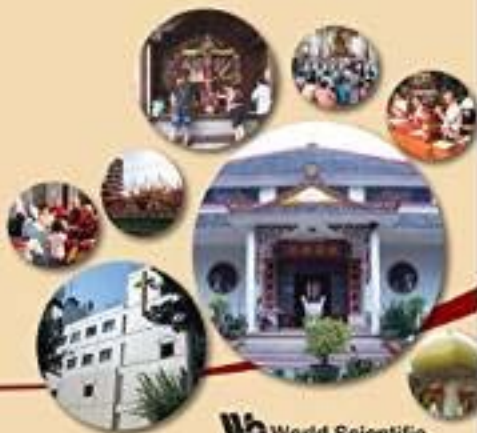


# After Migration and Religious Affiliation

Religions, Chinese Identities and  
Transnational Networks

*Edited by* Tan Chee-Beng



**Wb** World Scientific



# **BETWEEN CATHOLICISM AND EVANGELISM: THE PERUVIAN CHINESE COMMUNITY**

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## **First Conversions to Catholicism**

Acuam<sup>1</sup> must have been between 9 and 14 years old<sup>2</sup> when he debarked in Peru in 1850 from one of the first ships bringing in

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<sup>1</sup>The existence of this boy is known thanks to a document written in 1851 by José Sevilla, associate of Domingo Elías (Lausent-Herrera, 2006: 289). In the report “*Representación de la Empresa a la Honorable Cámara de Senadores. Colonos Chinos*”, Biblioteca Nacional de Lima (BNL), *Miscelanea Zagarra*, XZ-V58-1851, folio 37-38, José Sevilla tried to convince the Peruvian Government that the arrival in Peru of a great number of Chinese coolies was a good idea. For this, he reproduced the letters of satisfaction sent to him by all the *hacendados*,

coolies for the great sugar haciendas, the cotton plantations and the extraction of guano on the Chincha Islands. Since the year before, Domingo Elias and José Sevilla had started to import this new workforce destined for the *hacendados* to replace the Afro-Peruvians freed from slavery. Aiming to have a law voted to legalize this traffic between China and Peru, José Sevilla published a report investigating the satisfaction of the first buyers. Among them was one of the richest and most respected men in Lima, State Councilor José Gregorio Paz Soldán.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to coolies for his hacienda, J.G. Paz Soldán had bought the contract of young Acuam in order to make him a household servant. Two years later, on 8 May 1852, Acuam was catechized and baptized at Tiabaya (Arequipa) under the name of Juan Miguel Gregorio Paz Soldán, taking, as was frequent, the name of his patron and master. It is most likely that Acuam, alias Juan Miguel Gregorio

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artisans and bourgeois who between 1849 and 1851 had benefited from the services of the first Chinese workers. Among them was found the recommendation of José Gregorio Paz Soldán who congratulated himself on having taken as servant the young Acuam. Jesús Cosamalon Aguilar found trace of the baptism and marriage in 1856 of Acuam, alias J.M. Paz Soldán, in the *Pliego Matrimonial no. 22, Expedientes matrimoniales de la Parroquia de Santa Ana, 1856*, (*Archivo del Arzobispado de Lima, AAL*). The document indicated by Cosamalon mentions the baptism of Acuam as well as his marriage with a Peruvian woman in Lima in 1856 (Cosamalon, 2011: 27).

<sup>2</sup> Acuam's age differs constantly according to the documents of J. Sevilla (see footnote 1) when he was hired, those from the Archivo Arzobispal (1856) for his baptism and marriage, and those concerning his contract, dated 13 August 1850, which declared his birth in 1838. Concerning the young boys and girls who were brought over like Acuam in the coolie boats or merchant ships, see Lausent-Herrera (2006: 288–291).

<sup>3</sup> Jose Gregorio Paz Soldán had written a report in 1846 in which he recommended introducing free Africans from the Caribbean to make up for the lack of workers. Originally he was against the arrival of Chinese workers but finished by recognizing the benefits of this solution. Later he was to be the only one in favor of the introduction of Chinese couples and for better treatment of the Chinese working in the extraction of guano in the Chincha Islands.

Paz Soldán, was no doubt one of the very first Chinese baptized in Peru, and his master one of the first to be concerned with his religious instruction.

Three years later, on the other side of the Pacific at the port of Swatow, Father Leturdu from the *Missions Etrangères Françaises* (French Foreign Missions), informed his superior, Father Guillemain, in a letter dated June first 1855,<sup>4</sup> that he had taken the initiative of contacting the captain of a Peruvian ship to ask him to help raise a subscription to gather the funds necessary to build a chapel. His aim was to welcome, in a Christian way, the Chilean and Peruvian sailors who carried out the coolie trade to Peru but also to bring the first rudiments of Catholicism to the coolies waiting to leave in the sheds by the port. Father Leturdu, who was imprisoned the next year, was not much supported by his church and could not accomplish his project.

In China the evangelizing Catholic missions were not interested in the fate of the coolies sent to Peru, and in Peru the great land owners did not intend to Christianize them because of the consequences this would imply: respect for the religious feasts — days not worked — and time lost in the catechisms and mass for the believers. This weakness would have allowed the church to regulate working hours and intervene in the economic life of the hacienda. The Chinese, who in the haciendas and the capital continued after their arrival in Peru to manifest their traditional religious beliefs, were regarded with indifference and relative tolerance until the beginning of the 1870s. It was known that they were pagans and thus given to vice, but this was not really worrying, for in the beginning it was thought that few of them, once their contract finished, would establish themselves in Peru. The Church displayed the same indifference

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<sup>4</sup> *Missions Etrangères*, Paris: Catalogue, Vol. 552E, f.19. In this letter, Leturdu describes in length the coolie trade to Peru and Chile.



to those — however few they were — who in 1859 declared themselves Muslims.<sup>5</sup>

In Lima, however, it was thought that the evangelization of servants such as Acum as well as the Chinese cooks and artisans was the responsibility of their employers. In the evangelization process, one can take into account only what was observed in the urban milieu among the Chinese employed or freed from their contracts. In the case of the Chinese working in the countryside, it was those who at the end of their contracts were able to remain in the neighborhood of the hacienda with their partners and children, who were the most solicited to convert. In fact, in the cities as in the rural regions, it was the birth of the first mixed-blood baby who, because of social pressure, led the Chinese father to accept the baptism of his child. The men of the church and the Peruvian relatives thought that in this way the Chinese fathers would be converted in turn, which was rarely the case — except when they were about to die.<sup>6</sup>

Death revealed the necessity to convert the Chinese coolies. Two questions were posed, one spiritual, the other material: how to convert the coolies who did not speak Spanish, brought, dying, into the San Andrés hospital by the hacienda owners near Lima? And what to do with the bodies, impious and unconsecrated? For this last question, several solutions were possible. When a coolie died in the hacienda,

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<sup>5</sup> Asin, a native of Guangdong, 24 year old, a free worker in the Santa Beatrix hacienda, living in Lima, was pursued in August 1859 for stealing cattle. When arrested he declared himself Muslim. His translator was Jose M. de la Cruz, a Chinese Catholic (*Archivo General de la Nación (AGN), Causas Criminales, legajo 169, 26 de agosto de 1859*). What is interesting is that in 1877, when in Lima the Chinese Muslims were no longer spoken of, 10 Chinese workers were found, Chinese Muslims employed in the port Pabellón de Pica and among them a certain Lolo (Chou, 2004: 163–164).

<sup>6</sup> The case of Chong Tak, alias Jose Rosario, who when he was dying asked to be baptized to make his daughter legitimate and be able to put her in his will. AGN, Terán T.647, 25 November 1891.

his body was buried near the sacred places of the Indians (*Huacas*), but in the capital and especially in the cities, the burial had to be in a cemetery. In the case of the San Andrés hospital, the majority of the coolies, those not converted and even the converted, were buried in a common grave.<sup>7</sup> The Chinese freed from their contracts were buried in the new municipal cemetery, Presbítero Maestro, run by Lima's Public Benevolent Society (*Beneficiencia Pública*). In 1865 there was an attempt to set aside a plot of land for the Chinese but the project came to nothing. This did not prevent the Chinese of Lima from being buried there. Between 1868 and 1870, for example, out of 240 Chinese buried in the "Presbítero Maestro" cemetery, half of them were buried in the communal grave<sup>8</sup> and 45 others benefited from a site where they paid to remain three years.<sup>9</sup> Only five Chinese had the means of obtaining a perpetual grave site. What is interesting in this case is that out of the five privileged, two were not Catholic. Still today, tombstones with beautiful engraving mark the sites where the Chinese were buried, bringing us a great deal of information on these privileged first Catholics.<sup>10</sup> A minority among them, converted or not, displayed in this sacred place their worldly success in Peru. When faced with death, the second spiritual question was the impossibility to communicate with the Chinese in their language and to find the exact words which would have brought them nearer the Christian divinity. The sisters

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<sup>7</sup> In Peru, despite a law of 1825 declaring illegal burials in the churches or on land belonging to the church, common graves were tolerated in the hospitals run by the church.

<sup>8</sup> On this subject and the information which follows, see Lausent-Herrera (2008).

<sup>9</sup> The choice of three years was due both to the fact that friends or relatives could not pay more than the 88 soles required, but also because this allowed them after three years to recuperate the bones which should then go to the communal grave and send them to China without the Church's knowledge.

<sup>10</sup> From the epigraphic studies I carried out these two years (Lausent-Herrera, 2008), we see the predominance of the Hakka Chinese from Fujian, Chaozhou and villages from the northeast of Guangdong. Two associations took charge of certain burials: in 1869, the Tongxing Gonsi (a commercial society in 1869) which became Tongsheng Huiguan, and the Ku y Kang. They diversified after 1875. The secret societies, (Yiyong Tang, Lieyi Tang, Tongyi Tang) also took care of the burials of their members.

who worked in the San Andrés hospital were the first to ask for help, which, as we will see later on, allowed the real beginning of the evangelical work with the Chinese who were ill and dying.

In fact, the Catholic Church had, all during the coolie trade from 1849 to 1874, more important preoccupations such as those presented by the advance of liberal ideas and along with them, the danger represented by the increasing presence of the Protestants preaching in the mountainous provinces in the south of the country.<sup>11</sup> This advance was fostered by the absence of vocations in the Catholic clergy, barely present in the remote regions, by the impoverishment of the churches and a mishandled image.<sup>12</sup> The Peruvian Church, weakened, having abandoned the evangelization of the indigenous people of the Andes, would leave the initiative of evangelization to the laity and to a few religious orders. The evangelization of the Chinese would therefore be done by employers worried to have under their roofs or in their homes not only pagans but impious and superstitious servants who attended the first Chinese temples dedicated to Guandi.<sup>13</sup> Thus certain Catholics, on their own initiative and then in relation with their church, began to evangelize the Chinese closest to them. An example is given of the

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<sup>11</sup> Since the first constitution of 1823 until 1915, the year when the Peruvian constitution recognized freedom of religion, the Catholic Church never ceased to struggle against the liberal movements in favor of tolerance, so as not to lose its political power and to continue to rule Peruvian society. In the domain of immigration, the religious debate concerned essentially the introduction of foreign colonists who were Protestant; the case of the Chinese colonists and their beliefs was not publically judged a national danger but it raised protests on the part of the local clergy (AAL, Curatos, 1896, XV, 17). In 1885, a little after the War of the Pacific during which certain Chinese helped the Chilean occupants, Peruvian troops profaned and destroyed the Chinese temple of Casma (*Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, MRE*, 6–11, 4/30/1885).

<sup>12</sup> See Armas 1988.

