of other missionaries in Thailand and neighboring countries

through high-quality printed materials.

CHAPTER 6
CASE STUDY OF PACTEC ASIA

Introduction

In this chapter I present the case study of PACTEC Asia. The first part of the chapter is a descriptive narrative of the case taken from the data collected during the research process. The second part is an analysis of the case study through the three theoretical frameworks selected for the study.

PACTEC Asia is a start up company that provides three core services: (1) digital publishing, (2) digital mapping, and (3) data entry. Dwight Martin, a Missionary Aviation Fellowship (MAF) missionary, founded the company in July 2006 in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Dwight grew up in Thailand as a missionary kid. His parents, Marvin and Florence Martin, were missionaries for the Christian and Missionary Alliance for thirty years, arriving in 1948. They were pioneer missionaries who worked in rough, rural conditions and started Campus Crusade for Christ's work in Thailand as well as founded Bangkok Bible College. A significant part of their work was mapping where churches were being planted and translating resources from English into Thai. In every free moment, Florence would translate. The work that Dwight's parents did, the relationships they formed, and the books they translated would be a big influence on him (Martin 2007a).

As a young adult Dwight relocated to the States to pursue his education and

settled into a business career. In 1999, Dwight chose to leave his comfortable job as a

software development executive in order to start his own business (Martin 2007a).

Aquaracy LLC was a developer and provider of check and payment processing software,

and its product, Aqurit, was a check and payment processing system that could be

tailored to suit the needs of individual clients. The automated imaging system scanned

checks and bill stubs, extracted payment and other data, then recorded that information

for accounting purposes. It stamped the back of each check and prepared a bank deposit.

The technology companies saved the time and labor costs involved in manually

processing checks. In just a few years, Dwight built Aquaracy LLC into a solid business,

with reported 2005 sales of $1 million (Birmingham Business Journal 2006).

Moving to Thailand

In 2005 the *Birmingham Business Journal* named Dwight an outstanding

entrepreneur of the year (Birmingham Business Journal 2006). Despite this success,

Dwight once again, this time at the age of 50, chose to make another life change, selling

his company[38] and deciding to relocate with his wife, Mary Kay, to Thailand. His passion

to empower, equip, and enable the church in Thailand had brought him back to the land

of his childhood; however, he did not want to relinquish his passion for entrepreneurship

and business and wanted to make a difference for the kingdom through the skill set he

had carefully developed through the years (Martin 2007b).

Rather interestingly, God led him to MAF, a missions agency most known for

flying to remote corners of the world. Although MAF pilots fly to remote areas, MAF has

put a premium on innovation and has branched into a broader range of services and

ministries. The Martins became a part of MAF's Learning Technology (MAF-LT)

program with the aim of partnering with Christian ministries and national leaders to

provide resources for Leadership Training. After researching the resources needed to do

the job and praying about it, they "sensed God's direction [was] to start a Kingdom

business synergistic with LT [with] all profits [being used] to subsidize leadership

training" (Martin 2007e).

The Plan

PACTEC had the concept of hiring Thai workers to do imaged-based data entry

services for U. S. organizations. This strategy would help create some synergy, as the

---

[38] AQ2 Tech bought Aquaracy LLC in 2005.

Learning Technology training center requires PCs and an Internet connection for students

to attend classes. This same equipment could be used for remote data-entry services. By

day the learning center could be used for business purposes and during the evening for

leadership training. The employees would be cross-trained to work on either data entry or

to prepare digital resources for Christian leaders, and the same facilities would be used

for training Christians as well as funding the ministry.[39]

Dwight also believed that this BAM model had these additional benefits:

1. It is reproducible in neighboring countries where Christian ministries are not

   welcome. An LT training center could be opened as a business but used to train

   national Christian leaders.

2. It provides a work environment where Christ is glorified and his values are

   modeled. In Southeast Asia, workers are often taken advantage of and corruption

   is common. This business would stand apart and be a witness for Christ.

3. It provides jobs for the disadvantaged. Data-entry work does not require extensive

   education. Workers that have limited job opportunities could work at an LT

---

[39] Using the same facilities for training and data entry was the original plan, but it has not yet come to fruition. Dwight does not think that the current environment will be conducive to doing evening training courses. Once the business is sustainable, they will pursue emerging opportunities in other Southeast Asian countries and will aim to incorporate the training centers there.

learning center. (For example, up to an estimated 20 percent of Thai girls between the ages of 11 and 17 are kidnapped and sold into prostitution. Girls rescued out of prostitution could do data-entry work.)

4. It could be a Christian testimony to business and government leaders. These leaders (who are the middle and upper classes, wealthy and educated) can influence the nation. Currently little Christian witness is directed towards these leaders.

5. It provides a business visa that allows people to remain in Thailand and facilitates travel to neighboring countries.

6. It has the potential of making the ministry self-funded. Figure 6.1 demonstrates the funding strategy of PACTEC Asia (Martin 2006).
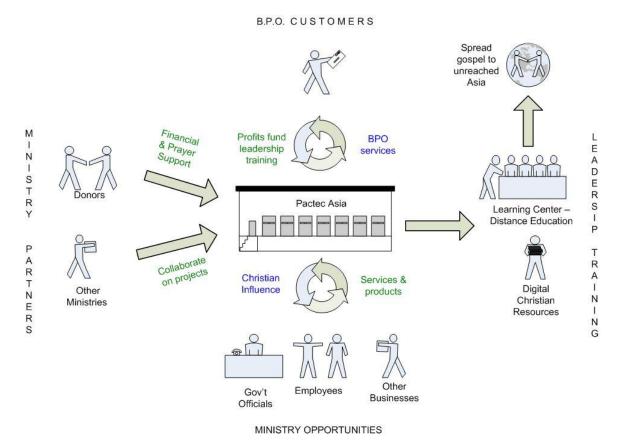
Figure 6.1. PACTEC Asia funding strategy.

First Steps

After receiving a business license from the Thai government in November 2006, they moved forward, securing office space and hiring their first three employees. Partnering with two local ministries (New Life Center and the Garden of Hope), PACTEC Asia hired four young tribal women to do the work. One of them came from a labor-exploited background in which she had to work against Thai law seven days a week for below minimum wage.

Challenges

The start-up phase was not without its difficulties, however. Dwight, an entrepreneurial veteran, remarked, "I thought starting a business in the U. S. was hard; this is much harder" (Martin 2007b). Some of the challenges were quite minor. For example, another local ministry brought to Dwight a sex worker as a potential employee. She literally came to the interview from the street and was dressed very provocatively. Her form of dress made the other employees quite nervous and startled Dwight since he had assumed the sex worker was a former sex worker rather than current one. Other situations were even more challenging. On a personal basis, Dwight invested heavily in the enterprise and faced personal financial pressure when his house in Birmingham would not sell as a result of the bursting of the 2006-07 housing bubble. Mary Kay returned to the States in an attempt to sell it. The slow realization that their house had no buyers was stressful and energy draining and created financial pressure. Eventually, they decided to take their house off the market (Martin 2007e).

Additionally, PACTEC Asia had some difficulties ensuring that everything was being done legally. As in many countries of the world, Thai law, particularly its interpretation and enforcement, varies according to situation. Up until the Thai military coup on 19 September 2006 that removed Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and his government from power, businesses had some "elasticity" as to what laws had to be followed and exactly how they had to be followed. After the coup, the new government, in an attempt to close loopholes and crack down on corruption, utilized stricter interpretations of the law and tended to view businesses suspiciously. PACTEC Asia always desired to be legal and ethical; however, business law was so complex that they had to rely on legal counsel to guide them as to what they should file. Unfortunately, the legal counsel was accustomed to the "old way of doing things" meaning they did not always go by the letter of the law. The change in protocol caused some confusion and time delays in PACTEC Asia's progress. Reflecting on the first year of the start-up, Dwight wrote:

> [If I could do it all over again,] I [would] do everything exactly by the book. Not what my attorney said is acceptable practice. Not that I knew what the difference was at the time. In the past the government has had laws, but apparently you didn't have to live up to them 100%. They would let things slide. Since the coup the government officials have gotten skittish and are doing everything by the book. Unfortunately in my case I didn't know what the book said and what acceptable practice was. I trusted my attorney and assumed he was doing everything appropriately, but his understanding was based upon [how things were done] prior to the coup. However it was not exactly what the law said. So we had some difficulties getting things through. But we're past that know. (I hope.) (Martin 2007d)

One of the Thai shareholders of the venture was a Thai general who knew Dwight from childhood and he could occasionally provide strategic assistance. Nevertheless, the problems continued as they tried to figure out how to do business in Thailand. They had

problems ascertaining what taxes they owed and how to minimize their taxes. As Dwight

remarked, "It can be quite confusing, especially when the government is in flux. You get

different answers depending upon which official you talk to on a given day" (Martin

2007d). This experience demonstrates that obeying the law in a foreign land is frequently

not as simple as being willing to do so.

Positive Signs

PACTEC also showed some very positive signs. Believing in the need to resource

the Thai church in a cost-effective and helpful way, PACTEC Asia initially started

working on converting printed Christian materials into digital format. As Dwight notes:

> Very few Christian resources are available in Thailand, so those that do exist need
> to be made available to believers. Typically, once a book is out of print it is not
> reprinted due to the expense involved. (Largely because there is such a small
> market for them— there are only 175,000 Thai Christians out of a population of
> over 62 million people!) Our task, then, is to find these valuable out-of-print
> books and convert them into a digital format so they can be downloaded from the
> Internet or provided on a CD. (Martin 2006c)

Within months of starting up, they had identified 1,332 Thai resources, and 530 had completed the conversion process.[40]

Despite 500 years of Christian missionary presence in Thailand, the ethnic Thai people have remained remarkably resistant. The number of tribal Christians equal the number of ethnic Thai Christians even though Thailand has only one million tribal people compared to 62 million Thai people. Figure 6.2 is a graph created by PACTEC Asia to demonstrate the sparse acceptance of the gospel by the ethnic Thai. The cultural gap between Western missionary and Thai Buddhist is a large one and Dwight notes, "This is why I am so passionate about resourcing the Thai church" (Martin 2007c).

PACTEC Asia had also begun a digital mapping project through which they would map the presence of all of the churches in Thailand in order to facilitate church-planting efforts. Dwight's son, Tim, came to Thailand to study the Thai language as part of his stateside university degree program and helped his father create the digital maps. They developed a strategic partnership with THAIVISION2010, a massive interdenominational campaign organized by the Thai churches for Thailand's 80,000 neighborhoods and villages to hear the gospel, 7,415 sub-districts to have a group of

---

[40] As of November 2007, 225 resources are in the process of being converted from paper to digital format. Four hundred twenty-five have been identified but not in hand. One hundred fifty-two are available but cannot be converted due to copyright issues.

Christians, and 926 districts to have a church by the year 2010. One of the biggest gaps in this plan was having sound statistical data to know where they needed to focus. Through their maps and statistical database, PACTEC Asia is working to fill this gap. Figure 6.2 is an example of the work done by PACTEC Asia. This map shows the dispersion and location of Christians in Thailand.

Though expenses were a challenge, God did appear to be providing. In order to reprocess the literature, PACTEC Asia needed a good high-quality document scanner. In Thailand, the scanner cost $8,000, more money than PACTEC Asia had budgeted; however, through a ministry partner in Birmingham, they were able to purchase the scanner for less than half this price. Another missionary returning to Chiang Mai from the United States was able to carry it back with him as luggage, bringing it the whole way without any additional airline or custom's charges, which was something of a miracle because the baggage was well over on luggage and weight restrictions.

They formed relationships and reaped spiritual fruit. One of Dwight's Thai friends, Gahn (not his real name), was a taxi driver who had fallen on hard times. Dwight gave him an interest-free $200 loan. Later, some visiting Americans asked Dwight to recommend a taxi driver to them. After spending the week with Gahn, they told Dwight that they wanted to pay off Gahn's $200 debt to him, but before Dwight let Gahn know his debt was forgiven, the visitors wanted Dwight to explain how Jesus had paid for his debt of sin. When Gahn heard the news of his debt being forgiven coupled with the explanation of Christ, he asked how he could get his debt of sin paid off. Dwight was then able to lead Gahn into a relationship with Christ (Martin 2006).
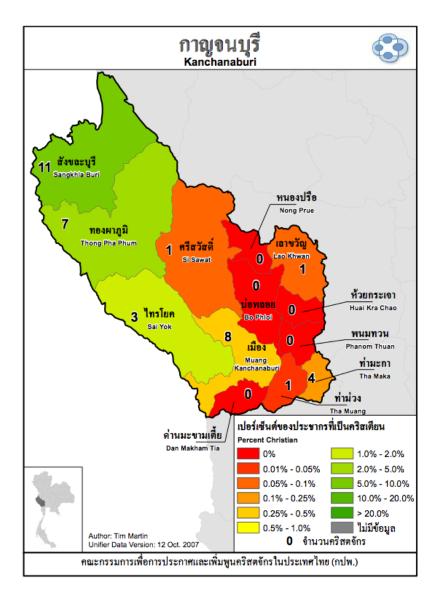
Figure 6.2. PACTEC Asia map demonstrating dispersion of Christians in Thailand.

The Evolving Enterprise

Originally Dwight planned to fund 100 percent of the operation through business

process outsourcing (BPO). BPO is the contracting of a specific business task, such as

payroll or data entry, to a third-party service provider. It is as a cost-saving measure for

tasks that a company requires but that are not a part of their core service. With Dwight's

background experience in this area, he felt that he could meet the needs of companies and leverage the lower expense of operating in Thailand to provide these services and make enough profit to provide for the digital publishing and digital mapping services that he could then provide to the Thai churches.

However, strong interest in the digital publishing and digital mapping emerged before sufficient time could be spent building up a BPO business base. Though Dwight contracted two clients for his BPO services, which was enough "to keep us busy for a few months," he got unexpected strong support for his other services from the Thai churches (Martin 2007c). Building off of his parents' reputation, he has been able to establish relationships with key leaders of the Thai church.

Slightly adapting his initial strategy, Dwight realized that Thai churches would be willing to pay for the services. As a bit of a surprise, the churches immediately agreed to his proposal. As of November 2007, he had contracted with six ministries for 50,000 Baht each (≈$1600) annually (Martin 2007e). The extra revenue helped to advance the project and provided some needed funding; however, this source of income meant altering his funding model. Dwight notes the change in funding strategy:

> For the next year [2007-08 fiscal year], I plan that 30 percent of revenue comes from BPO work to support [the] mission endeavors. In following years I hope to increase—so that eventually it is more like 70 to 80 percent with the [other 20-30%] coming from ministries in Thailand. I had to change my expectations a bit. I thought it would be at 100 percent during year one, but that was not what God had in mind. Just me. He had better plans.

Figure 6.3 demonstrates PACTEC Asia's current funding plan.

The goal of digital mapping and digital resources is to develop a database that can be used for all of the Christian ministries in Thailand. This portion of the business is

referred to as the Thai Church Resource Center (ThaiCRC). This work was originally

started by Overseas Mission Fellowship (OMF) missionary, Martin Visser in 2001. In

2002 key leaders representing all Thai denominations and mission organizations formed

the Thailand Evangelism and Church Growth Committee (TEC), marking the first time of

nationwide unity of vision, purpose, and planning for the kingdom of God in the history

of the Thai church. The TEC has commissioned the ThaiCRC to provide the tools and

technology to support the Thai church leaders in this vision.
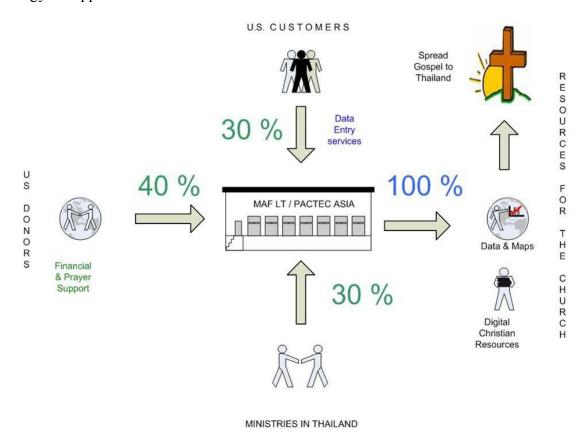
Figure 6.3. PACTEC Asia's funding strategy with percentages.

From 2002 to 2006, other missionaries worked on the ThaiCRC until Dwight took

over the leadership of it in 2006 with PACTEC Asia providing the resources and

services. To that point the missionaries had personally funded the project and this funding

approach had become unsustainable; thus, a capital-generating business model was needed in order to keep the project alive. Given the strategic importance of the ThaiCRC and the historic importance of the TEC, Dwight is passionate about executing the plan and says, "Helping the Thai church has been very rewarding. Providing Thai pastors with data (and maps) so they can strategically know where to plant new churches and help reach their country with the gospel is rewarding" (Martin 2007c). The capital generated from the sale of these materials enabled PACTEC Asia to hire three more employees, expanding to six full-time Thai employees. Dwight and his wife Mary Kay work full-time on PACTEC Asia. They have one MAF partner, Brad Hazlett, who helps out on occasion but primarily works on other matters for MAF. Figure 6.4 demonstrates the digital resources workflow of the ThaiCRC.

Case Analysis

To analyze the case, I return to my three research questions and the accompanying theoretical framework.

Research Question #1

My first research question is, "What is the nature and status of the businesses' financial arrangements?" The research proposition that undergirds this question is as follows: Generating start-up capital and means of financial sustainability in BAM projects are not as straightforward as in normal business operations. The theoretical framework that I used to analyze the financial arrangements of the businesses was Rundle and Sudyk's funding a kingdom business model.[41]

PACTEC Asia qualifies as a hybrid model because it does not fit any of the other three Rundle and Sudyk models. PACTEC Asia's funding model has several unique aspects that deserve some attention. First, the initial capital came from a hybrid source. During their deputation work, the time in which missionaries raise funds for future service on the field, unlike other missionaries, Dwight still worked on his own business, Aquaracy LLC and received a salary from it. Generally during the deputation time, MAF missionaries do not work another job and, instead, receive a salary from the mission agency to provide for their ongoing life expenses. Dwight opted to work and asked for his salary to be used as the venture capital for the start-up. Therefore, in a very real sense, the initial capital came from MAF. However, in another sense, because Dwight chose to

---

[41] For more information on my research propositions, question, and theoretical framework see the relevant discussion in Chapter 1.

work and forgo a stipend to which he would be legitimately entitled, the initial capital

came, therefore, one might say, from Dwight and Mary Kay.
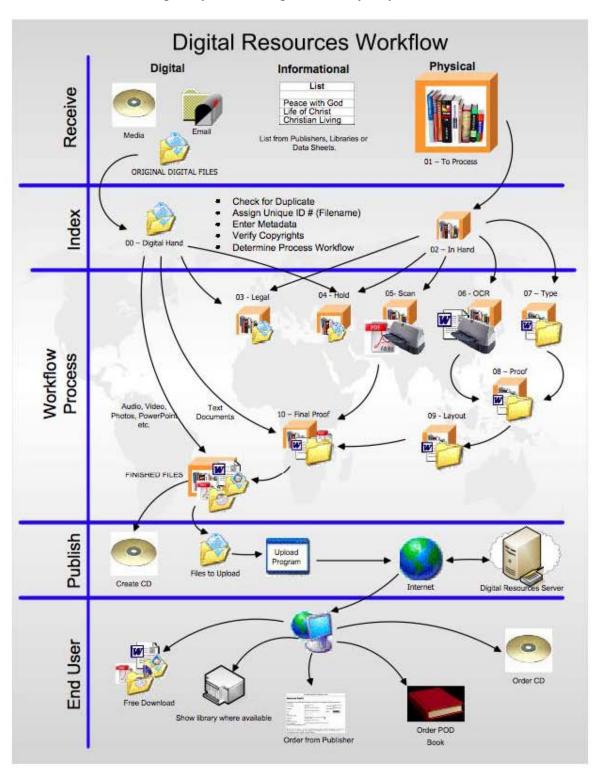
Figure 6.4. PACTEC Asia digital resources workflow of the ThaiCRC.

Second, as mentioned before, at this stage ongoing funding is provided through a variety of means: the selling of BPO services to U. S.-based clients, the selling of data and digital resources to the Thai churches, and the selling of services to MAF in the U. S. A.[42]

Third, Dwight and Mary Kay's personal funds come from donations made by friends and family through MAF. Therefore, the business is not yet generating sufficient income to pay for the salary of the executive director. It is, however, paying for the six paid staff.

Fourth, although Americans are allowed to own 100 percent of a company in Thailand, for visa and cultural adaptation reasons, Dwight thought sharing ownership with some Thai citizens would be better. He has three partners who have nonvoting shares and own 51 percent of the company. Dwight and Mary Kay and Brad and Joyce Hazlett have 49 percent ownership. The company is legally incorporated as a separate entity from the mission agency within Thailand.

---

[42] Providing services to MAF is also an area that could see significant expansion for PACTEC Asia. Recently MAF approached them about developing the capacity to monitor all MAF flights worldwide from their office in Chiang Mai.

Therefore, PACTEC Asia is another hybrid funding model. The Thai citizens and Dwight and Mary Kay own the company, but it was initially funded by MAF as a result of Dwight and Mary Kay redirecting their deputation salary. Dwight and Mary Kay are reliant upon outside donations for personal expenses. The ongoing needs of the company are met through services to ministries, businesses, and MAF.

This model is currently working for PACTEC Asia as MAF has been very supportive of the endeavor and has empowered the Martins. Nevertheless, missionaries in other agencies pointed out to me that their mission agencies (frequently ones not known for engaging in such ventures) were initially supportive but grew weary and eventually antagonistic as they became increasingly aware of the complexities of doing business for missional purposes in complicated developing countries. To offset some of the potential concerns regarding profiteering in missions, Dwight told his Thai shareholders that neither he nor anyone else should expect to profit personally from the project. Dwight signed a document for MAF saying that he would not personally profit from surplus funds generated through the project. Though the project is not yet to this point, Dwight plans to set up a foundation for the surplus funds when they come that would go towards financially supporting other mission projects in the area.

Research Question #2

My second research question is, "What is the nature and status of the cultural contextualization of the BAM projects?" The research proposition that undergirds this question is as follows: In cross-cultural contexts business as well as ministry must work in a culturally sensitive and contextually appropriate manner. The theoretical framework

that I used to analyze the cultural contextualization of the business operations was

Mejudhon's Thai contextualization model.

Mejudhon argues that meekness is the best approach to contextualizing Christian

discipleship in Thailand. As mentioned previously, Mejudhon identifies eight primary

differences between the cultural values of the Thai and Americans.[43] Here I will work

through these eight primary differences and how PACTEC Asia dealt with them.[44]

Concept of time. Americans tend to believe that time is valuable; the Thai tend to

move much slower and not pay as much attention to time. PACTEC Asia appeared to

operate as an American-Thai hybrid in terms of time. The employees were on time and

worked throughout the day, but the atmosphere was easygoing, appropriate for Thai

culture. Attended meetings were started on time, but one of the American workers was

late, indicating, in PACTEC Asia's case, that at least one of the expatriates had adapted

Thai patterns in terms of time.

---

[43] A more extensive evaluation of Thai cultural characteristics and contrasts and comparisons with American culture are made in Chapter 3.

[44] These eight primary differences were not presented to ACTS Co., any of its employees, or anyone else whom I researched. One of my goals was to see how expatriates and Thai explained and articulated the differences. One of my chief findings, as reported in the final chapter, is that no one had clear categories or the terminology to describe the differences. This result was true for ACTS Co. as well. Therefore, the following is drawn from implication and response to open ended questions.

