

The Socio-Political Activism of Chinese Community Organisations in Canberra and Sydney

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The Australian National University

Jingjing Shen

BA English Language and Literature (Beijing Foreign Studies University)

MA Australian Studies (Beijing Foreign Studies University)

College of Arts and Social Sciences

The Australian National University

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is based on my original work, except where due acknowledgements are made, and that it has not been previously included in a thesis, dissertation or report submitted to this University or to any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualification.

Signature of Author: *Jingjia Shen*

Date: 03/02/2015

Dedication

The author wishes to dedicate this thesis to

Yiming Shen, Li Shen and the family

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I bear full responsibility for the contents of the thesis and any errors of judgment it contains.

Abstract

This thesis investigates the latest developmental trends and main patterns of socio-political activism of overseas Chinese organisations via a case study of Chinese communities in Canberra and Sydney. It also explores the adaptive strategies adopted by these organisations, which correspond with intertwining sets of political opportunity structures home and abroad and are conducive to the optimal accumulation of ethnic capital in the transnational field.

Drawing on the anthropological, institutionalist and transnational approaches and developing the notion of transmigrants, the thesis proposes an interpretive model of ethnic capital conversion to account for the divergent developmental paths of different types of Chinese organisations in Australia. In this study, Australian multicultural policy and overseas Chinese policy of the PRC are regarded as the twin pillars of the synthesised political opportunity structure, under which Chinese organisational activism unfolds.

The data gathered from my fieldwork shows a strong correlation between the transformation of Chinese organisations in Australia and the predominant policy imperatives of Australia and China. Broadly speaking, two types of strategies could be identified among a plethora of organisations: the modernising reform of local-oriented organisations and the transnational networking of homebound organisations.

On the one hand, local-oriented organisations actively engage with the multicultural discourse of the host society and initiate structural reforms to enhance their “Whiteness”, as reflected in the formalisation of governance structure, ascendance of professional class in constituting community leadership, transformation of organisational culture and diversification of financial sources. Four major modes of organisational activism in the domestic context are discussed, including ethnically-based social participation, cultural maintenance, service provision and political advocacy and representation, all of which accord with the policy priorities of the host society.

On the other hand, the viability of overseas-oriented organisations lies in their capacity of networking with political elites of both countries. To fulfil this purpose, they have a greater reliance on the *guanxi* system and display a willingness to cater to the pan-

nationalist agenda of China. Citing numerous examples of economic, socio-cultural and political exchanges by transnational Chinese organisations, the thesis highlights the centrality of cross-border networking in their operation and comes up with a pattern of their developmental stages: primitive resource accumulation in the host society, resource input from the home country and transnational expansion through the integration of resources.

Finally, the thesis argues that the latest thrusts of Chinese organisational development in Australia correspond with different channels of ethnic capital conversion, which result in a maximisation of the aggregate capitals possessed by the Chinese transmigrants. Although primarily motivated by self-interests, the transnational actors are ingenuous in aligning their interests with policy concerns of multiple political powers, and through their bridging roles, contribute to the deepening of bilateral relationship between Australia and China.

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List of Abbreviations

ABA: Australian Beijing Association
ABS: Australian Bureau of Statistics
ABT: Australian Broadcasting Tribunal
ACCA: Australian Chinese Community Association
ACCC: Australian Chinese Chamber of Commerce
ACCEPA: Australian Chinese Culture Exchange and Promotion Association
ACCF: Australian Chinese Charity Foundation
ACDMA: Australian Chinese Descendants Mutual Association
ACETCA: Australia China Economics, Trade & Culture Association
ACFROC: All-China's Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese
ACPAA: Australian Chinese Performing Artists Association
ACPEA: Australian Council on Population and Ethnic Affairs
ACPPRC: Australian Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China
ACSAC: Australian Chao Shan Association of Commerce
ACSWEPCC: Australian Chinese Shanghai World Expo Promotion Committee
ACT: Australian Capital Territory
ACT-ACA: ACT Australian Chinese Association
ACTCA: Australian Chinese Teo Chew Association
ACT-ESA: ACT Ethnic Schools Association
ACTMAC: ACT Muslim Advisory Council
ACTMC: ACT Multicultural Council
ACYCC: Australia-China Youth Chamber of Commerce
ADHC: Department of Aging, Disability and Home Care
AEAC: Australian Ethnic Affairs Council
AEC: Australian Electoral Commission
AGM: Annual General Meeting
AHHKA: Australian Hokkien Huay Kuan Association
AIMG: Australian International Media Group
ALP: Australian Labor Party
AMEDA: Australian Medical Exchange and Development Association
ANHF: Australian Nursing Home Foundation
ANU: Australian National University
APSC: Australian Public Service Commission

ASA: Australian Shanghai Association
ASCC: Australian School of Contemporary Chinese
ASIC: Australian Securities and Investment Commission
ATCMA: Australian Traditional Chinese Medical Association
AUSCOCO: Australian Council of Chinese Organisations
AYA: Australian Yangzhou Association
BIMPR: Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research
CACA: Chinese Arts & Culture Association
CACC: Chinese Australian Celebrations Committee
CACP: Community Aged Care Package
CAF: Chinese Australian Forum
CALD: Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CASS: Chinese Australian Services Society
CAU: Chinese Australian Union
CBD: Central Business District
CCC: Canberra Chinese Club
CCCA: Chinese Community Council of Australia
CCCC: Canberra Chinese Christian Church
CCN: Canberra Chinese News
CCP: Chinese Communist Party
CCSEC: Canberra Chinese Special Events Committee
CDC: Customer-Directed Care
CEO: Chief Executive Officer
CHAA: Chinese Heritage Association of Australia
CIT: Canberra Institute of Technology
CITIC: China International Trust and Investment Corporation
CMA: Council for Multicultural Australia
CMCC: Chinese Ministerial Consultative Committee
CMCF: Canberra Multicultural Community Forum
CMD: Chief Minister's Department
CNS: China News Service
CPPCC: Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference
CPPRC: Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China
CRC: Community Relations Commission
CSA: Chungshan Society of Australia

CSCS: Canberra Society of Chinese Scholars
CSSA: Chinese Students and Scholars Association
CSSS: Community Settlement Services Scheme
CYL: Chinese Youth League
DET: Department of Education and Training
DHCS: Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services
DIAC: Department of Immigration and Citizenship
DIMA: Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs
DIMIA: Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
DoHA: Department of Health and Ageing
DYCS: Department of Youth and Community Services
EAPS: Ethnic Affairs Policy Statement
ECC: Ethnic Communities' Council
ESSS: Elderly Social Support Services
FACS: Family & Children's Services
FCA-ACT: Federation of Chinese Associations of ACT
FCCCI: Federation of Chinese Communities of Canberra Inc.
FDI: Foreign Direct Investment
FECCA: Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia
FIRB: Foreign Investment Review Board
GIA: Grant-in-aid
GYT: Goon Yee Tong
HACC: Home and Community Care Program
HADS: Health, Aging & Disability Services
IPAD: Information, Planning and Development
JACS: Department of Justice and Community Safety
LGA: Local Government Area
LMC: Local Management Committee
LTSP: Long-Term Scholarships Program
MACMA: Ministerial Advisory Council for Multicultural Affairs
MCC: Multicultural Consultative Council
MRC: Migrant Resource Centre
MRSS: Migrant and Refugee Settlement Services
MWA: Multicultural Women's Advocacy
MYS: Multicultural Youth Services

NACA: National Australian Chinese Association
NES: Non-English-Speaking
NESB: Non-English-Speaking Background
NFP: Not-For-Profit
NMAC: National Multicultural Advisory Council
NMF: National Multicultural Festival
NPCOCC: National People's Congress Overseas Chinese Committee
NRCS: National Respite for Carers Services
NSW: New South Wales
OCAC: Overseas Chinese Affairs Commission (China)
OCAC: Overseas Compatriot Affairs Commission (Taiwan)
OCAO: Overseas Chinese Affairs Office
OEA: Overseas Exchange Association
OMA: Office of Multicultural Affairs
PBI: Public Benevolent Institution
POS: Political Opportunity Structure
PRC: People's Republic of China
ROC: Republic of China
SCCCI: Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry
SOE: State-Owned Enterprise
SYS: Sze Yap Society
TAC: Taiwanese Association of Canberra
TAMS: Department of Territory and Municipal Services
TCM: Traditional Chinese Medicine
TGA: Therapeutic Goods Administration
UC: University of Canberra
UNSW: University of New South Wales
UTS: University of Technology, Sydney
VATS: Vocational & Training Services
WCBN: World Chinese Business Network
WCEC: World Chinese Entrepreneurs Convention
WTO: World Trade Organisation
XKB: *Xin Kuai Bao* (Australian New Express Daily)
YMHFT: Yiu Ming Hung Fook Tong

Introduction

This thesis aims to capture the latest developmental patterns of Chinese community organisations via a case study of the Canberra and Sydney Chinese communities. From the organisational perspective, it answers the significant question of how the Chinese overseas exercise their agency in navigating through the policy prescriptions of various nation-states involved in a long chain of migratory movements and shape a malleable self-identity which caters to but ultimately transcends national ideologies. The emphasis will be placed on the developmental pathways and adaptive strategies of contemporary Chinese organisations, which correspond with intertwining sets of political opportunity structures home and abroad and lead to the optimal accumulation of ethnic capital in the transnational field.

1. Research Background

The migration and settlement of the Chinese people is a global phenomenon, which became prevalent in the nineteenth century and since then attracted intense debates among academics, policy-makers and the general public. It is an issue thoroughly examined, rationally planned, but yet charged with intense emotions ranging from fear and anxiety to elation and euphoria (Kuah and Davidson 2008; Lever-Tracy, Ip and Tracy 1996; Lintner 2012; Ma 2003; Mung 1998; Ong and Nonini 1997; Reid 2008). According to the latest estimation of the authoritative report published by the China News Service (CNS), there are about 48 million overseas Chinese now living outside mainland China, whose multiplicity is succinctly captured by the term “Chinese diaspora” (CNS 2009: 1-1).

The report provides us with a bird’s eye view of the general migratory trends of the Chinese since 1950. As Table 1 indicates, the growing impetus of Chinese migration is quite evident. Starting from the base population of 12.097 million in the early 1950s, the total number of the diasporic Chinese almost doubled three years after the opening up of China to the outside world. By the year 2008, the Chinese diasporic population reached 48 million, almost four times as large as its size in early 1950. Dubbed the “new migrants”, the mainlanders are becoming the mainstay of global Chinese migration today. The report points out that from available data published by the European Union and International Organisation of Migration, the annual growth rate of the new migrants

averaged about 2.93 per cent from 1999 to 2004. By extrapolation, it pointed to a total outflow of over six million migrants from mainland China from 1978 to 2008 (CNS 2009: 1-3).

Table 1: Selected Estimation of the Overall Population of the Chinese Overseas since 1950

Year	1950	1980	2000	2008
Population (million)	12.097	21	39.75	48

Source: CNS (2009). “2008 Shijie huashang fazhan baogao”. 2008 世界华商发展报告, (Report on the Development of Global Chinese Entrepreneurs), 1-1.