<sup>13</sup> There is much to say concerning the Chinese temples (*pagodas*) in Lima or in the haciendas, the coastal and even the Amazonian cities. A few descriptions of religious demonstrations can be found in travelers' reports or the meetings of secret societies linked to the cult of Guangong during the war between Chile and Peru (Lausent-Herrera, 1992). Belief in Guangong still predominates in the Chinese colony of Peru. Since 1870 it has been the object of strong syncretizing pressure (Lausent, 1983) among the Peruvian working classes.

case of Juan Assim in the newspaper *El Comercio* of Lima dated 9 September 1868. The priest, Rector of the cathedral of Trujillo, Pedro Antonio Lezeta, sent to the paper copies of the documents certifying the surprising and edifying profession of belief and conversion of his own free will of the Chinese Assim, baptized Juan Bautista on 24 June 1864. He was 30 years old, had worked in Lima as the servant of Dominga Casquero de Ferreyros. A little later he became a member of the brotherhood of *Nuestra Señora del Cármén* and put on the habit of the Saint Sepulchre. According to the testimony of A. Ganoza, Assim said, during the ceremony, “Now I am Peruvian, *Limeño* and *Trujillano!*” (an inhabitant of the city of Trujillo). By his baptism and entire conversion, Assim, alias Juan Bautista Ferreyros y Orbegoso had changed his identity. As we will see further on, conversions — sincere or for social reasons to mark their integration — will play an important role in the construction of the identity of the Chinese of Peru and their descendants.

## **Dominga Gazcón and the First Chinese Catholic Community**

The first person to express real compassion for the Chinese, who showed a true desire to convert them and above all to unite them in a Catholic community, was Dominga Gazcón (1809–1879). Monseigneur J.B. Valeri, during the mass requested by the Chinese Catholic colony on 23 October 1879, spoke of her in his funeral oration<sup>14</sup> as the ‘Apostle

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<sup>14</sup>The oration “*Oración fúnebre, pronunciada por el Ilmo. Y Rvdo. Mons D. Juan Bautista Valeri. En las solemnes exequias que la Colonia Asiática Católica hizo celebrar en la iglesia de San Pedro de Lima el día 23 de octubre de 1879 por el eterno descanso de Doña Dominga Gazcón*” was published in 1926 by the Chinese Catholic Colony with a presentation by Manuel Ambrosio Lecaros. In this oration there are hard words for the non-Catholic Chinese, treated as “ignorant idolizers”, “cancerous wounds” forming a “materialist sect”, meeting in their “repugnant pagodas where there is only corruption” (Lecaros, 1926: 12). The grand funeral mass was paid for thanks to a collection raised by her Chinese friend, Arnaldo Almeida, from all the Chinese converted by Dominga Gazcón. See also Portal 1924.

of the Asians'. She began in 1865 to evangelize the Chinese living in the center of Lima, although she did not speak their language. She welcomed them for catechism in the San Pedro Basilica<sup>15</sup> then in the chapel of the Santa Rosa hospice (*Casa de Ejercicios*). Three important founding conversions are attributed to her. The first, that of José Larriva, a young Chinese from Nam Hoi who arrived in Peru in 1864, was baptized in 1866 and sent to the seminary of Santo Toribio which was run by the Jesuits. He was ordained priest and later became Apostolic Missionary of the Santa Ana Chapel in the Chinese quarter of Barrios Altos. In 1888, he founded the *Hermandad del Corazón de Jesús* and later the Chinese section of the secondary school *Nuestra Señora de las Mercedes* (1917) located in the Barrios Altos quarter. Then came the second decisive conversion for the Chinese community: that of a young Chinese from Guangdong, (San Yi, Samyap), Juan Manuel Chavez. In an article of *Nacional* (8/1/1876) entitled "*Chinos beatos en Lima*" "Devout Chinese in Lima", J.M. Chavez was described physically with a great deal of contempt and irony. Already he was said to be taken in hand by Monseigneur Juan Polo, bishop of Ayacucho who ordained him priest in July six months later to the great happiness of his protector, Dominga Gazcón. Her wishes came true and other catechists took over from her, as stressed in the same article: "The number of devout Chinese in Lima is much larger than one thinks. At this very moment more young children are being catechized at the Saint Thomas church".<sup>16</sup> Ten years after his ordination, J.M. Chávez, at his request, was given responsibility for all the Asians residing in all the Lima parishes. Then he became priest of the parish of Magdalena Vieja (a rural village of Lima). Another Chinese priest, Pedro José del Carmen Veliz, also educated by the Blessed Dominga

<sup>15</sup> This Basilica, close to the Chinese quarter, was returned to the Jesuits in 1871. It was they who, at the death of Dominga Gazcón, were responsible for a part of the Chinese Catholics and then the Japanese in the 1960s, the decade when the Franciscans took charge of the Catholic system of education of the Chinese of Lima and then that of the Tusan (Chinese descendants) community.

<sup>16</sup> This church was also a secondary school. It was located in the Chinese quarter.

Gazcón, became priest of the parish of Huaral, a valley north of Lima, where the Chinese community was very large. These three important figures of Chinese Catholicism would have a leading role, as we shall see, in 1886, when the Church tried to group together all the Chinese in one Catholic community.

Moreover, secular persons, such as the employers of Dominga Gazcón, the monks and nuns confronted with the problem of language, asked for help to begin the first work of evangelization, particularly with the sick and dying. From 1860, the 'Vicentinas' or Sisters of Charity of the Order of Saint Vincent complained of not being able to teach the rudiments of the Faith to those who were to receive extreme unction as well as to those accompanying them in their work at the San Andrés Hospital.<sup>17</sup> The Sisters, who were French, had close relations with the sisters of their order established in China as well as with the members of the "*Société de la Propagation de la Foi*" (Society for the Propagation of the Faith) which supported "*Les Missions Etrangères*" (The Foreign Missions) in China.<sup>18</sup> These are the privileged relations which allowed, despite certain reservations, the coming in 1868 of the first Chinese catechist Paul Akan.<sup>19</sup>

It would seem that during the years 1860–1880 there was a real intention to evangelize the Chinese, using the clergy of Chinese origin, as was the case in China. Actually this intention was not successful and there are no witnesses indicating that other Chinese catechists came to join the Chinese clergy which Dominga Gazcón had helped to form or whose vocation emerged among those newly baptized. I. Portal thinks that the Chinese catechized by Dominga Gazcón were those who led their companions to convert and who dedicated themselves to helping a number of Chinese in difficulty (Portal, 1924: 384). It is very probable that this was the case and that

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<sup>17</sup> Ill or wounded Chinese were brought to this hospital by the *hacendados*. The sisters were helped by Chinese servants (Alzamora, 1963: 145–146).

<sup>18</sup> The Sisters of Saint Vincent de Paul ran an asylum in Hong Kong which was taken over by the Italian Foreign Missions (*Missions Etrangères*), directed by Monseigneur Raimondi.

<sup>19</sup> His arrival was announced in the newspaper *El Comercio* on 4 January 1868.

Catholicism spread in this way through a reduced part of the Chinese community in the years preceding 1880, but this group was not large and did not prevent the maintaining of ancestral beliefs.

It is at this period a strange personality appeared, whose life — the little we know of it — was not edifying, but it illustrated the relation which existed between some missionaries in China and in Peru. This is Eugenio Durand (1840–1904). Born in France in 1840, Eugène Durand was ordained priest in 1866 and then vicar, but he was not satisfied with his condition. He requested two years later to be admitted to the Seminary of Foreign Missions in Paris where he was prepared to be missionary. The following year, 1869, E. Durand left Paris to join the Mission of “Kuouang Tong” and “Kuouang Xi”. During a year he remained in Hong Kong to learn Cantonese and only after that, in 1870 was he made responsible until 1873 for the administration of the mission of “Shui-Heing” and its 781 Catholics. His rebellious character along with a carnal sin and excessive pride — according to his superiors — led the Mission to want to send him back to France. But Eugène Durand had other projects: the trafficking of the Chinese moved him. In 1874, in total rupture with his hierarchy, he asked to be sent to Peru and to recruit Chinese catechists to accompany him. His aim was to find a mission there which would evangelize the Chinese. Despite his efforts, he was not able to convince other priests to follow him. His request was rejected not only because of his personality and past errors but also because the Foreign Missions did not have the right to recruit for Peru. When he sailed for Peru in 1874, Father Jolly wrote to the Director of the Kuouang Tong Mission:

*“Monsieur Durand has finally left for Peru. He claims, if he is able to find a mission in Peru, then he’ll return to China to recruit missionaries from Guangzhou. God keep us from ever seeing him again in this place”.*<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Missions Etrangères, Paris: Catalogues, Vols. 555 E and 555 D. Several letters from No. 589 to No. 1851 refer to the misadventures of Eugène Durand. There is a short official biography of his life in Launay (1916).

Eugenio Durand landed in Lima in 1874 and began to catechize the Chinese at the San Andrés Hospital with the 'Sisters of Charity'. He disappeared and then reappeared in the 1890s at Tarma and Acobamba, where he catechized a number of Chinese who had settled there as well as the Indians and maintained relations with the Sisters of Charity of the Saint Vincent de Paul Hospital of Tarma. He also participated with the Franciscans in the evangelizing work among the Chinese colony of San Luis de Shuaro and of La Merced. Father Durand died in Peru in 1904 and it is not known which place he really held in the evangelization of the Chinese and if he had been in contact with the Blessed Dominga Gazcón. Despite Father Jolly's fears, he never returned to China to find new evangelizers.

### **The Abbreviated Mission of the Institutionalization of a Chinese Community based on Catholicism**

The Chinese of Peru began officially to organize in the capital, Lima, regrouping the associations, either dialectical (the case of the Hakkas who were numerous at that time and the Cantonese or Punti), or of those from the same region (*huiguan*). The first legally registered association was that of the Hakka Chinese from the Port of Callao (Lima) in 1867, then in 1868 those of Ku y Kang (Guganzhou) and of Tung Xing (Hakkas). The Hakkas predominated then and a great number of them proved to be Catholics and at the same time translators.<sup>21</sup> Those Chinese Catholics who entered the integration process thanks to their religion were very shocked by the invasion

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<sup>21</sup>The documents from the Missions Etrangères show that a number of churches were implanted in the villages of Guangdong, some of which were entirely Hakka. The Chinese-coolies who were in contact with the Protestant missions or who were Muslims do not appear as Catholics. However, the Chinese already baptized in China or who had lived in the villages within a Catholic mission integrated better, serving as a link between the two cultures. In the case of the translators, this observation was made possible by crosschecking the names appearing in the documents of the archdiocese of Lima, those of the General Archives of the Nation, and the information engraved on the tombstones such as membership in the Tung Sing Society or the name of the original village.



and the occupation of Lima by the Chilean troops in December 1880. They sought therefore to work with the Archdiocese to find the means to reassemble the Chinese all over Peru under the protection of the Church and create a new association at the national level. The same undertaking was begun with the Ministry of Interior and the Police.<sup>22</sup> The association was created on 16 October 1881, and its statutes were registered officially in October 1882. Its president, Kuh Tacqui, alias M. Benavides, reminded the authorities that he represented the most numerous, the most honest and hardworking colony of Peru, and demanded protection for Chinese workers. But this project, conceived in a period of troubles and without the power of the head of state, could only be imposed by a providential man, the Archbishop of Hong Kong, Giovanni Timoleone Raimondi (1826–1894).<sup>23</sup>

In 1850, G.T. Raimondi was a young missionary at the *Istituto Missionario di Milano*, (the present *Pontificio Istituto Missioni Estere, PIME de Roma*). He left for Asia (Melanesia, Manila and Singapore/Malaya) then returned to Italy before being named in 1867, *Procuratore di Propaganda FIDE*. From 1874 on, when the Apostolic Prefecture of Hong Kong was raised to the level of Apostolic Vicariate, Monseigneur Raimondi consecrated himself entirely to China. From China he travelled to the United States, Mexico and Peru where his presence was linked to the creation of the first Chinese communitarian institution as when on February 10, 1882, he inaugurated the hospice for sick Chinese at Bellavista (Callao-Lima). It is difficult to determine his exact role: was he the initiator? As Bishop of Hong Kong, was he in relation with other Peruvian religious figures involved in the project? How did the Chinese contact him? On 7 November 1883, a letter written by Kuh

<sup>22</sup> Archivo de la Biblioteca Nacional, Lima (8NL) D3830. “1883, *Nota dirigida por el presidente de la Beneficencia china del Perú al Ministerio de Gobierno y Policía*”.