Concept of work and play. Americans tend to separate work and play and view them as independent; the Thai tend to believe that work should be as enjoyable as play. Though PACTEC Asia was not an overly playful atmosphere, all of the employees were near ecstatic about their job conditions as they were treated with dignity, were able to converse with their friends, and were paid slightly above market rate.

Concept of youth versus age. Americans tend to value youth and do not show as much respect for their elders as do the Thai. PACTEC Asia's lower-level employees were younger (estimated age 20-something), Dwight, the manager, is early 50s. This arrangement naturally fit Thai age concepts.

Concept of equality versus hierarchy and rank. Americans value equality. It is one of the central themes in the founding of the nation. Hierarchical relations are the center of Thai culture. PACTEC Asia actually introduced some radical egalitarian concepts that appeared to go well. After reading *Joy at Work* by Dennis Bakke (2005), Dwight decided to follow Bakke's practice of allowing the employees to set their own salary. Bakke argues that this practice promotes an egalitarian culture and empowers the employee. The employees set their salary slightly higher but surprisingly close to the going market rate. In interviews they all expressed joyful surprise that they were allowed to do set their own salary, and Dwight was happy with the results. Though Dwight maintained the role of manager, he appeared to navigate the hierarchical expectations of the culture with his more egalitarian perspective.

Concept of material versus spiritual. Americans accumulate goods as a measure of success and wealth; however, Thai culture values spiritual growth over amassing wealth. Material possession can even be viewed as a sign of poor spiritual health and as a

disruption to society. Simplicity is valued. PACTEC Asia had a very nice and clean business environment with high quality technology, giving the location a professional feel. PACTEC Asia's offices were decorated in a simple style, and there were no evidences of conspicuous consumption that would have caused problems with Thai cultural values. In interviews the employee gave no indication that any tension existed regarding material and spiritual concepts.

Concept of change versus tradition. Thais and Americans believe in change; however, Americans view it as more compulsory than do Thais. Thais do not like conflict and change tends to produce conflict. PACTEC Asia is, on the one hand, an example of rapid, discontinuous change as it is a growing entrepreneurial venture that is necessarily adapting to its developing reality. Dwight appeared to bear the burden of much of this change, thus shielding the Thai staff. They largely continued their jobs as normal and did what was expected of them. When undesirable changes occurred, such as the aforementioned interviewing of a sex worker who did not conform to the organizational culture, Dwight remedied the situation quickly, again protecting the Thai staff from a stressful change.

Concept of independence versus dependence. Americans value self-reliance and the Thai have a strong view of dependency. PACTEC Asia appeared to navigate the dependent-independent difference quite well. Thais are accustomed to directive leadership on a daily basis; however, the jobs of data entry and converting printed documents to digital format are fairly straightforward. Thus, the expectation of directive leadership was lower. The Thai employees all work physically close to one another and

are able to converse regularly during the workday creating an interdependent communityin the workplace.

Concept of confrontation versus indirection (avoidance). Americans easily bring problems out into the open and discuss them in a frank and candid manner so that everyone knows where someone stands. Thais avoid direct confrontation in order to preserve surface harmony. In Thailand saving face is very important; people talk around subjects in order to avoid open confrontation. Americans naturally confront problems in a direct way. PACTEC Asia did not appear to have many difficulties in this regard. In the case of the inappropriate employee, Dwight was able to sense the unease of the other employees and acted without requiring them to be in an awkward position of avoidance.

Mejudhon offers six main applications for effective contextualization in the Thai context that together communicate the concept of meekness. PACTEC Asia made use of these methods in the following manner.

Application 1. The Christian communicator should have positive attitudes toward Buddhism and Thai culture. Dwight demonstrated positive attitudes toward Buddhism and Thai culture. Though firmly Christian in theology, Dwight expressed an openness and respect for Buddhism to a degree that was quite rare among evangelical missionaries in Thailand.

Application 2. The Christian communicator should have genuine and sincere relationships with Buddhists. Dwight had many positive relationships with Buddhists and engaged in regular extracurricular activities with them. During one bicycle adventure, he arrived late and was riding his bike by himself going up a steep hill. The returning group was coming down the hill, saw him, and reversed directions, going once again back up

the steep hill, saying that they would not "let our friend go it alone." The aforementioned story of Gahn, the financially strapped taxi driver, is another example of a genuine relationship.

Application 3. The Christian communicator should present the gospel by showing benefits and help instead of confrontation and threat. Dwight sincerely thought through various cultural frameworks and how he could positively present the gospel to his Thai Buddhist friends in such a way that presented the benefits of faith. The story of Gahn demonstrates how he focused on the benefit of debt (sin) forgiveness instead of confronting others with threats.

Application 4. The Christian communicator needs to allow more time for the diffusion of the gospel. As a new organization, PACTEC Asia has not had the time necessary to generate extensive conversions to Christianity. However, they appeared to be patient and not pressing for immediate conversion decisions on a general basis. Therefore, they seem well positioned to have a viable spiritual impact

Application 5. The Christian communicator needs to have indigenous strategies for communication of the gospel. The business strategy, though not necessarily an indigenous strategy, created a context for the PACTEC Asia expatriates to be indigenous immigrants in the community. They also had a broader strategy to empower the local church to do the task of missions by resourcing them with digital materials and extensive mapping data. Overall, they work to empower the indigenous people.

Application 6. Missionaries and Thai Christians should play appropriate roles in Thai culture if they are to develop their relationship with the Thai and become insiders. The genius of an authentic business enterprise is that the business allows the missionaries

to have an appropriate role in Thai culture and to develop natural relationships with the Thai people. PACTEC Asia is shining model for this truth.

PACTEC Asia demonstrated that they were relatively strong in terms of cultural contextualization. Although they did some things that are culturally counterintuitive, such as allowing employees to set their own wage, they did so in a way that was empowering rather than unhelpful to the cultural dynamics.

Because Dwight grew up in Thailand and speaks fluent Thai, he has a strategic advantage over many other missionaries. His background and experience combined with a very positive view of Thai culture give him a lot of potential for significant influence in Thailand. Unfortunately, not all missionary kids (MKs) have the same potential; I interviewed other MKs who demonstrated a negative attitude toward the Thai culture. Though too early to say how PACTEC Asia will fare in terms of business, the cultural contextualizing approach is a positive indicator. Every single successful expatriate-led company I came across exhibited strong contextualization similar to PACTEC Asia.

Likewise, PACTEC will have to wait to see how successful they will be in terms of their long-term goal to empower and resource the Thai church. The fact that they have already had positive signs in this regard is very encouraging, important, and, according to my research, contrary to the vast majority of missionary experiences in Thailand.

Research Question #3

My third research question is, "What is the nature and status of the social and spiritual impact of the BAM projects?" The research proposition that undergirds this question is as follows: The use of business for socio-spiritual purposes holds both

promise and peril. The theoretical framework that I used to analyze the social and spiritual impact of the businesses was Eldred's kingdom business framework.

Is a model for self-sustainable missions. PACTEC Asia has reached the point of self-sustainability in terms of business expenses, excluding the personal expenses of the expatriate missionaries. Only three of the twelve companies that I researched were self-sustaining, and they took years to get to that status.

Brings much-needed expertise, technology, and capital. PACTEC Asia fulfills a very unique niche that makes for a very important contribution to the Thai economy. It brings expertise, technology, and capital that creates jobs.

Creates jobs. PACTEC Asia is creating new jobs and seeks to leverage the jobs created through the enterprise for maximum kingdom impact by working with other ministries to employ women from labor-exploited backgrounds and/or ethnic minorities who regularly face discrimination.

Builds the local economy and blesses the nation. PACTEC Asia is building the economy by employing disadvantaged people and giving them marketable skills.

Provides access to locations that would otherwise be closed. Because all of their operations are based in Thailand, PACTEC Asia is not opening access to closed locations; however, some of their digital publishing materials and data maps may be of benefit to churches and missionaries in closed locations and the business has strong future possibilities for expansion into other Asian countries.

Presents the gospel by word. PACTEC Asia has a weekly devotional time for all employees. Each week a different employee leads the meeting that consists of prayer, song, and Bible reading. The gospel and biblical truth are consistently presented by word.

Presents the gospel by deed. PACTEC Asia presents the gospel by deed, primarily through its loving attitude toward the Thai people but also through its business operations.

Enables local funding of the church. One could make the argument that that PACTEC Asia takes away from funding of the local church because it requires payment from the Thai churches; however, the response of the Thai churches demonstrates that they are willing and able to pay for these resources. Furthermore, one could make a strong counterargument that they are significantly decreasing dependency by charging for the services instead of providing them for free. Nevertheless, PACTEC Asia still aspires to generate the majority (if not all) of its funds through its BPO services.

Can be a valuable partner for other missions efforts. PACTEC Asia is a valuable partner to other mission efforts. First, they provide valuable information, such as maps, statistics, and published resources to the Thai Christian community to facilitate and enhance their mission efforts to have a Thai church in every district of Thailand. Second, by operating a legitimate business operation, they are able to provide a MAF missionary who travels regularly to other parts of the world and works part-time at PACTEC Asia with a business visa. I came across many "cover" businesses in which missionaries who traveled to other countries hostile to Christian missions, based themselves in Thailand, and secured Thai business visas enabling them to travel freely. Unfortunately this "cover" strategy created serious problems for other legitimate missionary-operated businesses in Thailand as well as ongoing visa problems for themselves. PACTEC Asia offers a convincing contrasting model in which a traveling missionary executive attaches himself

or herself to a legitimate business enterprise, does a reasonable amount of work to justify the visa legally and ethically, and also performs other missions-related tasks.[45]

Taps into an underutilized but highly capable resource in the church.
PACTEC Asia is using a data management specialist in a unique way to advance the work of the church in Thailand.

Eldred addresses five obstacles to BAM.

Transformation—not recognizing the holistic reality of the ministry of Jesus.
PACTEC Asia demonstrated that they view people's current physical lives as well as their spiritual lives as vitally important, thus reflecting the "holistic reality of the ministry of Jesus."

Work—a vocational hierarchy led by professional ministers. PACTEC Asia, quite uniquely, really works hard to serve and empower the professional ministers. However, their support of professional ministers is not done out of a vocational hierarchy approach but rather out of a sense of using one's unique skills to the glory of God for the advancement of his kingdom.

---

[45] The strategy of using business purely as a means to obtain visas is discussed in more detail in Chapter 10 (see the section on "The Problems of Business as a Cover in Missions").

Business—a frequent suspicion regarding commercial enterprise. PACTEC

Asia had a strong view of business and had partnered with a mission agency that

understood and validated its importance.

Profit—skepticism about making money. PACTEC Asia was not skeptical

about making money but worked hard to earn it in order to sustain vital operations.

PACTEC Asia understands the necessity of profit in the development of the ThaiCRC.

The need for profit is a chief reason why they started the business. None of the profits of

the operations goes or will go to any of the missionaries or other shareholders in the

company. All of it is reinvested into the company. Dwight and the other stakeholders

have all signed documents confirming that no one will personally profit from the

endeavor.

**Wealth—false teachings such as the "health and wealth gospel" and the

"poverty gospel" and misconceptions regarding the Bible's teachings on wealth.**

PACTEC Asia did not demonstrate either of these extremes occasionally found in

churches.

Eldred identifies the three objectives of BAM:

1. Profitability and sustainability. As mentioned before, PACTEC Asia is a startup

and, as is normative in entrepreneurial endeavors, has not yet reached profitability or

sustainability;

2. Local job and wealth creation. PACTEC Asia creates local jobs and, through

those jobs, is creating local wealth. It aspires to produce more jobs and local wealth in the

future; and,

3. The advancement of the local church and the increase of spiritual capital. PACTEC Asia is strongly focused on advancing the local church and is building up spiritual capital in Thailand through its ethical operations, loving witness to Thais, creation of jobs, and dedication of valuable time and money to the people in the nation.

Conclusion

Though it has experienced some significant challenges and is still developing as a company, PACTEC Asia shows promising signs. It is very strong when analyzed through Mejuhdon's contextualization framework as well as through Eldred's Kingdom Business paradigm. Though it still needs to reach profitability and sustainability, it is adapting and evolving to its changing environment. As a result its funding model is putting it in a challenging position, and time will tell what the results will be. In light of its youthful stage (birth to 18 months), the operation appears poised to have a positive economical and spiritual influence in Thailand.

CHAPTER 7

CASE STUDY OF CORNERSTONE INTERNATIONAL GROUP

Introduction

In this chapter I present the case study of Cornerstone International Group (CIG). The first part of the chapter is a descriptive narrative of the case taken from the data collected during the research process. The second part is an analysis of the case study through the three theoretical frameworks selected for the study.

CIG is a conglomeration of companies operating in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Gene Foltz, a New Tribes missionary at the time, founded CIG in 2000. Currently, Thammasak Sumettikul, a Thai national and disciple of Foltz, leads the organization. CIG has four primary businesses:[46]

---

[46] Cornerstone Counseling Center (CCC), a counseling business that primarily serves expatriate Christian workers, was a part of CIG. CIG worked with CCC for four years, providing on-site management expertise. After four years CCC spun off and currently operates as a separate entity from CIG. I was able to interview several clients who came to Chiang Mai from all over Asia (Sri Lanka, Nepal, Malaysia, Tibet, and others) to attend the counseling center. However, because it is under its own management, I do not feature it here extensively.

1. Capital G—A housing and development company that develops high-end

residential neighborhoods, builds luxury homes, and constructs large dormitory-

style buildings;

2. Body and Mind Fitness Center—A fitness center in Chiang Mai that targets

 budget and health conscious Thais;

3. Corner Inn—An inexpensive and basic accommodation facility;

4. Cornerstone Language School—A language school that teaches Thai to foreign

 residents. Primarily, the school serves missionaries and other expatriate

 Christians.

The History of CIG

To understand CIG, one must understand its history. In the late 1990s, Chiang

Mai became a popular place for missionaries. Previously, Hong Kong was a base for

missionaries and mission agencies serving Asia. When Hong Kong came under Chinese

control in 1997, many mission agencies and organizations relocated to Chiang Mai

because they were uncertain of the future in Hong Kong. At the same time, Gene Foltz

noticed that a lot of missionaries returned to their home countries because they could not

find adequate educational options for their children in Asia. With the goal of preventing

the attrition of missionaries and serving the growing missionary community in Chiang

Mai, Gene decided to start a Christian school (Foltz 2007a).

The idea of starting a Christian school did not conform to New Tribes' priorities

and vision at the time. According to Gene, "Some gave resistance because of cooperation

[multidenominational and multiagency approach]. Others didn't like the strategy and

preferred homeschooling" (Folz 2007a). In April 1997, Gene took a leave of absence from New Tribes to focus on setting up the school. In April 1998 Gene established an official board, composed of Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) and Southern Baptist mission executives and set up the school as a foundation, Grace Foundation, in Thailand.

The organizational structure of the school has been so exemplary that the Thai government now recommends that schools structure themselves like Grace (Folz 2007a).

Around the same time, Gene became increasingly convinced of the need to provide high-quality Thai language instruction to missionaries. New Tribes had a small school, but it was reserved for New Tribes missionaries. The school was not functioning well and was costing too much money, causing New Tribes to decide to shut down the school. Gene proposed that they sell the school to Cornerstone. The move would allow Cornerstone to expand to other mission agencies, giving it the capacity necessary to be financially sustainable. In return for the sale, New Tribes missionaries got a tuition reduction at the school. New Tribes agreed, and in the fall of 2000, Cornerstone Language School (CLS) was born. The school has been profitable ever since (Folz 2007a).

Gene was the founding superintendent of GIS and was also working closely with CLS. He noted, "Lots of CLS and Grace employees started coming to the Lord" (Folz 2007a). The original focus of CLS and GIS was not to create an environment through which Thais would become Christians; rather, Gene notes that they "stumbled into" into an effective strategy and started to see the potential of business to accomplish multi-purposes in missions. In the next two years, CIG started its housing and development arm, Capital G, as well as two sports clubs and two schools.

During this time frame, Gene also led Thammasak to the Lord and later his wife and family. Gene discipled Thammasak for four to five years; the two became close friends and business partners. In January 2002, Gene's aging parents became ill, and he and his wife made the decision to return permanently to the States. At this time Thammasak became the CEO and has led CIG ever since.

Thammasak embraced the vision of using business to reach people for Christ. He says, "I have a heart for middle-class Thais, and the only way to reach them is through business" (Summetikul 2007a). He says that middle-class Thais have remained resistant to the gospel because it has been so widely accepted by the lower class. Another complicating factor to gospel acceptance has been the prominent and predominant role of missionaries. He notes that after five hundred years of Christian missionary work in Thailand, the country is still less than 1 percent Christian. Thammasak acknowledges that missionaries have done a lot for Thailand, "They brought good hospitals and good schools," but he adds, "Missionaries do it their own way. Foreigners are not the best [for evangelism] because locals put up a wall. They interpret the gospel as a foreigner's religion. The best evangelizers are Thai" (Summetikul 2007a).

When he was a new Christian, Thammasak was embarrassed because all Thai Christians were of low education and Christians were viewed as ignorant people who did not make a valuable social contribution. Thammasak resolved to change that by "being a walking testimony to middle class Thais" (Summetikul 2007c).

Thammasak has poured his heart and soul into CIG and has made a lot of aggressive moves, both in terms of business and ministry. He expanded operations in

most of the businesses, and he set up a proactive ministry strategy focused on

evangelism. He developed a powerful vision and mission statement for the company:

The vision of Cornerstone is to transform society by implementing Christian

business practices in the Thai economy.

The mission of Cornerstone is to demonstrate biblical values of integrity and

honesty in our dealings with our peers, vendors, contractors, customers, and

employees, being truthful in all that we say and do and working aggressively as

professionals in our industry. (CIG 2007)

Thammasak says that the formula to running a BAM business is to "become a

walking testimony. Let people see you walk. We want to show people the practical

results of becoming a Christian like honesty, working hard, etc" (Summetikul 2007a).

Nevertheless, his strategy is not one of simply being seen and not heard. Rather, he has

thought through ways to proclaim the gospel verbally to people who work for his

companies.

The most prominent venue for gospel proclamation is what is called Lunch for

Christ. At all of their businesses, CIG offers a free lunch at least once a week. Attendance

is voluntary, but most employees attend. Along with the free food, the employees hear

gospel proclamations and biblical teaching, worship through song, pray, and receive

prayer. Thammasak is usually present at the meeting and is actively involved, sometimes

leading worship; however, other people, such as Thai pastors, other ministry partners, missionaries, and some emerging leaders among the staff, do the teaching.

Frequently the employees have never heard the gospel or the name of Jesus or been exposed to Thai Christians. The work has seen tremendous fruit. Approximately 80 percent of non-Christians who work on an extended basis for the company convert to Christ. Approximately fifty have converted. Scores of others have been exposed. For example, in one of his construction sites, the laborers come from Burma and the business has a high turnover as they return periodically to their home country. Though only three have become Christians, all hear the gospel during their time in Thailand. The free food may be the means by which people start studying but it is not the reason they keep coming back. After financial restraints caused CIG to stop the free meal in one business location, the employees, of whom 90+ percent were not Christians, continued to meet on a weekly basis to study the Bible and learn about the gospel.

Figure 7.1. Construction at a CIG site.

Thammasak also seeks to cultivate partnerships with local churches, saying, "We should work as partners; church and company should be close together." He notes that most middle-class Thais will not go to church, so "we must bring the church to the

company" (Summetikul 2007c). He arranges for pastors to speak during lunch for Christ and to be available to serve as intermediaries or for prayer when problems arise. One of Thammasak's goals is to "normalize prayer," creating a context for the gospel to take root in people's lives (Summetikul 2007a). They provide this context by starting all meetings in prayer and encourage people to pray spontaneously. This principle worked many times in CIG. For example, one Buddhist girl approached a Christian employee and asked for immediate prayer after her fiancé went blind from an accident.

Thammasak seeks to demonstrate a "Father's love" to all of the employees (Summetikul 2007d). He makes a sincere attempt to forgive work mistakes which is good management because otherwise "people would lie about mistakes." The one exception, he notes, is cheating, saying that he has had to let people go for stealing from the company. In another situation, he found out that an employee was cheating on the time sheet and used the opportunity to "teach him about God." The employee later became a Christian (Summetikul 2007d).

Another employee described Thammasak as the father and CLS as a family where "everyone is brother and sister" (Summetikul 2007a). Many employees pointed to prayer as the one aspect that unites them as a family: "When some has a problem, we pray for one another" (Sarai 2007). One Buddhist employee said, "When I first saw this [praying for one another], I did not understand it, but now I do. Being a Christian means being a part of a new family. Cornerstone has become that family for me" (Paveena 2007).

Thammasak has restrained from making rules that govern behavior of his employees but has tried to facilitate transformation among them and points out, "The company is starting to take on Christian culture" (Summetikul 2007a). He explains that

most employees no longer spend Monday morning talking about their drunken binges, and cursing is seldom heard. The annual New Year's Eve party has changed from "a drunk fest to a nice evening." At first, "God was funny to most of the employees, but now He seems normal" (Summetikul 2007a).

Despite this intentional focus on having a fruitful ministry, Thammasak realized that he was "a slave to money" and sensed that God wanted him "to become a master of money" (Summetikul 2007d). He read Randy Alcorn's *The Treasure Principle: Discovering the Secret of Joyful Giving* and concluded, "Money is the vehicle. The goal is to serve God." He realized he could not serve two masters and says, "This killed me because I loved money" (Summetikul 2007d).

His desire not to be a slave to money led him to make some strong financial decisions. In the middle of 2006, Thammasak resolved to give 10 percent of all of CIG revenue to local ministries. Figure 7.2 demonstrates where the money goes. The goal is not to give 10 percent of profit but rather 10 percent of all revenue before expenses. Thammasak said, "Giving 50 percent of profits is easy, but giving 10 percent of revenues is scary" (Summetikul 2007d). This step was a massive financial risk that Thammasak thought necessary. At the same time, the economy of Thailand slowed dramatically as a result of the 2006 *coup d'état* that removed Thaksin from power. With Thais suddenly struggling financially, Capital G had a few large 6,000+ square feet luxury homes that they needed to sell. The resulting constriction of cash flow made follow through on the commitment to give 10 percent of all revenue quite difficult.

Though Thammasak is in complete control of CIG's operations, Gene still shares ownership and interacts with Thammasak regularly. When Gene learned of Thammasak's

commitment to give 10 percent of CIG's revenue, he became quite frustrated, believing that it was an inappropriate commitment and an unwise use of funds. Nevertheless, Thammasak held firm to his commitment even while CIG's financial picture worsened. Their tight friendship helped them to endure the cash flow challenge and the differences in opinion. Eventually, Gene got some financial partners from the States to make donations to the local ministries to fulfill CIG's commitment and to relieve Thammasak of his promise. The arrangement was made in such a way to honor all commitments, allow Thammasak to save face, and enable CIG to regain some financial strength.

Thammasak has remained committed to financial integrity and stewardship for himself and for the company, saying, "Money is a terrible master, but an excellent slave" (Summetikul 2007a).

Thammasak has started the practice of giving small loans to staff in need. After noticing an increase in staff with financial problems, he brought them all together and asked if they were tithing. After several said that they wanted to but found doing so too difficult, Thammasak offered a solution. He said that he could take out 10 percent from their paychecks and send it directly to a ministry. To his surprise, most of them responded that they wanted to do that. A few months later, one employee shared that his financial situation had stabilized after he started having his tithe automatically removed from his paycheck.

Where Does the Money Go?
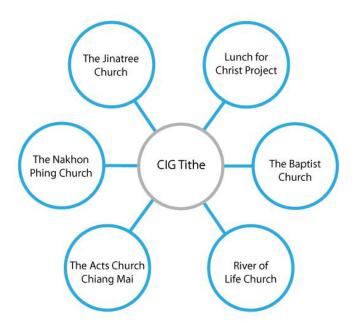
Figure 7.2. Dispersion of CIG tithe.