In terms of geographical distribution, there has been a manifest diversification of destination regions for the Chinese migrants. As Table 2 demonstrates, in the 1950s, 96.45 per cent of overseas Chinese were living in Asia, followed by the Americas (2.12 per cent), Oceania (0.81 per cent), Europe (0.31 per cent) and Africa (0.31 per cent). By the turn of the century, while the population in all major regions increased considerably, the proportion of those in Asia dropped by more than 13 per cent, with a concomitant rise of percentage points in all other regions. The greatest growth rate was seen in Europe, with a 39-fold increase of the total population. The population increase in the Americas and Oceania was also quite remarkable, respectively at 16.9-fold and eight-fold of the level in 1950, a clear indication of the preference of new migrants for major immigrant countries such as the United States, Canada and Australia (Ember, Ember and Skoggard 2005; Pan 1994).

Table 2: Changes in the Continental Distribution of the Chinese Overseas from 1950 to 2000

Region	1950		2000	
	Population (,000)	Per cent (%)	Population (,000)	Per cent (%)
Asia	11,667	96.45	32,940	82.85
Americas	256	2.12	4,330	10.90
Europe	37	0.31	1,450	3.66
Oceania	98	0.81	786	1.98
Africa	37	0.31	240	0.61

Total	12,097	100.00	39,750	100.00
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Source: CNS (China News Service) (2009). “2008 Shijie huashang fazhan baogao”. 2008 世界华商发展报告, (Report on the Development of Global Chinese Entrepreneurs), 1-1.

In Australia alone, new arrivals from mainland China skyrocketed from merely 6,368 persons in the 1970s to 172,971 persons in the first decade of the twenty-first century, representing a 27-fold increase (Table 3). This duly reflected the growing mobility of Chinese nationals and the significant shift of the migration policy regime of Australia, which was characterised by an elaborate point system aimed at attracting highly qualified migrants with assets and skills (Walsh 2008: 796).

Table 3: Birthplace of Migrants by Year of Arrival in Australia

Birthplace	1971-1980	1981-1990	1991-2000	2001-2010	Total
China (excl. SARS and Taiwan)	6,368	44,149	62,976	172,971	223,488
Hong Kong	7,342	20,449	21,910	18,234	67,935
Taiwan	427	5,353	9,221	10,862	15,001
Total	14,137	69,951	94,107	109,205	306,424

Source: Table compiled from the 2011 Australian Census of Population and Housing (Australian Bureau of Statistics).

Accompanying the unprecedented global movements of the Chinese people was the proliferation and diversification of Chinese community organisations, which caught the attention of many scholars (Liu 1998; McKeown 1999; Nyíri 1999; Pieke 2004). According to the statistics compiled by Minghuan Li, the number of overseas Chinese organisations all over the world has been consistently increasing in all major continents since 1950, especially in the Americas, where the figure rose from 469 in 1950 to 2,252 in 1991 (Li 1995: 5). In addition to the increase of the aggregate number, there has also been an evident change in the proportion of different types of associations. In the estimation of the Overseas Compatriot Affairs Commission (OCAC) of Taiwan, traditional associations shrunk considerably at the global level, and their roles were gradually taken over by all-embracing, locally-rooted, democratically-operated voluntary organisations. Counting by types, the OCAC concluded that multi-functional

organisations¹ formed the largest cohort, accounting for 16.1 per cent of all overseas Chinese organisations in the world, followed by educational and cultural associations at 12.5 per cent and native-place associations at 10.9 per cent, the latter receiving a major boost by the influx of new migrants (OCAC 2008: 17). The rapid development of Chinese organisational network spearheaded by modern-style multi-functional associations is also taking place in Australia. While core service organisations started in the early 1980s quickly developed into multi-million entities under the auspices of a blossoming multicultural governing philosophy, hundreds of new locality organisations sprung up in the 1990s, actively engaging themselves in a wide range of social, economic, and cultural exchanges, which are congruent with the policy goal of the People's Republic of China (PRC) to liaise with the Chinese overseas.

Despite the robust development of overseas Chinese organisational network and the increasing political weight it carries, relevant scholarly research is scarce and less than systematic. The serious negligence of this important area, especially in the specific site of Australia, triggered my interest in investigating the development of Chinese organisations in Australia through empirical research. Of the available literature, two conspicuous trends could be observed. To begin with, we have the anthropologists who are interested in the cultural root of overseas Chinese organisations. As Freedman demonstrated in his seminal work *Lineage Organization in Southeastern China* (1958), the cultural foundation of Chinese organisations could be traced back to the lineage system of rural South China region, which provided the principles of sanguinity and geographical affinity for the formation of traditional types of organisations like clan organisations, native-place associations, chambers of commerce and brotherhoods. These organisational forms were later on transplanted to overseas destinations in the nineteenth century, as the migrants suffered from the exclusionary policy environment in the host society and virtual abandonment of the home country. The situation was particularly acute for Chinese communities in Australia, as the latter, until the mid-twentieth century, had been adamant in prohibiting the entry of coloured races and disciplining those living within. The culturalist approach is constructive in pinpointing the cultural specificity of Chinese organisations, which distinguishes them from parallel structures of other ethnic groups. It could help enhance our understandings of the

¹ Multifunctional Chinese organisations refer to those medium- to large-sized associations, which offer a wide range of services to the whole community while maintaining a special focus on the Chinese group. They are usually democratically-operated and receive funding from the host government.

unique cultural premises of traditional Chinese associations and therefore highlight the evolutionary trajectory they go through in modern age.

In contrast to the anthropological approach which focuses on the special historical-cultural properties of Chinese organisations, the institutionalist approach tends to conceptualise all ethnic organisations in their abstract form and understand their activism solely in relation to policy imperatives of the host government. Early theorisation of ethnic associations, with few exceptions, was concerned with their roles, progressive or regressive, in regard to the end of assimilation. For the critics, not surprisingly, they were regarded as carriers of undesirable elements of an alien culture. They argued that by relying on such a sub-structure, members of the minority groups did not need to make genuine efforts in engaging with the mainstream society, therefore perpetuating their separatist existence (Gordon 1964; Schoeneberg 1985). More sympathetic observers contended that ethnic organisations smoothed out the transitional period, and better prepared those disadvantaged migrants for a full participation in the new society (Berger, Galonska and Koopmans 2004; Fennema 2004; Tillie 2004). Despite the different conclusions they arrived at, one thing in common was the teleological obsession with the policy objective of integration and the assumption that ethnic organisations had no other significance in themselves except for their potential impact on the nation-building project. The restoration of agency is only partially achieved with the launch of multicultural philosophy, which, to some extent, endorses and celebrates the presence of everyday diversity by striking a balance between “social cohesion, equality (understood as access not cultural relativism) and cultural maintenance” (Naraniecki 2013: 247). In this context, ethnic organisations are positively assessed as useful vehicles to preserve minority culture, promote social participation and provide ethnic-specific services to their communities. However, as many scholars point out, multiculturalism itself is a highly contested field, easily swayed by anxieties over national unity (Babacan 2006; Fleras 2009; Koleh 2010). Faced with the paradox of pluralism and universalism, the entire policy field of multiculturalism could easily slip back to the integrationist model of the older era, which suggests a conservative reading of the role of ethnic organisations (Keddie 2012: 6).

Notably, host governments are not alone in their fixation on state-sanctified ideologies at the expense of a solid grasp of the reality. It is important to realise that the perception

of the home government is equally filtered by nationalist fantasies, which could sometimes lead to distorted interpretations and self-fulfilled prophecies. History shows that official courting of Chinese migrants is a recurring theme for successive Chinese governments regardless of ideologies, though the specific official discourses and political strategies of catering to the overseas Chinese vary greatly according to China's international position and internal political situation (Fitzgerald 1972; Zhuang 1998). In charting out the two-way interaction between the Chinese government and the overseas Chinese, Gungwu Wang proposed an interesting model of overseas Chinese cycle consisting of four stages (Wang 2003: 100). In the first stage of strong and prosperous Qing Empire from 1689 to the 1840s, the Qing Court was virtually neglectful of the fates of overseas Chinese. Consequently, the migrants, though facing great obstacles, learned to be self-sufficient and independent, doing well in transnational trade. The second stage stretching from the 1840s to 1949 was marked by one hundred years' weakness and poverty. Both the Qing Court and the succeeding Republic offered recognition of and support to the overseas Chinese, and as a result expected political loyalty and economic investments from those affluent communities. The overseas Chinese, on the other hand, oscillated between periodic nationalist outbursts and profound shame at the failure of successive Chinese governments to rejuvenate the Chinese nation. The Mao era from 1949 to 1976 fell under the shadow of Cold War and Cultural Revolution, during which the PRC government, forced by diplomatic isolation and ideological factors, returned to the stage of negligence of overseas Chinese affairs. Apart from those still torn between mainland China and Taiwan, most overseas Chinese became politically localised and naturalised, and the term for the collective grouping was subsequently changed into "Chinese overseas" or "ethnic Chinese". The last stage referred to the reform of the PRC since 1978, when the Chinese government resumed its interest in the Chinese overseas, especially in economic and technological terms. The ethnic Chinese, mostly well adapted to the local conditions, were attracted by the promise of wealth and status back in China. Developing on Wang's model, a new generation of scholars like Elena Barabantseva (2011), Congyi Feng (2011), Hong Liu (2005), Pál Nyíri (2005), Frank Pieke (2007) and Mette Thunø (2007) pointed to the mass-emigration of mainland Chinese since the 1980s and correlated it with the revival of overseas Chinese nationalism sponsored by the PRC. In this background, Chinese community organisations, together with Chinese language schools and Chinese media are regarded as the three main pillars in facilitating China's public diplomacy and

promoting its soft power in the world (Deng 2006; Gill and Huang 2006; Xu and Xie 2012).

As Walsh rightly notes, political states are also self-interested entities and pursue objectives and programs meant to legitimate and extend their sovereignty over territory and population (Walsh 2008: 790). Past research shows that the developmental stage of ethnic organisations strongly depends on the structure of political institutions and the configuration of political power in a given society. Changes in the external opportunities or constraints on mobilisation can spur or inhibit group action (Schrover and Vermeulen 2005: 828). In the case of Chinese organisations, it goes beyond doubt that the regulatory regimes of Australia and China represent the two most influential power structures, which shape the cultural orientation, operational style and developmental trajectory of most organisations. However, this should not prevent us from seeing the remarkable agency of Chinese migrants, which often enables them to circumvent the hegemonic control of nation-states.