<sup>23</sup> Monseigneur G.T. Raimondi was also the older brother of the naturalist scientist, Antonio Raimondi, who settled in Peru.

Tacqui, alias M. Benavides, to Monseigneur the Archbishop of Peru, announced *a posteriori* the creation of a Benevolent Society as well as the creation of the Bellavista asylum. His letter ended in these terms: "*I must tell your Excellency that the Christian Catholic, apostolic doctrine of Rome is taught in this hospice and that the poor who profess our faith have been baptized and have received the Holy Sacrament of Confirmation from the hands of Monseigneur Raimondi, Bishop of Hong Kong in the chapel of the Bellavista Hospital and we have engaged ourselves to see that the poor benefit from the health which our religion brings.*"<sup>24</sup> In this letter as in those which followed<sup>25</sup> in the exchange with the Archdiocese, we note that between 1881 and 1885 a kind of alliance was formed between the Chinese and the Church and also between the Church and the Government Authorities so as to organize and control the young Chinese community or "colonia". In 1885 after the departure of the Chilean troops, the Bishop of Hong Kong as well as the Chinese priests ordained in Peru are again mentioned on the occasion of the installation and the foundation of the Peruvian Colonial Chinese Benevolent Society (*Sociedad Colonial de la Beneficencia China del Perú*). In this act, in which the Peruvian political authorities also participated, it appears clearly that all the representatives of the Chinese community were then Catholics who were ready to submit to certain allegiance.

It is evident that this alliance with the Church and the Peruvian political authorities could not be tolerated by the first ambassador from the Chinese Empire. When he came to Peru in 1884 to present his letters of accreditation, his first political act was to order the

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<sup>24</sup> *Archivo Arzobispal de Lima. Comunicaciones. Carta de noviembre 7 de 1883 de Kuh Tacqui. M. Benavides, Presidente de la Beneficencia China al Iltrmo y Reverendisimo Señor Arzobispo del Perú.*

<sup>25</sup> Kuh Tacqui in a letter dated 22 November 1883, wrote in the name of the *Sociedad Asiática de Beneficencia* to the *Señor Provisor y Gobernador Eclesiástico* requesting authorization to collect offerings within the jurisdiction of the Archdiocese to help the Bellavista asylum.

creation of an association which, on the Californian model of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA), regrouped all the Chinese associations in Peru. The Chinese Charitable Association of Peru, Tong Huy Chong Koc (*Beneficencia China*) inaugurated by the Imperial Emissary Zheng Zaoru in 1886 was thus placed under the control of the Chinese legation. From then on, without China openly showing its hostility to the regrouping of the Chinese on the basis of their belonging to the Catholic Church, this decision signified clearly to the Peruvian Government<sup>26</sup> and the Church that the Peruvian authorities could not interfere in the direction of the Chinese community.<sup>27</sup>

The Chinese who had tried to regroup under the protection of the Church joined the Tong Huy Chong Koc but formed in parallel a real Chinese Catholic community separating faith and attachment to institutions. A consensus was formed making the Chinese Catholics turn more to the practice of charity and education than to evangelization, since apart from the three Chinese priests ordained in the 1880s and a certain number of Chinese and mixed blood nuns sent by Macao and Hong Kong, there were no other ordinations to relieve them and further on the problem of language was posed once again. Father Jose Pineda was the first Jesuit really responsible for this community. Helped by some nuns and pious Chinese, he would practice evangelization through the education of Chinese and mixed-blood youth.

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<sup>26</sup> In a letter dated 23 January 1884, S.M. Pacheco, responsible for registering the Chinese, wrote to the Interior Ministry in which he said that, to appease the Chinese community, the obligation of Chinese workers to enroll in a registry specially created for them could not be required of those who would have registered and contributed at the Chinese Benevolent Society, demonstrating that there was collaboration between them and the Government, the latter supporting the creation of the Benevolent Society to control it better.

<sup>27</sup> The Tong Huy Chong Koc was directed and administered in a collegiate way by the representatives of the great Chinese houses of commerce who also headed the *huiguan*. There were among them some Chinese Catholics but they never exploited their faith or intervened because of it.

## Religion and Education

During the years which followed, at the dawn of the 20th century, a part of the Chinese community in Lima and in the province, those linked to the import-export business, to the management of the great agricultural domains and the young industry, became prosperous. Lima's Chinese quarter, the center of Chinese institutions and political activities also became that of education and thus of the religious expression of the Peruvian Chinese. The Catholic religious space went from the San Pedro Basilica, not far from the cathedral held by the Jesuits who were then in charge of the Chinese community,<sup>28</sup> to the Santa Ana church in the Barrios Altos, a short distance away from the Chinese quarter. The review *New Chung Wa*, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the foundation of the Society of Chinese Catholics of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, praised the Chinese priest J. Larriva who symbolized the exceptional virtue of the Chinese people<sup>29</sup> and the Jesuit Priest J. Pineda with whom since 1910 he had visited the asylums and hospitals and above all with whom he dispensed religious instruction to the young children of the quarter. Together they asked the great Chinese houses of commerce to donate to Catholic works, particularly to the Asylum of the Little Sisters of the Elderly Homeless (*Las Hermanitas de los Ancianos Desamparados*) which took charge of lonely, elderly Chinese in a pavilion reserved for them.

It was at this period that the Chinese merchants of the Chinese quarter were the most integrated and economically powerful.<sup>30</sup> They

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<sup>28</sup> As in Europe, the Jesuits were expelled from Peru; they returned only in 1871, the year when they retook possession of the San Pedro Basilica and when they began to take an interest in taking charge of the education and conversion of some young Chinese in their Santo Toribio seminary. The newspaper *El Comercio* of 8 January 1876, also mentioned the fact that more than one hundred young Chinese were being catechized in the Dominican church Santo Tomas (in the Chinese quarter).

<sup>29</sup> *New Chung Wa*, No. 12, October 1935, p. 32.

<sup>30</sup> See Anon (1924).

cultivated their relations with the authorities and protected efficiently their compatriots in the associations they directed. Almost all of them had converted to Catholicism. Aurelio Pow Sanchia (Xie Baoshang, 1869–1939), whose wife, a Chilean, had great influence in the Chinese Catholic milieu, was at the same time president of the Tong Huy Chong Koc and that of the *Sociedad de los Caballeros del Corazón de Jesús* (Chevaliers of the Heart of Jesus). In 1936, Pow Sanchia offered a meal to 400 aged Chinese from the Asylum of the Little Sisters of the Elderly Homeless.

But a part of the Chinese and Tusan (Tusheng)<sup>31</sup> community, although they did not refuse the teaching of Catholicism, thought this education incomplete. It became evident to some parents among the latest arrivals and the most linked to the community institutions, that schools should be created which would allow the preservation of Chinese culture and language while following the Peruvian system of education. This worry was also a response to the enormous progress of the nationalist ideas of the Guomindang within the community. Classes were opened in different association and then grouped together. In 1924 the “Catholic Ladies of the Chinese Colony”, an association founded by the wife of Pow Sanchia and some Catholic Tusans,<sup>32</sup> created in the Chinese quarter the school Chung Wha, reserved at first for young Chinese and Tusan boys. Jesuit Father Jacinto Garcia, also professor, became the chaplain. At first a primary school, then a high school, Chung Wha had no fixed location and was sheltered for a time in the Nam Hoy Association, then in Chinese Benevolent Association. The children sent to this school

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<sup>31</sup> This term designates the Chinese local born and by extension the Chinese descendants up to the third generation (see Lausent-Herrera, 2009 for an extensive discussion).

<sup>32</sup> In 1934, the review *New Chung Wa*, whose founders were linked to the college (directors and professors: L. Koo, H. Loo Kung, J. Koo). They expressed ideas on the evolution of the Tusan society of Peru, and they emphasized the role of education and modern pedagogy. In their project they were also associated with Father García. Too much in competition with the review *Oriental*, created in the same year, *New Chung Wha* disappeared before the end of the 1930s.

were from families who had not sent them to China to perfect their Chinese education. Some of them did leave for China later, in adolescence, and then went to a Protestant or Catholic high school in Macao or Hong Kong.

Always with the support of the Church, the little girls who went to the neighborhood school awaited the inauguration of the new San Min school in 1935, before going on to higher education destined to preserve Chinese values but also to bring the children into modern times, as was happening in the entire Peruvian system of education very much influenced by the Anglo-Saxon and American models. At San Min, created in reference to the Three Principles (Nationalism, Democracy and the People's Livelihood) of Sun Yat-sen, Catholicism went along closely with the apprenticeship of nationalism. A new identity imposed itself among the young Tusans: to be a Chinese Peruvian Catholic Tusan defending values common to Confucianism and Catholicism, to be engaged in the defense of the territorial integrity of China in face of Japan and at the same time, be open to knowledge, to the modernity of the Western world symbolized by North American culture.

Other parents, Chinese or Tusan, regularly sent their children to the Protestant high schools, well known outside the Chinese quarter: Lima High School (for girls), created in 1906, or the Anglo American School at Callao (1891) or the Victoria (1915) where many Chinese lived. The Anglo-Peruano High School (for boys), Presbyterian, which became San Andrés High School, was attended by many Chinese although they were Catholic. In fact many Chinese parents of this new generation had received at Macao, Hong Kong, or in their original county, an education given by Protestant and/or Catholic clergy. At Chock Kai, for example, a county in Guangdong inhabited mostly by Hakkas, there had been a Catholic mission since 1862<sup>33</sup> as well as a Protestant church. In their migration to Macao

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<sup>33</sup> The documents consulted at the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Relations (Archivo 91, 3ra gaveta 1930–1934) as well as testimonies gathered from Chinese Tusan women, emphasize the importance of the Catholic parishes and their schools in maintaining relations

or Hong Kong, the young mainland Chinese, local-born Chinese in Peru and mixed-blood Chinese-Peruvians were welcomed in these religious establishments without demanding immediate conversion. These different doctrines allowed above all the young Chinese and mixed-bloods to reinforce their link with Western culture which they had either left behind or were going towards. At Macao young women just arrived from their villages in the interior, who had been taught in the religious schools, were sought after as future wives<sup>34</sup> by the Chinese living in Peru or in other Latin American countries. Young children who had accompanied their father or mother from Peru were confided to these institutions while waiting for the next return trip (see Lausent-Herrera, 2006).

During the 1930s a part of the Chinese colony, educated and close to the bourgeois middle classes, was closely linked to the Catholic Church as was the grand bourgeoisie Peruvian to its Church. These two bodies were inseparable. Attendance at the Church brought the status and the social recognition needed by the immigrant Chinese and the Tusans. It was the proof of their integration even if a part of this same bourgeoisie still looked upon the Chinese in Peru with contempt. Influenced by the New Life Movement (Xin Shenghuo Yundong), propagated and discussed in *Oriental*, the young members of the Chinese community were eager

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between the Chinese who had returned to China and Peru. From the end of the 19th century until the 1930s, these parishes were the moral and at times the physical refuge of many Peruvian and Latin American women (Cubans, Mexicans, and Panamanian) who continued to bring up their children in China in the Catholic religion. Until World War II, the baptismal certificate represented the only document proving the link which united the Chinese and the children in Peru and above all, the legitimacy of the mixed-blood children and the possibility for those in China to return to Peru.

