

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

Let me conclude by stressing the need for research on the shophouses and cultural identity among the Chinese in the Bangkok Chinatown. The Chinese have been part of Thai history for a long time. Chinese people came to the Bangkok area since the time of King Taksin to augment the local Siamese workforce. They arrived from Southern China and settled opposite the then capital of Thonburi. In 1782 when King Rama I, the first King of the new Chakri dynasty, moved the capital to Bangkok and began building the Grand Palace, the traders were relocated to what is today's is Bangkok's Chinatown.

However, Chinatown has always been synonymous with commerce. At almost any hour someone is selling something somewhere in Chinatown. Even before the first Bangkok department stores opened on Yaowarat Road, the Chinatown markets sold goods found nowhere else in the city. Locals believed that they owe this good fortune, wealth and prosperity to the mythical Golden Dragon, the guardian spirit that has watched over the community for centuries.

The "Shophouse" is the first generation of architecture that serves both as commercial and residential area in the same building. Most of the head of the households are satisfied with the physical condition of their shophouses while the younger generation prefers better housing with bigger surrounding so they decided to move from Chinatown, of course with the permission from their parents.

Most of the lands in Bangkok Chinatown belong to the Crown Property Bureau which owns the highest number of shophouse units.

Chinatown consists of many income groups living together and serving each other. Even the neighbors are helpful as they came from the same part of Mainland China. The pride in each Chinese person makes him improve the physical condition of the "Shophouses" individually.

The Chinatown phenomenon has long held a fascination for me. Throughout Asia and in the greatest cities worldwide, the Chinese have created characteristic communities in urban settings. All Chinatowns have great impact on their host cities in terms of both economic and cultural force.

This study examined Chinese architecture and festivals practiced in Chinatown. These are all forces that are relevant to the evolution of Chinatown's communities. The role and function of Chinatown in maintaining Chinese identity and culture is still very vibrant. The attempt to preserve Chinese identity and culture in Chinatown in tourism development as seen in construction of new architecture further support the Sino-Thai identity of the Chinese. They can be Chinese and Thai simultaneously.