Improving the strategic-relational approach developed by Hay (2002), Marsh conceptualises structure and agency as ontologically distinct phenomena. While structures provide the context within which agents act, agents are reflexive and formulate strategy on the basis of partial knowledge of structures. In acting agents change the structures, which then provide the new context within which agents act in the next iteration (Marsh 2010: 218-9). The emphasis on the agency of the diasporic Chinese and the transforming impact it has on the governing structures of nation-states naturally lead us to the theoretical position of transnationalists, who propose the concept of “transnational space” or “transnational field”, in which the migrants simultaneously negotiate with multiple political powers (Basch, Glick Schiller and Blanc-Szanton 1994; Goldring 1998; Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004). In her masterpiece *Ungrounded Empires*, Ong describes these practices as “flexible citizenship”, which refers to the cultural logics of capitalist accumulation, travel and displacement that induce subjects to respond fluidly and opportunistically to changing political-economic conditions (Ong 1999: 6). Concrete cases illustrating “the flexible ways of accumulation” are plenty, from deliberate dispersal of family members (Pe-Pua et al. 1998) to the operation of bamboo network which fuses entrepreneurship with cultural reciprocity (Menkhoff and Gerke 2002). However, rarely are such debates extended to the sphere of organisational development, which is surprising given the cultural propensity of the Chinese to

congregate and the explosive growth of overseas Chinese organisations in recent decades.

2. Scope of Research

To understand the complex interactions between contemporary Chinese organisations and policy frameworks of Australia and China, I start from the notion of transmigrants and proceed to develop a model of ethnic capital conversion to analyse the different developmental pathways and corresponding adaptive strategies of these organisations. While the key organisational players are treated as the primary agents for analysis, Australian multiculturalism and overseas Chinese policy of the PRC are regarded as the predominant political opportunity structures² within which Chinese activism unfolds. Intangible as it is, the agency of the Chinese migrants is reflected in the extensive conversion of the ethnic Chinese capital to and from other forms of social, economic and political capitals in a global system, whose value fluctuate in response to the national and local socio-political circumstances. In the Australian context, the ethnic Chinese capital is conceptualised as a two-fold entity, contextually manifested as “Whiteness” and “Chineseness”, which correspond to the bifocal identity of the Chinese Australians. “Chineseness” refers to the sum of bodily characteristics, cultural knowledge and familial and social networks, which are either inherited or naturally acquired in the country of origin. In comparison, “Whiteness” points to a complex repertoire of physical traits (white skin), cultural know-how, technical rationality, professional qualifications, cosmopolitan outlook and the ability to network with or even become part of the governing class of the adopted Western country. Apart from the visible physical marker, the social elements of “Whiteness” could be incrementally accumulated by the migrants through a prolonged process of integration. The notions of “Whiteness” and “Chineseness”, while largely derived from my ethnographical observation at the research site, are also used as meaningful analytical categories by scholars like Hage (2000), Tabar, Noble and Poynting (2003, 2010). Essentially, they point to the expansion of the conceptualisation of symbolic capital to incorporate the relatively new configuration of ethnicity (also see Chapter Two). As Hage pertinently points out, in the field of national power, ethnicity is regarded as a form of symbolic

² The concept of the political opportunity structure refers to the sociopolitical environment in which ethnic organisational activities are carried out. It will be elaborated in the section of “institutionalist approach” of Chapter One.

capital, which strengthens or weakens the capital agents' claim to governmental belonging and aristocratic status depending on its perceived value (Hage 2000: 60-1). Ethnic identities, once valorised by the state as a type of capital, are convertible to other types of capital and could generate significant profits if such transactions are executed in multiple locales where major "value differentials" exist.

Compared with other ethnic groups, Chinese transmigrants are in a very good position to benefit from transactions of ethnic capital due to their unique characteristics. At the national level, the socio-historical circumstances in China and the West for the past thirty-five years provided unprecedented opportunities for the Chinese overseas to turn their ethnic capital into power and status. The first wave of ethnic capital conversion was tied up with the reform of the PRC in the late 1970s, resulting in a nation-wide quest for "Whiteness", which is keenly felt in areas like science and technology, corporate governance, legal reform, financial restructuring and Western lifestyle. This spurred the tide of return among the Chinese overseas, whose accumulated "Whiteness" was eagerly sought by the Chinese government and could almost guarantee their inclusion into the "elite" class of the Chinese society. While the first wave was essentially about the affirmation of the entrenched superiority of "Whiteness", the second ongoing wave relates to the appreciation of "Chineseness", as the PRC is occupying a more prominent position in the international community. The Chinese-Australians now have the opportunity to turn their China-related knowledge and homeland connections into resources highly valued by Australian decision-makers, who are compelled to acknowledge China's strategic weight and reformulate regional policies to meet the challenges of an "Asian Century" (White 2011: 92). These recent developments greatly improve the status of Chinese community leaders, whose "Chineseness" qualifies them to give strategic advice to Australian policy-makers and business leaders in areas like trade and investment, bilateral exchanges and international relations, in addition to the traditional policy domain of multiculturalism.

While the changing dynamics of international politics is conducive to a significant appreciation of both facets of the ethnic Chinese capital, and indeed creates new channels for its conversion, the prevalence of its worldwide transactions could be partly attributed to the Chinese philosophy of *guanxi*. As many scholars observe, *guanxi* is a central principle governing the pattern of human interactions in the Chinese society (Chang and Holt 1991; Fan, Woodbine and Scully 2011; Yao 2013). It refers to the

“personal connections/relationships on which an individual can draw to secure resources or advantages when doing business as well as in the course of social life” (Ewing, Caruana and Wong 2000). The functioning of *guanxi* observes the rule of reciprocity, and the favours could be banked and transferred within the social network. According to Chinese tradition, the presence of *guanxi* is often prior to and a prerequisite to the formation of any serious cooperative relationship. Its strength lies in the long-term, non-contractual trust it forges, which has enabled the ethnic Chinese to spin local, regional and global business webs and contributed to the extraordinary economic growth in East and Southeast Asia after World War II (Tagliacozzo and Chang 2011).

The pivotal role of *guanxi* in facilitating the practice of ethnic capital conversion among the Chinese could be seen in two respects. On the one hand, it keeps alive the social connections and resources left behind by the Chinese migrants over an extended period of time, sometimes even over generations, which could be re-activated and strengthened when opportunities of mutually beneficial cooperation are available. On the other hand, the belief in the extensibility of the *guanxi* network helps to cement trust in the transnational setting and leads to the expectation (not always met) that benefits arising from accumulated “Whiteness” could be exchanged in reciprocal terms once the capital agents are included into the network. The unique cultural logics of *guanxi* explain the unparalleled scale on which ethnic Chinese capital is transacted in different parts of the world.

The recognition of the ubiquity of ethnic capital conversion among the Chinese decides that it could serve as a suitable perspective to analyse different types of Chinese agents engaging in a full range of social domains in multiple locales. However, the focus of this thesis is on the Chinese organisational players, whose main activities are negotiated through the disciplinary regimes of Australia and China. The thesis argues that underlying the seemingly divergent developmental trends of different types of overseas Chinese organisations is the common concern toward the maximisation of the aggregate capitals, though the specific strategies differ in accordance with the comparative strength, resource pool and political orientation of a given organisation. Broadly speaking, two types of mutually complementing tactics could be identified: the modernising reform of local-oriented organisations and the transnational networking of home-bound associations. In the former case, local-oriented organisations initiate structural reforms to enhance their “Whiteness”, which in turn allows the “ethnic”

dimension of their identity to be actualised and valorised under the multicultural setting. In the latter case, the overseas-oriented organisations utilise their “Chineseness” to build trust with parallel institutions of the home country, and then convert their “Whiteness” into wealth and socio-political status in China. The concurrent processes of capital conversion are premised on the composite nature of the ethnic Chinese capital, which is characterised by its situational representation of “Chineseness” and “Whiteness” in different national contexts with the ultimate aim of realising the greatest value in the transnational field.

Informed by the anthropological, institutionalist and transnational approaches, this thesis starts with a few basic research questions to guide the thinking. With little empirical research to refer to, they are deliberately framed in a broad fashion so as not to impose intellectual constraints prior to my entry into the field. These research questions are addressed in detail in following chapters:

1. What are the broad trends of development for contemporary Chinese organisations in Australia? What are the specific adaptive strategies they adopt?
2. What are the main characteristics of Chinese communities in Canberra and Sydney? How do the local contexts influence the formation and activism of the Chinese organisational network?
3. What are the major social, cultural and political activities of Chinese community organisations in Australia? Do they prove to be an integrative force in the host society in terms of civic participation? Do they constitute a viable political force to effect structural changes in Australia? If not, what are the major factors preventing them from playing such a role?
4. How do the rise of China and its changing policy on overseas Chinese influence the organisational development of Chinese communities abroad? In what ways do overseas Chinese organisations react to the policy initiatives of the Chinese government? What are the specific forms of transnational activities they are engaged in?
5. What are the policy implications of these activities for the home country and host society respectively?

With these questions in mind, the selection of research sites becomes easier. Limitation of time and resource determines that it is impossible to conduct nation-wide research. Instead, Sydney is chosen as the primary research site for its gateway city status, historical significance in absorbing Chinese migrants, high concentration of residents of Chinese ancestry and the well-established Chinese community network, as exemplified by the numerous satellite Chinatowns like the Carlingford-Eastwood-Epping area, Auburn, Burwood, Beverly Hills, Paramatta, Ashfield, Chatswood and Hurstville. Moreover, Sydney also witnesses the rise of many prominent Chinese Australians such as Henry Tsang, Helen Sham-Ho, Benjamin Chow, Frank Chou, Peter Wong and many others, who are central nodes in the web of community leadership. All considered, the case of Sydney could effectively reflect the developmental trends of Chinese organisations in Australia.

Furthermore, I also include Canberra as a supplementary site in my research design for several reasons. In comparison to the cosmopolitan ambience of Sydney, Canberra's importance lies in its strategic position as the capital city of Australia and its top-down mechanism of policy making in relevant areas such as immigration, multicultural affairs and community services. The relatively small local Chinese population and the resultant cohesion of the organisational network make it a good starting point to understand the basic operating principles of Chinese organisations. Moreover, since the place of my residence is in Canberra, it becomes practical for me to conduct prolonged participatory observation in the field and ensure an ongoing collection of data about their activities and evolving foci. Finally, the rapport formed through intensive community participation in Canberra could be transformed into trust in the form of personal references and greatly helps with my networking in Sydney. In retrospect, it is fair to say that it would have been impossible for me to have interview opportunities with heavy-weights in Sydney without the recognition and support of community leaders in Canberra. In this sense, I have benefited from my inclusion into the Chinese *guanxi* network in Australia, with the favour easily transferred from Canberra to Sydney communities through the affirmation of a few central figures in the network.