<sup>34</sup>This is reported in the numerous interviews carried out with Tusans and Chinese immigrants now living in Peru. It should be noted that Janet Lim, in her work "Sold for Silver: An Autobiography of a Girl Sold into Slavery in Southeast Asia" tells how, when she was sent to one of these high schools in Singapore, she saw these Chinese who had come to choose a wife, a choice based on precise criteria such as the dialect spoken by the young woman (Lim, 1958).

to be modern. The Jesuits were not a hindrance to this modernity. The young Chinese and Tusan Catholics, supervised by Father García during every stage of their life (Fig. 8.1), studied the secretariat, languages, the arts, engineering, medicine, journalism, but continued to marry according to the desire of their parents.

Although the two magazines (*New Chung Wa* and *Oriental*) were always prompt to support the Chinese Catholic community and to be their spokesman, we see from their articles that the youth invested itself less in religious activities, and turned to other noble commitments which were directly related to the Sino-Japanese conflict. In Lima and in the provinces, members of the Red Cross ladies' associations multiplied and the young Chinese Catholics joined the YMCA and the WMCA and they were a driving force. The two preceding Tusan generations, ill at ease in a purely Chinese milieu, had chosen a Chinese or mixed-blood, Catholic identity, educated and



**Fig. 8.1.** Meeting of Young Chinese Catholic Girls and Tusans from Lima with Father García (Collection of R. Chang, circa 1950, Photography by Isabelle Lausent-Herrera).



integrated. The War allowed them to show their Chinese parents both their attachment to their ancestors and their allegiance to their family. By participating in the war effort, they looked for paternal recognition. But this episode was short and full of disillusion.

After the War, the bonds with China were broken. There was no more contact with the Catholic Mission of China. Father Garcia, aided by some Chinese and Tusan nuns continued to take care of the elderly, the ill. Religious manifestations lost their importance within the community, agitated by political problems. Father Garcia continued to baptize, celebrate communions (Fig. 8.2), marriages and



**Fig. 8.2.** Young Girl During her First Communion, 1950s in Lima (Collection R. Chang, Circa 1950, Photography by Isabelle Lausent-Herrera).



**Fig. 8.3.** Father García at the Christening of a Boat Belonging to a Chinese Family in the Port of Chancay (Collection R. Chang, circa 1950, Photography by Isabelle Lausent-Herrera).

burials, and bless new businesses or fishing boats (Fig. 8.3), but faith no longer developed in the Chinese community.<sup>35</sup> The arrival of new Chinese who had escaped Communist China through Hong Kong, relegated to secondary importance this form of integration.

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<sup>35</sup>The *New Chung Wa* magazine (1935, No. 12, p. 32) announced to its readers that Father Jacinto García, spiritual director of the community “who works to raise the moral and spiritual level of our community, will celebrate the mass dedicated to the Chinese national day. He will pray for the happiness and prosperity of our distant homeland”. R.P. García insisted that attendance had to be very large in order to obtain the best graces of the Lord. In 1941 the *Oriental* review (No. 107), echoed by Father García, lambasted the Chinese who no longer visited their “abandoned” seniors at the asylum run by the Little Sisters of the Poor in the Maria Auxiliadora parish.

## **Pastoral Vicariate of the Chinese Community of Peru “Saint Francis of Assisi”**

The period after the war brought an uneasiness within the Chinese community: the rupture with China, the non-return of those unable to come back in time, the arrival of other clandestine compatriots, distrusted by some before being accepted. It witnessed the growing rebellion of the young generations to whom institutional responsibilities continued to be refused while the number of Chinese born in China continued to fall.<sup>36</sup> The Chinese quarter was aging and little by little invaded by Peruvians from the mountains. Their constant ally, the Church, was less present and less active in the community. Relations with China had become very difficult and missionaries were lacking. Father Kao came twice, in 1945 and then in 1950, to uphold the catechism efforts of Father García. In 1947 Monseigneur Yu Pin,<sup>37</sup> worried about the catechism and education of the Chinese arriving from China, also came for a month to help his brother Jesuit of the San Pedro church; in particular he brought with him books of catechism in Chinese. In the 1950s the government of Taipei began to support local efforts to create schools through the Guomindang, even when the latter worked with representatives of the church. Father Francisco Keng (Keng Jie),<sup>38</sup> chaplain of the Chinese community of Santiago de Chile, became the director of the “Institute Pei

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<sup>36</sup> According to the 1961 national census, the total number of Chinese in Peru was 5,932 (5,766 were born in China). In 1971, there were 4,057 but 1338 of them were over 65. In 1981, the census counted more than 1,714 Chinese in Peru (this diminution was caused as much by the death of the oldest as the absence of a renewing of immigration in the preceding years and to departure to the United States of a certain number) (INEI, 1971, 1972, 1981).

<sup>37</sup> Paul Yu Pin (1901–1978) archbishop of Nanking, studied in Rome and went back to China in 1933. He was expelled to the United States in 1949. He was the National Director of Catholic Action, Secretary of the Chinese nunciature and Inspector General of Catholic schools in China.

<sup>38</sup> Francisco Keng came from a very historical Catholic family of Hubei. Fleeing Communism, he left for Italy, then Spain and Chile. He dedicated himself to the Pei Yen high school from 1963–1965, then created and directed, between 1965 and 1973, the Chinese-Catholic Missionary Center. See *Oriental* (1964, No. 384) and Chou (2004: 246–251).

Yen” high school in 1973; he had been active there since 1945. He came to Peru several times to share with his brother Franciscans his worries over the catechizing of the Chinese and the necessity of guarding the apprenticeship of the Chinese.

Father Garcia was the last Jesuit to support the Chinese community in Peru. Subsequently, the Holy See appointed the Franciscan, Monsignor Orazio Ferruccio Ceol (1911–1990) to take over. The latter was from 1934 missionary to China in Hubei and was appointed Bishop of Kichow. He was persecuted and made prisoner between 1951 and 1952. He returned to Italy, but later went back to Peru and his Chinese community in 1955. Upon his arrival in Peru, Mgr. Ferruccio had to fight on two fronts: that of evangelization which, according to Isabel Kcomt<sup>39</sup> was almost non-existent, and that of education which had to be regrouped and converted to Catholicism. Speaking only Mandarin, he was helped by the women catechists, Sisters from China or Manila, speaking Cantonese and/or Hakka, from whom he learned Cantonese. Residing with the Jesuits from the San Pedro Church, who did not speak Chinese at this time, he had to reintroduce mass in Chinese at Santa Ana (at the heart of Lima’s Chinatown). Given the situation, the task of education seemed to him to be the most urgent. There again he was helped by the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati (Ohio) for the teaching and catechism. In 1961, with the help — or rather, the instigation — of Monseigneur Ferruccio, the young generation of Tusans created a new Tusan Association, the majority of whom were the former pupils of Father J. García when they studied at Chung Wa and at San Min Schools; they belonged to the *Acción Católica China* (Chinese

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<sup>39</sup> According to her interview, Isabelle Kcomt, 80 years old in 2002, is a Hakka from Chockai (Chixi). She belongs to the *Cofradía del Corazón de Jesús* (Brotherhood of the Heart of Jesus). She remembers being in Zhongshan in a parish school, Sacred Heart, run by Portuguese Jesuits. On their arrival in Peru the family went to San Pedro. All its members were baptized at Santa Ana and later her sister, who joined the orders, was sent to Macao to help the refugees during the Japanese invasion. Then she was sent to Singapore to catechize the Hakkas. She returned to Peru and went to serve Mgr. Ferruccio.

Catholic Action). These young fathers, who in their majority no longer lived in the Chinese quarter and had seceded from the *Beneficencia Central*, ardently supported Mgr. Ferruccio's project. Torn between their desire for integration, putting their children in a State-recognized college (thus mixed and obliged to accept Peruvian students), and their desire to remain Tusan and keep their Chinese identity, these young Tusans found in this association the answer to the malaise they had suffered until then.

This new vision put into question the entire system of education of young Chinese and Tusans. From that time on, the two high schools, San Min and Chung Wa, would merge to create, a new high school also outside the Chinese quarter subsidized by the Guomindang, the *Colegio Peruano-Chino* or *Diez de Octubre* (the Double 10). It was inaugurated in 1962, the same year that the new Catholic high school, baptized Jean XXIII, to honor the Pope who had helped in its construction.<sup>40</sup> With the school was born the Pastoral Vicariate of the Chinese Community of Peru. The school was a success and the creation in 1981 of the Centro Cultural Peruano-Chino (CCPCh), which was formed by the pupils' parents and former students, re-launched its growth. With the Vicariate they bought land and built a residential ensemble to be divided between weekend bungalows for families and a center for religious retreats with its chapel, meeting rooms and bungalows for the elderly.<sup>41</sup> This was intended for families from the *Villa Tusan* and the Franciscans from the *Villa Asis*. This dynamism found in the teaching<sup>42</sup> and the activities offered by the school has lasted until today. There exists within the Chinese and a part of the Tusan community a real group cohesion, a

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<sup>40</sup> The school would be completely finished in 1992.

<sup>41</sup> Outings with meals and activities are organized regularly here for the Chinese and some Tusans.

<sup>42</sup> The Jean XXIII School is twinned with the college No. 1 of Zhongguancun of Beijing and has participated in the 39th World School Children's Art Exhibition, Republic of China. At the level of Chinese language teaching, the school has obtained the right to have the children pass the official Chinese language examination, the Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi (HSK).

strong feeling of Chinese Catholic identity. In this identity cocoon, belonging to the Catholic Jean XXIII — CCPCCh — *Villa Tusan* group is a component as important as the fact of belonging to the Chinese community. Students and their parents have a tendency to live in a world closed in on itself<sup>43</sup> despite the dynamism created by the effort of constantly improving the level of education. The split which took shape at the beginning of the 1960s has been transformed during the years — thanks to the actions of Mgr. O. Ferruccio and then of Father A. Tomasi Travaglaria. The two Chinese and Tusan ‘communities’ are very distinct, there is no overlapping between them. The first collaborates show mutual willingness with the actions of the second.

Therefore, the work of evangelization under the responsibility of the Franciscans became secondary to the educative work<sup>44</sup> and the future of the Jean XXIII high school. From 1980 on, the arrival of new Chinese announced the resumption of the former Cantonese migratory flow; this was imperceptible at the beginning. Many

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<sup>43</sup> Society in Peru, whether on the level of the big companies (banks) the well-known private schools, certain professions (the army or the police, for example), has a tendency to form a community based on exclusive associations, with social clubs (beach and mountains) and centers for cultural activities. In the case of the Jean XXIII high school and the *Villa Tusan*, the Peruvians have accepted them, but because of a phenomenon of auto-exclusion, linked as much to ethnic identity as to personal resources, they are less visible.

<sup>44</sup> From the beginning of the 1960s, Peru realized that it was behind in the education of the young generations, but also that there were great inequalities in the economic and social relations. The review *Oriental* (1964, No. 384) noted that the Church was moving towards the most needy (slums, Amazonia, etc.) and that one of its actions was to participate in raising the level of education by creating new schools. In 1964 the Catholic Church ran 42 high schools, welcomed 150,000 students, 58,000 of them free of charge. Cardinal J. Landazuri Ricketts then organized evening classes for poor workers and supported the beginnings of Land Reform. This movement found its expression in the propagation of Liberation Theology preached by Father Gutierrez (1971). Despite its affectionate attachment to China because of its missionary origins, the Chinese Peruvian vicariate, strongly anti-communist, held itself apart from these engagements at a national level. It is only in 1996 that the Church opened a technical high school for the poorer inhabitants of Huaycan in the northern outskirts of Lima, the “*Colegio Técnico Peruano-Chino San Francisco de Asís de Huaycán*” which would be twinned with the Jean XXIII high school.

young people, sent by their family to live with the families of vague relatives with the idea of studying in Peru, could no longer realize their ambitions. Jean XXIII high school, despite the scholarships offered to the new arrivals, was too expensive, and studying in high school meant not being able to work, the reason that the Chinese-Peruvian parents had brought them over. The Chinese evangelical church of Lima would little by little attract these new arrivals while the Jean XXIII high school welcomed others, discretely.