The post-coup cash crunch at CIG has had tremendous pressure on Thammasak:

"The last year has been the hardest of my life." He adds, "I am closer to God than ever

before." He says the stress "has caused me to rely on God." While things have not

worked out as he has envisioned, Thammasak adds, "We are in the middle of the story.

Plans Change. Business is hard. Failure is the best teacher" (Summetikul 2007d).

In the middle of the story, CIG is adapting to its new business environment.

Thammasak has raised salaries of many of his employees 30-40 percent in order to avoid

defection to competitors. He has reconfigured the operations at the Body and Mind

Fitness Center to utilize a new marketing strategy called Blue Ocean. CIG has developed

different possibilities for selling their housing units. Though they are still in the "middle

of the story," they are poised to thrive financially and to continue to make a significant spiritual impact within their companies and the community at large (Summetikul 2007d).

Case Analysis

To analyze the case, I will return to my three research questions and the accompanying theoretical framework.

Research Question #1

My first research question is, "What is the nature and status of the businesses' financial arrangements?" The research proposition that undergirds this question is as follows: Generating start-up capital and means of financial sustainability in BAM projects are not as straightforward as in normal business operations. The theoretical framework that I used to analyze the financial arrangements of the businesses was Rundle and Sudyk's funding a kingdom business model.[47]

In order to understand the funding and ongoing financing of BAM projects, I analyzed the case studies using Rundle and Sudyk's financing model. Of Rundle and

---

[47] For more information on my research propositions, question, and theoretical framework, see the relevant discussion in Chapter 1.

Sudyk's four different types, the third type, privately owned and funded businesses, is the category under which CIG falls. It is a for-profit business, and, unlike many other BAM projects, has never received any subsidies either in the form of start-up capital, ongoing expenses, or for-management salaries.

Research Question #2

My second research question is, "What is the nature and status of the cultural contextualization of the BAM projects?" The research proposition that undergirds this question is as follows: In cross-cultural contexts, business as well as ministry must work in a culturally sensitive and contextually appropriate manner. The theoretical framework that I used to analyze the cultural contextualization of the business operations was Mejudhon's Thai contextualization model.

CIG makes an interesting case study in cultural contextualization as it is currently under Thai management and fully operates as a Thai company, although many of its clients are expatriates. However, missionaries founded the group, and many of the employees worked for missionary managers through the developing years. The employees could testify to the differences between working for an American manager

and working for a Thai manager. Also, contrasting a Thai-managed company with the missionary-expatriate managed companies that composed my other case studies provided a helpful model.

Mejudhon argues that meekness is the best approach to contextualizing Christian discipleship in Thailand. As mentioned previously, Mejudhon identifies eight primary differences between the cultural values of the Thai and Americans.[48] Here I will work through these eight primary differences and how CIG dealt with them and how the approach of the Thai managementcontrasted with missionary expatriate managed businesses.[49]

Concept of time. Americans tend to believe that time is valuable whereas the Thai tend to move much slower and not pay as much attention to time. CIG had a high-energy, time-conscious environment. Despite being composed of Thai managers and employees, CIG reflected a high value on time and using time efficiently. Employees who had worked under German and American managers said that Thai management

---

[48] A more extensive evaluation of Thai cultural characteristics and contrasts and comparisons with American culture are made in Chapter 3.

[49] These eight primary differences were not presented to CIG, any of its employees, or anyone else whom I researched. One of my goals was to see how expatriates and Thai explained and articulated the differences. One of my chief findings, as reported in the final chapter, is that no one had clear categories or the terminology to describe the differences. The following is drawn from analysis of responses to open-ended questions.

offered more grace regarding timelines. Employees reported higher levels of stress when working under strict time guidelines imposed by foreigner managers. CIG has managed to utilize time in an effective and culturally appropriate way.

Concept of work and play. Americans tend to separate work and play and view them as independent whereas the Thai tend to believe that work should be as enjoyable as play. CIG intentionally integrated play and work. For example, at Body and Mind Fitness Center, they have a weekly fun time in which employees play games and eat lunch together. Of the 12 businesses I researched, they were the only one to incorporate fun activities strategically. In all employee interviews, they reported that the workplace became more fun when they worked under Thai management rather than expatriate management.

Concept of youth versus age. Americans tend to value youth and do not show as much respect for their elders as do the Thai. Since its founding the leaders of CIG have been older than most of their subordinates. All cultural customs regarding titles have been followed since the inception of CIG.

Concept of equality versus hierarchy and rank. Americans value equality. It is one of the central themes in the founding of the nation whereas hierarchical relations are the center of Thai culture. CIG operates according to a normative Thai organizational structure; however, Thammasak is incorporating aspects of managerial techniques from America, such as the empowerment of subordinates to make decisions that are counter to normal Thai processes. The strategy of incorporating American managerial practices is a new development, and time will tell if this new managerial strategy is effective in the Thai context or not.

Concept of material versus spiritual. Americans accumulate goods as a measure of success and wealth. Thai culture values spiritual growth over amassing wealth. Material possession can even be viewed as a sign of poor spiritual health and as a disruption to society. Simplicity is valued. During its beginning years, CIG operated according to principles of leanness and frugality. Thammasak admits now that he struggled with a materialistic attitude that pushed him to seek more money through aggressive business expansion. Ironically, CIG had more of a "Thai" cultural approach to material possessions when it was under American management; however, Thammasak has experienced personal, internal change and is managing CIG today with more value put on spiritual growth rather than material growth.

Concept of change versus tradition. Thais and Americans believe in change. Americans view it as more compulsory than do Thais. Thais do not like conflict, and change tends to bring it about. As a company, CIG has experienced periods of rapid growth and decline, thus creating a high-change culture that is not uncommon in Thai business. Rapid change is not a reflection of a rejection of Thai cultural values but of the reality of contemporary business. CIG employees did not seem to be aware of a lot of changes and did not report any frustrations with change; therefore, CIG, though having a lot of change, managed it effectively in terms of its cultural implications.

Concept of independence versus dependence. Americans value self-reliance whereas the Thai have a strong view of dependency. CIG had a strong interdependent culture that reflected Thai cultural values. CIG expects employees to do their jobs but not in an autonomous manner as is common in American firms; rather, they ask questions of their supervisors and interact with one another on basic tasks. Furthermore, the frequency

of sharing personal prayer requests among the staff is a reflection of the dependency orientation found among the Thai.

Concept of confrontation versus indirection (avoidance). Americans easily bring problems out into the open and discuss them in a frank and candid manner so that everyone knows where everyone else stands. Thais, however, avoid direct confrontation in order to preserve surface harmony. In Thailand people talk around a subject in order to avoid open confrontation. Americans naturally confront problems in a direct way. Several CIG employees had previously worked for both American and German managers. Their chief complaint about the expatriate managers is that they were too direct and "harsh" when communicating with employees. One employee said, "Now we do it the right way" (Banjit 2007). By that statement she meant that problems are not directly or harshly confronted but are handled through indirect means as is common in Thai culture.

Mejudhon offers six main applications for effective contextualization in the Thai context that together communicate the concept of meekness. Again, I outline these six areas and address how CIG dealt with them.

Application 1. The Christian communicator should have positive attitudes toward Buddhism and Thai culture. CIG, as a business, has a very positive attitude toward Thai culture. It was accepted as normative, and everyone operated according to Thai culture norms and customs. Buddhism is accepted as a reality, but the general attitude toward it would not be considered positive. Christian employees did not speak strongly negatively about Buddhism but did consistently voice negative attributes about it.

Application 2. The Christian communicator should have genuine and sincere relationships with Buddhists. Many employees at CIG are Buddhists, and Christians

interacted with them in a healthy ways. Many of the Christian employees had family members and/or spouses who were Buddhists. To the extent possible, these employees reported that they maintained positive relationships with these family members. A few, however, noted that the family members had rejected or abandoned them because of their decision to become Christian.

Application 3. The Christian communicator should present the gospel showing benefits and help instead of confrontation and threat. The presentation of the gospel at CIG-sponsored events strongly emphasized the personal benefits of becoming a Christ follower. In some instances the benefits of the gospel were overemphasized in regards to material possessions. Some people noted that they were financially blessed because of their tithing, reflecting a prosperity gospel orientation.

Application 4. The Christian communicator needs to allow more time for the diffusion of the gospel. In general CIG allowed for time for the gospel to take root in people's lives. CIG had incidents of calling for "professions of faith" at lunch meetings when people had just attended a few times. In general the evangelistic calls appeared to be done in such a way that allowed for people to take time to make their decision and to process the new information about Christ in a culturally appropriate way.

Application 5. The Christian communicator needs to have indigenous strategies for communication of the gospel. CIG has very indigenous strategies for reaching the Thai. First, they are Thai and they proclaim the gospel as Thais to Thais. Second, they incorporate gospel proclamation into normal business operations. Third, gospel proclamation is integrated into "fun time" activities at lunch. Fun activities at lunch are an indigenous business activity.

Application 6. Missionaries and Thai Christians should play appropriate roles in Thai culture if they are to develop their relationship with the Thai and become insiders. Though CIG is now fully operated under Thai management, the missionary, Gene Folz, who founded it had strong relationships with Thai people. Employee interviews reflected great respect and honor for him. CIG has a solid foundation because of the culturally adapted work of the missionaries who founded it.

Research Question #3

My third research question is, "What is the nature and status of the social and spiritual impact of the BAM projects?" The research proposition that undergirds this question is as follows: The use of business for socio-spiritual purposes holds both promise and peril. The theoretical framework that I used to analyze the social and spiritual impact of the businesses was Eldred's kingdom business framework. As stated previously, each case was analyzed through the kingdom business framework articulated by Eldred in his book, *God is at Work*. Eldred argues that BAM is a preferred strategy for mission.

Is a model for self-sustainable missions. CIG is self-sustaining. It is a for-profit company that does not receive any mission subsidies.[50]

Brings much-needed expertise, technology, and capital. CIG has brought in capital to Thailand in the form of foreign direct investment.

Creates jobs. CIG has sixty-four full-time employees and is currently employing an additional forty construction workers. These jobs were created by the business of CIG and would not otherwise exist without CIG.

Builds the local economy and blesses the nation. The term "bless" was frequently used by CIG management and staff and is a reflection of their intention to bless others. CIG's business operations appropriately build up the local economy.

Provides access to locations that would otherwise be closed. CIG provides access to people who live in closed countries. By employing scores of Burmese construction workers CIG exposes them to the gospel. These Burmese workers regularly return to Burma and carry the seeds of the good news with them.

---

[50] CIG has used donated subsidies to pass on to other local ministries but has not used them for operational expenses.

Presents the gospel by word. CIG aggressively integrates gospel proclamation into its business activities, generally through its Lunch for Christ meetings but also through spontaneous prayer sessions and casual conversations.

Presents the gospel by deed. Thammasak's vision is "to be a walking testimony for Christ" (Summetikul 2007a). CIG encourages financial transparency and personal accountability in an obvious aspect of its organizational culture.

Enables local funding of the church. CIG funds several local ministries and encourages its employees to tithe (see Figure 7.2). Thammasak automatically withdraws the tithe from the paychecks of employees who have asked him to do so in order to assist them in tithing.

Can be a valuable partner for other missions efforts. CIG has worked as an umbrella organization for other BAM projects, providing consulting and a legal structure. They have also partnered with other mission efforts, such as the Cornerstone Counseling Center, which provides counseling services for missionaries and others.

Taps into an underutilized but highly capable resource in the church. CIG evangelizes and disciples professionals in the marketplace to serve God and their neighbor in the marketplace. They continue to operate as a missional organization even though no missionaries are on staff. They utilize business professionals in the course of their normal jobs to spread the gospel.

Eldred addresses five obstacles to BAM.

Transformation—not recognizing the holistic reality of the ministry of Jesus. An inadequate view of transformation did not appear to be an obstacle at CIG. Employees and management alike spoke about the work of Christ in their lives in the

here and now and in the future. CIG does not obviously overemphasize either the physical or spiritual worlds.

Work—a vocational hierarchy led by professional ministers. CIG acknowledged the necessity of pastors and the usefulness of missionaries. However, Thammasak believes that middle class Thai "will only be reached through business" (Summetikul 2007a). As such no evidence exists that professional ministers are too highly valued in CIG.

Business—a frequent suspicion regarding commercial enterprise. Many employees at CIG demonstrated that they had thought about the divine purposes of business and valued it as an "honorable enterprise." CIG showed no evidence of suspicion regarding inappropriate commercial enterprise.

Profit—skepticism about making money. CIG showed no evidence of skepticism toward profit. As a matter of fact, at times it had an unhealthy focus on profits, which led to spiritual and financial challenges within the organization.

Wealth—false teachings such as the "health and wealth gospel" and the "poverty gospel." Many misconceptions exist regarding the Bible's teachings on wealth: Thammasak admits that he sought money for the sake of money. Money is still perceived as a blessing from God, which leans toward prosperity gospel. Thammasak admits that he has a lot to learn in this area and is making significant steps toward a fuller biblical understanding of wealth. Some other employee's comments also reflected a prosperity gospel orientation, speaking of money as something that mysteriously appears rather than something that should be earned. However, most of the employees seemed to have a fairly biblically solid view of money.

Eldred says BAM has three objectives:

1. Profitability and sustainability. CIG has attained profitability and sustainability. Although they are in "the middle of the story" and may have to make some readjustments to their business operations, they are currently sustaining business operations.

2. Local job and wealth creation. They have created local jobs and local wealth; and,

3. The advancement of the local church and the increase of spiritual capital. They are supporting local churches, producing new Christians and bringing salt and light into the Thai marketplace.

Conclusion

CIG is a fascinating case study that demonstrates that BAM projects can be started by a missionary and then passed on to a national. They have one of the more assertive, evangelistic strategies of all of the BAM operations researched and, interestingly enough, have produced more evangelistic fruit than most of the others. As a Thai-managed and operated business, they very strongly reflect Thai cultural values and are quite contextual in their approach according to Mejudhon's framework. They are an example of an unsubsidized and sustainable BAM project in Thailand and powerfully fulfill Eldred's model of BAM.

CHAPTER 8
CASE STUDY OF FOUNDATION WORKPLACE ENGLISH INTERNATIONAL[51]

Introduction

In this chapter I present the case study of Foundation Workplace English

International (FWEI). The first part of the chapter is a descriptive narrative of the case

taken from the data collected during the research process. The second part is an analysis

of the case study through the three theoretical frameworks selected for the study.

FWEI is a niche market English language school focusing on teaching English in

the workplace. They aim to transform the community through good business practice and

by building healthy relationships. It was founded in 2003 by Robert Cutlett and is a

subsidiary of Market Impact Limited (MIL), a 100 percent New Zealand-owned company

---

[51] Name of the company and other identifying details changed by request of the company's management.

with business interests in India, Bangladesh, China, Macau, Thailand, and New Zealand. Their businesses include three manufacturing units, one light engineering unit, one kindergarten, two English language schools, one workplace support consultancy firm, and one tour company (Berry 2007a).

MIL is a unique organization that exists "to transform the marketplace with holistic business principles and practices" (Berry 2007a). Their goal is to differentiate themselves by operating through sound business ethics and practices, having genuine concern for each stakeholder including employees, suppliers, customers, local communities, directors, and investors, and ultimately aiming to provide social, environmental, economic, and spiritual uplift to marginalized people in developing countries.

MIL is committed to functioning as an organization in a balanced and responsible manner and with a quadruple bottom line. The following four areas outline where their focus is in their own words:

1. Social—While being internally sustainable, we want to contribute to the community beyond ourselves. We do that by being socially aware and proactively engage in social issues, particularly toward marginalized people in developing countries.

2. Economic—As an organisation we want to be fiscally responsible by ensuring we run long-term financially sustainable businesses. This means ensuring we steward our financial resources both for now and for the long-term.

3. Environmental—we want to be recognized as good and responsible stewards of our environment. This means we must behave in a way that ensures our planet will benefit from our involvement and not see it as part of the problem.

4. Spiritual—We recognize that every individual we interact with has a full and extensive life independent of MIL. We want to encourage people intentionally that spiritual exploration is healthy and an important part of the circle and journey of life (FWEI 2007).

FWEI

In 2006 FWEI experienced a change in leadership as Mark Berry, a New Zealander, came to Thailand and became the director of CWE. In August 2007 Robert Cutlett and his family returned home to New Zealand, bringing an end to the founder's tenure with the young organization.

Before moving to Thailand Mark had worked as a mission executive. He had observed missionaries working in various countries and operating businesses and teaching English. Many times the purpose of these operations was simply to serve as a means through which they could obtain visas. Sometimes the strategy helped to get visas; other times it did not. At one point he witnessed several people having their visas revoked, and he began to consider other approaches. Mark began talking with other people, such as Bobby Smith, who founded a clothing company in Bombay, India, in order to empower prostitutes with alternative employment opportunities. After a period of time, they experienced a "shift in mind-set," and they decided that "the best contextualized approach was a legitimate business" (Berry 2007a).

This conclusion caused Mark to change careers and move to MIL. Mark and Barbara moved to Chiang Mai, a city full of "misfits, mercenaries, and missionaries," bringing the goal of "transforming the middle class; transforming business; transforming society" (Berry 2007b). FWEI was an ideal fit for them creating an avenue for them to be fully engaged in the Thai marketplace, to develop relationships with Thai business people, and to use their skills to create value for other people.

The primary mission of FWEI is to be a transformational influence on Thai urban Buddhists. Despite centuries of Christian work in Thailand, middle-class urban Thais remain remarkably resistant with substantially less than 1 percent being followers of Christ. This people group is not geographically located; rather, they are a demographic. Though they sometimes cluster in communities, they generally disperse around the city. Furthermore, their community is primarily their workplace. As Mark said, "Their community is their work; their work is their community" (Berry 2007b). They frequently work six twelve-hour days a week. In order to be a spiritual influence on these people, the best approach chosen was through a legitimate business operation.

FWEI is a growing company including five Thai office staff, six foreign teachers, as well as a couple of Thai teachers who teach the lower level classes where some Thai

language is required.[52] All of the staff and many of the teachers are employed directly by FWEI while some of the teachers are employed by MIL. The teachers are all on board with the holistic mission of FWEI, and many have joined because they have realized that to create genuine change in Thailand they needed to "find a way to identify more directly with the people" (Thurlow 2007). Another teacher added that he became convinced that "Godly business goes hand in hand with people responding to God in a contextualized manner" (Knox 2007).

Their clients have included Chiang Mai University Pharmacy School, a postnatal hospital, major hotels, a fitness trainer school, an international school, and scores of other businesses, universities, and schools. Their clients are frequently engaged in important work in which language communication is a key factor for success in the global marketplace. For example, L-tec, a growing Japanese fiber-optics firm with 7,000 employees, needs its Thai and Japanese employees to learn English so they can communicate with one another. SPB software is a German-owned company that makes software for Microsoft Personal Digital Assistants (PDA) and needs English instruction to enhance communication with its Russian office. FWEI must have a broad clientele in

---

[52] FWEI once had ten foreign teachers but four resigned in 2007, primarily because of changes of direction in their own lives.

order to generate sufficient income for sustainability. They serve five specific groups in

the following order of priority: (1) groups of Thai urban Buddhists in businesses, (2)

groups of Thai urban Buddhist adults in educational institutes, (3) private Thai urban

Buddhist professionals, (4) Thai children, and (5) non-Thai adults and children.[53]

Teaching English in Chiang Mai is challenging due to the high ratio of English-

speaking expatriates live. Until March 2004 no other English instruction companies

served the Thai business community, but now the market is overcrowded. Financially

English instruction is challenging because British expatriates receive money from a

British international aid fund in exchange for teaching English. A for-profit enterprise has

difficulty competing against British government-subsidized English teachers. Although

the Thai government requires all English teachers to have a certificate and a qualification,

this law is frequently ignored. Therefore, several illegal schools have unqualified

instructors who work for less money.

Many traveling foreigners teach English on an *ad hoc* basis for minimal payment.

Furthermore, many mission organizations provide English language instruction for free

driving down the market rates. All FWEI instructors carry a Certificate in English

---

[53] Though they are currently providing services to non-Thai children, they plan to discontinue that work as soon as they can financially afford to do so. However, they plan to continue teaching non-Thai adults as a low priority.

Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA) from Cambridge University or a Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) from Trinity University to gives them a highly regarded, internationally recognized teaching certificate. Unfortunately, these credentials are not always important to clients.

The business has other challenges as well. In July 2007 they were ready to start a large teaching contract with the Chiang Mai Pharmacy School. Before it began it was postponed until August, and five days before the August start, the Pharmacy School canceled the contract. FWEI was expecting twenty-three classes for "two by two" hour lessons, lessons in which a teacher teaches twice for two hours, each week for eight to ten weeks. This type of contract meant having teachers prepared to teach, and its cancellation left quite a hole in FWEI, both with staff and, consequently, financially. In hindsight,

Mark realizes that they should have kept in closer contact with the Pharmacy school during the time leading up to the courses in order to ensure they were still on track, but challenges such as this one are hard to predict, considering FWEI had been teaching classes for the Pharmacy school for three years and had never had a problem of this nature before. They have been able to fill the gap left by the canceled contract by doing one-on-one tutoring but have also had problems with these people canceling on short notice. To counteract the last minute cancellations FWEI developed a standard tutoring contract for private students that they must sign before teaching commences. FWEI also rehired a Thai marketing director, who had previously left for personal/family reasons, to help generate new contracts. Fortunately, they have enough work to keep busy but need even more to be profitable.

The challenges of doing business in Thailand caused some internal conflicts within FWEI regarding the appropriate strategy. Some of the teachers believed that FWEI needed to make a large capital investment to compete with the larger English language firms. Others, believing that this decision carried unnecessary risk and that raising the capital would require a lot of time and energy, resisted the move toward a larger scale development and instead preferred to stay small and break into the market through creative strategies and hard work. To date, FWEI has maintained the strategy to utilize minimal capital and to seek out a niche in the crowded English language market.

One of FWEI's strategies has been to focus on small groups. Other companies that have offered special discounts for large groups have been tempting to cash-strapped companies, and FWEI has lost some customers to these low-cost competitors. FWEI has maintained that small groups are necessary in order to learn English well. This strategyhas worked to their advantage as many clients have returned noting that the drop in quality in the large-group settings did not justify the cost savings. Through this strategy, FWEI has created a niche market that specializes in high-quality small group-based English instruction. This strategy will hopefully help them find a place in a crowded market, but this strategy also works well in regards to their goal to have a spiritual influence on their clients.

Small groups allow for relationship connections to be developed. Teaching English at higher levels within business environments creates a context for constant conversation which frequently leads to spiritual and religious questions and dialogue. As one FWEI teacher said, "This happens more than I ever thought it would" (Rich 2007b). Others noted that spiritual conversations happen regularly before and after class and these

teachers arrive early and stay late in order to make the most of every opportunity.

Nevertheless, developing ongoing relationships necessary to see conversions in the

Buddhist context has been challenging.[54] Some expressed frustration that they do not

have the time or energy to spend extra time with students outside of class. One signed a

contract for reduced pay in order to have more free time to pursue relationships outside of

the working environment. Another said they also wanted more contact with students

outside of teaching hours and more conversations on faith and added that they were "still

trying to figure out how to do that" (Holsteller 2007).

FWEI's classes are generally thirty-hour courses with fifteen two-hour meetings.

Some of the school-based courses allow for up to 100 hours with students. Generally,

some of the teachers noted that they tended to develop a stronger relationship with one

student per course and this friendship would last for a few months after the completion of

the course.