Regarding sampling, I note that there is no uniform definition of ethnic organisations. Different criteria are proposed to categorise them, for example, by function, scale, political orientation, membership, geographical origin and so on (Li 1995: 22-23). The use of these standards is quite flexible and selective, for ethnic organisations represent a

site of intense contestations of identities and meanings, which make Schrover and Vermeulen wonder about their nature:

Do we regard organisations as immigrant organisations because the majority of its members are foreign-born, or because most of its members are descendants from immigrants? Do we call an organisation an immigrant organisation because the inspiration for the organisation originally came from immigrants, and when does an organisation stop being an immigrant organisation? (2005: 825)

With an understanding of the history of traditional Chinese organisations and their diverse contemporary manifestations, I define Chinese community organisations in the broadest sense, as not-for-profit (NFP) organisations with a formal structure, whose members mainly comprise Chinese migrants and native-born Chinese Australians. This definition allows me to include in my sample all types of Chinese organisations in both traditional and modern groupings. Moreover, as I discovered in my field trip, the lack of a clear power locus and the sporadic waves of migration have contributed to the numerical enormity and diversity of Chinese associations in Australia, especially for those established by mainlanders. Compared with the old-generation migrants who were usually connected by clan affiliations, the migration of mainlanders is a highly individualised process unmediated by pre-existing organisational influence. While the older inhabitants of Chinatown were all from the same circle, the relational network of the new migrants is loosely organised, and the power structure is decentralised with decision-making power firmly vested in each individual. For many mainlanders, the decision to establish a new organisation could purely be a matter of personal choice devoid of any intent for community influence. This results in the emergence of hundreds of mini-sized organisations in Sydney alone, which only have a few dozen members and are usually phased out in five to ten years. In many ways, these mini-sized organisations are more aptly seen as vehicles of self-expression than representative platforms for community members. To select those core organisations with greater community impact and policy salience out of the hundreds, I rely on extensive consultation with key community leaders, intensive reading of community newspapers and the compilation of membership lists of Chinese peak organisations in Australia. As Chapter Three introduces, these efforts lead to the construction of an inventory of 120 important organisations and a smaller sample for in-depth case studies.

3. Structure of Thesis

The organisation of the thesis closely corresponds with my research questions and strives to give a clear demonstration of the latest developmental trends and patterns of activism for different types of Chinese organisations. Building on the brief discussion of relevant literature in this section, Chapter One elaborates on the three dominant schools of thinking (anthropological, institutionalist and transnationalist), reviews the concrete research under each category and explains how they could contribute to the understanding of the issue under study. I seek to spell out the strengths and weaknesses of each approach in analysing the specific phenomenon of overseas Chinese organisations and attempt at the fusion of these perspectives through the proposed model of ethnic capital conversion.

Following the train of thought in Chapter One and drawing on the notion of transmigrants, Chapter Two provides a full description of the model of ethnic capital conversion, which highlights the agency of Chinese Australians within a macro-level political opportunity structure in the transnational space. It is followed by an analysis of the major constituents of this synthesised structure, respectively Australian multiculturalism and overseas Chinese policy of the PRC. On the one hand, the evolution of cultural ideologies in Australia from assimilation to multiculturalism allows for the valorisation of ethnic identities and systematically opens the socio-political space for the civic participation of ethnic minorities. This sets the background for the modernising reforms of mainstream Chinese organisations. On the other hand, the proactive policy of the PRC government in courting the Chinese overseas leads to the boisterous development of overseas-oriented organisations, Chinese language schools and media, which are perceived as important platforms to disseminate Chinese culture, improve PRC's image abroad and facilitate collaborative projects between China and other countries.

With Chapter Two establishing the interpretive framework of the thesis, Chapter Three introduces the research methods employed for this study, describes the whole research process consisting of sampling, data collection and data interpretation, and then explains the limitation of the study. The chapter begins with an account of the role of the researcher and recognises the strength and potential biases arising from my partial belonging to the Chinese community. It proceeds with an explanation of the two-phase

sampling process carried out in Canberra and Sydney, from which I identified 120 key organisations and decided on a smaller sample for in-depth research. To improve validity and reliability of the research, a triangulation of research methods is adopted, including a brief survey of major Chinese organisations, concentrated participant observation, semi-structured, in-depth interviews and documentary research. Resource constraint, inaccessibility of some organisations, the issue of confidentiality and problems related to translation are discussed as main limitations of the study.

In Chapter Four, I direct my attention to the local settings of Canberra and Sydney and explore the similarities and differences of Chinese communities at these two locales. A succinct account is provided regarding the social conditions of the two cities, their respective histories of Chinese migration, demographical and occupational profiles of Chinese communities within, and their impact on the formation of organisational networks among the Chinese. In Canberra, the compactness of the Chinese community has resulted in the formation of the peak body Federation of Chinese Associations of ACT (FCA-ACT), which serves as the central coordinating structure to promote cooperation among key Chinese associations in Canberra. Moreover, the strong leadership role played by the ACT government in regulating the multicultural sector and the occupational structure of Canberra decide that there is a very high proportion of professionals and public servants in the circle of community elite, who are more likely to adopt the strategy of co-option when managing their organisations. In contrast, the story of Sydney is much more complex, as demonstrated by its global city status, the long history of Chinese migration, solid community foundation and the multiplicity of organisations active home and abroad. The investigation of the parallels and disparities of associational lives in these two cities alerts us of the importance of attending to specific local circumstances, which are irreducible to general conceptualisation of transnational activism.

With Chapter Four delineating the background of organisational development, Chapter Five explores the structural changes of Chinese community organisations under the evolving multicultural policy framework in Australia. It investigates the different facets of modernising reform experienced by those local-oriented organisations, as reflected in their formalisation of governance structure, ascendance of professional class in constituting community leadership, transformation of the organisational culture and diversification of financial sources. Signs of modernisation are most manifest in those

advocacy organisations, community service-providers and representative peak bodies, which are incorporated into the mainstream governing structure and therefore held publicly accountable for their behaviours. Self-initiated reform helps with the accumulation of “Whiteness”, which verifies their credentials in ethnic affairs and serves as the precondition for the valorisation of their “Chineseness” in the realm of ethnic governance. Building on the analysis of Chapter Five, Chapter Six continues with the specific forms of Chinese organisational activities in the domestic context of Australian multiculturalism. The major categories of activities include ethnically-based social participation, cultural maintenance, service provision and political advocacy and representation. It shows how Chinese community leaders actively engage with the policy priorities of the host government and launch new programs or reinterpret existing ones in line with the state agenda. The chapter enumerates the achievements made by Chinese community leaders in multiple areas, but warns about the innate instability of the sphere of ethnic affairs in Australia, which could negatively affect the evaluation of ethnic capital and undermine the long-term sustainability of ethnic organisations.

Recognising the policy constraints in the host society, the Chinese overseas cast their eyes on the abundance of opportunities available in the transnational space. Chapter Seven examines the cultural characteristics and management styles of overseas-oriented organisations, including new locality associations, clan associations and a whole range of cultural, economic and professional associations specialising in transnational exchanges. Different from local-oriented Chinese organisations, the viability of overseas-oriented organisations lies in their capacity of networking with political elites of both countries. To fulfil this purpose, they have a greater reliance on the *guanxi* system home and abroad and display a willingness to cater to the pan-nationalist agenda of the PRC. Citing numerous examples of economic, socio-cultural and political exchanges undertaken by transnational Chinese organisations, this chapter highlights the centrality of cross-border networking in their operation and comes up with a pattern of their developmental stages: primitive resource accumulation in the host society, resource input from the home country and transnational expansion through integration of resources. It argues that while these transnational activities could be seen as deliberate attempts to cater to the policy imperatives of the PRC, they are also compatible with Australian interests, which are increasingly perceived as lying in the Asia-Pacific region.

Finally, the thesis concludes by recapitulating the main developmental paths and strategies of local-oriented organisations and overseas-oriented ones and linking them with the political opportunity structures in China and Australia. From an ethnic capital perspective, it argues that the divergent pathways of Chinese organisational development correspond with different channels of ethnic capital conversion, which lead to a maximisation of the aggregate capitals possessed by the transnational Chinese agents. Although primarily motivated by self-interest, the transnational actors are adept in aligning their interests with policy concerns of multiple political powers and through their bridging roles, contribute to the deepening of bilateral relationship between Australia and China.

Chapter One: Literature Review

Scholarly works which are solely devoted to the topic of contemporary Chinese organisations in immigrant communities are generally scarce, even more so for the specific research site of Australia. Minghuan Li's *Studies on Contemporary Overseas Chinese Associations* (1995) is perhaps the most comprehensive research done in this area. However, it is written in Chinese and is mostly concerned with Chinese organisations in Southeast Asia, Europe and America, while paying little attention to parallel groups in Australia. The short list of authors who paid considerable attention to Chinese organisations in Australia mainly comprised historians interested in minority communities, such as Ching Fatt Yong (1977), Shirley Fitzgerald (1997), Jane Lydon (1999), John Fitzgerald (2006, 2007), Mei-Fen Guo (2013) and Mei-Fen Guo and Judith Brett (2013). In his representative work *Big, White Lie* (2007), John Fitzgerald provided a thorough account of Chinese organisations active in the beginning of the twentieth century, such as the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, the Chinese Masonic Society and the Australian branch of *Kuomintang* (Chinese Nationalist Party). Extolling the burgeoning democratic spirit in these traditional associations as early as around Federation time, this was one of the most influential works to demonstrate the initial stage of voluntary integration by the Chinese organisations. Ching Fatt Yong, on the other hand, delved into the internal politics of Chinese communities in Sydney and Melbourne in the 1930s and gave detailed descriptions of the activism of county, clan and political associations which were instrumental in battling against the discriminatory regime of the host society and engaging in the political struggles of a divided China. Although most of those organisations ceased to exist, and political conditions in both home country and resident society have changed beyond recognition, it nevertheless addressed the simultaneity of dual political consciousness of Chinese-Australians, who live "lives" that incorporate daily activities, routines, and institutions located both in a destination country and transnationally (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004: 1003).

Apart from these few works specialising in Chinese organisational life, most of the information about Chinese organisations is thinly scattered in general historical accounts of Chinese migration and settlement, biographies, personal diaries, government reports and internal records of organisations themselves. It is therefore of pivotal importance to distil the substantive content from these discrete sources of materials. Moreover, it is interesting to observe that often these documents are more

about the restatement of pre-established ideological positions than empirical investigations of the rich fabrics of organisational life. There has been a clear manifestation of disciplinary division and ideological traditions in the copious literature on general theories on ethnic organisations, integration and multiculturalism, Chinese diaspora and transnationalism, which impact on the choice of research questions, selection of data and preferred perspectives of interpretation. The insistence on one perspective could lead to the negligence of alternative data suitable for another conceptual framework. At the epistemological level, it points to the diverging intellectual paradigms which are undergirded by different understandings of the dialectic interactions between agency and structure. While the earlier phase of literature on Chinese migration and settlement was often plagued by ideological concerns of assimilation, the subsequent development of multicultural discourses and progressive thinking on minority politics partially restored the agency of the migrants despite the continuing influence of institutional constraints. Moreover, the relatively new research field of transnationalism and diasporic politics represents a further liberation of agency by transcending the boundaries of nation-states and rediscovering the potential of multi-factor analyses which include “geographical proximity of sending and receiving contexts, histories of interdependence between nation-states and localities, patterns of migration and processes of settlement” (Vertovec 2009: 19).