### **The Friends of Jesus Passover<sup>45</sup>**

In July 2001 the arrival from Hong Kong of a group of Chinese Catholics, the “Friends of Jesus Passover” revitalized the evangelic vocation of the Jean XXIII high school, seat of the Chinese vicariate of Peru. This community of prayer created in Hong Kong in 1999 allows young Chinese Catholics of all nationalities from overseas, to gather together once a year for a long evangelizing voyage to Chinese communities all over the world. “Over the four seas we are all brothers. The words of Jesus complete those of Confucius.” This charismatic Catholic movement created by Father Giovanni Gianpietro (PIME), residing in Hong Kong since 1944, unites, during a voyage of ‘initiation’, a great number of young people who form a musical troop, and prepare a show with a theme which they present all along the trip. Lima was the capital which finished the third long voyage, and the show’s theme, built around the life of Moses, was “under heaven, only one home”. Besides a choreography and theatrical scenes, the show is made up of songs, all in Mandarin, English and Spanish. The show was put on in the theater of the Jean XXIII high school. It was destined for young Chinese and Chinese descendants. Its energy, almost Pentecostal, raised great enthusiasm among the

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<sup>45</sup> I attended this great evangelizing concert of the Friends of Jesus Passover on 14 July 2001, in the auditorium of the Jean XXIII high school and followed until 2012 the evolution of the Loc Tin group.

young and had a real impact, awaking the evangelical spirit in the Chinese community.

### **The “Loc Tin Wa Kiu Chi yam” group (God’s Will and Happiness)**

This group of Chinese who arrived in Peru between 1960 and 1980 was really touched by the visit in July 2001 of the ‘Friends of Jesus Passover’. In the same month, with the help of Father A. Tomasi who replaced Mgr. O. Ferruccio, they formed the Loc Tin group<sup>46</sup> whose mission would be “to evangelize members of the Chinese community of Lima”. The members organized retreats, brought the Eucharist to ill and aged Chinese, supported the activities of the Vicariate, met with members of the colony who remained in the quarter sheltered by the Chinese Benevolent Association, met with Chinese students and translated the mass into Chinese. They were in this way extremely useful to the community. In 2012 their group, 30 or so members, occupied a small meeting room in the Jean XXVIII high school (Fig. 8.4), where a small altar was set up to honor all the ancestors, as well as a Motupe cross and a Saint Damien crucifix,<sup>47</sup> and the Virgins of She Shan, patrons of the school, and The Virgin of the Evangelization (*La Virgen de la Evangelización*) icons. The Loc Tin group is in constant communication with the ‘Group of Friends of Jesus Passover’ from Hong Kong and is also connected to The Mission Office for Overseas Chinese Catholics and Father Paolo Pang, and affiliated with the Worldwide Overseas Chinese Pastoral Evangelization Convention (WOCPEC).

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<sup>46</sup>The founders, Paulina Yu, born in Hong Kong, Rosa Ko from Macao and Susy Yep Chu, born in Peru of Chinese parents, professor at the high school, were already helping the Franciscans, thanks to their translations.

<sup>47</sup>The Motupe Cross evokes the Motupe pilgrimage in the North of Peru in which participate a number of Chinese living in Chiclayo or Lambayeque. The crucifix of Saint Damien evokes for all the Franciscans the moment when Francis of Assisi prayed before this cross in the chapel of Saint Damien and decided to listen to the voice which asked him to repair the Lord’s house, which was falling in ruin.





Fig. 8.4. Altar of the Loc Tin group, Church of the Jean XXIII School (Photography by Isabelle Lausent-Herrera, 2012).

Paulina was 53 when interviewed in 2012. She arrived in Peru in 1975 when she was 16. Her family, from Zhongshan, left China for Hong Kong where she was born in 1959. As a young girl she studied in a school run by Catholic nuns. Later she wanted to go to England to study but an uncle of her mother who lived in Peru visited them and proposed that they settle in Peru. She married her “cousin” and together they ran a boutique facing the military hospital. During a period of violence between 1980 and 1994 the boutique was under the fire of the attackers and the bombs. Paulina was baptized with her two daughters “to protect them” but she also prayed to Guangong and Guanyin in her boutique for the same reasons. In 1993 when she entered the high school to teach, she heard a mass in Chinese. She felt the peace which had been lacking at home. For three years she came every Sunday. She asked Father A. Tomasi if

she could continue to pray to her gods but he answered “If you leave them, you may in exchange receive the body of the Lord”, and Paulina was baptized during the Holy Week of 1998. Her husband, Jaime, who arrived in Peru in 1960, did not follow her then, but he decided to accompany her to mass during the next three years. He was baptized during the pastoral visit of the Friends of Jesus Passover in 2001. Since then the couple has consecrated themselves to serving God and the Chinese community. Paulina teaches religion to young Chinese who have just entered high school and studies on the internet the School of Evangelization of Father G. Gianpietro in Hong Kong.

The Loc Tin group is the only one to consecrate itself on all the activities requiring the use of Chinese; the other groups, composed mainly of descendants of Chinese immigrants, developed support activities within the vicariate such as Faith and Light (*Fe y Luz*), Rising Life (*Vida Ascendente*), and prayer groups like the Secular Franciscan Order (*Orden Franciscana Seglar*) and the Cenacle of Prayer (*Cenáculo de oración*). The young Chinese, Tusans and Peruvians from the high school with a missionary vocation, also have their group of prayer and activities, the JUFRA (*Juventud Franciscana*). All of them have access to the most modern communication methods, an internet site, intranet networks, the internal review *Sampan Express*. Their charismatic engagement links them to the Kairos<sup>48</sup> Foundation (*Boletín de la Fundación Kairos*) of Buenos Aires. But they are above all very close to the Holy Spirit Study Centre, organ of the Hong Kong Diocese (HSSC) which watches over the situation of the Catholics in continental China.

Under the direction of Father A. Tomasi, now Auxiliary Bishop of Lima, the school has welcomed new young Chinese immigrants from all parts of China, not only from Guangdong. Their numbers

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<sup>48</sup> Kairos, a non-profit organization created in 1987 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, is an oecumenic foundation which assembles the Churches and dialogues with the Catholics in favor of evangelization. It works with the *Congreso Latinoamericano de Evangelización* (CLADEs).

do not appear in the school statistics. Although not numerous and, in a certain measure, chosen,<sup>49</sup> these new students are proof of the continuation of the evangelical work of the Franciscans with the Chinese and Tusan community through the Jean XXIII school. Chinese identity is greatly valued there (celebration of Chinese fetes, artistic activities, learning the Chinese language, exchanges with China) along with a Chinese nationalistic sentiment clearly reinforced among the new immigrants. This valorization of the Chinese identity allows the inculcation of Catholicism, gently so it is not perceived as a loss of identity, a form of attack on their nationalism. However, this long-term strategy makes the Chinese and Tusan community originating in Canton remain closed in within their specificity, despite a certain opening towards the Peruvians. The survival of this identity depends on this, as it depends on encounters that the young boys and girls make within their high school and later in the fraternities and associations of former pupils, which lead to marriages. By contributing through internal social networks to form new Chinese-Chinese or Chinese-Tusan and Catholic households, or favoring collaboration at work, the Jean XXIII high school perpetuates the idea of a Chinese community and takes the part played in the past by the *huiguans* as a place of preservation of identity.

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<sup>49</sup> Among the Cantonese who go to Jean XXIII School, a good number have in China Catholic grandparents, who have sometimes lived in Peru before leaving again for China. Among the new entrants from different Chinese provinces, those with an educational advantage are selected with the assurance of their continuing to learn Chinese. Jean XXIII high school is an expensive private school, which dispenses parsimoniously its renewable annual scholarships. Another possibility for those parents who do not fit into the school's norms of selectivity: a second Sino-Peruvian high school exists (Ten October School), also private and above all, non-confessional, much less expensive and also offering scholarships. But it is said to be less well managed, less outstanding and to be close to the 'Communists'. Representatives from Taipei (the Guomindang is at the origin of this high school) and those of the Chinese Benevolent Association (representing the Popular Republic of China) are often in conflict over its management. Young Chinese and Tusans study there but the level is not as high. Therefore it is the wealthiest, the most involved in the community, who choose to send their children to Jean XXIII.

## **The New Immigration and Religion**

In the beginning of the 1980s, the arrival of new immigrants would shake the foundations of this Chinese community of Cantonese and Hakka origins from Guangdong, which lived “outside Chinese time”, until the economic awakening of China and until realization of the great changes caused by the presence of the new immigrants. The first disruption — in addition to the lack of space (Lausent-Herrera, 2011) — was that Cantonese and Hakka became minority languages. Mandarin was now indispensable to communicate with the other immigrants and do business. The entry of the immigrants, the majority illegal, from Fujian, and then small businessmen and big investors from all the regions of China (Lausent-Herrera, 2012: 85) gave another image of the Chinese. The latter did not integrate into the Benevolent Association or really into Peruvian society, at least not yet. The majority is masculine except in the case of the Fujian, Guangdong and Dongbei immigrants who formed families (Lausent-Herrera, 2012: 389–394), this new immigration was not really stable or established. Their presence depended on their economic success or their contract. Apparently the newcomers had no identity problems during the first months of their residence in Peru, but they nevertheless encountered economic, familial and professional difficulties. Illegal immigrants, including women and immigrants from northeast China or Fujian, bachelor technicians, racket victims do not have the same ability to bear estrangement, isolation, and incertitude. The Chinese Evangelists recently installed in Peru were involved in helping them to cope with their fragility and the hardships of life. It was here, unlike the Chinese vicariate, that the Evangelists intervened successfully.

We have seen that adherence to the Catholic religion was obtained mainly through education. But until the 1960s the Chinese schools were not alone in accepting Chinese students. The more cosmopolitan Protestant schools, such as San Andrés and the Anglo-Peruano High School, received a certain number of young Chinese baptized Catholic, who went to the WMCA and YWCA. If some of them

converted to Protestantism during these years, it was never with the intention of making up as part of an ethno-religious community. It was in this way that they were dispersed in one or the other of the numerous Protestant churches in Peru. Only relatively later did Protestantism and the Chinese identity merged.

When the Chinese migratory flow, at first made up of Cantonese, then Fujianese, started up again between Peru and mainland China in the beginning of the 1980s, the Chinese community was represented only by 1714 native-born Chinese. However, the Chinese community in the wider sense of the term was large and the Peruvians did not realize that it was disappearing because in their eyes it continued to exist through its thousands of descendants, the Tusans. In reality, even if a good number of Tusans were strongly attached to their roots and their culture, they would not have been able to take over the institutions or claim to be Chinese. The new immigration, based on illegality, developed with extreme rapidity because of corruption and the intervention of the mafia.<sup>50</sup> Many immigrants, above all the Fujianese, arrived in Peru to wait to leave for the United States or Canada. In a number of cases, the great trip did not take place and Peru, the transit country, quickly became the country of short- or medium-term residence.

In 1993, the number of Chinese had increased to 3,728. In 2007, the census showed a slight decrease<sup>51</sup>: the number dropped to 3,450 people counted. In 2010, an unpublished figure was produced by the DIGEMIN indicating that 5,533 Chinese<sup>52</sup> were established in Peru.

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<sup>50</sup> Responsibility for this corruption belongs as much to the Chinese as to the Peruvians, especially those who acted within the official institutions such as the Direction General of Immigration and Naturalization (DIGEMIN) and the National Register of Identity and Civil Estate (RENIEC). Each year the networks are dismantled, but they reform themselves immediately.

<sup>51</sup> Between 2006 and 2007 an important network of human trafficking belonging to the Red Dragon was dismantled. The Chinese residing illegally were once again concealed from the census takers.

<sup>52</sup> See Lausent-Herrera (2012: 381–387).