This relationship challenge has led FWEI to adapt in two ways. First, they are

able to have ongoing relationships with the Thai staff who are, with one exception, not

Christian. One teacher said that she was "motivated to stay in Thailand primarily for the

---

[54] In the final chapter, I discuss the components of conversion for Buddhists in Thailand. All twenty-six converts that I interviewed noted that they witnessed the life of a believer(s) over an extended period of time (as in years).

Thai staff." Second, they view themselves in large part as a seed-planting ministry rather than a reaping ministry. One teacher said that they are able to "sow values and instill godly principles" through teaching (Smith 2007). When asked about what spiritual fruit he had seen, Mark drew a graph of Paul Hiebert's centered set (see Figure 8.1).
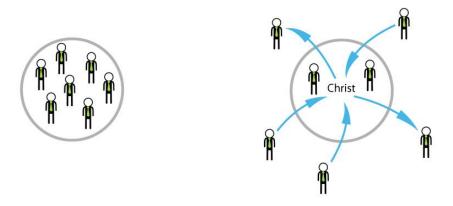
Figure 8.1. Mark Berry's drawing of Paul Hiebert's centered set.

This concept expressed in Hiebert's work, *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues* (1994), describes a set as essentially "a group" of things. The nature of sets can vary significantly, and Hiebert addresses two in particular: (1) the "bounded set," and (2) the "centered set."

A bounded set has well-defined boundaries and is focused on propositions, while a centered set "groups things on the basis of how they relate to other things." Therefore, in terms of a bounded set, the Church would be a people who are "all the same in essence," while in terms of a centered set, "the church would be defined by its center, the Jesus Christ of Scripture" (Hiebert 1994, 150). Hiebert says that the bounded set can become too exacting and exclusive, while an advantage of the centered set is that Jesus Christ becomes the focus of all that the Church is and does.

As a seed-planting ministry, FWEI does not specifically focus on bringing people into the bounded set but focuses on turning them toward the centered set. Mark said that they have not seen many join the bounded set but have seen scores make the turn from a life headed away from Christ to a life moving toward Christ. The Engel scale was also another formulation used by FWEI to express how they view their ministry as moving people closer to Christ but not necessarily to the point of having a redemptive relationship with him.[55] Through their four years, FWEI believes that hundreds of Thai have been significantly challenged in their view of Christ through their teaching, attitude, and care. Only one Thai person has become a Christian as a direct result of their work, but Mark notes that this method "is not a good way to evaluate our effectiveness" (Berry 2007a).

Developing relationships in small group contexts can be challenging when trying to cross-cultural barriers. FWEI learned some things the hard way. For example, no one showed up when the staff was invited to go out for coffee with the director. They learned two things: (1) Going out for coffee is not a normal Thai cultural activity, and (2) going out with the *jao-nai* (boss) is not well accepted in Thailand as it violates their status-rank

---

[55] Not all of FWEI's teachers pointed to the Engel scale or Heibert's centered set at all, and some expressed frustration that they were not able to minister to the point of conversion.

orientation. They also had to learn to go through a third person instead of communicating difficult things directly to Thai staff, an acknowledgement of the Thai indirect communication style. They realized that eating outside of the kitchen was considered inappropriate and sometimes asking unsolicited personal questions raised barriers rather than established relationships.

Another challenge to FWEI teachers is learning the Thai language. Because they must spend a lot of time on the business, it is, as an obvious necessity, conducted completely in English. Their lack of proficiency in Thai means that their relationship opportunities outside of the workplace are limited.

The "coup" in September 2006 brought the economy of Thailand to a grinding halt. While much of the country regained some economic momentum, Chiang Mai has not. Most businesses have suffered. FWEI paid an advertising company to run two advertisements. When the second advertisement never manifested itself, FWEI called their offices and got no answer. They finally made a trip to their offices and learned that the company had disappeared in the middle of the night taking everything with them. Other businesses are struggling, and office space has a high rate of turnover as businesses open and close down. In this environment businesses are very reluctant to spend money on teaching their employees to speak English, either doing nothing or gravitating to the lower-quality yet lower-cost (or free) providers.

Another challenge they have is that if they get busy with new teaching contracts they will have a shortage of teachers. Managing inconsistent contracts and maintaining sufficient income to keep people on has been difficult. Whether FWEI can become a viable business within the short to medium or even long-term is still unclear. Despite all

of these challenges, FWEI is still committed to its original vision of transforming the society of Thailand through the medium of a socially, economically, environmentally, and spiritually engaged business.

Case Analysis

To analyze the case, I return to my three research questions and the accompanying theoretical framework.

Research Question #1

My first research question is, "What is the nature and status of the businesses' financial arrangements?" The research proposition that undergirds this question is as follows: Generating start-up capital and means of financial sustainability in BAM projects are not as straightforward as in normal business operations. The theoretical framework that I used to analyze the financial arrangements of the businesses was Rundle and Sudyk's funding a kingdom business model.[56]

---

[56] For more information on my research propositions, question, and theoretical framework, see the relevant discussion in Chapter 1.

Of the four different models for funding a kingdom business FWEI would fit the hybrid model. MIL, the New Zealand-based multinational holding company, owns 49 percent of the company. A local Thai conglomerate owns 51 percent of the company. The company was started and funded by MIL, but because New Zealand does not have an amity agreement with Thailand, 51 percent of the business has to be owned by a Thai person or company. The local Thai conglomerate has a similar purpose, mission, and vision and have made an ideal partner. To date, the conglomerate's role has been mainly on a consulting basis, but FWEI would like to move toward more of a partnership arrangement.

FWEI's funding of ongoing operations is also a hybrid. Many of the employees and staff are employed directly by FWEI and are compensated from income generated through teaching contracts. Some of the employees, including Mark Berry, the director of FWEI, are employed and compensated by MIL who receives its funding through donations and non-equity investments.

This hybrid model has not caused any major complications to date because the lines have been quite clear, and each contract was crafted according to the individual and their unique circumstances. The employees, including the director, receive fair compensation but have no equity in the investment. This financial arrangement serves to protect the original mission of the organization. FWEI will not survive if it must rely continually on donated funds, which is unsustainable in most cases. One of the primary challenges for FWEI in coming years will be to operate in a way that covers costs and creates surplus or profits to enable them to pursue more opportunities in the Chiang Mai

marketplace. As Mark Berry said, "We want to be a viable business and to do that with integrity, we have to make a profit."

Research Question #2

My second research question is, "What is the nature and status of the cultural contextualization of the BAM projects?" The research proposition that undergirds this question is as follows: In cross-cultural contexts, business as well as ministry must work in a culturally sensitive and contextually appropriate manner. The theoretical framework that I used to analyze the cultural contextualization of the business operations was Mejudhon's Thai contextualization model.

Mejudhon argues that meekness is the best approach to contextualizing Christian discipleship in Thailand.[57] Mejudhon identifies eight primary differences between the cultural values of the Thai and Westerners.[58] Here I will work through these eight primary differences and how FWEI dealt with them.[59]

---

[57] A more extensive evaluation of Thai cultural characteristics and contrasts and comparisons with American culture are made in Chapter 3.

[58] FWEI has no Americans who work for them. However, they come from English-speaking backgrounds and the foreigners are all Western Caucasians. FWEI is multicultural as the teachers come

Concept of time. Westerners tend to believe that time is valuable whereas the Thai tend to move much slower and not pay as much attention to time. This difference has been one of their biggest challenges. FWEI has been unexpectedly faced with contract cancellations at the last minute, a common result for a culture with a lax understanding of time. FWEI, however, has learned that one cannot expect the Thai to live according to FWEI's timelines unless the need is clearly expressed. To deal with the differing concepts of time, FWEI has created contracts with specific guidelines

Concept of work and play. Westerners tend to separate work and play and view them as independent whereas the Thai tend to believe that work should be as enjoyable as play. FWEI has had some challenges integrating work and play. As mentioned before, an invitation to coffee was ignored because (1) going out for coffee is not a normal Thai cultural activity, and (2) going out with one's boss is not well accepted in Thailand as it

---

from New Zealand and Canada. The preferences of the cultures from where FWEI teachers come are quite similar to the noted American preferences. Since there is a close correlation between the Western culture of New Zealanders and that of the Americans, we will equate their Western culture of that of the Americans and compare that culture with the Thai culture in the following analysis. See Storti 1999.

[59] These eight primary differences were not presented to FWEI, any of its employees, or anyone else whom I researched. One of my goals was to see how expatriates and Thai explained and articulated the differences.

violates their status-rank orientation. Therefore, FWEI is still in need of developing culturally appropriate ways to create a playful work environment.

Concept of youth versus age. Westerners tend to value youth and do not show as much respect for their elders as do the Thai. FWEI has an environment conducive to Thai culture in terms of age orientation. The *pi* or office manager is older. The FWEI teachers and leadership also are generally organized according to age.

Concept of equality versus hierarchy and rank. Westerners value equality, one of the central themes of their culture; whereas hierarchical relations are the center of Thai culture. FWEI has an appropriate organizational structure for Thai culture with clear job descriptions and positions.

Concept of material versus spiritual. Westerners accumulate goods as a measure of success and wealth. Thai culture values spiritual growth over amassing wealth, and simplicity is valued. With its strong focus on the quadruple bottom line, FWEIreflects much of Thai cultural values by not focusing too much on the material or financial aspects of business.

Concept of change versus tradition. Thais and Westerners believe in change. Westerners view it as more compulsory than do Thais. Thais do not like conflict and change tends to bring about conflict. Like many small businesses, FWEI's reality is constantly changing; however, the FWEI leadership has shouldered much of the burden of the change and has not unnecessarily created change in a culturally inappropriate way.

Concept of independence versus dependence. Westerners value self-reliance whereas the Thai have a strong view of dependency. FWEI fosters a team atmosphere that reflects the Thai cultural value of dependency.

Concept of confrontation versus indirection (avoidance). Westerners easily bring problems out into the open and discuss them in a frank and candid manner so that everyone knows where everyone else stands. Thais avoid direct confrontation in order to preserve surface harmony. FWEI has learned the hard way to go through a third person when confrontation is necessary.

Mejudhon offers six main applications for effective contextualization in the Thai context that together communicate the concept of meekness. Again I outline these six areas and address how FWEI dealt with them.

Application 1. The Christian communicator should have positive attitudes toward Buddhism and Thai culture. All of FWEI foreign employees demonstrated a strong and, in some cases, almost extreme respect for Buddhism and Thai culture.

Application 2. The Christian communicator should have genuine and sincere relationships with Buddhists. As mentioned previously, deep relationship has been a challenge as fostering deep relationships in a short time period is difficult and linguistic challenges impede relationship development with non-English-speaking Thai people. The deeper relationships are developed with the Thai staff who speak English and have constant long-term contact with the expatriate teachers.

Application 3. The Christian communicator should present the gospel showing benefits and help instead of confrontation and threat. FWEI is still in the process of developing creative ways to demonstrate the positive benefits of the gospel, but they never appear to use confrontation and threat.

Application 4. The Christian communicator needs to allow more time for the diffusion of the gospel. FWEI courses generally run for a few months, which does not

allow for extensive time for the gospel to influence their clients to the point of conversion. FWEI recognizes this deficit and acknowledges that their primary role is to sow seeds. Secondarily, they can develop a few ongoing relationships with former students. They do have long-term relationships with their staff. FWEI does not try to push for acceptance of the gospel prematurely, which conforms to Mejudhon's principle. However, many of the teachers seem to prefer a strategy that allows for longer and deeper relationships to be formed with the Thai people. Though they acknowledge the seed-sowing aspect, it is not really preferred and is something of a struggle for several.

Application 5. The Christian communicator needs to have indigenous strategies for communication of the gospel. A significant part of the business strategy is to create a natural, indigenous context for developing relationships.

Application 6. Missionaries and Thai Christians should play appropriate roles in Thai culture if they are to develop their relationship with the Thai and become insiders. Learning the language is a challenge and impedes some of the acculturation. However, they make a genuine attempt to support Thai culture and live and work in culturally sensitive ways.

Research Question #3

My third research question is, "What is the nature and status of the social and spiritual impact of the BAM projects?" The research proposition that undergirds this question is as follows: The use of business for socio-spiritual purposes holds both promise and peril. The theoretical framework that I used to analyze the social and spiritual impact of the businesses was Eldred's kingdom business framework.

As stated previously, each case was analyzed through the kingdom business framework articulated by Eldred in his book, *God is at Work*. Eldred argues that BAM is a preferred strategy for mission.

Is a model for self-sustainable missions. FWEI is generating extra capital for missions and has been able to hire directly several like-minded expatriates to work for the company. FWEI is still in need of creating more capital to be completely self-sustaining and not partially reliant on donations.

Brings much needed expertise, technology and capital. FWEI brings a much-needed expertise for effectively engaging the global marketplace, namely English language skills. They have also brought in some extra capital in the form of foreign direct investment through MIL.

Creates jobs. Currently, FWEI has five full-time Thai staff and two part-time Thai teachers, so they have essentially created six full-time positions in Thailand.

Builds the local economy and blesses the nation. The six jobs created by FWEI are professional positions that strengthen the middle class of the Thai economy.

Provides access to locations that would otherwise be closed. Because Thailand is not a closed country, FWEI is not entering a geographic location they could not otherwise access. They are focused on reaching the Thai middle-class professional community, which has remained closed to traditional missions and Thai church outreach activity. Therefore, they are in a very real way providing right of entry to a location that would otherwise be closed.

Presents the gospel by word. FWEI presents the gospel by word primarily through conversations with students before, after, and during teaching sessions.

Presents the gospel by deed. Through its intentional servant attitude and professional service, FWEI seeks to present the gospel by deed.

Enables local funding of the church. FWEI is not yet in position to contribute to the funding of the local church.

Can be a valuable partner for other missions efforts. FWEI has not yet worked as a partner to other missions efforts.

Taps into an underutilized but highly capable resource in the Church. FWEI utilizes the skills of English-speaking professionals and teachers for kingdom impact. Traditionally this group has not been extensively involved in missions.

Eldred addresses five obstacles to BAM.

Transformation—not recognizing the holistic reality of the ministry of Jesus. FWEI showed no indication of this obstacle. Transforming business and society is a central part of the organization's mission.

Work—a vocational hierarchy led by professional ministers. Some FWEI teachers and leaders acknowledged that they have shifted their thinking over the years and recognize that a vocational hierarchy does not exist.

Business—a frequent suspicion regarding commercial enterprise. FWEI sees business as an honorable sector of society and a place for dignified service to the world. While recognizing the need for the transformation of business, they do not exhibit any suspicion about its purposes.

Profit—skepticism about making money. FWEI had no skepticism about money. In fact, they recognized that they needed to make more.

Wealth—false teachings such as the "health and wealth gospel" and the "poverty gospel" and misconceptions regarding the Bible's teachings on wealth. FWEI did not appear to have either one of these extremes. Due to its structure, none of the teachers or directors could use the enterprise to "get rich." The need to charge for their services and make money was not a hindrance to any of them, either.

Eldred identifies the three objectives of BAM:

1. Profitability and sustainability. FWEI has not yet achieved this objective of BAM but is working hard toward it;

2. Local job and wealth creation. FWEI has created local jobs and wealth for the Thai economy; and,

3. The advancement of the local church and the increase of spiritual capital. FWEI has the goal of advancing the local church and building up spiritual capital in Thailand and is doing so at a microlevel.

Conclusion

Though four years old, FWEI is still in its early growth development as a company striving for sustainability and maturity. The challenges have been a result of internal as well as external dynamics. A slowing economy has hindered progress in many industries and most particularly something like English language instruction that is perceived as extracurricular by some firms. Through the financial crisis they have needed to learn from the culture and adapt its processes by doing things such as systematizing contracts for private students. Developing an organizational vision and mission has produced some internal dissent and resulted in some turnover. Nevertheless, FWEI has a

sincerity as well as an accompanying necessary knowledge and skill base to move

forward in its mission to transform business, society, and culture in Thailand.

In terms of producing spiritual fruit in Thailand, a Buddhist country where people

require a lot of time to become followers of Christ, the approach of FWEI, which gives

them a high volume of contacts for a relatively short amount of time, is not ideal.

However, FWEI recognizes this issue and does not try to rush or force acceptance of the

gospel into the limited amount of time; rather, they recognize that their ministry is one of

seed sowing and of turning people toward Hiebert's centered set to be focused on Christ.

Therefore, this unique adaptation of mission strategy fits well with Mejudhon's

framework for ministering in Thailand. FWEI, like all foreign organizations, is on a

learning curve for adapting effectively to Thai culture but has a genuine desire to do so

and comes off very strong in a cultural analysis.

The funding model appears to be working well. They are one of the few

organizations that has a well thought-out process for funding. Though they still need to

create more surplus funds (profit) from their operations, they are well organized in terms

of lines of demarcation.

They are a small operation, somewhat by design. Justifying larger financial

investments is always easy, but such decisions raise risk as well as pressure for

generating income. By staying small, they are able to have focus, which also creates

challenges when things do not go according to plan, as they never seem to do in many

developing country contexts.

When viewed through Eldred's Kingdom Business framework, FWEI is a very

strong BAM project and is a good model for other English-teaching ministries. Their

primary area for improvement is generating more funds to ensure profitability and

sustainability, but they are well aware of the issue and it is a priority for them at this time.

CHAPTER 9
CASE STUDY OF THAILAND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

Introduction

In this chapter I present the case study of Thailand Leadership Development

Centre (TLDC). The first part of the chapter is a descriptive narrative of the case taken

from the data collected during the research process. The second part is an analysis of the

case study through the three theoretical frameworks selected for the study.

Australian missionaries Terry and Robyn Collins founded the TLDC. Terry was a

cattle farmer, hospital department head then Associate Pastor in Queensland, Australia,

before moving to Chiang Mai, Thailand, in February 2002 with his wife, Robyn, in

affiliation with the mission agency PIONEERS. Robyn is a pediatric psychoterapist and

both have had formal training in bible and church planting. They worked on a variety of

tasks for PIONEERS, ranging from church planting to the university student ministry

team, and finally, to member care.

Eventually God gave them the vision to start a training center that provides

preparation in practical, hands-on application of church-planting methods. Their goal is

to develop leaders, church leaders, and church planters where Thais train Thais to plant

indigenous, self-sufficient churches that then, in turn, plant other churches. In order to

cultivate an indigenous environment and ensure they did not create dependency on

foreign subsidies, Terry and Robyn chose to develop the center in such a way that its

ongoing financial support and workers come primarily from within Thailand (Collins, T. 2007a).

The TLDC encourages and, if necessary, facilitates Thai church planters to be financially independent. Terry explains, "When church planters are self-supporting, local community finances are freed up for 'reproduction' of their church. Church planters are more easily accepted because they are seen to be earning income by their own hand" (Collins, T. 2007a). In order to create an atmosphere of self-sufficiency and minimal reliance on foreign support, the TLDC initiated several BAM projects to generate funds. The vision for church planters is not only to gain teaching in the areas of spiritual growth and church planting, but also in the operations of the businesses. The first businesses were started in June 2006 and the first teaching sessions of the TLDC were started in June 2007. At this stage the businesses include cattle farming, a coffee shop/restaurant, and a bakery.

The TLDC is structured as a local Thai business. In order to own land in Thailand, a business must have a majority Thai shareholders. The TLDC management committee is composed of four Thai nationals and three foreigners. The Thai nationals are composed of a pastor, a PIONEERS missionary, a local businessperson, and a person who has been involved in a lot of PIONEERS work in Thailand. The foreigners are Terry and Robyn Collins and a fellow PIONEERS missionary, Dan Tisdale. The principal managers of day-to-day operations are Terry and Robyn Collins. All of the shareholders

are Christians who understand and support the ministry focus. The agreement is articulated through a memorandum of understanding.

Their first business was a fish farm. Terry dug a two-acre pond on a rice farm for about 35,000 Baht (≈U. S. $1000) with the goal of growing fish and selling them to merchants who would then sell the fish at market. They immediately faced two challenges. First, many of the buyers were unreliable and would not come to get the fish as they had agreed, leaving Terry scrambling to sell the fish at the needed time.

They were in the process of developing a new marketing plan to "cut out middlepersons" when they were confronted by their second challenge (Collins, T. 2007a). They dug the pond in this specific location because they were told that irrigation water was available year-round. However, in the middle of growing their fish, they realized that in actuality irrigation is cut off two to three months a year. They built a dam in an attempt to contain water, but eventually this approach was determined to be unsustainable. The cost of the infrastructure caused them to stop this operation. They hope to continue it in the future, but realized for now they needed to diversify.

Though they do not have accurate records on how they fared financially using the fishpond, the TLDC did have some positive results. The government saw their irrigation system and said that it should be a model for other Thai fish farmers. The Thai government has sponsored others to build their own ponds following this model by giving them about 90 percent of the necessary start-up capital. Terry and Robyn were also able to teach others how to cook fish in a more healthy way, thereby making a significant social contribution to the local community. Teaching others to cook eventually led to another business.

Terry and Robyn live in a housing complex owned by PIONEERS. The complex is located next to Chiang Mai University where PIONEERS engages in a significant amount of ministry. PIONEERS uses the complex to provide a place to stay for university students in need. Robyn started teaching one of the girls how to cook and then began training some of the university students to be workers in their coffee shop/restaurant.

Currently, their businesses are quite small. The coffee shop employs four workers, the bakery two, and the cattle farm has one full-time manager plus temporary labor as required. As of now, they are able to cover their operating expenses but aspire to increase revenue to the point that they are able to fund the training center from the surplus or profits of the business operations.

One of their current plans is to import cattle from China. In September 2007 Terry went to a PIONEERS conference on BAM put on in Chiang Mai. While there, he was talking with one of the area leaders from China. This leader has access to a large farming area as well as to good cattle but has no resources to fatten the cattle nor as strong as a market for the cattle as in Thailand. Terry shared with him that, while both cows and land here are expensive in comparison to China, they have the ability to fatten cattle, as well as a more ready access to a market. So they began to investigate the possibility of importing his live cattle from China to Chiang Mai.

The following week, Terry and Robyn were talking to their neighbor, who is a policeman, about security concerns regarding traveling through Laos to transport the cattle. He left, and five minutes later his wife returned and told them that her cousin was already importing live cattle from China. She told them how to do all the government

paperwork and gave them the safest route and other vital information. Though this new development is still in process, this information saved the TLDC months of research.[60]

They have also added a street stall to their business operations. From the street stall, they sell sandwiches, coffee shop items, and bread from the bakery. Robyn says, "This has increased our turnover [sales] and the exciting aspect for ministry is the amazing increase in contact with the local community. The involvement and dedication of staff members has been a real encouragement to us" (Collins, R. 2007a).

In addition to the street stall, they are also adding a rice mill. The planting of rice will create a cash flow as well as provide feed for the cattle. In the long-term, this new business venture will reduce costs greatly. They are also pursing the possibility of marketing the choicest portions of each cow to the luxury hotels of Chiang Mai and others who can afford it.

As they have sought to grow as a business, they have encountered numerous cultural differences. They have noticed that the concept of ownership has led to some misunderstandings. Terry notes, "The idea that it is not mine to own is strange here" (Collins, T. 2007c). In place of ownership, they seek to model and instruct others about

---

[60] A few weeks after this development, Terry Collins fell ill and had to return to Australia. He plans to return to Thailand at the beginning of 2008 and pick up where he left off.

stewardship, meaning that everything belongs to the Lord and we are to care for it and nurture it rather than seek to profit financially as much as possible.