In recognition of the inadequacy of specific research projects on overseas Chinese organisations, the highly diffused nature of general literature and the clear ideological and disciplinary foci they represent, this chapter will be organised around three distinctive schools of thought which shape my understanding of contemporary Chinese organisational network in Australia, respectively anthropological, institutionalist and transnational/diasporic. Under each category, I will delineate the dominant threads of thinking, give a brief review of the concrete researches involved and explain how they could contribute to the framing of the subject matter and naturally lead to the design of my own research questions.

1.1. Anthropological Approach

The anthropological approach addresses the cultural roots of Chinese organisations, explores the structures and functioning principles of different types of traditional

Chinese organisations and establishes the basis for the assessment of their overseas offshoots in terms of cultural maintenance and evolutionary trajectory.

It is the consensus in the academic community that the organising principle of Chinese associations lies in the lineage system in rural China. Early research on social organisation of rural China is normally local-based. As part of the general cultural studies of China, it is often invoked to explain the impact of internal urbanising processes on the socio-economic conditions of the rural society, with virtually no attention paid to the overseas settings. For instance, the foundational anthropologist in China, Professor Xiaotong Fei, detailed in his masterpiece *Peasant Life in China* (1947) the country life in Yangtze Village based on his intensive fieldwork and found the root of Chinese social relations in the *guanxi* system, which underlay the formation of a complex clan structure. Following Fei's steps, numerous works were produced to investigate the social order of rural China, especially the South China region, which was characterised by the concentration of "emigrant communities" (Faure 2007; Faure and Siu 1995; Hu 1948; Liu 1959). The seminal works of Maurice Freedman (1958, 1966) on Chinese lineage organisation in Southeast China highlighted the importance of lineage as the basic unit of local administration, as marked by its geographical distinctiveness (conflation with the village) and a self-complete disciplinary regime defining different aspects of village life such as mutual help, ancestral worship and punishment.

Interest in the cultural uniqueness of the South China region swelled with the emerging pattern of global Chinese migration, as scholars found out that virtually all Chinese emigrants between the early 1850s and the founding of the PRC in 1949 originated from the two southeast provinces of Fujian and Guangdong rather than from the heartland of Chinese core culture—areas along the Yellow River (Wickberg 1994: 71). The regional factors which made traditionally earthbound Chinese into sea-borne adventurers were found in the mixing racial stocks, adjacency to the sea, historical tradition of junk trade, the weak hold of the Confucius doctrine, long-lasting regional turbulence and the early infiltration of the foreign powers (Wang 2000, 2003). The junk trade which connected South China with Nanyang (today's Southeast Asia) in as early as the fifteenth century became the first focal point of Chinese migration research, which gave rise to discussions of the Chinese diasporic mode of *Huashang* (Chinese merchants), referring to the Chinese comprador class under the colonial rule in the nineteenth century (Wang

1996: 2). Scattered in the rich literature on Chinese settlement in Southeast Asia were many accounts of early Chinese associations including homeland societies, guilds, surname associations and triads (Crissman 1967; Dean 1998; Freedman 1960). Drawing on similar social formations in ancient Chinese cities, these scholars concluded that these varying forms of traditional associations stemmed from the same principle of clan rule in rural China dating back to the nineteenth century, and acted as surrogate authority to fill the power vacuum in different overseas destinations (Hsiao 1960; Liu 1988). Supported by empirical case studies drawn from Chinese communities all over the world, this line of argument is accepted as the dominant position in explaining the cultural specificity of overseas Chinese organisations of the older era, well-known examples including Six Companies in San Francisco (Chen 1992; Tsai 1986), the Triads in Singapore (Freedman 1960), as well as Sze Yap Society and Toon Goon Association in Sydney (Choi 1975; Williams 1999). Key features of these organisations include the reproduction of the sanguine connections, patriarchal rule, and the moral responsibility of mutual support based on familial relationships (Lyman 1974).

The importance of the anthropological approach rests on its emphasis on the cultural uniqueness of Chinese organisational entities, which distinguishes them from parallel structures of other ethnic communities. Moreover, it provides a referential framework to gauge the degree of modernisation in contemporary Chinese organisations. Although the rough division between traditional and modern organisations might risk cultural reductionism, it is usual for social scientists to make such distinctions based on an evolutionary view of organisational development. Both Bernard Wong (1982) and Edger Wickberg (1994) adopted this perspective in categorising the huge varieties of Chinese organisations in their research. Included in the camp of traditional Chinese organisations are clan associations, chambers of commerce, native-place associations, guilds, secret societies, Chinese temples as well as the federated bodies of these associations, while modern organisations comprise social service groups, professional associations, educational and cultural groups, alumni associations, Chinese churches, and large representative peak bodies. Obviously, such classification is premised on the cultural distance between overseas Chinese organisations and those cultural prototypes back in the village context of ancient China and points to the degree of acculturation on the part of the overseas offshoots. Conceptualised by Milton Gordon in his assimilationist model, acculturation refers to the process where a minority group's cultural and behavioral traits converge toward those of the dominant group (Gordon

1964: 70-1). It can take place at both individual and group level, thereby justifying its application to the intermediary level of ethnic organisations (Teske Jr and Nelson 1974: 351).

Organisational analyses based on the anthropologist approach benefit from the configuration of traditional cultural traits as explanatory variables to observe the current activism of target organisations. The linear view from tradition to modernity also scores high in analytical clarity. However, as many scholars point out, theoretical parsimony is usually achieved at the expense of sophistication. Too often the analysis is structured in a dichotomous way, oriented either toward the home country or the host society, thereby suppressing all the nuances along the spectrum (Schoeneberg 1985: 417). By classifying organisations by types, it ignores the modernising thrust within the traditional sector, and does not adequately account for the manifestation of both traditional and modern elements in organisational bodies of the transitional stage. To improve this model, I will break down the notion of tradition and modernity into several observable indicators including structure, leadership, cultural orientation, financing source and modes of activism, and use them to evaluate target organisations on a continuum so as to engender a more nuanced description of organisational evolution.

1.2. Institutional Approach

The institutionalist approach focuses on the effect of host-society institutions and structure on the behavioural patterns of ethnic communities and conceives the role of ethnic organisations in relation to the grand narrative of nation-building (Alexander 2003; Favell 2001; Ireland 1994; Koopmans 2004). Overcoming the negative connotations of “institutional constraint”, the concept of “political opportunity structure” (POS) is often invoked to denote the sociopolitical environment in which ethnic organisational activities are carried out (Tarrow 1994: 13). This concept has significant bearing on the pattern and dynamism of ethnic organisational networks, for at the macro level it stipulates the legitimate roles of ethnic associations in the host society and determines the flow of economic and political resources, which are essential for their very survival. For example, the case study of migrant organisations in Sweden conducted by Odmalm showed that organisational life in Sweden was highly regulated and tightly steered from above. This was achieved through onerous administrative rules, strict terms of funding and regular supervision of their activities (Odmalm 2004: 474-6).

When applied to the field of ethnic studies, POS coalesces with the model of ethnic governance and incorporates miscellaneous factors like immigrants' legal situation, their social and political rights, citizenship and naturalisation laws, and broadly defined integration policies and non-policies (Ireland 1994). For clarity of discussion, I will use the model of ethnic governance developed by David Brown to trace the corresponding research orientations in the area of ethnic organisations.

In theorising the governance of multiethnic states, David Brown proposes three distinct visions of community—ethnocultural, civic and multicultural, which lead to different discursive perceptions and policy prescriptions for ethnic organisations (Brown 2000: 126-7). To begin with, the ethnocultural model is founded on the primacy of “common descent”, authentic or constructed, as the touchstone of national membership. White Australia used to be achieved through two forms of boundary-marking—the restriction of entry to the outsiders and the subjugation of the “outsiders within”, respectively embodied in the Immigration Restriction Act in 1901 and the violent suppression of the Indigenous population. To cope with the challenge brought by immigrants from diverse backgrounds since the 1950s, assimilation policy was introduced, which required all migrants to shed their home culture and adopt the monocultural identity of the host society. Under the aforementioned assimilation model established by Milton Gordon, after the transitional period of acculturation, structural assimilation is expected to be achieved with the migrants moving out of ethnic associations and other related structures into the non-ethnic equivalents available in the host society (Gans 1997: 877). In this context, ethnic associations are regarded as carriers of undesirable elements of an alien culture. By relying on the ethnic subsystems, members of the minority groups are not compelled to engage with the dominant structure and subsequently lock their primary social relationships in the ethnic circle. The formation and persistence of ethnic organisations are therefore taken as ill omen of “parallel societies” or “ethnic ghettos”, and will hypothetically result in an increased fragmentation of the population and the eventual failure of assimilation (Schoeneberg 1985: 419). Paradoxically, restrictive access to the public space and political apathy on the part of the host government in fact accentuate the need for intra-group support offered by ethnic associations and unintendedly prolong their isolationist and home-oriented existence (Smith 1998: 212).

Often raised in polarity with the ethnocultural model is the civic model, which is founded on the institution of citizenship and the fundamental division between the

public and private spheres of the state. Members of the state may be divided along ethnic, cultural, social and other lines, but these differences are politically irrelevant and do not detract from the fact that they are one people granted with equal rights (Parekh 2000: 181). The civic model has its deep homogenising tendencies, for all the citizens are expected to privilege their political identity over other identities and to relate to the state under the identical prescriptions of rights and obligations, therefore precluding the possibility of differential treatment based on individual or group differences. Following the same logic, ethnic organisations are subsumed into the larger category of voluntary associations, which collectively comprise the civil community and by forging trust, social capital and sense of belonging, contribute to the proper functioning of democracy (Fennema 2004: 432). Influenced by this train of thought, quite a number of scholars explore the link between participation in ethnic associational life and the level of political participation by members of minority groups (Berger, Galonska and Koopmans 2004; Jacobs and Tillie 2004; Tillie 2004; Vermeulen 2005). The conclusion is that full civic participation of migrants is always accomplished by a “detour”, preceded and facilitated by involvement in intermediary social institutions like ethnic organisations (Berger, Galonska and Koopmans 2004: 492). Compared with the assimilation model, the civic model at least acknowledges the beneficial effects of ethnic organisations in mainstream life. However, the very emphasis on civic integration determines that it heavily tilts toward those modern, middle-class organisations which can be easily incorporated into the domain of civil society, and deliberately leaves out the large number of traditional organisations, whose chief mission lies in the preservation and development of traditional cultural identities (Fennema 2004: 440). Cultural expression, which is a central theme in the platform of many organisations, is viewed at its best as totally irrelevant to the public life, or at its worst, as proof of isolationist inclinations, which hopefully will die out with a full integration into the host society (Layton-Henry 1990: 102, 109).