These numbers remain much lower than the reality and are contradicted by the number of naturalizations, inscriptions on the register of commerce, and requests for a change in immigration status. Population increase is measured also by the multiplication of businesses, shops and enterprises created such as the 'boutiques' and the restaurants called 'chifas' or simply by the coming of women and children called over by the first arrivals. Apparently it was the OCEYBEC<sup>53</sup> who gave the figure most close to reality of 39,000 people at the beginning of 1990. However, this figure has increased again these last 20 years without our knowing precisely the state of the Chinese population in Peru. The size of this increase and the changes in the composition of the Chinese community of Peru were perceived relatively late by the Protestant and Catholic churches<sup>54</sup>; at the level of the capacity of setting up a real strategy of attraction, it is the Evangelical church which seems to have been the most effective and to have known how to capture the disarray of some of the new immigrants.

The new Cantonese immigrants should be distinguished from those from the other provinces such as Fujian, Zhejiang or the northern provinces of Dongbei. A part of the Cantonese who arrived in the 1980s were solicited by close or distant family members living in Peru who, often for reasons more guided by self-interest than affection, advanced them the cost of the trip in exchange for a poorly paid job on arrival. Among these first immigrants, there were a number of young men and above all, young women from large families in the suburbs. In the majority of cases, the host families did not pay for their education and the young people were in despair. In the absence of financial means, they did not attend the Jean XXIII high school, the establishment best prepared to help integration. As for the *Diez de Octubre* high school, very few were able to follow a

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<sup>53</sup>Overseas Chinese Economy Year Book Editorial Committee (1991/1992: 491–494).

<sup>54</sup>Enoch Wan estimated at 100,000 the number of Chinese in Peru and counts only one Evangelical church and 40 Chinese Christians (Wan, 2003: 8).

normal curriculum. A certain number of these young people, among them some who would return to China, turned after a few months to the Chinese-Peruvian Evangelical Church. Some women, very disappointed by Peru on their arrival, would also, in little groups, joined the Evangelicals to find some human warmth, talk with other people. They were the first to take this step; others brought their children and sometimes their husbands. The men were much less numerous to go spontaneously to a meeting or a church service. These approaches did not obligatorily mean conversion. Moreover, with time and the increased immigration flow, other kinds of people arrived, such as traditional doctors and shamans who comforted and allowed a re-immersion into local Chinese culture with a multiplication of small domestic altars, delaying still more the moment of integration and conversion. The case of the Cantonese is interesting for they have an advantage: they can go to the locations of the various *huiguans* in the Chinese quarter and those of Chinese Benevolent Association, where the local dialects are spoken. However, they are the least numerous to attend them assiduously.

The Fujian immigrants, disliked by others, are associated with clandestine immigration, with false papers, the mafia and money laundering. Many, with the Cantonese who arrived in the 1980s, are working in restaurant kitchens and waiting to leave again for the United States. The poorest among them are the bachelors from the mountains of the Anxi Valley, from Nanping, while the most organized ones come from the coast (Fuzhou, Quanzhou, and Zhangzhou) and tend to stay in Peru and bring over their families. This means that they now form a community comparable, in demographic terms, to that of the Cantonese. More aware of the presence of the Evangelicals, up to now they have never as a group — unlike what happened in New York (see Guest, 2003) — manifested their attachment to this religion.

As for the other immigrants, often professionals (technical managers, engineers, geologists, etc.), few have approached the Evangelical church. On the whole, the new immigrants, even those

from Fujian, have little religious instruction. It seems that the situation of being an immigrant, the distance from China and the difficulty of the situations faced, either bring the immigrants back to religions held in the past by their grandparents, the case of Catholicism and the Cantonese, or known in their original milieu like Evangelism for certain Fujianese immigrants. From a list I made up of 358 immigrants registered as residents between December 2009 and January 2011,<sup>55</sup> a large majority, 303 among them, declared they had no religion. Only 14 people declared themselves Catholic, 37 were Buddhists and 4 were Evangelicals. Mistrust is doubtless the cause of this weak number but these figures also reflect the feeble proportion of Chinese adhering to an Occidental religion among the immigrants. With the adversity and increasing fragility of the immigrants, this situation is evolving.

### **The Chinese Church of the Christian and Missionary Alliance**

Protestantism, unwelcome in a mainly Catholic society, began to spread in Peru at the end of the 19th century. The first missionaries entered the port of Callao and then settled in the center of Lima; they belonged to the Harley Bible and Missionary Training College of London and the Regions Beyond Missionary Union (RBMU); the latter joined the Evangelical Union of South America (EUSA). At the same time, in 1896, C. Bright installed a congregation in Lima which created, thanks to the work of three Scottish Presbyterians, the Peruvian Evangelic Church (PEC). It sent hundreds of voluntary missionaries over the whole of Peru. Protestantism would gain ground, especially in the Andes and in Lima because of its involvement in the system of education (see Fonseca, 2002). The number of denominations, congregations, missions and agencies multiplied. “The IEP (Peruvian Evangelic Church), [*Iglesia Evangelica Peruana*] became a

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<sup>55</sup> DIGEMIN, Chinos Residentes en Perú en 2010. Unpublished data.



cooperative venture between the EUSA and the Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA)” (Holland, 2010: 2246).<sup>56</sup>

The CMA<sup>57</sup> (*La Alianza Cristiana Misionera*) is the Evangelic Christian denomination that is the largest now in Peru.<sup>58</sup> It is noted for its forceful proselytizing, for its desire to gain new space and to incorporate missionaries from all nations. The CMA arrived in Peru in 1922, entering by the Amazon, four years after John Ritchie had founded the PEC. In 1933 its superintendent, R.B. Clark, was one of the founders of the Evangelic Seminar of Lima. However, the CMA did not really implant itself in Lima until 1959. Its first church was built on Avenue Arequipa, in the Lince district. Another church was also constructed, this time on Avenue Brasil in the Pueblo Libre district. These two quarters were inhabited mainly by small employees and merchants.

Humberto Lay Sun is the most well-known evangelist in Peru. Born in 1934 to Chinese parents who arrived in Peru in the 1920s, Lay Sun went to the San Min high school, called ‘*El Progreso*’, and then entered the Protestant high school, San Andrés.<sup>59</sup> His mother was Catholic and his father professed no religion. He went to university and became an architect in the 1970s. He multiplied his commercial activities and at the same time his memberships in many associations. The effort of conversion of one of his brothers brought slowly the entire family to join the CMA. His conversion led him to

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<sup>56</sup> In the paragraphs concerning Peru, there is nothing on the establishment of a Chinese Evangelic Church. However, one reads there that the Chinese and their descendants estimated at 87,000 in 2008 are all “adherents of traditional Chinese religion (ancestor worship, Daoism, Buddhism)” which does not correspond to reality (Holland, 2010: 2243).

<sup>57</sup> Founded by Reverend A.B. Simpson, the CMA is the result of the fusion in 1897 of two Protestant parachurches, the Christian Alliance and the Evangelical Mission Alliance created 10 years before. At the beginning of the 20th century the CMA became an *official denomination*.

<sup>58</sup> See Klaiber (1996: 504); Fonseca (2002: 148–153) and Marzal (1988: 284–286).

<sup>59</sup> The San Andrés high school (1942) is the former *Anglo Peruano high school*, founded in 1917. It belongs to the Missions of the Free Church of Scotland.

develop at the same time a religious and political career, both anchored in Peruvian social life. At first professor at the *Instituto Bíblico Alianza*, then named CMA Pastor of the Lince district church in 1984, he founded in 1987 his own charismatic congregation, the Emmanuel Biblical Church (neo-Pentecostal) and joined the Assemblies of God. He left for the United States and received the degree Doctor *Honoris Causa* at the California Graduate School of Theology in 1999. In 1990, during the elections which made A. Fujimori President of Peru, there was a massive entry of Evangelists into national politics. Grouping together to support the candidature of A. Fujimori, they won 15 parliamentary seats and the position of Vice President of the Republic for an ex-Baptist Preacher. Very soon in opposition to A. Fujimori's politics, they resigned less than a year later. For the first time in Peru, candidates had joined together to get a denominational vote. Lay Sun profited from this opening to launch himself into politics successfully. He first created in 2005 with a group of evangelists the "*Restauración Nacional*" party to get into the presidential campaign. After a first defeat, he ran in 2006 for the post of mayor of Lima. He was not elected but his ability in mediation and fighting corruption allowed him entry into the political arena. In 2001 after associating his party with *Alianza por el Gran Cambio* to support the candidate of the ultra-liberal right, P.P. Kuczynski, in 2010, he was elected to Congress in 2011. Although closely linked to the Chinese community and he called on the Tusans to vote for him and for the moral values of their Chinese ancestors,<sup>60</sup> Pastor Lay Sun has never sought to create an

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<sup>60</sup> *Integración*, 2010, No. 10, pp. 8–11. In 2005, he created the *Restauración Nacional* party to present himself at the presidential elections of 2006 (13.1%) and then those of 2011 (4.3%), as well as the municipal elections of 2010 (7.6%). The party structure was made up of evangelists. But its members and above all those who vote for him are not all evangelicals. He joined the list of *Alianza por el Gran Cambio* and was elected to the Congress of the Republic. He is above all recognized for his role as a mediator and his nomination to the *Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación* (2001–2003). He is at present president of the *Comisión de Ética*.

evangelical church for the Chinese and their descendants. Others would do it in his place.<sup>61</sup>

In 1979,<sup>62</sup> the CMA Church Union in Hong Kong was alerted by the fact that there existed an aging Chinese community in Peru but also that new Cantonese immigrants were installing themselves there. The Alliance sent two missionaries, the Hong Kong Alliance pioneer missionaries Belinda Kwok and Grace Li, who spoke both Cantonese and Mandarin, to establish a Chinese Christian church. After a training in Spanish at the *Spanish Language Institute* in San José (Costa Rica), an institute serving “hundreds of evangelical mission agencies”, they arrived in Lima where they were helped by a young Tusan Evangelic, Luis Wong. With a Chinese father and mixed-blood mother, Luis Wong did not speak Chinese and belonged to the multi-ethnic church of the Lince district. Helped by Luis Wong, the two missionaries were able, thanks to their charisma, to group together the Chinese congregations and lay the bases of the first Chinese Evangelical church and the future *Iglesia Evangélica China* of the Avenue Brasil.

In 1985, Pastor Joseph Lee, born in China, and his wife Helen from Hong Kong, who belonged to the Vancouver Chinese Alliance Church (VCAC), arrived in their turn in Lima after having passed through the *Spanish Language Institute* of San José de Costa Rica. To the question: why have you chosen Peru? Joseph Lee answered, “We had several places in mind, yet God again narrowed it down to

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<sup>61</sup> Pastor Mac Chiu told us in 2012 the following story: in the 1960s a missionary evangelist, Ana Wallace, opened in Chinatown a Sunday Bible School. She was succeeded by Herbert Chan, who founded the Chinese Evangelical mission that met in the CMA temple of Lince district as well as in their Chinatown facility. He also created a radio program “*radio del Oriente*” (Radio from Orient) to evangelize the Chinese community. In 1972, the CMA sent a missionary to Hong Kong and then others would come from the United States. But Belinda Kwok is considered to be the founder because it was in 1979 that the Chinese evangelists joined the CMA.

<sup>62</sup> It is difficult to reconstruct exactly the history of the installation of the first Chinese ACM church because the different accounts I had from Luis Wong (2007 and 2012), from Pastor Michael Chang (2005), and Grace Li herself do not always coincide.