Their Thai employees have also had difficulty embracing the idea of planning ahead. Though some Thais apparently understand the need of future planning, Terry says, "There is little of this here" (Collins, T. 2007b). Interestingly, all of the interviewed employees noted that Terry and Robyn are very good at planning ahead. These comments support what I found in other BAM companies, namely that the Thai are not future oriented but understand its value when taught it cautiously, consciously, and consistently in a business setting.

Modeling a strong work ethic is an integral part of what they are trying to do at the TLDC, but "it has been difficult to motivate" (Collins, T. 2007b). They acknowledge that workers vary regarding their work ethic and motivation levels but producing a solid work ethic has been more challenging among employees in Thailand than in Australia.

Their ministry strategy is to reach the unreached of Thailand with the Christian faith, focusing primarily on ethnic Thais rather than those of tribal origin. Middle-class Thais are the most unreached people group segment in Thailand. The TLDC does not currently employ any middle-class Thais, but Terry notes, "University graduates go on to

become middle-class Thai citizens" (Collins, T. 2007b).   By employing university students, they are seeking to influence the middle class preemptively with the gospel. In their coffee shop/restaurant, their most developed business, three of the four employees have become Christians through their ministry.

Thailand is a culture with a strong formal orientation,[61] and ceremonies are an important part of their culture. Opening a new business is frequently marked by a ceremony for the employees as well as sometimes for the surrounding community. These ceremonial openings have given them many opportunities to be witnesses for Christ. For example, when they started their cattle farm, the employees wanted to sacrifice a chicken to the local spirit so that the workers would not be hurt during construction. Instead, Terry held a symbol-filled ceremony that gave thanks to the living God and had a Thai member of the TLDS present the gospel. They put up a cross as a "functional substitute." The ceremony opened the door for Terry to minister to the employees in other ways. The farm manager told Terry that a *phii* or spirit was harassing him at night and keeping him awake. Terry prayed for the harassment to stop and it did (Collins, T. 2007b).

Another time, Terry sensed through prayer that rain was coming. He told the farm manager about the coming rain, why he believed it was coming, and then gave him a list

---

[61] See Chapter 3 for more details on the formal orientation of Thai culture.

of tasks to be done in preparation for the rain. The farm manager ignored some of the tasks and the rain came at the predicted time (Collins, T. 2007c).

When opening their bakery and the Training Centre, they hosted a large ceremony for everyone involved in the TLDC, plus friends, acquaintances, people who attended other PIONEERS' ministries in Chiang Mai, as well as people from the community where the they are located. Nearly one hundred people were in attendance, and the TLDC used the opportunity to share openly with their neighbors about who they are and what their objectives are. Many BAM operations that I interviewed were very covert about their missional purposes and kept them a secret from as many people as possible. In direct contrast to a clandestine approach, the TLDC presented openly to the mixed audience of Buddhists and Christians and those new to and those familiar with PIONEERS, their missional strategy. They put in PowerPoint and translated into Thai their church-planting strategy and told the audience that they were there to start a church-planting movement in Thailand. They told of their vision for Thais to lead Thais to Christ.

Their approach contrasted so distinctly with other BAM projects, even those located within a mile of the bakery, that I had to confirm with multiple PIONEERS missionaries that they were aware that Buddhist neighbors were in the audience. When speaking with the one missionary, I asked why they were so open. He remarked, "This is what is good about being in Thailand; we can be completely open about who we are and why we are here" (Johnson 2007). He appeared honestly confused when I told him that other BAM companies operated according to a highly covert philosophy. In addition to explaining their missional strategy and purposes, the TLDC also invited two Thai pastors

to speak to the community about their local church ministries and to "plant seeds of the gospel."

The TLDC is still in the early stages of formulation and only time will tell if they obtain their goal of generating profitable business enterprises that will fund and sustain the ongoing operations of the training center; however, they have demonstrated that they are capable of adapting their business strategy to developing situations. They have a well-sculpted ministry strategy that conforms with other ministry strategies that have been effective in bringing others to Christ in Thailand. TLDC appears well positioned for a bright future.

Case Analysis

To analyze the case I return to my three research questions and the accompanying theoretical framework.

Research Question #1

My first research question is, "What is the nature and status of the businesses' financial arrangements?" The research proposition that undergirds this question is as

follows: Generating start-up capital and means of financial sustainability in BAM

projects are not as straightforward as in normal business operations. The theoretical

framework that I used to analyze the financial arrangements of the businesses was Rundle

and Sudyk's funding a kingdom business model.[62]

In order to understand the funding and ongoing financing of BAM projects, I

analyzed the case studies using Rundle and Sudyk's funding model. The first type is the

missionary-funded business in which the missionary and/or mission agency owns the

company. Typically it is started with funds from the missionary's personal reserves or by

raising donations from financial supporters. This model best fits the TLDC. The TLDC is

legally structured as a for-profit company in Thailand with 51 percent Thai ownership,

which was necessary in order to own land. The initial capital for the company was

provided through Terry and Robyn's personal savings. In order to expand business

operations they are seeking donations. These funds will be raised outside of Thailand and

routed through PIONEERS to the business.

The mixing of personal funds to start up a business and donations to maintain

ongoing operations has caused difficulty in other situations. One of the primary instances

---

[62] For more information on my research propositions, question, and theoretical framework see the relevant discussion in Chapter 1.

is when missionaries have used personal funds to start up the company and then have later raised funds. Sometimes the missionaries wanted to reimburse themselves for the start up capital they provided and other times they still viewed themselves as sole owners. In both cases, frustration, miscommunication and worse occurred between the missionary and the mission agency because both sides operated according to different assumptions. The TLDC now has a very solid focus on using the business as a place of ministry and to fund other ministries. People's personal situations can change and difficulties frequently emerge after changes have occurred.

Research Question #2

My second research question is, "What is the nature and status of the cultural contextualization of the BAM projects?" The research proposition that undergirds this question is as follows: In cross-cultural contexts, business as well as ministry must work in a culturally sensitive and contextually appropriate manner. The theoretical framework that I used to analyze the cultural contextualization of the business operations was Mejudhon's Thai contextualization model.

Mejudhon argues that meekness is the best approach to contextualizing Christian discipleship in Thailand. As mentioned previously,[63] Mejudhon identifies eight primary differences between the cultural values of the Thais and Westerners.[64] Here I will work through these eight primary differences and how the TLDC dealt with them.[65]

Concept of time. Westerners tend to believe that time is valuable whereas the Thai tend to move much slower and not pay as much attention to time. The TLDC environment was more reflective of Thai time orientation than Western. Thai employees remarked that they "did not get in trouble when late to work." The opening ceremony of their bakery started thirty minutes late, consistent with other Thai ceremonies that I attended.

Concept of work and play. Westerners tend to separate work and play and view them as independent whereas the Thai tend to believe that work should be just as

---

[63] A more extensive evaluation of Thai cultural characteristics and contrasts and comparisons with American culture are made in Chapter 3.

[64] The principal expatriates in the TLDC are Australians and not Americans. As such they do not conform completely to Mejudhon's contrast; nevertheless, the cultural preferences of Australians are generally quite similar to the noted American preferences. Since there is a close correlation between the Western culture of Australians and that of the Americans, we will equate their Western culture of that of the Americans and compare that culture with the Thai culture in the following analysis. See Storti 1999.

[65] These eight primary differences were not presented to TLDC any of its employees, or anyone else whom I researched. One of my goals was to see how expatriates and Thais explained and articulated the differences. One of my chief findings, as reported in the final chapter, is that no one had clear categories or the terminology to describe the differences. The following is drawn from responses to open-ended questions.

enjoyable as play. While employees reported high job satisfaction at the TLDC, when making comparisons between working for the TLDC and Thai managers, employees did point out that in the Thai workplace fun activities were a normative part of operations whereas at the TLDC they were not. One employee complained that the anniversary for her start date at work had come and gone with no party or recognition. She noted, "This would never happen if this was a Thai workplace."

Concept of youth versus age. Westerners tend to value youth and do not show as much respect for their elders as do the Thai. At the TLDC, the managers, Terry and Robyn Collins, are older than their Thai employees. As a result the age orientation values of the Thai culture are upheld.

Concept of equality versus hierarchy and rank. Westerners value equality. It is one of the central themes of their culture whereas hierarchical relations are the center of Thai culture. The TLDC operated according to a culturally appropriate concept of hierarchy and rank. The employees had little doubt who was in charge, and Terry and Robyn Collins did not attempt to import foreign concepts of workplace equality. In employee interviews, the *krôp krua* (family) concept was mentioned repeatedly. Employees viewed the company as a *krôp krua* and Terry as a *pôr* (father) and Robyn as a *mâe* (mother).

Concept of material versus spiritual. Westerners accumulate goods as a measure of success and wealth. Thai culture values spiritual growth over amassing wealth. Material possession can even be viewed as a sign of poor spiritual health and as a disruption to society. Simplicity is valued. Due to its focus and vision of creating business enterprises to fund the training center, no one had the perception that the

purposes of the businesses were to accumulate material possessions. The TLDC is operated very frugally, and its business environment is one of simplicity. Though the TLDC's frugality and vision comes from their Christian values and understanding of their mission, it naturally conforms to Thai cultural values.

Concept of change versus tradition. Thais and Westerners believe in change. Westerners view it as more compulsory than do Thais. Thais do not like conflict and change tends to bring about conflict. The TLDC does not put an inordinate emphasis on change and in this regard, they operated according to Thai cultural values.

Concept of independence versus dependence. Westerners value self-reliance whereas the Thai have a strong view of dependency. In general the TLDC had created a very interdependent environment expressed by employees when they used the family metaphor for the company. One employee did voice complaints that she did not always know what she was to do, a common problem when a manager operates according to an independent orientation and employees have an interdependent orientation. The manager does not believe explaining every detail is necessary and that the employee can complete tasks or figure them out *independently*; interdependent-oriented employees want further explanation and close supervision and guidance. The independent-interdependent dynamics did not appear to be a major issue at TLDC but is an area that could be approached with more intentionality.

Concept of confrontation versus indirection (avoidance). Westerners easily bring problems out into the open and discuss them in a frank and candid manner so that everyone knows where everyone else stands. Thais avoid direct confrontation in order to preserve surface harmony. In Thailand people talk around a subject in order to avoid an

open confrontation. Westerners naturally confront problems in a direct way. When making comparisons between working for Thai managers and the TLDC managers, the TLDC employees actually reported that the TLDC managers handled confrontation better than Thai managers. Several employees reported that a Thai boss who criticized them in front of others had humiliated them; however, they said, "Terry and Robyn speak to us in private if we make a mistake. This is good."

Mejudhon offers six main applications for effective contextualization in the Thai context that together communicate the concept of meekness. Again, I outline these six areas and address how the TLDC dealt with them.

Application 1. The Christian communicator should have positive attitudes toward Buddhism and Thai culture. At the TLDC they did not have an overtly positive attitude toward Buddhism, but they did have a very positive attitude toward Thai culture. They also acknowledged the cultural role of Buddhism and respected it, but the general attitude would not be seen as positive. Their attitude toward Buddhism did not appear to cause any problems.

Application 2. The Christian communicator should have genuine and sincere relationships with Buddhists. The lives of the missionaries included several deep relationships with Buddhists. Each time I visited the coffee shop and restaurant, Buddhists were in fellowship with Christians, inquiring regularly about Christ and Christianity.

Application 3. The Christian communicator should present the gospel, showing benefits and help instead of confrontation and threat. The gospel was proclaimed with an

attitude of grace and love toward the Thai people with no evidence of confrontation or threat ever being used.

Application 4. The Christian communicator needs to allow more time for the diffusion of the gospel. Terry, Robyn, the TLDC Christian employees, and other PIONEERS' missionaries acknowledged that it "takes time to become a Christian in Thailand." Their ministry strategies reflected that Thai Buddhists became Christians only after long-term exposure to the Christian faith and through positive, love-based relationships with Christians.

Application 5. The Christian communicator needs to have indigenous strategies for communication of the gospel. The vision of the TLDC is to support and empower Thai Christians to minister in Thailand with a strong emphasis on supporting Thai Christians and Thai culture. The business strategy creates a natural context for developing relationships. The TLDC strategy and approach is very indigenous.

Application 6. Missionaries and Thai Christians should play appropriate roles in Thai culture if they are to develop their relationships with the Thais and become insiders. The missionaries and the Thai Christians involved with the TLDC all had strong relationships with Thai non-Christians and were positively integrated into the local community.

Research Question #3

My third research question is, "What is the nature and status of the social and spiritual impact of the BAM projects?" The research proposition that undergirds this question is as follows: The use of business for socio-spiritual purposes holds both

promise and peril. The theoretical framework that I used to analyze the social and spiritual impact of the businesses was Eldred's kingdom business framework.

As stated previously, each case was analyzed through the kingdom business framework articulated by Eldred in his book, *God is at Work*. Eldred argues that BAM is a preferred strategy for mission.

Is a model for self-sustainable missions. Right now, the TLDC is not yet self-sustaining. They are pursuing donations in order to expand services. Their vision is to move towards self-sustainability and time will tell if that goal is achieved.

Brings much needed expertise, technology, and capital. The TLDC does bring much-needed expertise to Thailand. Their expertise is illustrated by the fact that the Thai government says that their fish farm is a model and funds Thai citizens who use the same model for their fish farms. The TLDC is also bringing in foreign capital to their operations through donations and personal investment.

Creates jobs. Though the TLDC is still small, they have created several jobs and are actively looking to add more employees.

Builds the local economy and blesses the nation. The TLDC's business operations have built up the local economy.

Provides access to locations that would otherwise be closed. The TLDC is not currently providing access to a strictly closed location; however, they are reaching a people group that has not been reached through traditional mission strategies. Furthermore, they may provide access to closed neighboring countries by importing and exporting cattle.

Presents the gospel by word. The TLDC primary mission is to equip Thai Christians "to successfully minister to the majority of people who are still outside of the Kingdom of God." To fulfill this mission, they regularly incorporate gospel proclamation into their activities generally through relationships developed rather than coordinated proclamation outreaches. They do use special occasions such as grand openings to proclaim the gospel verbally.

Presents the gospel by deed. The ministry priority of the TLDC is "evangelism that is holistic." By this statement they mean that gospel proclamation should be accompanied by deeds and care for people's physical well being. The business strategy enables them to develop relationships with other people who have daily exposure to their lives, a powerful form of presenting the gospel by deed.

Enables local funding of the church. The goal of TLDC is to generate funding for the training center. They are still in the beginning of that process, and time will tell how much funding they are able to provide.

Can be a valuable partner for other missions efforts. The heart and soul of the TLDC BAM projects is to operate as a partner to other mission efforts.

Taps into an underutilized but highly capable resource in the church. The TLDC does empowers the laity by employing university students and turning them into witnesses in the workplace. Instead of relying completely on professional ministers, the TLDC has created an avenue of service for other Christians.

Eldred addresses five obstacles to BAM.

Transformation—not recognizing the holistic reality of the ministry of Jesus. The TLDC says that their primary distinctive is, "We value transformation over the

transference of information. Character is more important than intellect in Christian service." The word "transformation" was a commonly used term in the TLDC interviews. It was an accepted and promoted concept and was not an obstacle.

Work—a vocational hierarchy led by professional ministers. The TLDC is based on the idea that people can minister and plant churches in the marketplace as marketplace participants instead of being professional ministers. The TLDC showed no evidence of a vocational hierarchy.

Business—frequent suspicion regarding commercial enterprise. The TLDC is also built off the concept that business is an honorable sector of society and a preferred location for ministry. It exhibited no evidence of suspicion regarding commercial enterprise.

Profit—skepticism about making money. All of the profits for the TLDC will go towards funding the training center. I did not observe any skepticism about making money, and they were continually trying to figure out ways to make more.

Wealth—false teachings such as the "health and wealth gospel" and the "poverty gospel" and misconceptions regarding the Bible's teachings on wealth. Rather than operating according to either of these two extremes, the TLDC is operated according to frugal principles out of a sense of stewardship and the need to operate a lean, profitable business enterprise rather than a "poverty gospel" perception.

Eldred identifies the three objectives of BAM:

1. Profitability and sustainability. The TLDC is still in pursuit of profitability and sustainability; however, these are objectives of the TLDC;

2. Local job and wealth creation. The TLDC has created some local jobs and wealth; and,

3. The advancement of the local church and the increase of spiritual capital. The TLDC is strongly committed to advancing the local church and building up spiritual capital in Thailand.

Conclusion

The TLDC is an interesting case study that demonstrates how missionaries can integrate church planting, training, and marketplace activities. The primary focus of the TLDC business operations is to provide funding for the church planting training center. However, the businesses are not just a means to an end but are also a place for ministry in their own right. Through modeling Christian behavior and the evangelization of employees and clients alike, the TLDC business operations function, in many aspects, like any other ministry setting. The businesses help those working in the TLDC to develop relationships with people from the surrounding community, establish a platform that enhances their credibility and visibility, and enable the missionaries to be open and forthright about their mission and purpose in Thailand.

CHAPTER 10

MISSIOLOGICAL INSIGHTS

Two Contrasting Stories

To illustrate some of the findings that have emerged from the research, I have

composed two narrative case studies. These case studies are fictional and a composite of

the businesses I researched. The stories, nonetheless, are realistic and an accurate

reflection of what I consistently observed.

Robert and Susan Kolbowitz

International Christian Agency (ICA) missionaries Robert and Susan Kolbowitz

had always been drawn to other cultures. As college ministers at a secular university in

the Midwest USA, they tried constantly to expose students to international missions.

They counted themselves successful that twenty-eight students from their college

ministry had spent a summer overseas doing missions work. Following what they took to

be the Lord's call, Bob and Susan decided to attend seminary and to take the three to four

years to see if God was leading them to be missionaries.

During his final year of completing his Master's of Divinity degree at a large

evangelical seminary, Bob went to Chiang Mai, Thailand, on a missions reconnaissance

trip with Dwight Foster, the missions pastor at his home church. Dwight and Bob met

with several missionaries from their denomination. They both were overwhelmed with

the small number of Thai Christians. They were also frustrated as they realized that the

vast majority of missionaries were focusing on larger, more well-known countries in the

region and were, to a large extent, ignoring the plight of the Thai. During their trip they also met some other young missionaries from a different agency. This missionary couple had also been college ministers, but now they were engaged in Business as Mission (BAM). Bob and Dwight were not really familiar with the concept but understood quite quickly that the traditional approach of other missionaries was not working. They needed was innovation, a new way, a way to blend into the culture without being obvious as foreign missionaries. Being a businessperson seemed like the perfect method. Fascinated with BAM, Bob returned home to Susan and announced he had caught the vision for participating in BAM in Chiang Mai and said he sensed God leading the family to move there upon graduation. Susan, finally glad to know what the future held and excited to hear about this new way of mission, was quickly on board.

Ron and Dawn Marshall

Ron Marshall grew up as a missionary child in a rural part of the Central African Republic. His parents were missionaries with Bible Mission Agency (BMA) and this setting was really the only world he ever knew. Though his siblings aspired to engage in other types of work and were anxious to be "typical Americans," Ron always sensed he was supposed to be a missionary. While attending Midwest Bible College, Ron met Dawn. The two quickly fell in love and married. Dawn had only traveled out of her state a handful of times and was quite nervous about living in the jungle after hearing all of Ron's crazy stories. Nevertheless, she decided that if they were meant to be there, she was willing to go. Ron always imagined himself on the mission field, but he decided to spend the first few years of marriage in the States. Even though he grew up in a very

undeveloped part of the world and his undergraduate education was in theology, Ron had an intuitive sense about business and quickly became a successful tire salesman at a locally owned auto shop. Impressed, the owner continued to give Ron raises, bonuses, and promotions, but Ron's heart was never satisfied. He always wanted to go back to the mission field.

One night Ron came to Dawn and told her he wanted to return. She smiled and said, "I've been wondering when you were going to admit that. Let's go!" A few months prior, they had heard a missionary couple give a presentation at church. They talked about their work among a tribal group in northern Thailand. Ron and Dawn had never really thought of Thailand as a missionary destination, but the presentation really touched Dawn's heart, so they decided God was leading them there.

The Kolbowitz Family in Chiang Mai

Bob and Susan arrived in Chiang Mai and quickly started researching what business would help them integrate into the community. Alarmed at the lack of evangelism occurring among the Thai, they were eager to begin their work. They visited with several missionaries from other mission agencies and analyzed their approaches. "Some of them are so slow in their approach and mentality," Bob remarked to Susan, "This is why the gospel is not taking root."

After visiting one missionary couple, Craig and Cheryl Ramsey, who owned and operated a local coffee shop, Bob and Susan realized that they had found their model. Young Thai business professionals constantly popped in and out of the coffee shop and the Ramseys greeted each one. "They know everybody in town!" exclaimed Susan.

Intrigued, Bob visited Craig another time to get more information. Craig noted that running the coffee shop had been a lot more complex than he imagined:

> Sometimes we cannot even get sugar. Inventory is hard to manage. I thought a coffee shop would be easy, but I feel like I don't do anything other than just try to maintain the status quo. Furthermore, the market is starting to get crowded here. Starbucks is expanding around the city and it's just hard to compete with coffee shops like that.

Bob was a little concerned by the amount of time Craig was spending on the business. "Isn't Craig here for ministry?" he thought to himself. That evening Bob talked it over with Susan. "I think Craig has lost his priorities. He seems disorganized. We can do this better than they can."

Convinced that the Lord had shown them the way, Bob and Susan wrote a formal ministry plan for ICA. The ICA board had said they wanted to see innovation in mission and were pleased by the BAM model that Bob and Susan had developed. The plan seemed like a reasonable one that would help them integrate into the culture but "wouldn't take too much time away from ministry" or cause them to lose focus on "the salvation of souls." ICA quickly approved the plan and approached a Christian businessman who had said he would financially support board-approved ministry plans using business. The Christian businessman supplied $50,000 for them to "get up and going."

The Marshall Family in Chiang Mai

Ron and Dawn arrived in Chiang Mai and quickly set about learning the Thai language. Both Ron and Dawn found language learning arduous and difficult. Though Ron was trilingual, he had learned the other languages as a child. Dawn had never

learned a second language, except for studying a few years of Spanish in high school.
Despite these challenges, they were convinced that learning the language was an absolute
necessity. Ron remarked to Dawn how he had translated for missionaries as a child.
"They never had an impact on anyone." They started attending a local Thai church and
quickly made Thai friends. Not a weekend went by that they were not visited by a
handful of Thai Christians. Slowly Thailand became home to them. The language, though
always a challenge, started to become easier. Their Thai Christian friends were a strong
basis of support.

As their time in language school came to an end, Ron and Dawn started to pray
about what their next steps should be. They spoke with the leaders of the local association
of Thai churches about what needs they recognized. Though the Marshalls loved the Thai
Christians, they were a bit frustrated that so many of them perceived money as the
primary need. They wanted to help but felt uncomfortable about just supplying money.
They wanted to do something.

Right at this time, Ron's old boss at the tire store called. He told Ron that he was
looking to send a lot of work, such as data entry and inventory monitoring, offshore in
order to lower expenses and asked Ron if he could help. From his experience at the tire
store, he knew this type of work, and he was confident he could teach some of the local
Thais how to do it. Ron asked his boss for a rough estimate of how much he was looking
to invest and some time to check out his options. Quickly, Ron realized that not only
could he do the task but he could do it profitably from the outset. Though he never
considered himself a business person or considered business as a part of mission, he

realized that the local Christians needed money and this opportunity would help that cause.

The Kolbowitzes Get Going

Bob and Susan got their coffee shop up and going in no time. Several smart and charming young Thais applied as baristas and helpers, and Bob hired them quickly. To maintain priorities Bob took a long lunch every day to be with family. However, this luxury became increasingly more difficult to maintain. Whenever he returned, everything seemed to be in disarray. The staff seemed to do absolutely nothing while he was gone. He started to work long hours, believing he could never leave the shop unattended. He wondered if his employees were stealing from him. He could not understand why virtually no money would come in when he was gone.