A more positive evaluation of ethnic organisations is only viable under the multicultural model. Multiculturalism stems from the new social movement in the 1960s and is built upon the acknowledgement of the gap between formal equality and substantive equality. It recognises the legitimate interests of a multiplicity of marginalised social groups (ethnic minorities included) and seeks to incorporate their rights into the political structure (Stokes 1997: 6). While traditional liberalism as inbuilt in the assimilationist-civic model deduces from the premise of atomised individuals, multiculturalists believe

that “by treating each individual citizen in the same way (formal equality), inequality can be reproduced because of the different attributes individuals and groups possess” (Greig, Lewins and White 2003: 218). Ethnic organisations in this context represent the institutional wing of ethnic mobilisation and like other functionally differentiated subsystems, are essential for the realisation of a participatory democracy based on a “heterogeneous public” (Young 1990: 116). Apart from its basic function of cultural preservation, ethnic organisations may perform multiple roles like delivery of ethnically targeted welfare services, ethnic minority representation, involvement in government consultation and direct participation as corporate bodies in the political process (Vertovec 1999: 25). Precisely due to the inadequacy of a uniform system in addressing issues arising from a multiplicity of identities, beliefs and objectives, political scientists value the role played by differentiated subsystems in balancing diverse interests and creating resources for the satisfaction of special needs. The proposed “mirror representation” of minority groups and the newfound importance of deliberative policy-making as directed by pure reasoning could be useful remedies to avoid the “tyranny of the majority” and give voice to those once marginalised groups (Fishkin 1991). Hirst goes as far as to suggest a new model of associational democracy, advocating a greater degree of governance of social affairs through voluntary associations which provide specially tailored services to a particular set of audience (Hirst 1994: 20). This, at the policy level, is reflected in the contracting-out of social services to ethnic organisations, which are seen as “enjoying advantages in supplementing general community services” to cater to the need of a linguistically and culturally diverse clientele (Lippmann 1982: 18). Vertovec also cherishes high hopes for the ethnic organisations to contribute to a pluralistic system of service delivery. In his words, this offers the possibility of “a middle-path mode of decentralization which challenges the state strategy of collective welfarism without embracing the reductionist neo-liberal individualism” (Vertovec 1999: 29).

From the above review of literature, it is manifest that the interpretation of ethnic organisations is profoundly influenced by the changing theoretical and policy paradigms of the Western world. Ethnic organisations are often assessed according to their perceived roles in facilitating or hindering a given policy position, and the emphasis is invariably placed on the policy design of the host society. Although there are very few scholarly works researching the specific topic of Chinese organisations in Australia, a good amount of historiography is available about different aspects of Chinese migration

and settlement in Australia, which, responding to the changing paradigms of ethnic governance, produces contrasting images of unassimilable, passive objects to be managed and enterprising settlers participating in the forging of a democratic, multicultural national culture. While relevant to the research topic here, it is also interesting to note the clear trajectory of shifting academic interests and interpretive lens, which is reflexive of the transformation of the broad POS in Australia.

Unsurprisingly, early works related to Chinese migrants to Australia were chiefly concerned with the introduction and administration of the White Australia Policy. More often than not, they betrayed a strain of “cultural racism”, where race was coded in terms of “difference” and “culture” (Back and Solomos 2000: 20). From the 1920s to the 1950s, most Australian scholars were supportive of the exclusionary policy, and explained its history as a product of a desire to protect Australian workers from unfair competition. A notable example was Myra Willard’s *History of the White Australia Policy* (1923). In that book, Willard acknowledged that Commonwealth immigration policies excluded people of Asian background from entry to Australia, but justified them by claiming that the cultural predispositions of people from China were incompatible from the national culture of Australia. This line of argument was characteristic of the racial ideology prevalent at the time and received wide currency in official reports and documents (McLaren 1985).

The first wave of literature on Chinese settlement in Australia blossomed after the Second World War, during which scholars began to question the White Australia Policy and the rationales behind its emergence. Contributors to this stream of historiography included Margaret Rendell (1952), Geoffrey A. Oddie (1959), Christine Inglis (1967), Arthur Huck (1968), Charles Price (1974), Andrew Markus (1979), Kathryn Cronin (1982), Cathie May (1984) and Ann Atkinson (1988). Using English sources, these works traced the footsteps of Chinese diggers in the nineteenth century and sought to unravel the reasons behind the racist upsurge and the introduction of punitive policy regime by different colonies. For instance, Kathryn Cronin’s *Colonial Casualties* (1982) described the early experience of Chinese migrants in Victoria as bush workers and gold diggers, and spelt out the racial ideologies underlying discriminatory legislations passed by Victorian colonial authorities from 1854 to 1864. Similarly, Andrew Markus (1979) researched on the Chinese presence in California, Victoria and New South Wales in the 1860s, and the agitation and hatred they excited, which coalesced into wide-ranging,

anti-Chinese movements from 1882 to 1888. While Markus strove to offer a comparative account, his focus was on Australian movements encompassing the trade unionists, rural communities and the Labor Party. The scholarship of this period was richly imbued with a progressive spirit and faced up to the gross injustice inherent in racist discourses; however, as Jennifer Cushman rightly pointed out, their emphasis had been on racism towards the Chinese rather than Chinese communities *per se*. The Chinese were often treated as passive victims reacting and responding to white racism. In view of this, Cushman suggested that it was surely possible to restore some agency to the Chinese immigrants and to look more closely at their community life and organisational structures (Cushman 1984: 100-103).

Ironically, one of the earliest researches in Australia involving significant Chinese participation was conducted by the New South Wales Royal Commission (1892), which was aimed at investigating alleged Chinese gambling, immorality and charges of bribery. Despite its explicit goal of social control, a good measure of objectivity was achieved by appointing the famous Chinese-Australian Mandarin Quong Tart as one of its three commissioners and gathering views from both local residents and Chinese community leaders. Another important research about the internal dynamics of the Chinese community was Yong's *The New Gold Mountain: the Chinese in Australia 1901-1921* (1977), which examined the formation of Chinese communities in New South Wales and Victoria in the first two decades of the twentieth century and traced the development of their basic institutional structures. Yong's history was based on an exhaustive study of records of native-place associations, archives of the Chinese consulates in Sydney and Melbourne, and documents of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and *Kuomintang* in Sydney. Up till now, this remained to be one of the most authoritative accounts of early Chinese associational life.

The ushering in of the multicultural era dramatically changed the mindset and perspectives of minority history-writing. Chinese migrants were no longer viewed as passive objects waiting to be fit into the grand scheme of white nation-building; instead their experiences were perceived as an integral part of Australian history. At the official level, relevant government agencies were commissioning researchers to explore concrete issues such as migration trends, demographical patterns, settlement experiences, intergroup relations, and social problems encountered by different ethnic groups including the Chinese. *Chinese Immigrants in Australia: Construction of a*

Socio-Economic Profile (1988) by Kee Poo-Kong and *Dinky-di: the Contributions of Chinese Immigrants and Australians of Chinese Descent to Australia's Defence Forces* (1989) by Morag Loh and Judith Winternitz were both published through the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA), while Heritage Offices at the state level launched a series of reports on local histories of Chinese communities (Smith 1997; Williams 1999). In addition, a number of biographies and autobiographies of famous Chinese Australian leaders emerged in recent years, whose life stories intersected with the larger picture of migrant settlement and community development in Australia. Important works in this category included the Chinese-language biography of Arthur Lock Chang (1999), the autobiography of Stanley Hunt (2009), the oral history of Chinese Australians by Diana Giese (1997) and many others.

In the academic community, the progressive rewriting of history was exemplified in John Fitzgerald's *Big White Lie* (2007), which broke new ground by writing about the institutional involvement of Chinese fraternal and political associations in White Australia. Going beyond the paradigm of "cultural clash", John Fitzgerald affirmed the democratic and egalitarian tradition inherent in Chinese fraternal networks and invalidated the logics of cultural racism based on supposedly unique "national values" (Fitzgerald 2007: 28). The restoration of the Chinese agency has been keenly reflected in many recent works. For instance, Jane Lydon's *Many Inventions* (1999) beautifully presented a historical archaeology of the Chinese community at the west side of Sydney Cove from 1890 to 1930. It was not only an archaeological investigation of antiques, cultural relics and heritage places, but also a re-enactment of cultural and social life of Chinese community at the time. Dealing with similar subject matters, *Red Tape, Gold Scissors* (1997) by Shirley Fitzgerald provided a chronological view of the historical buildup of Chinese communities in Sydney from before the colonial era to the early 1990s, with a vivid description of sites of ethnographical interest. Mei-Fen Guo (2013) on the other hand, delved into the huge archive of Chinese newspapers and uncovered the historical processes by which Chinese immigrants came to participate in Australian life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. A similar approach was adopted to recount the history of the Australian *Kuomintang* from 1911-2013 by supplementing oral history interviews with the archival materials of the Sydney and Melbourne branches of the Chinese Nationalist Party, which include "rich photographic collections, records of membership, notes of committee meetings, reports of conventions, official and private correspondences, publications, financial records and account books" (Guo

and Brett 2003: ix). In all these accounts, there was an extensive use of images, legislative records, census data, royal commission records, petitions, oral histories, commercial directories, artefacts, official correspondence and maps to re-construct the story of the Chinese in Sydney.

Apart from historians, sociologists also contribute to the unravelling of inner dynamics of Chinese communities in Australia. Kewt-Hon Chin (1997), for example, explored the intra-ethnic conflict of the Sydney Chinese. By focusing on the conflict between Chinese immigrants from Indochina and the Chinatown Chinese in Western and Central Sydney during the late 1980s, Chin identified four “patterns of strains”—ideological incompatibility, status ambiguity, economic rivalry and different educational approaches, which in his view caused the factional fights between various Chinese groups. Walter Lalich, on the other hand, employed the concept of ethnic community capital to analyse the development of ethnic social infrastructure in Sydney, which consisted of places of worship, community clubs, migrant resource centres, as well as aged care organisations (Lalich 2006). Lalich’s research is very informative, containing updated data about volunteer involvement and financial makeup of some forty-three organisational entities. However, the research topic he chooses to explore determines that his sample only includes those organisations which are considered part of the local infrastructure, to the exclusion of the large majority of new locality associations, whose missions are contextualised in the transnational setting. In general, there has been a significant improvement in the diversity and sophistication of literature on Chinese in Australia, reflecting the evolution of the prevalent ideology framework from assimilation to multiculturalism. As Reeves and Mountford note,

The tendency within Chinese Australian studies during the past decade towards close readings of regional locales has gone hand in hand with an increasing awareness of the need to investigate communities on their own terms. After a long period of relative silence, Sinocentric perspectives within histories of migration and settlement are being relocated to the centre ground. (2011: 121)

Congruent with the institutionalist approach, the restoration of the Sinocentric perspectives could be interpreted as a reflection of the relaxed policy environment in Australia, which valorises and celebrates diversity. In other words, the multicultural ideology itself contains a good measure of progressive reflexivity, which, to some extent, accommodates the expression of agency. While admitting theoretical elasticity

of the POS approach, other scholars do find it necessary to go beyond the institutionalist approach for a further liberation of the agency. In a recent article, Nicholls and Uitermarks pointed to the “path-dependent” tendency of the institutional paradigm and called for a new “political field”, which “in addition to institutions and relations”, examined “how actors ascribe meaning to reality and frame policy problems and solutions” (2013: 1557). Conducting cases studies of minority organisations in Amsterdam and Los Angeles, they discovered that in the common background of post-multicultural politics, the different strategies employed by local elites and community leaders resulted in divergent trends of minority politics in these two cities. The role of organisational actors to challenge or cooperate with the governing structure was configured into the proposed “political field” to explain the making and breaking of the political structure (2013: 1571). At another front, the institutionalist approach is critiqued for its sole emphasis on the dyadic relationship between the migrants and the host society without capturing the circuit movements and transnational activism of migrants (Østergaard-Nielsen 2001: 264). With the emergence and consolidation of transnational studies, it is widely acknowledged that immigrants “develop and maintain relations—familial, economic, social, organizational, religious and political—that span borders”, and exhibit their agency through the simultaneous negotiation with “a number of hegemonic contexts, both global and local” (Glick Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton 1992: 1, 7). Building on this flexible understanding of agency, Adam McKeown calls for the formulation of a global perspective, which could “centre attention on ‘links’ and ‘connections’ rather than marginalise them as secondary phenomena that occupy the interstices between nations or civilisations” (McKeown 2001: 5-6). Such an analytical perspective is indispensable for the discussion of the Chinese diasporas, which are characterised by their long historical tradition, wide geographical span and dynamic exchanges.