Lima, Peru, where 30,000 Chinese live there without the saving knowledge of Christ”.<sup>63</sup> The missionary couple thus came to support Belinda Kwok. A center of Bible studies for the Chinese community was opened on the CMA premises on Avenue Brasil. This initiative coincided with the increase in the arrivals of new Cantonese and Hakka immigrants. But the Chinese were not numerous to leave their quarter in the heart of town to go to Avenida Brasil; moreover the church which should have been reserved for the Chinese was also attended by Tusans and Peruvians of mixed Indian blood. Pastor Joseph Lee returned to Canada after 10 years in Peru without much progress in Chinese evangelism. Later on he would open other Chinese churches, one in Guatemala, the other in Salvador, but after his departure the Chinese church of Lima remained without a main pastor. The young Pastor Miguel Mac Chiu who should have succeeded him, was Peruvian with Chinese parents, but he did not speak enough Chinese. He left in 1999 for Taiwan to follow a training in Chinese until 2003. On his return he came with his wife to help the new pastor, Michael Chang and his wife. Together they dedicated themselves exclusively to the evangelization of the most recently arrived Chinese, the young and also the poor workers from Fujian; they also grouped together the wealthiest Chinese from Taiwan and continental China.

Luis Wong who had helped the first mission also left it in 1995 to study at the *Seminario Biblico Alianza del Perú*, and went to work at first with the poor populations of mixed-blood Peruvians. However, in the absence of Chinese missionaries from the VCAC, he was called and named Pastor of the church on Avenue Brasil in the year 2000. His work then consisted of consolidating the evangelic Chinese community and attracting new immigrants. He worked along with the immigrants who acted as interpreters for him during

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<sup>63</sup>In the on-line review of May 2012, Family News, VCAC, Pastor Joseph Lee retraces rapidly his life as a missionary and adds information, some of which has not been brought up to date.

the church service and for the Bible study classes; the language barrier made his job difficult and his work less visible; however, his church by its racial and social mix brought a structure beneficial for the integration of the new immigrants. This did not seem to be appreciated by the VCAV who apparently wanted to form a purely Chinese church. Joseph Lee, in his short biographical letter, (Family News, 2012) says that from the departure of Miguel Mac Chiu in 1999, “the Church in Lima has been without a Chinese pastor”, not recognizing the legitimacy of the Tusan Pastor Wong.

In the meantime the number of Chinese in Peru never stopped increasing. Through its Chinese vicariate the Catholic church sought more to keep and reproduce the identity of the Chinese-Tusan community than to undertake a campaign to convert the Chinese immigrants over the long term. The Vicariate which practiced a charismatic Catholicism, closer and closer in its form to evangelism, concentrated its attention on the young generation and religious education within the high school. The Chinese church of the CMA deployed, with less means, it forces in an evangelization campaign particularly strong with the poor such as the illegal (undocumented) immigrants, the restaurant employees who arrived from Fujian. For all that, it did not neglect the wealthier Chinese who already had contacts with the evangelical churches in Taiwan or in other Latin American countries and even in China or who were already converted. With these Peruvians, these Tusans and some young Chinese cooks and students, the Chinese church of Avenue Brasil, “an orphan church” according to Pastor Lee, did not count. The necessity to intervene was all the more urgent as the Chinese immigrants did not live as in the past in the Chinese quarter (Lausent-Herrera, 2011), or in certain well-to-do quarters. They were dispersed in the districts of emerging economy to the north and south of the capital, following the expansion and opening of the Chinese restaurants (chifas) and the creation of small businesses, merchandise depots and new industries. In 2003 the United States CMA (not that of Canada)

sent out a new ministry, Pastor Michael Chang<sup>64</sup> and his wife at the same time as the Taiwan Alliance Church Union took charge of the presence of Miguel Mac Chiu and his wife, who had returned from Taiwan. They were welcomed at first in the CMA headquarters in the bourgeois district of Borja. From there they set up a new strategy, based on ethnicity, to create a new dependence on the Chinese church, up to now attended by native-born Chinese. At that time, the relations between the first Chinese church and the new one which the two new pastors were preparing to establish were very tense.

### **The Global Chifa Mission Conference**

Pastors Chang, Mac Chui and Wong, despite their divisions, had nevertheless in common the creation of an ambitious program: to go after the Chinese in their work places to evangelize a greater number. To do this they would benefit from the help of other movements and Chinese churches affiliated with the Chinese Coordination Centre of World Evangelism (CCCOWE) such as the CMA, the International Mission Board, the World Team and the Overseas Chinese Missions, not to mention the Gospel Operation International (GOI),<sup>65</sup> a “Chinese mission organization committed to mobilizing God’s people for the Great Commission”. The action undertaken with the other movement was the project “A church in every chifa”.<sup>66</sup> This

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<sup>64</sup> Pastor Michael Chang is Taiwanese. He migrated young with his family to Argentina. He then converted, studied and became pastor of the CMA. Later he migrated to the United States and joined the Danbury CAC.

<sup>65</sup> Founded in 1995 the GOI for Chinese Christians was rapidly present in Latin America: it sent missionaries to Argentina, to Mexico. It founded in 2009 the first independent Chinese church in Mexico. In the same year, it sent to Lima Mrs Lai Chuchan, a minister herself as well as four other missionaries speaking Cantonese and Mandarin. In 2010, a medical Gospel Team was sent to the Chinese community of Colombia.

<sup>66</sup> At this time, the World Team showed on its site the following prayers: “That is about World Team missionaries in Peru urgently looking to mobilize a team a Chinese church planters for this unique ministry... Ask God to supply a team of Chinese missionaries to

mission was approved during the Third Pan American Conference of the CCCOWE in Sao Paolo in 2005. A report written by the Brinkley family (a Baptist couple) mentioned the increasing number of Chinese immigrants arriving in transit in Peru in hopes of leaving later for the United States, describing their miserable condition as exploited employees in the numerous restaurants in Lima (chifas and grills or little shops selling chicken soup). The majority of them had neither papers nor money to continue the trip. Debbie and Wayne Brinkley from the International Mission Board estimated that there were in Lima 6,000 chifas and 400,000 Chinese.<sup>67</sup> The World Team insisted also on the fact that “a booming Chinese is changing the face of Peru’s capital city and calling for a new kind of missionary with a fresh approach to church planting.”

Between the 19th and 21st March 2006 the first world meeting of evangelist chefs and restaurant employees took place in Lima (Fig. 8.5), jointly organized with the World Federation of Chinese Christian Restaurant Evangelism. To help the specific actions already undertaken locally by the pastors, a great assembly at an international level of Chinese evangelical chefs of different nationalities was organized. About 76 Chinese missionaries and chefs in 19 groups were distributed throughout all the quarters of Lima. The organizers in turn asked for the collaboration of the biggest Chinese restaurants, communicating with them by the publication, *Delicacy of Life*, edited by the Chinese Christian Herald Crusades.<sup>68</sup> The evangelization campaign was held by day with the restaurant owners and during the night between midnight and four o’clock in the morning after the restaurants closed, the only time when the chefs were

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share the Gospel in Lima and help establish churches that are relevant to the life of Lima’s Chinese community.”

<sup>67</sup>If the number of Chinese in Lima is greatly exaggerated, the number in the restaurants is closer to the truth, but there are no official numbers for this sector of the restaurant business.

<sup>68</sup>Herald restaurant gospel ministries (<http://www.heraldrgm.org> et <http://www.wfcref.org>; [blog.roodo.com/restaurantgospel](http://blog.roodo.com/restaurantgospel)).



Fig. 8.5. Announcing the Global Chifa Mission Conference in Lima in 2006 (Photography by Isabelle Lausent-Herrera, 2006).

free, a time which they usually spent gambling in the Chinese casinos. On this occasion, the Chinese church of Pastor Wong collaborated with that of Pastor Chang. The Chinese Benevolent Association, located in Chinatown, also supported this campaign, so did the major Chinese restaurants of the capital. It is estimated that 1,000 chifas received in this way the visit of the Chinese evangelicals.

I was able to attend one of these night-time meetings which Pastor Wong continues to organize every week in his church. The participants are most often young men who find in these reunions the possibility of talking about the problems they encounter during their work week; they sing and pray in Chinese. Friendships are formed. The meeting resembles a Catholic prayer group, aside from the fact that the themes chosen are always linked to their immigrant condition, to the separation from the family, to the tensions due to



the omnipresence of the mafia and the latent violence in their work milieu. The pastor is there to help them solve the administrative problems linked to their immigration status; he sometimes brings the legal help needed by the participants.

### **The renewing of Chinese Evangelism at a Local Level in Peru**

The arrival of new missionaries and pastors speaking Cantonese and Mandarin, as well as the multiplication of help received in the form of short-term missions and financial donations were at the origin of significant changes. Pastor Luis Wong who did not speak Chinese and was responsible for a multicultural community in the first Chinese church of the CMA, was transferred to another church which had no Chinese in charge. The church on Avenue Brasil was now the responsibility of an American couple, not Chinese but Chinese-speaking, assisted by a Chinese missionary. The church was still attended by Tusans and Peruvians but mainly by the young Chinese who continued to go there because of its location and social milieu (small restaurants, chefs, and commercial employees).

Pastors Chang and Mac Chiu finally left CMA headquarters in San Borja which had welcomed them on their arrival; they built the “Chinese Alliance Center”, the headquarters for the Chinese mission of the CMA in Peru. It is located at the edge of the San Borja quarter, in a zone which is becoming middle class and a business center. The congregation belongs to the upper middle class of the Chinese of Taiwan or of mainland China, wealthy merchants, executives of Chinese or Asian companies (Korean or Japanese). For Pastor Mac Chiu who took especial care of the young studying in the Peruvian high schools — some even attending the Catholic high school Jean XXIII, the level is poor because they speak neither Chinese nor Spanish well and it is difficult to teach them the Evangile. The Bibles they use come from Taiwan, which are based in a 1919 translation

in non-simplified characters.<sup>69</sup> But the non-Taiwanese young people do not know it. The young who attend the Chinese Alliance Church (CAC) of San Borja are from wealthy and very modern backgrounds; numerous activities need to be organized for keeping them within the church and creating a real fraternity among its members. This is expressed through electronic messaging, such as Facebook, Yahoo, etc. The Chinese from the People Republic use QQ.com to communicate among themselves. Pastor Mac Chiu created in 2008 a virtual community on Facebook called FILOI (*friendship* in Greek). Thanks to the success of the virtual FILOI, “Young Chinese” was created, a community where the majority of its members knew each other only through the network. “This group was created to maintain contact with members of the (Chinese) community and to get to know Chinese descendants in other countries.”<sup>70</sup> Now the group has its own existence and its members share many religious activities.

But the strength of the new congregation of the CAC is its work with the poorest immigrants. The Chinese Evangelists understood upon their arrival at Lima’s Chinatown, that there existed not only a group of Chinese immigrants in difficulty but also other Chinese whose dynamism was linked to the new immigrant activities. In the center of Lima, in a building where a great number of Fujian immigrants were grouped together on arrival, the CAC opened the “Lima Chinatown Gospel Center”. More than Bible study, the center has a small library. In the emerging district of Los Olivos, a number of Chinese restaurants and little casinos were opened in the 1990s by the new immigrants from Fujian. The CAC has taken advantage of the existence of an evangelic school destined at first for Peruvians to borrow its premises since 2004 and reunite the local Chinese community there. Ever since the Lima Chinese Restaurant Campaign and the targeted evangelization of chefs, restaurants employees and small

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<sup>69</sup> According to Pastor Mac Chiu, the use of non-simplified Chinese characters are not suitable to correctly explain certain Christian concepts.

<sup>70</sup> Pastor Mac Chiu in *Integración*, 2009, No. 5, pp. 28–29.

restaurant or grill owners, they have continued to meet but less intensely. The job is difficult because of lack of means. "Once a month at the Midnight Restaurant Fellowship, the average attendance is 25",<sup>71</sup> comments Pastor Chang.