Susan began to complain that she felt lonely as Bob was at the coffee shop all day and she was home alone with young children. Because they were focused on reaching the unreached, they intentionally stayed away from Thai Christian churches, believing that interaction there would lead to requests for work they simply did not have time to do. Furthermore, they did not want to be labeled as missionaries by the local Thais rather than to be recognized as true entrepreneurs, which was their desire.

Because Susan did not speak the Thai language very well, she increasingly felt isolated from the culture around her. After much thought, fights, and prayer, Bob and Susan asked the ICA to send some more missionaries. Considering their initiative innovative and a future direction for the entire mission agency, ICA rerouted two other

missionary couples who were going to a nearby Southeastern Asian country. They also sent two recent college graduates on two-year terms for further support.

Immediately, everything improved. Susan truly enjoyed passing the days with the new missionary wives. Bob was glad to have extra help down at the coffee shop. Frankly, having a little bit of America in the coffee shop also felt better. The long days of trying to communicate with people who did not speak English very well were getting difficult.

Business, however, was not going very well. The staff was very unreliable. Frequently, people would never say they were quitting; they would simply stop showing up for work. Bob tried hard to be their friend but frequently felt betrayed. He sensed they were talking negatively about him, but he did not know what else to do. He knew he was a good boss. He did not micromanage. He did not try to control them, but things were just not going well.

Bob knew they were going to need another injection of capital to pay bills. He had taken out a line of credit simply to make payroll a few times. He was trying hard to pay off this debt, but with the high employee turnover he was either hiring or training all the time. Worse, he did not have time for ministry; he was consumed with the business. Several customers openly asked him if he was a missionary, a charge he would vehemently deny. hey could not afford for everyone to know they were missionaries. The whole reason for have the business was to appear as business entrepreneurs.

The Marshalls Get Going

Ron and Dawn were very excited about this new opportunity to help the Thai Christians move toward self-sufficiency by generating more income. They immediately

hired five young ladies who had been attending their church after moving to Chiang Mai from a tribal village. These young ladies had no money at all. Ron knew part of the reasons the Thai church requested donations from foreigners was due to the fact that many of its members were unemployed. Perhaps they could help the Thai church financially by employing church members. Uncomfortable with using donations as handouts to churches, Ron and Dawn were glad to give a hand up to individual church members.

Though Ron had never previously considered doing business in the mission field, he reflected on how much he learned when he worked at the tire store. One night he explained his excitement to Dawn:

> I can't believe I never thought of this before, but I think this business could be a real blessing to Thailand. We can give jobs to people who need it. They can then take care of their families and give money to the churches. This will help the church's financial situation and reduce the dependency on foreign donations. After we get going maybe we can find a way to employ some non-Christians so we can witness to them. It seems to me that it takes a long time for people to become Christians around here. The office could be a place for them to learn gradually over an extended period of time.

Ron wanted the company to function like a family and he cared for the employees like a father. He was kind and thoughtful yet also provided leadership and direction. He sensed they needed regular interaction and realized that talking with all the employees on a regular basis not only improved performance but also generated opportunities to discuss spiritual issues. The atmosphere did not change when they added several new Buddhist employees.

Over time the Buddhist employees began to ask questions and initiate conversations. Initially the questions seemed to be a matter of curiosity, but eventually Ron could tell that a few were sincerely seeking. Ron sensed that they needed something

more than he and the other Christian employees could provide during spontaneous conversations, but he also could tell that being from strong Buddhist families, they would never go to church and risk offending their relatives. One night while going over this issue with Dawn, she remarked, "Why don't you get Pastor Prabhu to come in and do devotions for them?" Pastor Prabhu was an Indian immigrant and a dynamic pastor of a growing congregation that the Marshalls attended.

Ron decided to start a weekly Bible time with all of the employees. Originally, he considered holding it during the lunch hour and providing free lunch; however, he decided to have it every Tuesday morning for the first hour of work. He noted that the Thai hierarchical orientation would enable him to have an obligatory Bible study without it being counterproductive. "In America it would anger everyone so much that it would never be effective. But we're not in America," he said to Dawn when she questioned the approach.

The Kolbowitzes at the End

Frustrated Bob stomped in the door, "I cannot figure these Thai people out!" After being in Chiang Mai for seven years, Bob was getting increasingly getting frustrated with his employees. "They are so unreliable! They never do any task I give them, and they just quit coming to work. I didn't know it would be so hard to find employees who speak English." The company was hemorrhaging money. Susan was stressed, and they had constant friction with their missionary colleagues. "I never knew Thailand would be so hard," Bob thought to himself.

The other two missionary families were returning to the States. One family left for medical reasons. The other because "the business is a major distraction to ministry." Bob still believed that not being seen as missionaries in Thailand was still important, but he was starting to doubt if anything would ever work. Two months earlier they had hired a Thai Christian, Nuananong, who was aware of their missionary purposes and had graduated from a university in the States.

Nuananong came to Bob one day. "Bob I know you do not want anyone to think that you guys are missionaries, but the employees say that everyone knows. They also wonder why you have never talked to them about it?" Bob was frustrated. He had thought that some of them might know, but he was not aware that it had become a topic of conversation. Bob and Susan were very depressed that after seven years, they had only seen one Buddhist convert to Christianity. "We came here to see people become Christians and it's not happening. Maybe we should just go back home," Susan sighed to Bob one night. "Maybe we should," said Bob looking off into space.

Nevertheless, Bob was not ready to go just yet. He was determined to keep trying. However, he knew now that his missionary status was revealed, he would have to be even more careful about presenting himself as a Christian. One day at work, he angrily confronted an employee who had not completed a task that he had given her a month ago. She went for lunch and never came back. Completely frustrated he went to Nuananong and asked him to explain how his people could do such things. "I do not think she understood the task you gave her," replied Nuananong, "I think that maybe she thought you did not care about her since you never explained to her how to do the task."

"What? Are you saying this is my fault?" retorted Bob. Nuananong looked away nervously and did not say anything. "I do not want to micro-manage people, Nuananong. They need to be able to do things on their own. That is part of being mature. Everyone here is just very immature."

Later that night he went over the incident with Susan. "Maybe she lost face when you yelled at her?" suggested Susan.

"Face. This whole face thing is just too much. These people need to get over it. America is a successful country because we are not worried about face. They need to learn not to worry about it," replied Bob with a strong tone of irritation in his voice.

"Well, maybe the American way works in America but it does not seem to be working here," cautioned Susan.

"That's exactly the problem," exclaimed Bob. "They need to adapt to the American way. You do not see American companies clamoring to learn the Thai way of doing things do you?"

"Well, honey, I don't know. Maybe we're all just different," muttered Susan.

The next day Bob was in the office early to look over the accounting books and clean up some of the mistakes that frequently happened. Nuananong came in with a downcast look on his face. He told Bob that he was moving to Bangkok. "I've always wanted to live in the big city, and I think it is time for me to do it."

Bob could not believe it. He had come to rely on Nuananong to make sense of what was going on and to function as a bridge to the Thai staff. He sensed that Nuananong was not telling him the complete story, but he had seen so many employees come and go that he just nodded and wished him the best. After Nuananong left the

office, Bob started thinking back on all the employees who had come and gone. Even all of his missionary colleagues had gone back home. He looked at the finances and he could not see how he could make the business work. Most painfully, he pondered how after seven years they had only seen one Buddhist convert to Christianity. "If I'd known it was going to be so hard, I never would have started this," he said to himself. That night he went home and told Susan that they needed to move back home. "It is just not working." She agreed. He closed the shop the following day.

The Marshalls Going Strong

Business was booming. Ron's old boss had told several other business associates of what Ron was doing for his company. Opportunities were coming from everywhere. Ron looked back at the seven years they had been in business and could not help but smile. They had grown to forty-five employees and were making significant profits every quarter. Ron had come to Thailand as a faith missionary, raising support to cover his personal expenses. The business was now generating a sufficient income to pay him a decent salary, but he decided against it. He continued to receive monies from friends and family in the States. All of the profits were either reinvested into the company or donated to six locally run ministries that the company fully supported.

Ron liked to tell the story of an employee's friend who came to visit one day and became so enamored with the culture of the company that she stayed until Ron gave her a job. Proudly Ron pointed out to employees and visitors alike that no one had ever left the company. Every employee had worked there since the day they were hired, but what made him happiest was not the flourishing business but the impact it had on people's

lives. Twelve employees had become Christians through the years. Three of the earlier hires, in fact, had become Christians after being with the company for six years.

Ministries had expanded and grown as a result of the finances the company had provided. They had seen mothers and fathers become able to send their children to school and feed them as a result of consistent employment. Three of the women were former prostitutes whose first job off the street was with Ron's company. Lives had been changed. Though they never said so to Ron, the employees considered him a father and the company a growing family. One night in reflection, Ron said to Dawn, "I would have never imagined that the Lord would have used business to bring such blessing to these people. This opportunity just fell in our laps as if from heaven!" "The Lord works in mysterious ways," said Dawn.

Explanation of the Two Contrasting Stories

These two case studies, though fictional, reflect a common pattern that emerged from the research. The Kolbowitz's coffee shop could not keep any employees while the Marshalls never lost an employee. The Kolbowitzes had seen only one conversion, and the Marshalls had seen numerous. The Kolbowitz's coffee shop lost money, and the Marshall's company profitted significantly. The Kolbowitzes returned frustrated to the USA while the Marshalls stayed in Chiang Mai amazed at how the Lord was working through them.

Contrary to many missionaries' opinions, effectiveness in business as mission is not random or determined purely by external factors. In Chiang Mai some clear approaches work and other clear ones do not work. Admittedly several BAM enterprises

have a mixture of the various approaches and thus have moderate or mixed results.

However, I was amazed at how many factors related to one another to the extent that

many companies could easily be fit into a particular category. In other words they would

strongly match either the Kolbowitz's coffee shop or the Marshall's offshoring business

in both business and ministry results. The following are some key insights to explain the

reasons for the differing results.

Insight Number 1: Contrasting Models with Contrasting Results

Several interesting aspects emerged that distinguished those companies that were

reaping spiritual fruit and performing better as an organization versus those that were not.

Each model had four characteristics that will be explained in the following section. The

four characteristics of the high performers were (1) blessing orientation, (2) openness

regarding purpose and identity, (3) partnership with local churches and ministries, and (4)

high cultural adaptation. This model contrasted with the low performers who had four

different characteristics: (1) converting orientation, (2) covert purpose and identity, (3)

independent operations, preferring not to partner with others, and (4) low cultural

adaptation.

Bless versus Convert

When asked what their primary purpose was, the missionaries who operated

sustainable businesses that produced missional fruit tended to give comprehensive

explanations for why they engaged in missional business. They frequently used the term

bless, resulting in what I call a blessing orientation. Their answers reflected a sincere

concern for the Thai people, a desire to help people in many aspects of their lives, such as financially, in their families, as well as to grow in understanding the Christian message and become Christ followers. Sample comments were, "I want to be a blessing," or, "I'm just here to bless whoever comes my way." This orientation included conversion but only as an aspect of a larger purpose and vision.

In contrast, when asked what their primary purpose was, the missionaries who operated businesses that were struggling financially and producing little or no missional fruit gave conversion-oriented responses. They would either use the term convert or evangelism. A frequent phrase they would reiterate was, "We have to keep the main thing the main thing," meaning that the business and its corresponding social contribution to the lives of Thai people was only of *instrumental* value. The purpose of the business was to create an avenue for the missionaries to proclaim the Christian message and produce conversions. Ironically, these missionaries reported far less incidents of evangelism than those with a bless orientation.

Open versus Covert

Those with a bless orientation tended to view themselves as "blessers," while those with a convert orientation viewed themselves as "converters." Both groups believed that the Thais perceived them as they perceived themselves. Therefore, the blessers believed that being a missionary was a positive thing and would be generally viewed as positive by others. For this reason, they tended to be more open about their missionary identity and freely shared their faith with others. In contrast, the "converters" believed that missionaries would be negatively viewed as converters and wanted to shield their

missionary identity. They developed covert strategies. Because sharing their faith ran the risk of "blowing their cover," they were very selective about concerning whom they talked to about their faith and tended to evangelize quite infrequently.

Two other explanations for the contrast in faith sharing incidents also apply. First, the converters tended to be insecure about their missionary identity. This insecurity carried over to other aspects of their lives and they tended to be insecure about and less confident in sharing their faith. They anticipated negative responses and consistently made comments about the difficulty of evangelizing Buddhists. In contrast, the blessers were secure about their missionary identity and were more secure about and confident in sharing their faith. This confidence leads to more faith sharing and more positive experiences. They had more positive anticipation regarding evangelism and positive experiences helped to increase their confidence.

Second, because converters considered conversion the central focus of their ministries, they evaluated their contribution in those terms. They tended to rush the decision and did not allow for the time necessary for positive response, making them less effective in evangelism. Because they evaluated themselves on their effectiveness in evangelism, self-evaluation led to decrease in already lower confidence levels. As a result, they put pressure on themselves and faith-sharing opportunities. This self-induced pressure caused them to avoid faith-sharing incidents because (1) they did not want to fail again, and (2) they wanted to wait until just the "right time." In contrast blessers did not rush the decision-making process, allowed for extensive exposure to the gospel, and evangelized naturally and opportunistically. These factors gave them increased levels of confidence and naturally resulted in more faith-sharing incidents.

Many missionaries were covert out of fear of being exposed as undercover missionaries, but this fear was not well founded. In three interviews, one with a Thai lawyer, another with a Thai customs official, and another with the family member of another Thai customs official, the interviewees had no concern or desire to crack down on missionary presence. On the contrary, Thailand gives out missionary visas and government policy supports foreign religious activities. One Thai Buddhist employee who did not know either that her managers or I were missionaries told me, "Missionaries are very respected here."

The Thai officials are highly suspicious of people who obscure their purposes for being in Thailand. Their primary fear is pedophilia. In the year since commencing research, several high-profile cases of foreigners guilty of pedophilia have emerged in Thailand and particularly in Chiang Mai. Drug trafficking is also a focus of concern and was the second chief concern. Third, they added that they are "cracking down on illegal aliens who are living off the system."

Missionaries who desire to hide their purposes for coming into the country tend to fall, unfortunately, into these categories of suspicion. The customs police had, in several incidents, talked to neighbors of BAM projects inquiring as to what they were doing, asking for descriptions of their activities and if they were truly working or not. Several missionaries confided in me that they knew that the Thai government was accepting of missionaries but did not feel that they would be effective in converting middle-class Thais if their missionary identity became known. My research indicates that those who are open about their identity are actually significantly more effective in bringing others to

faith in Christ. Figure 10.1 demonstrates the differences in the effectiveness of blessers versus converters in terms of conversions.

Comparing two blessing companies versus two converting companies, one conversion came in the converting companies after the expenditure of thirty-two missionary years. In the blessing companies, twelve conversions came after the expenditure of eight missionary year; thus, the larger circle represents the time output of the converters, thirty-two missionary years, for just one conversion represented by the person in the circle. The smaller circle represents the time output of the blessers, eight missionary years, for twelve conversions represented by the twelve people in the circle. The ratio difference is 48:1.
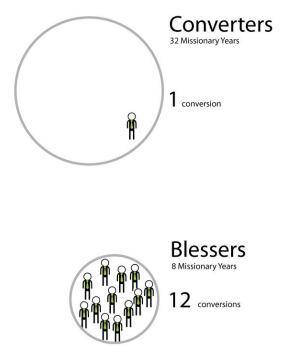
Figure 10.1. The conversions of converters and blessers.

Several covert missionaries tended to view work as a distraction from ministry and complained that they did not have time for ministry. Their view was not that the ministry occurred in the workplace or through the work but that it gave them a reason to live and work in the country. Ministry in their perspective happened after hours and through leisure activities and conversations with friends.

Bless / Open / Partnership / High Cultural Adaptation

Convert / Covert / Independent / Low Cultural Adaptation

Figure 10.2 Bless Model vs Convert Model

Partnership versus Independence

Those who were open partnered with other local ministries. They brought in local pastors to give devotions and preach in workplace meetings. They donated their finances and sometimes their time to other ministries. They went to other ministries when hiring, in hopes of finding a future employee that was on a faith journey and could use employment. These steps created multiple exposures to the gospel for some employees, thus creating the consistent exposure necessary for them to become Christ followers.

In contrast the converters thought that partnerships would expose their missionary identity and tended to view local ministries to skepticism. Therefore, they preferred to work autonomously. Frequently, these missionaries did not attend church and sought to minimize their interaction with Thai Christians.

High Cultural Adaptation versus Low Cultural Adaptation

High cultural adaptation means congruency with at least seven of the eight cultural categories and five of the six contextualization categories proposed by Mejudhon. Low cultural adaptation reflects congruency with three or less of the eight cultural categories and two or less of the six contextualization categories proposed by Mejudhon.

The missionaries with a bless orientation also demonstrated higher cultural adaptation and meaning. Though not necessarily capable of articulating all of the significant Thai cultural values, they showed that they sought to adapt their management style to the Thai context. This fact was demonstrated most conclusively through employee interviews. High cultural adaptation firms have far fewer complaints about management, lower employee turnover, and significantly higher levels of employee satisfaction.[66] Those businesses that operated according to a distinct American or Western management style had significant problems. They had high employee turnover, and employee interviews produced sharp negative feedback. In some cases, missionaries

---

[66] Though many people inherently understood some of the cultural differences between Thais and Americans, very few could articulate clear categories. This demonstrates a need for increased focus on Thai culture and strategies for managerial adaptation.

appeared unaware that their management style was American, perceiving it rather as "normal." In other cases, they intentionally chose to work from an American management style because they believed that younger educated Thais worked better with it.

However, the research demonstrates that it is ineffective to insert automatically an American management style without sufficient adaptation to and understanding of Thai cultural values. The belief that one can insert American or Western management style emerges in part from a misinformed and exaggerated perception of the impact of globalization and American education. For example, many Thai citizens become educated in America and return to Thailand. Others learn at American universities that have extension centers in Thailand. They become managers, and the result is a trickle-down effect of American management style. At the same time, American businesses such as McDonald's and Coca-Cola have greater visible exposure in Thailand leading many American missionaries to believe that globalization and education have made working from an American management style better. However, this assumption does not take into consideration how deeply ingrained cultural assumptions and actions are.

This is very well demonstrated by contrasting two companies that I researched. One had existed for five years and had nineteen employees. They had no employees who had been there since the beginning, and the average length of employment was eight months. The other, which employed workers of a similar socioeconomic position, was seven years old and had twenty-six employees. In their seven years, only three had ever left the company and all had returned. They have lost zero employees in their seven-year existence.

In reality, the changes brought on by globalization and the influence of foreign education are largely superficial. In sixty-four interviews with Thai employees, not a single one acknowledged any influence of American management techniques, and all strongly reflected Thai cultural values as expressed through the Mejudhon framework. In other words, neither intentionally nor inadvertently did any Thai employees demonstrate any change in culture as a result of globalization or foreign education. In contrast, they demonstrated quite clearly that they had not changed at all. Figure 10.3 shows the size, age, and employee retention rate (0% vs 100%) of these two companies.

Employee Retention

19 → 5 years old → 0% employee retention

26 → 7 years old → 100% employee retention

Figure 10.3 Employee Retention

Nevertheless, several American missionaries operating businesses told me that they could manage according to American management styles because the Thais understood them. Many younger missionaries (under 35) believed that they were at a disadvantage because Thais more naturally respect elders. Younger managers who managed consistently in accordance with other Thai cultural values did not experience significant problems. Unfortunately, the majority of younger missionaries did not have a firm grasp of Thai cultural values and had significant challenges due to their management

style. Without exception, the businesses managed by non-culturally adaptive missionaries had high employee turnover and serious financial problems.

Of course, a natural logical correlation exists between low cultural adaptation and high employee turnover. The employees in these cases were constantly frustrated, though they could not always articulate what their frustrations were nor were they necessarily aware that they were the result of a cultural problem. Because many of these employees were low-wage workers, they could readily find alternative employment opportunities. As a result of their indirect communication style, Thai employees would not communicate their displeasure directly or confront managers over their management styles. Expatriate managers with low cultural adaptation would anticipate that any problems would be communicated directly. Therefore, they were frequently unaware that the high turnover of their companies was unusual. Many managers commented to me that high turnover was ubiquitous and unavoidable in Thailand. A belief that is unfounded. Two of my case studies had zero turnover; the other three had very low turnover. However, other BAM enterprises that I researched had very high turnover. One company had an average employee term of less than six months.

In contrast to the low employee retention of the low cultural adaptation firms, high cultural adaptation management produced high employee retention as a natural result of fewer cross-cultural miscommunications and frustrations. These managers also came off as more humble, a very important Thai cultural trait, as they strove to learn Thai culture and adapt to the people. Because employees stayed longer, the managers were able to forge stronger relationships with the employees.

Those who demonstrated higher cultural adaptation to Thai culture in their management style have not only all of the benefits mentioned above but also have more incidents of faith sharing, have more converts, and have employees who reported more respect and trust in these managers. These outcomes are a natural result when one considers foundational aspects of Thai culture. Since the Thai Buddhist conversion process requires consistent, long-term exposure to the Christian message and witness, a natural result is that conversions would occur more often in a business with loyal employees who stay long-term in the company. Missionaries who had high cultural adaptation could point to changed lives. Low cultural adaptation missionaries experienced very little fruit in terms of changed lives. Simply put, they did not have the time necessary to influence the Thais positively and spiritually.

Positive Feedback Cycle

Bless ⟶ Open ⟶ Partnerships ⟶ High Cultural Adaptation
⟶ Satisfied Employees ⟶ Low or No Employee Turnover ⟶
Experienced More Effective Employees ⟶
Are Exposed to the Gospel Consistently Over a Long Period of Time

Negative Feedback Cycle

Covert ⟶ Convert ⟶ Independent ⟶ Low Cultural Adaptation Un-
atisfied Employees ⟶ High Employee Turnover ⟶
Inexperienced and Less Effective Employees ⟶
Are Not Exposed to the Gospel Consistently Over a Long Period of Time

Figure 10.4 The Feedback Cycle of the Two Models

As a result of the Thai interdependent orientation, employees who had a close, positive relationship with their supervisor tend to perform better. High employee turnover

means extra cost and time spent on interviewing and training employees. In contrast, low employee turnover means less expenses and more time focused on developing a profitable operation. Therefore, the cultural adaptation aspect created a natural feedback cycle. For these reasons cultural adaptation has a direct bearing on financial performance.

Insight Number 2: Thai Buddhist Conversion Process

The Thai Buddhist conversion process from Buddhism to Christianity provides a foundational insight. As a part of my research, I interviewed twenty-six Thai Buddhist background believers. Every convert had two common factors: (1) They had been exposed to the Christian message and lifestyle over an extended period of time, and (2) they had been exposed to the Christian message and lifestyle consistently during that time period. Through the businesses they were exposed to the Christian message on a weekly basis and to the Christian lifestyle on a five-day per week basis. As they moved closer to conversion, they tended also to start attending church and spending free time with Christians, thus increasing their exposure to the message to at least twice a week and exposure to the lifestyle as a daily occurrence.

Twenty-two of the 26 Thais interviewed who became Christians said the primary reason they became Christians was because they had observed the lives of other Christians. All Thai converts (100 percent) cited this reason in all of the interviews without me mentioning it. The long-term process of conversion is a result of a strong Buddhist culture. Interviews with missionaries in China, demonstrated that a long-term process in conversion was not as ubiquitous as in Thailand. This difference could at least

be partly due to the fact that many of the Chinese have a blank religious slate and are not having to unlearn a culturally deep and formed religion.