1.3. Transnational Approach

To compensate for the incompleteness of the institutionalist approach and give justice to the remarkable agency of the Chinese migrants, a transnational approach is required to explore “the growing disjuncture between territory, subjectivity and collective social movement and the steady erosion, principally due to the force and form of electronic mediation, of the relationship between spatial and virtual neighborhoods” (Appadurai 1995: 213). In his authoritative work on transnationalism, Vertovec defines

transnational practices as “the sustained linkages and ongoing exchanges among non-state actors based across national borders” (Vertovec 2009: 3). Although such cross-border activism could be traced back to the pre-industrial age, the development of transnationalism as a field of inquiry parallels the intensification of the globalising processes and is undergirded by the advance of “time-space-compressing” telecommunication and electronic technologies which bring about the increasing extent, intensity, velocity and impact of global interconnectedness across a broad range of human domains (Cohen 1997; Held 1999; Massey 1999). As a special prism to comprehend the processes and consequences of globalisation, the concept of transnationalism has evolved into a master framework to explain various types of transnational social formations, which leads Vertovec to propose the possibility of “cross-fertilisation” of theories and ideas by scholars of diverse disciplines (Vertovec 2009).

When applied to the social formation of international migration, transnationalism provides us with a very useful perspective to explore issues like cross-border migratory movements, the de-territorial politics of the home country and diasporic identities. Key in the analytical framework of transnationalism are notions of “transmigrants” (Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton-Blanc 1994: 51) or “transnational cultural brokers” (Schein 1998), which aim to foreground the agency of today’s immigrants, whose networks, activities and patterns of life transcend national borders and significantly impact on the dialectic interplay of sending nations and destination countries. The high degree of interconnectivity leads to the formation of multidimensional transnational fields, which are sustained by the everyday transnational practices of immigrants, and in the meantime create new opportunities for the flexible negotiation of transmigrants (Glick Schiller 1997: 158). The concepts of “transmigrants” or “transnational brokerage” are quite useful for the analysis of Chinese diasporic communities, which sprawl all over the world, but are somehow united by the same set of cultural-historical premises. Admittedly, migratory movements of the Chinese have been a longstanding practice, especially for those from South China where the seafaring tradition prevails and underlies the development of Chinese trading diasporas in the Asia Pacific region (Freedman 1979; Purcell 1965; Skinner 1968). The Chinese “comprador class”, which was central in facilitating the trade between the Chinese Empire and colonial powers in the nineteenth century, represented the earliest group of Chinese ethnic brokers fully adapted to the transnational conditions of a burgeoning capitalist economy.

With the intensification of the globalising process, contemporary Chinese transnational brokerage corresponds to “a different period in the evolution of the world economy and to a different set of responses and strategies by people in a condition of disadvantage to its dominant logic” (Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt 1999: 227). On the one hand, as Nonini and Ong note, what we call transnationalism today is intimately connected with “strategies of accumulation” under the late-capitalist conditions. Adopting tactics like “satellite families”, “multiple citizenships” and “fraternal business network”, Chinese transmigrants have generated “new and distinctive social arrangements, cultural discourses, practices and subjectivities”, which satisfy the demands of capitalist accumulation but yet adhere to the cultural logics of the Chinese tradition (Nonini and Ong 1997: 11). This point is expounded by prodigious literature exploring the root reasons for the economic miracles of the East-Asian Region, which are invariably found in the unique business creeds embedded in broad Confucianism (Fukuyama 1995; Gomez and Benton 2004; Lever-Tracy, Ip, and Tracy 1996; Redding 1993; Weidenbaum and Hughes 1996; Yeung and Olds 2000). On the other hand, fuelled by capitalist impulses toward a more efficient allocation of elements of production, transnational enterprise is more about free choice of countless individuals guided by rational cost-benefit analyses rather than life-and-death struggles necessitated by impossible conditions of the home country (except in the case of refugees). The relative freedom enjoyed by individual migrants and the necessary concessions made by nation-states to accommodate these rights allow for a progressive reading of transnationalism as the “counter-narrative of the nation”, or “third space of enunciation”, which locates hybridity as a transformative site offering the possibilities of new subject positions and forms of political agency and subversion (Bhabha 1994: 37).

While the empowerment of individual migrants is negligible vis-à-vis the regulatory authority of the states, immigrant transnationalism, when viewed in aggregate terms, does have macro-level social consequences for communities and broader institutionalised structures such as local and national governments (Itzigsohn et al. 1999; Levitt 2001; Østergaard-Nielsen 2001). As Portes observes,

These and similar actions, multiplied by the thousands, translate into a flow of money that can become a prime source of foreign exchange for sending nations, into investments that sustain the home construction industry in

these nations, and into new cultural practices that radically modify the value systems and everyday lives of entire regions. (Portes 2003: 877-8)

In this context, we observe a paradigmatic change in conceiving the triadic relationships between transmigrants, host society and home government. In this regard, the concept of transnationalism converges with diasporic research in their common emphasis on the sustained inter-dynamics between the immigrant communities and their homelands (Safran 1991: 83-4). In the reconfigured transnational field, the migrants are no longer viewed as passive objects to be moved around under national imperatives, but as mobile transnational brokers who benefit from a bifocal self-identification and seek to circumvent and negotiate with different national regimes by selecting different sites for investment, work and family relocation. The variegated networks of families, groups and organisations, which are the central components of the “transnational social space”, serve as the instrumental vehicles to tap into opportunities all over the world for a maximisation of interests (Basch, Glick Schiller and Blanc-Szanton 1994; Goldring 1998; Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004). The durability and frequency of these transnational practices, though not necessarily eroding the integrity of the nation-states, have indeed made it highly desirable for the governing class from both sending and receiving countries to proactively engage themselves in “mutually-referential” policy-making, which factors in the strategic considerations of the significant other in their own policy designs.

For the host government, especially major settlers’ societies like the US, Canada and Australia, policy responses to the transnational thrust range from deliberate strengthening of the national myth to a reluctant recognition of simultaneity as a permanent stage of development. Pioneering thinkers of the area such as Alejandro Portes, Luis Guarnizo, Patricia Landolt and Thomas Faist reject the linear, unidirectional model of gradualist integration and postulate “transnationalism” as an alternative mode of immigrant adaptation in receiving countries alongside assimilation and ethnic pluralism (Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt 1999: 229; Faist 2000a: 201). Building on the segmented assimilation theory, Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt argued that apart from ascending via mainstream channels, transmigrants could achieve social mobility through the internal dynamics of an established ethnic enclave, or by engaging in transnational endeavours to satisfy their quest for economic success and social status (Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt 1999; Portes and Zhou 1993). Under this model, integration and transnationalism are not constructed as diametrically opposite to each

other, but understood as concurrent and intertwined threads of self-positioning with a “both/and rather than either/or character” (Kivisto 2003: 17). The empirical research of Faist also confirms that contrary to conventional belief, multicultural policies can be conducive to transnational practices as they provide the resource and space for the institutionalisation of ethnic or religious organisations (Faist 2000b: 214). The introduction of “productive diversity” in the late 1990s as one of the revised themes of Australian multicultural policy represented a serious attempt to rechannel long-standing transnational practices for the national good. In the report submitted by the National Multicultural Advisory Council (NMAC), “Productive Diversity” was conceptualised as “the maximisation of the significant cultural, social and economic dividends which arise from the diversity of our population” (NMAC 1999: 17). In the section about “Diversity Dividends”, the Council enunciated the potential gains from diversity against the backdrop of economic globalisation, such as competitive edge in service provision, influential global networks and familiarity with diverse customs, languages and cultures of global and domestic suppliers, partners and customers (NMAC 1999: 71). The impulse to tap into existing transnational resources goes hand in hand with the challenge of strengthening the boundary of nation-states.

For the home government, there are even greater vested interests in developing long-distance nationalism and benefiting from its tangible manifestations like remittances, investments, transfer of science and technologies, as well as moral support of home country policies in the international arena. To encourage the expression of deterritorialised patriotism, sending countries come up with a series of creative policy measures targeting their expatriate populations. Many scholars note the proliferation of dual citizenship and dual nationality programs, which allow transmigrants to preserve their legal standing in the homeland while consolidating their economic and political position in the new country (Portes, Escobar and Arana 2008: 1058). With a systematic examination of the policy repertoire of sending nations, Levitt and de la Dehesa proposed five broad categories: 1) ministerial or consular reforms; 2) investment policies which seek to attract and channel migrant remittances; 3) extension of political rights in the form of dual citizenship or nationality, the right to vote from overseas, or the right to run for public office; 4) the extension of state protections or services to nationals living abroad that go beyond traditional consular services; and 5) implementation of symbolic policies designed to reinforce emigrants’ sense of enduring membership (Levitt and de la Dehesa 2003: 590). The PRC state, though

uncompromising about the issue of dual citizenship, has indeed implemented a wide range of favourable policies to reach out to the Chinese expatriates, easing their entry and residence in China and facilitating their economic investment in hometowns and key economic zones (Barabantseva 2005; Biao 2003; Liu 2005; Thunø 2001).