Another district also attracts the congregation's attention. This is San Juan de Miraflores, a much poorer and dangerous quarter but which presents numerous opportunities for the new immigrants (less expensive land, commercial spaces to be created, etc.). Many of them again come from Fujian as Pastor M. Chang remarks. He adds, "Some of them had prior contact with Christianity back in China. In April 2012 we started a bi-weekly midnight Bible study."<sup>72</sup> Outside of Lima, the CAC has the ambition, above all, to convert the new immigrants who have settled for almost 20 years in the Amazonian city of Iquitos. This is in fact a very old Chinese colony which was created during the Rubber period, around 1870, but which was almost deserted between the 1950s and the 1980s (Lausent-Herrera, 1996). The new immigration has brought back many Hakka descendants who represented the dialectical majority group of the colony. Pastor Mac Chiu hopes to continue their evangelization with the help of new volunteers and short-term missions.

The presence of these Protestant churches aiming to evangelize the small Chinese communities of Latin America is not new and though the Chinese and Missionary Alliance is the largest, it is nevertheless not the only organization in Peru and in the other Latin American countries interested in the Chinese immigrants. These churches are moved by the same desire for presence and actions as a great number of churches, congregations and denominations who want to revitalize the Christianity of the indigenous populations of Indians and mixed-bloods in particular. Chinese immigrants have also become a target. In Peru they are even speaking now, as lately

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<sup>71</sup> See the report for 2012 by Pastor M. Chang in <http://www.cmalliance.org/worker/chang-michael-christina>.

<sup>72</sup> <http://www.cmalliance.org/worker/chang-michael-christina>.

in Spain, of the arrival of the Jehovah's Witnesses who want to convert them. The CAC rejects this possibility.<sup>73</sup>

Certain authors have noticed that among these ethnic groups, the Indians, the mixed-blood Latin Americans and the Chinese immigrants, there existed the same attraction for what the Protestant churches offered and what they represented: a rupture and a return to family and political conservatism, the valorization and visibility of success through work (Yang and Ebaugh, 2001b: 238) and (Yang, 1998: 238). This similarity of behavior may also come from the fact that these indigenous and mixed-blood populations in Latin America are for the most part interior immigrants, caught up in the process of urbanization of the countryside and in the rapid process of modernization. There is little difference between the peasant-worker of Nanping and the Fujianese just arrived in Peru and the peasant from the Bolivian Andes taken from his traditional environment, practicing beliefs considered as "folkloric", when both must face modernity and the change in their environment. The causes of their conversion are the same as those cited by Fielder (2010: 75–79) and Yang (1998: 249): the low educational levels, the utilitarian motivations, need of a framework for the young, research for 'communality', resolutions of conflict and economic success. Bays (2003: 197),<sup>74</sup> for example, draws a parallel between the common attraction of Pentecostalism among the rural Chinese in China and among the indigenous Latin American populations, because it represents and contributes to change, to modernization and above all, the chance to enter into the liberal economy with a maximum of advantages, while still recognizing the conservatism in which it maintains them, this is what Bastian (2004: 80) calls prosperity theology. The message sent is a promise of economic success. The Chinese populations are not

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<sup>73</sup>In Pastor Mac Chang's 28 February 2012 report (see footnote 76), the last of the Prayer Requests which end the text say: "Pray against the Jehovah's Witnesses' activities targeting the Chinese in Peru."

<sup>74</sup>D. Bays takes up this comparison by quoting Ryan Dunch (Dunch, 2001: 215).

indifferent but also attracted, according to F. Yang, by the conservatism and the traditionalism of the evangelical churches which diffuse strict morals compatible with those of Confucianism. Chinese evangelism reassures them, in face of the trials of immigration and protects them against the too great changes. This opinion is clearly expressed in the *Bi-Monthly Mission Journal of Gospel Operation International* (GOI)<sup>75</sup> which reminds us that there is no opposition between evangelism and Chinese filial piety: “Filial piety is generally speaking a Biblical virtue as well. The Bible commands us to obey parents (Deut. 21: 18–21), take care of parents (1 Tim. 5–8), and honor them (Exodus 20: 12). This is the fundamentalism referred to by Yang (1998: 238–252). What is worthy of the Wenzhou described by D. Bays (Bays, 2003: 195–197) is worthy of the Fujian immigrants in Lima or Guayaquil and the Hakkas in the Amazon. Although the Evangelical Church is preferred by the Chinese in Peru, the Pentecostals also send their missionaries. The Baptists, who also participated in the Chinese Restaurant Campaign, sent in 2010 a Chinese-American mission which is set up in the Comas district where numerous Fujian immigrants live.

Generally, even if the methods used are different, the various denominations dedicated to evangelizing the Chinese stand by each other. The majority of the organizations which work together are run by Chinese in Hong Kong, in the United States and Canada. The CCCOWE whose objective in 1976 was to unite the Chinese congregations “in diaspora”, helps the pastors and coordinates their projects. “As the Chinese church continues to grow, her impact and contribution will go beyond her own ethnicity and will reach out to churches worldwide. CCCOWE can serve as a bridge enhancing fellowship, understanding and cooperation between Chinese and the global church” (Nagata, 2005: 121–123). J. Nagata considers that

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<sup>75</sup>The Quarterly Mission Journal of GOI began on line in March 2009 (No. 1), then became the *Bi-Monthly Mission Journal of Gospel Operation International* in September–October 2011, No. 11.

the CCCOWE (with other churches) puts the Chinese identity above the religious identity by systematically using Chinese (spoken and written in non-simplified characters) and by putting aside the local-born Chinese. The GOI which helps the CAC shares the same idea: "GOI is a Chinese mission organization, intentionally reflecting in various ways the best Chinese cultural values to accomplish our mission. These find expression in GOI's choices in matters of official organizational language, a highly relational personnel management style, policies which allow missionaries to honor their parents, and GOI's close relationship with Chinese churches. GOI is distinctly Chinese, setting itself intentionally apart from Western or Third World Mission organizations."<sup>76</sup>

In fact in Peru, the renewal of Chinese evangelism and the CAC in particular led to the departure of the mixed blood Tusan pastor and the transfer of the CAC headquarters to the only totally Chinese church. It also led the CAC to put more emphasis on the transmission of Chinese values to the young generation.

Do the Franciscans who had the responsibility of the pastoral vicariate of the Peruvian Chinese community have the same attitude? In the past as we have seen, the Catholics in charge of the Chinese community did everything to keep it captive so that it did not disperse nor did it assimilate completely, for it could have disappeared in time. Thus they organized the Chinese Catholic youth, favored the creation of associations which would have the same function as the *huiguan* created in the 19th century, that is, to perpetuate Chinese identity but also to favor marriages between Tusans and Chinese so as to reproduce almost completely Chinese families (Lausent, 1980). The Franciscans, although diffusing a "soft" version of Chinese culture, were able, thanks to the Jean XXIII high school and to the Chinese Vicariate, to fulfill the same role. In some ways there are many similarities between the evangelists and the present vicariate which profits

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<sup>76</sup>In *Bi-Monthly Mission Journal of Gospel Operation International*, 2012, No. 14 (March–April), "Distinct Chinese Cultural Identity".

from a strong nationalist sentiment implanted in the young immigrants and the admiration aroused in the young Tusans by the imposing success of China, to continue to emphasize Chinese ethnicity and the values of its ancestral civilization. The same arguments are used to valorize and integrate in their teaching the Confucian values.<sup>77</sup> Cohabitation of religion, doctrine and philosophy is not a problem for the young generations. The religious practice of the young Chinese and Tusan Catholics of Peru has become openly charismatic and approaches more and more to Pentecostalism and Evangelism.<sup>78</sup>

## Conclusion

Ever since their arrival in Peru in 1849, a majority of the Chinese, Cantonese or Hakka, accepted baptism so as to integrate more easily into Peruvian society. At the beginning of the 20th century, this community composed of the Chinese and their descendants benefited from the benevolence of the Jesuits and then the Franciscans who accompanied their desire to rise socially thanks to their own system of education. Successive generations of Tusans raised in Catholicism and close to the Chinese Catholic associations asked the Church every time to give them an educative framework which would allow them to remain as a distinct community while having the best chances to occupy an honorable place in Peruvian society. This privileged relation between the Catholic Church and the Chinese and Tusans has allowed the duration of a powerful Chinese-Tusan community in Peru.

The new migrants coming from Fujian and other Chinese provinces do not have the *huiguan* to welcome them. They are not sure of remaining in Peru because the attraction of the United States and

<sup>77</sup> In Integración, 2010, No. 11, "Grey sin Fronteras," Father A. Tomasi declared that the Catholic Church and Confucianism share the same values: the family, respect and obedience to elders, universal fraternity.

<sup>78</sup> In November 2004, a great evangelistic campaign organized by the Catholic Church took place in Lima, and the Chinese Vicariate actively participated in it.

Canada is always present. Due to their diversity of origin and their varying immigration projects, they do not seem ready to want to form a new community alongside the Cantonese community.<sup>79</sup> It is only after 20 years of presence that the Fujianese have finally installed their own association and opened an office. The Chinese coming from Dongbei, Hubei or Zhejiang see their numbers progressing but without the creation of associative structures. In all these cases, the adoption of Evangelism could replace this lack of cultural reference and sociability: the Church, Evangelic or Catholic bringing the network of ethnic solidarity and the social capital necessary for a better integration into their country of residence. For Yang and Ebaugh, in the context of the United States where Chinese Protestant Churches are mostly evangelical, proselytism is based on the idea that becoming Christian “does not mean becoming non-Chinese”. This has been successfully accomplished by Sinicizing Christianity (Yang and Ebaugh, 2001a: 373–374). But it seems that relatively few of the new immigrants have been inclined to choose this form of integration, for on the whole integration and less still assimilation do not seem to be a major problem for them. Their nationalism, the pride of being identified with the success of China — in a country where China is praised daily — allows them to envisage finding a place in Peruvian society without sacrificing their cultural heritage. With the same assurance, the majority of them oppose the marriage of their children with non-Chinese Peruvians.

Those whose convictions are more fragile, who think that their success depends upon this first step towards integration which is generally the adoption of a Western religion in a foreign country, are actually in minority. But little by little the Catholic Church, through the Chinese Vicariate and the evangelists, thanks to the CAC, have

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<sup>79</sup> In the present situation it is possible to envisage that China, through its embassy, would consider forming a new institution which would incorporate the future forms of association linked to the new immigrants to absorb the Chinese Benevolent Association, reducing it to almost nothing.



been able to convert a certain number.<sup>80</sup> The newly converted — in majority young people and women — go towards religion because of a feeling of defeat linked to their immigrant state and for economic reasons. The Chinese evangelists, not very active but open to multiculturalism during the past decades, have intensified their actions and their presence in the 2000s; they have also become more fundamentalist with a tendency to withdraw into their identity. In their turn they search for the poorest among them (the Fujianese workers in the Chinese restaurants) to raise the social level of these new immigrants. But lacking a school, their own high school comparable to Jean XXIII, and faced with the inevitable integration of the parents and the children, they can conserve and defend only the values of their Chinese identity and they can belong only to ethnic solidarity networks. Evangelization does not touch only the most vulnerable but also the wealthier and more educated immigrants for whom conversion to a Western religion is a choice perhaps due to faith but also to a strategy aimed at a certain form of integration within a cosmopolitan Chinese elite.

It is too early to know if the efforts of the Chinese evangelists succeed in converting a great number of new immigrants present in Peru or if the Chinese Vicariate, thanks to its system of education and the activity of its youth, is able to enlarge and reinforce the Chinese and Tusan community. It is too early still to know if all these immigrants, converted or not, will stay in Peru and reinforce one or the other of the two religious communities. What is certain is that more than just destabilizing the former Chinese community, the overall the factors of immigration and religion have changed the intra-community balance of power. We have retraced these changes that are also the sign of a redefinition of the old Chinese communities which, like that of Peru, have always been linked to the religion

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<sup>80</sup> As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, it is difficult because of the illegality of this immigration to give exact figures. The Vicariate does not produce the number of conversions of first generation Chinese and Tusans.

of their host country. They are inscribed in a vast restructuring of religious powers within Latin American societies.

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