Figure 10.5 demonstrates the length of time required for conversion for the people I interviewed. Eighteen months was the minimum period of exposure and applied to just one person. Three people needed between two and three years. Twelve people required between three and five years, nine people required between five and seven years, and five people over seven years.

Thai Conversion Process

18 Months

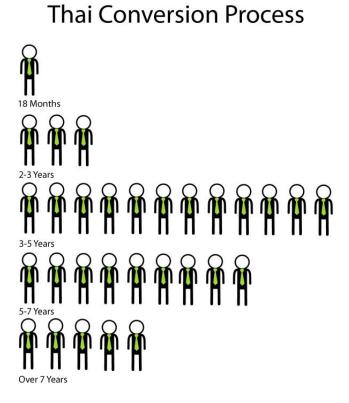2-3 Years

3-5 Years

5-7 Years

Over 7 Years

Figure 10.5. Length of consistent exposure to Christian message before conversion.

In looking at the graphs it appears that there is a "tipping point" in which the two to three year time period is the ideal time period. However, it should be pointed out that

the apparent diminishing rate of return of conversions over the more extended periods is influenced by the companies that I researched. The oldest company has been operating for nine year. For obvious reasons this company is the only company to have conversions of over seven years. Furthermore, they have added numerous employees through the years meaning the only employees who have been there over seven years are employees who have been with the company almost since its inception. More research would be necessary to determine what the ideal time frame would be. Nevertheless this research demonstrates clearly that the Thai conversion process occurs over a long period of time.

Furthermore, all of these converts were regularly exposed to Christian demonstration and proclamation over the time frame. They were all exposed to a verbal exposition of the Christian faith on a weekly basis, generally through their workplace. These expositions were not always call to faith messages, but were often about broader biblical themes regarding the Christian life. After a period of exposure, most of the converts started to attend church on a weekly or bi-weekly basis prior to conversion thus increasing their regular exposure to Christian demonstration and proclamation. The average convert was exposed 250-300 times to a proclamation of the Christian faith before making a personal decision to become a Christ follower.

Insight Number 3: Cultural Adaptation and Navigation

Those who had fruitful ministries and successful businesses had adapted in many respects to the culture but had also intentionally worked to counter certain aspects of the culture. People naturally do not conform to another culture. Some people respond as if every aspect in another culture should be accepted in its entirety. The culturally shrewd

people, however, recognize that they must adapt to and respect culture, yet to fulfill their organizational vision, they also recognize that they need to counter some aspects of the culture.

The most common cultural aspect that was challenged was that of the present time orientation. In several of the more financially successful companies, the managers told me that they had to emphasize constantly that they needed to plan ahead and discipline themselves toward a more future orientation. This trait or value is not a part of Thai culture. Therefore, the managers had to navigate this basis and teach the Thai to do something that was not innate culturally. In these companies, employees regularly mentioned changing their time orientation in the interviews, demonstrating that they were processing the issue.

The managers who did reoriented their employees regarding time well, did so cautiously, consciously, and consistently. Other managers, who critiqued Thai culture and did not extend significant effort in adapting to Thai culture, were not able to produce the reorientation of their Thai employees. In other words, those who were effective in reorienting their employees away from Thai cultural orientation for the sake of organizational performance were focused on what needed to be changed. They did not try to change too much but focused on just one aspect. They affirmed and adapted to all other Thai cultural values, at least as far as they were aware. Therefore, what emerged in those with high cultural adaptation was also the ability to navigate the culture and change its course in limited, yet strategically important, ways.

Insight Number 4: Business Development Is Challenging

During the research process, I had the opportunity to peek behind the curtain of some well-known BAM operations and saw that they were confronting serious challenges that are not publicized in newsletters and other published reports. People aspiring to go into BAM should know that operating a business in another culture for missional purposes contains many unique challenges. The vast majority of missionaries interviewed said that managing a business has been far harder than they imagined and if they had known how hard it would be, they probably would not have started.

For example, Dwight Martin, the Director of PACTEC Asia, who was "entrepreneur of the year" in Birmingham, Alabama, before moving to Thailand said, "I thought starting a business in the States was hard. This is much harder!" Thammasak Summetikul, CEO of Cornerstone International Group, looked me deeply in the eyes and said simply, "Business is hard." Most of the people I interviewed had experienced significant challenges maintaining their businesses. Many times the challenges were personal, such as loss of personal savings and extended working hours. Other times the hardship lay simply in trying to figure out the laws and processes of a foreign culture whose structures are not overly supportive for foreign entrepreneurs.

This set of challenges means that flexibility, adaptability, and perseverance are necessary traits of BAM entrepreneurs. They need to have flexible attitudes that embrace change as a challenge that they can overcome. However, not only do they need the attitude of flexibility, they have to have the ability to adapt to changing circumstances, evolving business plans, and market shifts. Finally, they need to have persevering spirit that understands what good can be done if they stick to it and see their vision through.

Still, not every BAM endeavor is meant to be. In Silicon Valley, entrepreneurs refer to other entrepreneurs who cannot give up on unworkable business ideas as "the walking wounded." In Thailand, many aspiring BAM entrepreneurs have held on too long to their dream. Instead of adapting and creating a new plan or just realizing that the business endeavor is not meant to be, they have become a member of "the walking wounded." Therefore, while perseverance is a necessity, so is realizing how long one should persevere with a single business idea.

Insight Number 5: Competition

Several missionaries operated businesses that were in competition with other missionary-operated businesses. Many complained that the others used donations to lower prices and steal clients. Others made strong accusations against competitors ranging from corporate espionage to character slander.

Many BAM people complained in general about an un-level playing field meaning that other businesses had an unfair competitive advantage. One of the more common complaints was that other missionaries would use "donated" funds to support a business, which would create a "fake" economy that hurt Thai business people by driving them out of business as well as other missionaries who did not have access to donor subsidies. Frequently, these complaints were examples of the pot calling the kettle black as these missionaries did not consider their salaries as subsidies even though they came from fund-raising and not from the business. Others complained of government subsidies. For example, as a part of their foreign aid policy, the British government gave stipends to British citizens who taught English allowing British citizens to charge lower prices than

other English-teaching competitors. These government subsidies drove down the market rate thus creating a market in which it was nearly impossible for companies completely reliant on generated income to make ends meet.

One missionary said to me, "Business, properly and fairly, you will always be on the same level field, then you are contextual. Business as mission that is not contextual will fail. Therefore, it needs to be contextual." In all actuality, business is never on a perfectly level playing field. Business schools and business textbooks teach about "competitive advantage," the concept that a business should seek to construct a "playing field" that is not level and benefits them. Businesses obtain competitive advantage in a number of ways, such as the use of technology, superior knowledge, or higher financial investment.

While recognizing the desire for competitive advantage, BAM operators do need to ensure that their overall economical impact is beneficial. For example, one BAM missionary told me that his Thai Christian employees encouraged him to use his subsidies to lower his prices dramatically. Their logic was that their lower price point would run his competitors, all Thai locals, out of business. He could then use his monopolistic position to increase his prices and earn more profits with higher margins. When he initially resisted the idea, the employees countered that he could then hire more Thai workers, expand his business operations, and be able to influence more people with the gospel. The business owner did not follow their advice, insisting that lowering prices through donated subsidies was an unfair and unethical business tactic and would violate their missional purposes.

The issue of a "level playing field" was a hot topic among missionaries. Several factors contributed to "an un-level playing field," such as government aid, illegal and uncertified workers, financial restraints, and tax-free donations. The topic was a hot one primarily because competition is high in many BAM situations. The high competition is a result of missionaries going into business in industries that have low barriers to entry. "Barriers to entry" is a term that emerges out of competition theory. Economists invoke it to describe obstacles in the path of a firm that wants to enter a given market. The term refers to hindrances that an individual may face while trying to gain entrance into a profession or trade. It also, more commonly, refers to hindrances that a firm may face while trying to enter an industry or trade grouping.

Teaching English and coffee shops are perennial favorites with missionaries, with good reason. For example, a native English speaker is almost automatically qualified to teach English in a developing country such as Thailand. Granted, they may need to get a certificate, but for a native English speaker such a task is not difficult, expensive, or time consuming. In the case of the coffee shop, though more complex than many people realize, the business is learnable, not tremendously expensive, and fairly doable by most people. In both cases, they provide a natural context for conversation and relationship development; this context is why many missionaries pursue such types of businesses.

The ease and inexpensiveness of going into these types of businesses qualifies it as a low barrier to entry business. This low barrier to entry actually makes it difficult business to operate in a financially sustainable manner. For example, in a city such as Chiang Mai, with its high missionary population, several missionaries have opened such businesses. They are then in *de facto* competition with each other. Some get subsidies

from their mission agencies or donors to fund operations and are able to charge lower prices requiring other missionary-operated businesses have to lower prices to attract clientele. Missionaries are being pushed out of business by other missionaries who use the subsidies which is why the issue of using subsidies is a hot topic for many missionaries. In many cases subsidized businesses are businesses that will only last to the end of the next missionary term.

These businesses are not only in competition with other missionaries but also with other expatriates as well as Thai citizens; therefore, the gravitational pull to find something inexpensive and easy to do puts many missionaries in low barrier to entry businesses with high levels of competition. BAM practitioners should be aware of the need to handle competition appropriately. Many BAM practitioners seemed very frustrated with the level of competition without acknowledging that they were also competitors to others. In other words, they wanted to operate a low barrier to entry business with little or no competition, but that is an unrealistic expectation.

To counteract the competition issues, some missionaries called for greater levels of investment. In other words, they believed that in order to operate effectively in the Thai business climate, one had to make a large initial investment. However, high capital investments carry a lot of risk and BAM companies with such investments are required to compete against major companies who do not have multiple purposes for existence. Other missionaries perceived that a large financial investment was risky or impossible and retreated to an even smaller business. These businesses would often involve a low barrier to entry, minimal financial investment, and would generate minimal financial returns. The missionaries pointed out that these small low barrier to entry businesses still

enabled them to build relationships and have a presence in the market, and they were not risking "kingdom" money in risky financial investments.

Alternative Response: Collaboration and Competition

Radical collaboration is an emerging trend in global business. Long ago the milk and beef industries overcame competitiveness in order to join forces and promote their industries cooperatively. Such collaboration is happening in other places as well. *USA Today* shares facilities with the *Chicago Tribune*. Long-time rivals are realizing that holding grudges and battles to the bitter end are a lose-lose scenario and are beginning to acknowledge that working together is quite effective in creating a win-win.

Societal stereotypes caricaturize big business in the image cast by Gordon Gekko (played by Michael Douglas) in the 1980s movie *Wall Street* (i.e., greedy corporations who would devour any competitor that stands between them and the almighty dollar). The unfortunate reality is that these forms of radical collaboration become more common the higher one goes up the annual revenue ladder. Recently, I met with the head of the international unit of the Department of Commerce for a U. S. state. In the meeting he told me small and medium-sized businesses in his state desperately needed outside help, but they were inherently skeptical. Paradoxically, he said the bigger and more successful a company is, the more likely it is to be open to sharing services and seeking external help.

Unfortunately, the same phenomenon is true in BAM operations. The ones who most need help and should get over their competitive instincts are the ones who refuse it the most. Recently, a colleague of mine who is working hard to empower nonprofits through a shared service center told me that many nonprofits openly told him that they

could not use a shared service center because it would "look like we don't know what we're doing." This perception is exactly what moneymaking big businesses regularly acknowledge to be fact; they do not know what they are doing and they cannot operate their businesses in isolation. Therefore, they collaborate with one another and seek outside advice frequently.

Insight Number 6: Business Strategy

Though my feature case studies are notable exceptions, what was missing from other businesses interviewed were missionaries who aspired to start small and then scale operations over time in a systematic and strategic fashion. Generally speaking they either tried to start large because they thought that was necessary or started small and had no vision or strategy for getting larger. In the former case, they frequently faced ongoing financial challenges that consumed time and energy and produced stress. In the latter case, they dealt with small amounts of people and had a minimal impact on the surrounding community.

Other BAM operations seemed to struggle because they did not have a clear business strategy. For example, one U.S.-based church decided to start an ongoing mission in Thailand. They wanted to use business as a missions strategy to reach out to poor people in the urban slums of Bangkok as well as a means to generate funds for other ministry activities. They approached a business consultant, whom I interviewed, who was working for a large well-respected multinational company. The consultant was very supportive of the plan but asked if their primary purpose was to help the poor or to generate funds. The church responded that they wanted the business to employ the

unemployed residents of the slum and be profitable to the point of covering all operating expenses, including expatriate management salaries and generate a sufficient profit to support other outreach activities. The consultant was completely bewildered and explained that if they wanted to operate a profitable business to the extent they intended, they needed to look for the skilled and knowledgeable workers and that would not be found among the unemployed people of the slum. If, on the other hand, they wanted to help the unemployed slum residents, then they should not expect it to generate sufficient income to cover all expenses much less produce a significant profit capable of supporting other outreach activities. From the consultant's perspective the church was not aware that their intended target group, unemployed slum residents, did not have the capacity to carry out their intended business project.

In my interviews I frequently encountered missionaries who appeared enamored with the concept and potential power of BAM but had no real strategy or idea how to turn that power into a reality. In one instance a group of BAM missionaries tried to get street prostitutes employed by other BAM operators in Chiang Mai without even confirming if the prostitutes wanted another job or were even remotely qualified for the job.

Of course, the church should aspire to help these people in anyway possible; but, a training bridge between their disadvantage background and regular, full-time employment first needs to be built. A very large and exceptionally profitable company can provide that training internally; however, more likely the training would best be done by specialist missionaries or Christian development workers who are skilled in this area. While this training bridge may occur in some type of business model settings, a for-profit business that intends to cover all operating expenses would find providing such training

extremely difficult. Many missionaries have wonderful dreams but, BAM is not always the way to fulfill these dreams. More work needs to be done for how various ministry practices can partner together to bring about the spiritual transformation that is the objective of missions.

In terms of BAM strategy, people have to clarify their purpose. Some companies are focused on providing alternative and dignified employment to sex industry workers. Others want to maximize profits and support other ministries from those profits. If their goal is the former, they probably will not be able to do the latter. If their goal is the latter, they can support the former from their profits. BAM practitioners need to determine their primary purpose first as that determines the scope and financial structure of the company.

Insight Number 7: Purpose, Mission, and Vision Statement

Not a single missionary could cite his or her purpose, mission, or vision statement from memory. About 90 percent either looked at the computer or said their statements were on the computer when asked. Although, several organizations had purpose, mission, and/or vision statements, very few demonstrated that their statements were actually directing or influencing their operations. In an article in *Christianity Today* giving ten principles for good development, Greg Snell said the first was;

> Know more than your mission statement: You must know your mission statement, but also know the vision and values behind it. What are you ultimately hoping to see happen, and why exactly do you want to see it happen? Answering those questions will go a long way in not only helping you have a plan but in knowing when you can veer from the plan. Continually lift up your vision and values to ensure they are owned from the grassroots to the "grasstops" of your organization. (Snell 2007: 1)

Snell's comment applies equally to BAM. However, Snell assumes that everyone knows his or her mission statements; therefore, this finding demonstrates that BAM practitioners need to develop mission statements for their organizations, know them, and know the reasons behind them. In my research there were just two (of twelve) BAM companies that had a purpose, mission, and vision statement that was understood and lived out by the company. Most BAM managers did not even know their organizational statements.

Insight Number 8: The Role of the Mission Agency in BAM

In ongoing business operations, external controls of a mission agency were a big factor in missionary satisfaction but not necessarily of performance. Interaction or intervention neither appeared to hurt nor facilitate success. Several missionary businesses ceased to function due to mission agency intervention either because the mission agency wanted to shut down the company or the missionary became frustrated with the level of intervention and shut down the business. In some cases the missionary resigned from the mission agency and continued working independently.

The primary culprit for the meltdowns was a lack of a clear agreement regarding the financing of the business. Conflicts between missionaries and their agencies over funds and ownership were not uncommon. Generally, no written agreement was in place, and both sides assumed the other shared their understanding. Often the conflict was over what would happen with the profits or what would happen to the money if the company were ever purchased. The typical scenario was that the missionary had put in some of personal savings and had assumed the ability to recuperate the money through the

businesses' profits. Sometimes, the missionary also assumed recuperation of the investment plus all additional profits.

The mission agency, on the other hand, had the understanding that profiteering was not appropriate through a missions activity. They operated from the assumption that others felt the same way. Because no clear communication was established on this key point, things could melt down quite quickly. Missionaries would argue that they had invested their retirement or their "nest egg" and wanted and deserved to get it back plus appropriate earnings. Missionaries would interpret the mission agency's negative reaction as a reflection of a lack of trust and the situation would continue with both sides viewing the other suspiciously until the entire situation collapsed. I interviewed people from three different situations that mirrored this issue and heard several other similar anecdotal accounts.

The situation is made more complex because many businesses are incorporated as a legal entity in Thailand. In order to purchase land or to counter the difficulties of being a foreigner, many of these businesses had multiple shareholders of whom many were Thai. Therefore, mission agencies actually had very little control and simplistic solutions could not be found. In general, what was most problematic was that only a handful of all businesses researched had even discussed the potential challenges with their mission agencies. Two mission agencies had developed policy guides, and a few businesses had signed statements of intent or memorandums of understanding. In general both had a dearth of preventive planning on these potential deal-breaking challenges.

To offset these problems, mission agencies should develop policy guides that create a variety of options for various scenarios. Mission agencies and their missionaries

should discuss the financial arrangements and should determine in advance what form the business should take. For example, they should decide whether or not pursuing personal profit through the business is acceptable. If not, they should decide if the missionaries and others can appropriately invest money with the expectation of having it returned later. If recuperating the money later is proper, then determining if interest will be added is also needed. If interest can be added, whether or not it is equal to, less than, or greater than inflation should be predetermined. There is no one size fits all approach to these complex issues. However, the alarming aspect is that in a surprising number of cases the various parties involved had dramatically different assumptions about where the money would go.

In many cases these differences led to an entire meltdown in which either the missionary left the mission agency and retained the business, the mission agency fired the missionary and retained the business, or the business was shut down. The agreement should be as detailed as possible and the process should be conducted in such a manner as to allow everyone to express their honest desires. In several cases, missionaries had not informed the administration of their personal stake in the business nor their desire to earn back that stake with profit because they were fearful of producing a negative reaction. This fear prevented open and honest discussion that could have offset a plethora of problems.

Insight Number 9: Why Missionaries Choose BAM

Many missionaries are attracted to BAM for four reasons. The first reason is to have legitimacy. By operating a business, many missionaries believe they automatically gain respect and credibility among the surrounding community.

The second reason is to have a persona. Through their business, the missionaries have a "story" about who they are. As one said, "We don't want to say. Hey, we're here to convert you. Being a business person helps us to be a 'real person' in the community."

The third reason is to receive a visa. Even though, as pointed out previously, missionaries can obtain religious activities visas and one mission agency told me that they have extras and have tried to give them to missionaries in other agencies, many missionaries still prefer not to use these types of visas. They prefer a visa that matches the legitimacy and persona that they think a business gives them.

The fourth reason is to gain contacts. Many missionaries have tremendous difficulty forming genuine relationships with Buddhists if they do not have an avenue for developing those relationships. With a business they are in constant and normal contact with people whom they would never get to know through a church or other organized ministry event or meeting place. They are able to develop relationships with employees, clients, suppliers, government officials, bankers, shippers, and other business people. As one missionary said to me, "The strength [of BAM] is that you engage people in day-to-day life." Figure 10.6 shows some of the relationships that missionary business operators are able to develop because of their business.

Figure 10.6. Missionary business operator relationships.

All four of these reasons are good; however, I contend that they are not enough to justify the energy and expense of BAM. Missionaries who follow these four reasons only tend to fall into the covert/convert category. They complain that they do not have the time and energy to follow up on their contacts because of the business. The legitimacy, persona, and visa are the benefits of the business. In contrast the open/bless missionaries tended to value the social contribution, the opportunity to model a Christian lifestyle, the creation of jobs, and the ability to have extended interaction with Buddhists in a natural, nonconfrontational way.

Insight Number 10: What Businesses Best Fit the BAM Model

The people in my cases came from varied backgrounds. Some were traditional missionaries who decided that running a business was a more effective means to attain their missional goals. Others were business people who wanted to be involved in missions and business was the most practical avenue for them to pursue. But it needs to be said that doing business in missions is not for everybody. Those who are effective at it are committed to it, view the role of business as important to society, understand the influence of economics in people's lives, and believe that their purpose is to serve God and their neighbor through their business. They either have the skills necessary to run a business or are diligent in obtaining the skills. Generally, both are necessary. They view their workplace as the location and the means to have an effective ministry and believe that a good business is a ministry in its own right.

Not all missionaries operating businesses share these viewpoints. Many expressed frustration that they did not "have time for ministry" because it took so much time and energy for the business. They considered the business good for getting them into the country but did not really think that it was a valuable social contribution or did not think that making a valuable social contribution was the purpose of their mission. Some have simply stumbled into running or working in a business. Others became enamored with the concept without being fully aware of the implications of running a business in a developing country for missional purposes. The bottom line is many missionaries are more qualified and gifted to be a pastor, evangelist, or full-time church planter, whatever is reflective of who they are and who they really want to be. These missionaries should not pursue operating businesses, which will be a drain to them, their mission agency, and

somebody's finances. Many missionaries explained that their mission agency was pushing them to be innovative and pursue entrepreneurial strategies. In these cases, the mission agency needs to understand that business ventures require a mix of gifting, commitment, and unique context to make them work effectively. Not just anyone can do it or should do it.

Insight Number 11: Integrating Ministry in Business

The Thai context created several unique ways in which Christian missionaries were able to integrate ministry opportunities. In Thailand symbols are normative in business operations. Several BAM practitioners used this as an opportunity to leverage for kingdom impact. In place of an altar to a spirit, several business placed crosses predominantly in the workplace serving as a functional substitute to the local spirit or god which would normally be honored.

Frequently, the Thai would perform a ritual to appease a local spirit if things were going bad or in hopes of avoiding bad things when operating a business. Many BAM entrepreneurs creatively utilized prayer to Christ during these cases and demonstrated to the Thai employees that they could go directly to God in prayer rather than engaging the spirit world through local traditional processes. Proactively integrating prayer in this way also served to normalize prayer in the workplace. This created an atmosphere in which employees could share concerns and be prayed for in a natural non-threatening way. Many of the converts to Christianity mentioned that they had spiritual experiences when being prayed for. In many other companies they acknowledged that it would awkward to

integrate prayer in the workplace. Those who had effective ministries had always managed to integrate and normalize prayer in the workplace.

It is also customary in Thailand to have ritualistic ceremonies to mark the opening of a new business. Many BAM practitioners used these opportunities to proclaim to their employees and the surrounding community the good news of Jesus Christ as well as their purposes for operating a business in Chiang Mai.

Workplace faith meetings were very effective in Thailand. Obligatory nature did not hinder its effectiveness which is probably a reflection of the Thai cultural orientation toward hierarchy. Ironically, only in CIG, which was Thai managed and had voluntary meetings, did employees express complaints regarding workplace faith meetings. They complained that sufficient peer pressure from other employees (not management) to attend the meetings actually made them obligatory but with a voluntary façade. Other employees were convinced that some employees were "pretending to be Christian" by coming to the meetings. The people who complained about peer pressure in CIG demonstrated that they had reflected deeply on the Christian message, were considering it, and were not currently annoyed by the meetings but describing how they felt when they first started working in the location.

Ironically, employees in other companies that had obligatory workplace faith meetings had no complaints. Part of the reason that no one complained could be due to the fact that the obligatory workplace faith meetings occurred on company time and the employees were remunerated for it, so it came off as "part of the job." In the companies where the meetings were voluntary but the employees felt peer pressure, it was an "additional requirement of the job," thus fostering some frustration. In CIG they were

compensated with free food, which was appreciated but did not appear to have equal effect. Both approaches were effective in producing conversions and bringing people to Christ. Even if some of the people in CIG did not have authentic conversions, clearly the majority of those converted have made significant life changes, were attending church, had been baptized, and, generally speaking, reflected the understanding and heart of being Christian.

The obligatory versus voluntary aspect of such meetings is a culturally unique phenomenon. For example, Kendall Cobb, director of ACTS CO., who has lived in several other countries, noted that this approach would never work in the States where people have a strong "rights" orientation and will not simply do whatever the boss says on sensitive religious issues. He said its success in Thailand is a result of their hierarchical orientation. In other words, if the boss says something, the employees do it. Another aspect could be the concept of indirect communication. A voluntary meeting that is attended by all employees sends the message that it is actually obligatory.

Insight Number 12: Lessons Learned from the Research Process

This research process differed from some of the compendiums of BAM research in that some of those works (Yamamori and Eldred 2003, Steffen and Barnett 2006), were compilations of multiple contributors with self-reported case studies from around the world. This project contrasted in that I was just one person rather than multiple contributors and I was not self-reported, but rather examining the case studies as an outsider, and I worked in one sociocultural context rather than several. This

differentiation is important and I believe necessary. However, it produced numerous difficulties.

As explained in chapter four, I faced three primary research challenges:

1. Security—fear of being exposed as an undercover missionary,

1. Insecurity—fear of poor performance and financial challenges being exposed,

2. Competition—fear of divulging too much information to the other missionary-operated businesses with whom they were in competition.

These challenges posed numerous complications. I had to offset their concerns through persuasion. The most powerful form of persuasion for the security concern was that I would not include them in any identifying way in the dissertation. This is an unfortunate concession in that it prevented many enlightening case studies from being published in case study format. These BAM enterprises would have helped shed light.

The second challenge of insecurity meant that those who cooperated with me to the extend of allowing me to write a case study about them tended to have a higher performance level in all categories than those that did not. This was probably the most difficult challenge to overcome as they were not only insecure about the outside world, but also of me. These companies shielded their data and were not overly cooperative on tough questions, thus making the task of ascertaining what was really going on quite difficult.

The third challenge of competition meant that I had to sit through a lot of people complaining about others. It also meant that I only got extensive information from the people who trusted me. Frequently, these were people who had known me or known of me from other contexts. However, many people opened up to me about their situation in

faith that I would shield their information. Nevertheless, several people would not divulge information related to their business out of fear that a competitor would utilize that information.

These challenges mean two things. First, the case studies I researched most extensively were generally more effective in achieving their goals that those that did not work with me. This could be construed to mean that my case studies are not representative of what is out there. On one hand this may not be a problem. Ted Yamamori asserts that we should only busy ourselves researching the BAM enterprises that are effective (Yamamori 2006). On the other hand it is probably true that my case studies are more effective than the others and that just demonstrates why the missiological community needs to be more assertive in promoting best practices in BAM.

Second, using a convenience sample based on people within my pre-existing relationship network was effective in getting enough people to participate with me for this process. Cold calls and communicating with people who did not know me or know of me simply was time consuming and spectacularly ineffective.

Future research projects on BAM should seek either to focus on effective BAM enterprises that are proud to open up their business operations to outside inspection, thus following the Yamamori recommendation. Or these research projects should utilize a relationship network that enables the researcher to get up close and personal with people that trust him/her.

Suggestions for Future Research

There is immense potential in BAM research and the possibilities are endless. Regarding, BAM research the following two areas appear as a priority. The first is continued in-depth research of BAM enterprises in a single socio-cultural context. Future research projects should be focused on singular contexts and done in such a way that the studies can be contrasted and compared. The uniqueness of each context warrants its own research project. However, as the scholarly missions community expands the number of BAM research projects it will give us the data to begin to develop useful and helpful generalizations and explore universal phenomena in BAM.

Second, it would be helpful for there to be research projects focused on singular industries. These studies could be in different socio-cultural contexts. For example, a research project could research the feasibility and effectiveness of missionary operated coffee shop businesses. Comparing and contrasting experiences in various socio-cultural contexts could be helpful. This research could help the church evaluate whether or not some types of businesses are more conducive to the unique goals and purposes of BAM enterprises.

Regarding Thailand, continued research could be focused on the Thai conversion process, particularly the length of time and the amount of exposure required for conversion. My research indicated a long time with 250-300 exposures to intentional gospel proclamation. However, it would be interesting to research this issue specifically with a larger group of converts and see if there is an ideal timeframe or number of exposures for Thai people to become Christians.

Regarding business management in BAM enterprises, further research could be done to evaluate the effectiveness of integrating American managerial techniques and practices in other cultures. My research demonstrated that high cultural adaptation was necessary but that some changing of the culture was possible if done cautiously, consciously and consistently. Further research could explore this so that BAM managers can be more thoughtful and effective in their management tasks.

Postscript

This research project has had a significant impact on me personally and professionally. Digging into my five case studies was an enlightening and humbling experience. Conducting 128 interviews was captivating, enriching, and exhausting. The BAM managers as well as the Thai people had a tremendous impact on me. The journey was a good one and one that I hope will continue for years to come as I aspire to continue to research and explore God's purposes for business as mission.

Many of the research findings are as important as they are obvious. To function effectively in another culture, missionaries need to understand and adapt to that culture significantly. This seems like common sense but it is a difficult task and one that is not done often enough. Business in a cross-cultural developing country is an arduous, time-draining, capital-consuming task that is not for the fainthearted but only for those who are convinced that God has given them this unique call.

There are no quick and easy answers to the daunting call of carrying the gospel to all nations. As I finished this research project I reflected on a seminar in which the presenter said that on average people need to hear the gospel seventeen times before

accepting it. My findings say that it is approximately fifteen times that many (250-300) in Thailand. The process of conversion is unique to each cultural context due to its religious, political and social history.
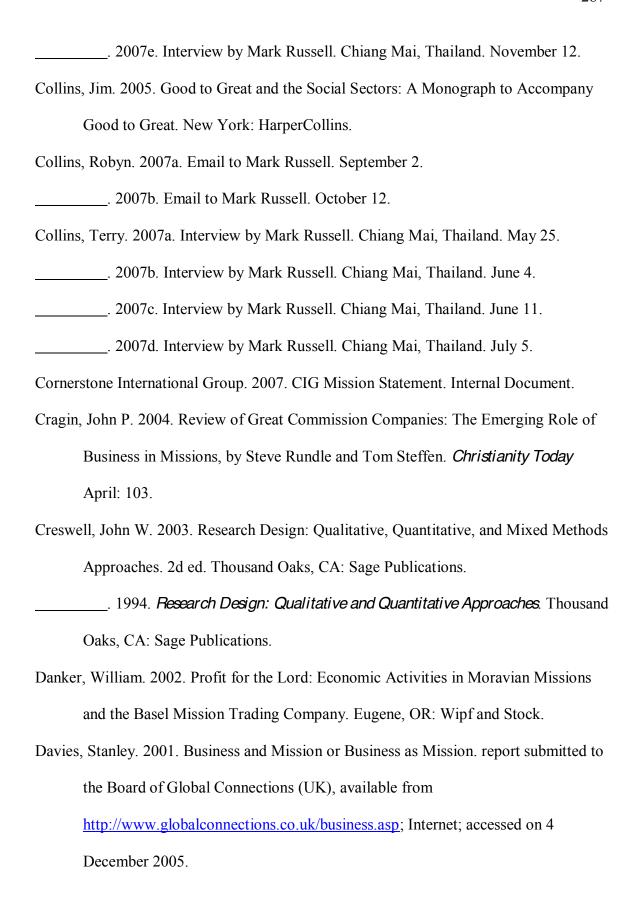
It is hoped that this research project will encourage and motivate Christians to engage in mission through business all over the world. Not going forward naively of the challenges and tasks that lay before them, but rather being well informed of the challenges and risks and well prepared to take them on.

WORKS CITED

ACTS Co. 2007. Publication Distribution Document. Internal Document.

 2008. Homepage About Us. Website. www.actsoco.org.

Anupap. 2007a. Interview by Mark Russell. Chaing Mai, Thailand. July 12.

          . 2007b. Interview by Mark Russell. Chaing Mai, Thailand. November 14.

Baer, Michael. 2006. Business as Mission: The Power of Business in the Kingdom of

    God. Seattle, WA: YWAM Publishing.

Baker, Chris, and Pasuk Phongpaichit. 2005. *Thailand: Economy and Politics*. Oxford:

    Oxford University Press.

Baker, Dwight. 2003. William Carey and the business model for mission. *Between Past*

    and Future: Evangelical Mission Entering the Twenty-First Century. Pasadena,

    CA: William Carey Library.

Bakke, Dennis. 2005. Joy at Work: A Revoutionary Approach to Fun on the Job. Seattle,

    WA: PVG.

Banjit. 2007. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. June 22.

Barnett, Michael. 2005. Innovation in mission operations: creative-access platforms. In

    The Changing Face of World Mission: Engaging Contemporary Issues and

    Trends. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

Befus, David R. 2003. Negocios para el Reino: El Ministerio de Promover Actividades

    Economicas Como Parte de la Mision de la Iglesia. Buena Semilla, Columbia:

    Mision Latinomaericana.

Berry, Mark. 2007a. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. May 31.

    _____. 2007b. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. June 5.

    _____. 2007c. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. July 9.

    _____. 2007d. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. November 11.

Birmingham Business Journal. 2006. Outstanding Entrepreneurs of 2005. February 17.

    Accessible on internet. Accessed February 19, 2008.

    http://www.bizjournals.com/birmingham/stories/2006/02/20/smallb3.html.

Case, John. 2001. The job factory. *Inc*, May Online.

    http://www.inc.com/magazine/20010515/22617.html, accessed February 12,

    2007.

Chan, Kim-Kwong. 2003. Ester Hui and Infosail. *On Kingdom Business: Transforming*

    Missions through Entrepreneurial Strategies. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

Chan, Kim-Kwong, and Tetsunao Yamamori. 2002. *Holistic Entrepreneurs in China*.

    Pasadena, CA: William Carey International University Press.

Cobb, Kendall. 2007a. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. May 30.

    _____. 2007b. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. June 8.

    _____. 2007c. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. June 24.

    _____. 2007d. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. July 12.

_____. 2007e. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. November 12.

Collins, Jim. 2005. Good to Great and the Social Sectors: A Monograph to Accompany Good to Great. New York: HarperCollins.

Collins, Robyn. 2007a. Email to Mark Russell. September 2.

_____. 2007b. Email to Mark Russell. October 12.

Collins, Terry. 2007a. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. May 25.

_____. 2007b. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. June 4.

_____. 2007c. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. June 11.

_____. 2007d. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. July 5.

Cornerstone International Group. 2007. CIG Mission Statement. Internal Document.

Cragin, John P. 2004. Review of Great Commission Companies: The Emerging Role of Business in Missions, by Steve Rundle and Tom Steffen. *Christianity Today* April: 103.

Creswell, John W. 2003. Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches. 2d ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

_____. 1994. *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Danker, William. 2002. Profit for the Lord: Economic Activities in Moravian Missions and the Basel Mission Trading Company. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock.

Davies, Stanley. 2001. Business and Mission or Business as Mission. report submitted to the Board of Global Connections (UK), available from http://www.globalconnections.co.uk/business.asp; Internet; accessed on 4 December 2005.

Dees, J. Gregory. 2007. The meaning of —social entrepreneurship. Working paper.

Online. http://www.fuqua.duke.edu/centers/case/, accessed February 12, 2007.

Dees, J. Gregory and Beth Battle Anderson. 2002. For-Profit Social Ventures.

International Journal of Entrepreneurship Education 2 (1). Senate Hall, NY:

Senate Hall Academic Publishing.

Dorfman, P.W., J.P. Howell, S. Hibino, J.K. Lee, U. Tate, and A. Bautista. 1997.

Leadership in Western and Asian Countries: Commonalities and Differences in

Effective Leadership Processes Across Cultures. Jon L. Pierce and John W.

Newstrom (eds.) *Leaders and the Leadership Process*. 3rd Edition. McGraw-Hill

Irwin.

Drewery, Mary. 1979. *William Carey*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

Eldred, Ken. 2005. God Is at Work: Transforming People and Nations through Business.

Ventura, CA: Regal Books.

Ewert, Norm. 2006. God's kingdom purpose for business: business as integral mission.

Tom A. Steffen and Michael Barnett (eds.) *Business as Mission: From*

Impoverished to Empowered. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.

Foltz, Gene. 2007a. Interview by Mark Russell. Telephone. April 20.

_____. 2007b. Interview by Mark Russell. Telephone. September 12.

Foundation of Workplace English International. 2007. FWEI Mission Statement. Internal

Document.

Foster, William and Jeffrey Bradach. 2005. Should Nonprofits seek Profits in *Harvard*

Business Review. February 2005.

Glaser, Barney. 1978. *Theoretical Sensitivity*. Mill Valley: Sociology Press.

Glaser, Barney, and Anselm Strauss. 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*. Chicago: Aldine.

Global Missiology Editorial Staff. 2003. Review of *On Kingdom Business: Transforming Missions through Entrepreneurial Strategies* by Tetsunao Yamamori and Kenneth A. Eldred, eds. *Global Missiology* Oct. Online. http://www.globalmissiology.org/english/docs_html/reviews/eldred_on_kingdom _business.html, accessed January 22, 2008.

Hampden-Turner, Charles and Fons Trompenaars. 1997. *Riding The Waves of Culture: Understanding Diversity in Global Business*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Haig, Brian D. 1995. Grounded theory as scientific method. *Philosophy of Education Yearbook*. Online. http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/EPS/PES-Yearbook/95_docs/haig.html#fn, accessed February 12, 2007.

Harger, Jonathan, and Julian Spindler. 1995. Thais Do Business the Thai Way: A Guide to Effective Communication in the Thai Business Environment. Bangkok, Thailand: Harger and Spindler.

Harris, Paula. 2000. Nestorian community, spirituality, and mission. *Global Missiology for the Twenty-First Century*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker.

Harvey, Peter. 1990. *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History and Practices*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Hicks, Douglas. 2003a. Religion and respectful pluralism in the workplace: a constructive framework. *Journal of Religious Leadership* 2.1 (Spring 2003). Internet. http://www.christianleaders.org/JRL/Spring2003/vol2no1Hicks.htm. Accessed January 22, 2008.

Hicks, Douglas. 2003b. *Religion in the Workplace: Pluralism, Spirituality, and Leadership*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Hiebert, Paul. 1994. Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker.

Hofstede, Geert. 1997. Cultural Constraints in Management Theories. Jon L. Pierce and John W. Newstrom (eds.) *Leaders and the Leadership Process*. 3rd Edition. McGraw-Hill Irwin. pp. 224-231.

Holsteller, Joe. 2007. Interview by Mark Russell. Chaing Mai, Thailand. June 18.

Johnson, C. Neal. 2003. Toward a marketplace missiology. *Missiology: An International Review* 31.1: 87-97.

Johnson, Neal, and Steve Rundle. 2006. Distinctives and challenges of business as mission. Tom A. Steffen and Michael Barnett (eds.) *Business as Mission: From Impoverished to Empowered*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.

Johnson, Paul. 2007. Interview by Mark Russell. Chaing Mai, Thailand. November 13.

Kaeo. 2007. Interview by Mark Russell. Chaing Mai, Thailand. July 16.

Komin, Suntaree. 1991 *Psychology of the Thai People: Values and Behavior Patterns*. Bangkok, Thailand: National Institute of Development Administration.

Lai, Patrick. 2003. Church planting via small business in Zazalan. Tetsunao Yamamori and Ken Eldred (eds.) *On Kingdom Business: Transforming Missions Through Entrepreneurial Strategies*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

Lester, Robert C. 1973. *Theravada Buddhism in Southeast Asia*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Mangalwadi, Vishal, and Ruth Mangalwadi. 1999. *The Legacy of William Carey: A Model for the Transformation of a Culture*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

Martin, Dwight. 2006. *The Martin Chronicles* 2.4. December 2006.

————. 2007a. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. May 24.

————. 2007b. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. June 10.

————. 2007c. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. June 16.

————. 2007d. Email to Mark Russell. August 31.

————. 2007e. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. November 13.

Mejudhon, Nantachai. 1997. *Meekness: A New Approach to Christian Witness to the Thai People*. Doctorate of Missiology dissertation. Wilmore, KY: Asbury Theological Seminary.

Mejudhon, Ubolwan.1997. *The Way of Meekness: Being Christian and Thai in the Thai Way*. Doctorate of Missiology dissertation. Wilmore, KY: Asbury Theological Seminary.

Moffett, Samuel. 1998. A History of Christianity in Asia. Beginnings to 1500. Maryknoll, NY. Orbis Books.

Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan. 2007. Small and medium enterprise: The supporting framework of the japanese economy. Online. http://www.meti.go.jp/english/aboutmeti/data/ aOrganizatione/keizai/chuushoukigyou/01.htm, accessed February 12, 2007.

Moreau, Scott A., ed. 2000. *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

Nee. 2007. Interview by Mark Russell. Chaing Mai, Thailand. June 24.

Neill, Stephen. 1991. *A History of Christian Missions*. 2d ed. New York: Penguin.

Novak, Michael. 1996. *Business as a Calling*. NY, Free Press.

Owens, Howard. 2006. Nestorian merchant missionaries and today's unreached people groups. Tom A. Steffen and Michael Barnett (eds.) *Business as Mission: From Impoverished to Empowered*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.

Paveena. 2007. Interview by Mark Russell. Chaing Mai, Thailand. July 9.

Pierce, Jon L. and John W. Newstrom (eds.) 2002. *Leaders and the Leadership Process*. 3rd Edition. McGraw-Hill Irwin.

Pierson, Paul E. 2000. Nestorian mission. Scott Moreau (ed.) *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

Pocock, Michael, Gailyn Van Rheenen, and Douglas McConnell (eds.). 2005. *The Changing Face of World Mission: Engaging Contemporary Issues and Trends*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

Pointer, Steven, and Michael Cooper. 2006. Seventeenth century puritan missions: Some implications for business as mission. Tom A. Steffen and Michael Barnett (eds.) *Business as Mission: From Impoverished to Empowered*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.

Rennstich, Karl. 1978. Mission und Wirschaftliche Entwicklung: Biblische Theologie des Kulturwandels und Christliche Ethik. Munich: Kaiser Verlag.

_____. 1985. Handwerker-Theologen und Industrie-Brueder als Botschafter des *Friedens: Entwicklungshilfe der Basler Mission im 19*. Jahrhundert. Stuttgart: Evangelischer Missionsverlag im Christlichen Verlagshaus.

_____. 1988. Die zwei Symbole des Kreuzes: Handel und Mission in China und *Südostasien*. Stuttgart: Quell Verlag.

Rich, Susan. 2007a. Interview by Mark Russell. Chaing Mai, Thailand. June 7.

_____. 2007b. Interview by Mark Russell. Chaing Mai, Thailand. November 16.

Robson, Colin. 2002. *Real World Research*. 2d ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Rundle, Steven, and Tom Steffen. 2003. *Great Commission Companies: The Emerging Role of Business in Missions*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Rundle, Steven L,. and Thomas Sudyk. 2007. Funding a kingdom business. *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* October. Internet. https://bgc.gospelcom.net/emqonline/emq_article_read.php?ArticleID=3765. Accessed January 22, 2008.

Russell, Mark. 2006. The biblical basis for the integration of business in missions in Tom Steffen and Mike Barnett (eds.). *Business as mission: From impoverished to empowered*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.

Russell, Mark. 2007. The secret of marketplace leadership success: Constructing a comprehensive framework for the effective integration of leadership, faith and work. *Journal of Religious Leadership* 6.1 (Spring 2007): 71-101.

Sarai. 2007. Interview by Mark Russell. Chaing Mai, Thailand. July 16.

Savitz, Andrew W., with Karl Weber. 2006. The Triple Bottom Line: How Today's Best-Run Companies Are Achieving Economic, Social and Environmental Success— And How You Can Too. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Schlatter, Willhelm. 1916. *Geschichte der Basler Mission 1815-1915*. vol. 1-3. Basel: Verlag der Basler Missions-Buchhandlung.

Smith, Jim. 2007. Interview by Mark Russell. Chaing Mai, Thailand. November 14.

Snell, Greg. 2007. Developing good development: 10 principles to guide your church's next mission project. *Christianity Today*. November. Online. http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2007/november/23.52.html. Accessed on January 22, 2008.

Stake, Robert E. 1994. Case studies. In *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Steffen, Tom. 2006. Introduction. In *Business as Mission: From Impoverished to Empowered*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.

Steffen, Tom, and Mike Barnett (eds.). 2006. *Business as mission: From impoverished to empowered*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.

Stevens, R. Paul. 2000. The Other Six Days: Vocation, Work and Ministry in Biblical Perspective. Grand Rapids, MI.: Eerdmans.

_____. 2006. Doing God's Business: Meaning and Motivation for the Marketplace. Grand Rapids, MI.: Eerdmans.

Stewart, John. 1928. *Nestorian Missionary Enterprise*. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark.

Strauss, Anselm. 1987. *Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Strauss, Anselm, and Juliet Corbin. 1990. *Basics of Qualitative Research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Storti, Craig. 1999. *Figuring Foreigners Out*. Boston, MA: Intercultural Press.

Summetikul, Thammasak. 2007a. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. May 25.

_____ 2007b. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. June 14.

_____ 2007c. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. June 28.

_____ 2007d. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. July 16.

_____ 2007e. Interview by Mark Russell. Chiang Mai, Thailand. November 14.

Suter, Heinz. 2003. Starting kingdom companies. Tetsunao Yamamori and Ken Eldred (eds.). *On Kingdom Business: Transforming Missions through Entrepreneurial Strategies*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

Suter, Heinz, and Marco Gmür. 1997. *Business Power for God's Purposes: Partnership with the Unreached*. Greng-Murten, Switzerland: Verlag für kulturbezogenen Gemeindebau.

Tunehag, Mats. BAM: An introduction. Working paper. Email. Received from author via email on April 10, 2006.

Tunehag, Mats, Wayne McGee, and Josie Plummer, eds. 2005. Business as missions. A New Vision, A New Heart, A Renewed Call: Lausanne Occasional Papers from the 2004 Forum of World Evangelization hosted by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization in Pattaya, Thailand. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.

Volf, Miraslov. 2001. *Work in the Spirit: Toward a Theology of Work*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock.

Wanner, Gustav Adolf. 1959. *Die Basler Handelsgesellschaft AG 1859-1959*. Basel: Basler Handelsgesellschaft.

Weber, Max. 1904. The Protestant Work Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. London: Routledge.

Wyatt, David. 2003. *Thailand: A Short History* (2nd Edition). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

William, Abiir. 2003. Business in the Middle East. In *On Kingdom Business: Transforming Missions through Entrepreneurial Strategies*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

Wright, Louis B. 1965. *Religion and Empire: The Alliance between Piety and Commerce in English Expansion 1558-1625*. New York: Octagon Books.

Yamamori, Tetsunao. 2006. Class Lecture, Asbury Theological Seminary, January 5, 2006.

Yamamori, Tetsunao, and Kenneth A. Eldred (eds.). 2003. *On Kingdom Business: Transforming Missions through Entrepreneurial Strategies*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

Yin, Robert. 2003. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. 2nd ed. London: Sage.

_____. 1997. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. 1st ed. London: Sage.