The competing claims of resident countries and homeland states, to a great extent, lead to the empowerment of Chinese transnational brokers, who now enjoy a wider scope of strategic manoeuvring to advance their interests. The adoption of the transnational (diasporic) perspective helps with a synthesis of multiple POSs involved in the long chain of migration and is conducive to the cognitive refocus on the remarkable agency of the transmigrants. It highlights those links, flows and processes, which are usually left out of nation-based histories and suggests the ways they interact with local perspectives (Tan 2007, 2013). At the macro-level, Adam McKeown proposed five distinct categories to understand the dynamism of modern Chinese diaspora, respectively diaspora labor, diasporic networks, diasporic nationalism, ethnic Chinese and diasporic culture, which reflect “the way that practices and ideologies of migration are embedded in larger global trends and transnational activities, with different aspects developing and coming to the forefront at different times” (McKeown 1999: 308). At the micro-level, there is an abundance of literature, which adopts the transnational lens to analyse different facets of Chinese migratory experiences. Notably, a huge amount of scholarly writing emerges to address the transnational business practices of the ethnic Chinese, the operation of their fraternal networks and in particular, their investment in China and the Greater Asian region (Cheok, Hing and Lee 2012; Huang, Zhuang and Tanaka 2000; Koehn and Yin 2002; Lever-Tracy, Ip, and Tracy 1996; Olds and Yeung 1999; Rauch 2002; Weidenbaum and Hughes 1996). These accounts chart out the rise of a new generation of modern Chinese entrepreneurs and point to an alternative vision of Asian modernity, which combines Chinese cultural logics with capitalist accumulation (Ong 1999: 6, 23). This is aptly reflected in the operational mode of new locality associations, which are organised on highly localised basis, but yet demonstrate strong globalising tendencies (Liu 1998).

Related to the theme of transnational Chinese business is the emergence of *qiaoxiang* (major emigration communities) as a new research area (Yow 2013: 6). In the past few decades, many ethnographical studies were undertaken to unravel the important role played by the Chinese overseas in transforming socio-economic profiles of *qiaoxiang*.

The earliest comprehensive work on *qiaoxiang* is that of Ta Chen (1939), who examined the influence of overseas migration on the standards of living and social customs of *qiaoxiang*. This gave rise to a flurry of *qiaoxiang* literature with varying focuses on oral histories, outreaching strategies of the local government, remittance and investment, as well as the role of migrant networks in sustaining these exchanges (Douw, Huang and Godley 1999; Hsu 2000; Kuah 2000; Tan 2007; Williams 2002; Yow 2013). In his highly-regarded doctoral thesis *Destination Qiaoxiang: Pearl River Delta Villages & Pacific Ports, 1849-1949* (2002), Michael Williams formally proposed *qiaoxiang* as an alternative analytical perspective to the old “border guard view”, which referred to the disciplinary control of migrants by the receiving state. In his words,

Research based on “border guard” issues and the perspective of the nation-state also have a tendency to focus on activities within defined territories and to see the act of “getting in” to a specific territory as all important. Continuing links with places of origin, including return, and motivations not centered on one-way migration and settlement, are either neglected or interpreted as the result of destination laws and prejudice. Rarely are these seen as choices that people might make according to their own ideals. (Williams 2002: 22)

Indeed, the centrality of voluntary, purposive choice permeates the literature of Chinese transnationalism, be it about the flexible arrangement of “astronaut families” (Bun 1997; Pe-Pua et al. 1998; Walters 1999; Zhou 1998), the nebulous transnational Chinese mediasphere (Carstens 2003; Sun 2006; Sun et al. 2011), or the expression of a highly fluid transnational identity (Benton and Gomez 2014; Kuah and Davidson 2008; Lee 2006; Ouyang 2007). As Vertovec and Cohen pertinently argue, underlying the plethora of transnational practices is an acute awareness of multi-locality, which stimulates the need to conceptually connect oneself with others, both “here” and “there”, who share the same “routes” and “roots” (1999: xviii). Importantly, the formation of diasporic consciousness is not confined to first-generation transmigrants, but could be extended to a nascent second generation through the reproduction of cultural imaginaries by the transnational media (Appadurai 1996). As John Sinclair and his collaborators found out in investigating the use of Chinese news programs, films and videos among recent Chinese immigrants to Australia from China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Southeast Asia and Indochina, despite group difference, the sustained use of transnational media was a key factor in creating and maintaining the diasporic public and fostering the sense of Chineseness (Sinclair *et al.* 2000). However, as Ien Ang points out, the resultant notion of Chineseness is not “a category with a fixed content”, but “operates as an open and

indeterminate signifier whose meanings are constantly renegotiated and rearticulated in the different sections of the Chinese diaspora” (Ang 2001: 38). The recognition of the heterogeneous nature of diasporic belonging has spawned a vast amount of literature on memories, homelands and generational identity formation (Kuah and Davidson 2008; Leung 2007; Skrbiš 1999; Wang and Wong 2007). The diversified perceptions of homelands, which are formed through selective processing of information and experiences, give rise to different modes of interactions between the transmigrants, their offspring and the homelands, and in the present case, could be usefully extended to explain the different patterns of activism of Chinese organisations (Skrbiš 1999: 42-3).

As the above review of literature indicates, the transnational approach provides me with a useful perspective to explore issues like cultural bonds, ties to the homeland, as well as transnational organisations and networks linking people together across geographical boundaries. Going beyond the simple dyadic relationship between the migrants and host society, this approach aims to accentuate the agency of transmigrants in negotiating with POSs at multiple localities, and in this sense, represents a significant analytical expansion of the institutionalist approach. While most research influenced by the institutionalist approach focuses on how host institutions shape the paths of incorporation of migrants, and by doing so tends to erase the efficacy of agency itself, the transnational approach does away with the normative expectation of full integration of migrants into the host society and regards their engagement in transnational activities as a viable channel of adaptation.

Although there are not many scholarly works addressing the specific topic of Chinese community organisations in Australia, I could nevertheless base my analysis on the useful insights derived from the anthropological, institutionalist and transnational approaches and come up with my own interpretive framework. On the one hand, the anthropological approach allows me to systematically study the spectrum of Chinese organisations following the broad divide of traditional and modern types and uncover the innate cultural logics of their operation. On the other hand, a rudimentary synthesis of the institutionalist and transnational approaches suggests that the dynamics of Chinese organisational activism has to be contextualised in at least two sets of POS—that of the home country and host society. For my present study, the POSs to be considered are the Australian multicultural policy and the overseas Chinese policy of the PRC. In the next chapter, I will explore the developmental trajectory of these state-

sponsored ideologies and then propose a model of ethnic capital conversion as the overarching framework to understand their implications for the activism of Chinese-Australians and their organisations.

Chapter Two: The Interpretive Framework

The review of literature illustrates that local integration and transnationalism are not mutually exclusive national agendas; or rather, they represent intertwining threads of policy regimes, which form a macro-level political opportunity structure (POS) which shapes and regulates the activities in the transnational space. The extraordinary agency of the transmigrants is best reflected in their flexible negotiation with multiple political powers and the balance they strike between self-interest and political imperatives of the states. This chapter aims to interpret the dynamic interactions between Chinese transmigrants and the synthesised POS through a model of ethnic capital conversion. In this model, the Australian multicultural policy and overseas Chinese policy of the PRC are regarded as the twin pillars of the expanded POS, which provide the localised contexts for the organisational activism of Chinese-Australians. In this chapter, I will first explain the working principles of the model in relation to the concept of “transmigrants”, and then proceed with the separate discussions of policy transformations in both Australia and China.

2.1. Transmigrants Viewed in a Model of Ethnic Capital Conversion

Before going into details of the proposed model of ethnic capital conversion, it is of great importance to renew our understanding of the “transmigrants”, who are the key agents of overseas Chinese organisational activism. As Glick Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton conceptualised it,

Transmigrants develop and maintain multiple-relations—familial, economic, social, organisational, religious, and political that span borders. Transmigrants take actions, make decisions, and feel concerns, and develop identities within social networks that connect them to two or more societies simultaneously. (1992: 1-2)

As the previous chapter demonstrates, there are a number of unique characteristics for transmigrants, which set them apart from migrants of the older era. To begin with, the emergence of the class of transmigrants is grounded in the new socio-historical circumstances characterised by “advanced telecommunication technology, a new international division of labour, increasing spatial fluidity of global capital and the rise of flexible production and specialisation in the global economy” (Ma 2003: 1). These historical conditions are the driving forces behind the phenomenon of mass-scale global

migration and help create the state of simultaneity for those living transnational lives. Smith gave a vivid account of this existential mode:

Co-presence in more than one spatial location (place/country/locality) is viewed as occurring in the postmodern “now” rather than, as in earlier times, in sequenced stages of time (before/after), space (sending/receiving) and place (here/there). In part the expectation of simultaneity is due to the widespread (though still unequal) availability of and access to advanced means of communication and transport, ranging from affordable air travel to inexpensive phone cards. (2005: 240)

With the advance of these time-space-compressing technologies, the standard migratory experience undergoes significant transformation from one that was permanent and unidirectional into a story of circuit movements undergirded by the freedom of choice. Moreover, the paradigmatic change is supported by the changing social profiles of the transmigrants themselves. Different from the migrants of the pre-1960s era who were mostly poor labourers facing economic, religious or political duress at the places of origin, a good proportion of today’s transnational migrants are well-educated and relatively well-off businessmen or professionals, who migrate for the purpose of self-fulfilment rather than mere survival (Cooke, Zhang and Wang 2013; Wickberg 1994). Because of the social, economic and political capitals they possess, they are warmly sought by sending and receiving countries alike and are in the position of making rational, strategic decisions based on an objective appraisal of the multiple opportunity structures they encounter in the migratory process.

The state of simultaneity made possible by modern technology on the one hand, and the availability of personal resources as levers in negotiating with the nation-states on the other, underlie the remarkable agency of today’s transmigrants and are the necessary conditions for those transnational brokering practices to become a constant feature of modern life. At the everyday level, all types of transnational activities abound, from the development of global ethnic business network (Olds and Yeung 1999), to the prosperity of transnational sociocultural exchanges (Itzigsohn and Saucedo 2002), and to the formation of ethnic lobby groups which liaise with the political elites home and abroad (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003; Singh 2012). In view of these developments, both home and destination countries are coming to recognise the enormous political and economic influence wielded by transmigrants and putting special policy emphasis on those of “middling social and economic status”, who are huge in number, rich in resources and having the greatest potentials in “mediating or brokering the process of

transnational interconnectivity” (Smith 2010: 240-1). The mediated power relation between the nation-states and transmigrants could be construed as such: while the individual decisions of the transmigrants are based on a cost-benefit analysis under each national context, the collective agents of transnational projects could bring about a dramatic reconfiguration of the disciplinary regime of the state, which then “assumes new functions, abdicates responsibilities for others, and redefines who its members are” (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004: 1019).

Once a dialectical understanding of agency (transmigrants empowered by modern technology and personal resources) and structure (national policies) is established, I could proceed with an analytical model to provide unified interpretations of myriad transnational activities in a multiplicity of national contexts. An abstraction of these activities could be achieved by viewing them as the accumulation, movement and conversion of different types of capital across borders, usually with the purpose of maximising the aggregate capitals. The categorisation of capitals was first proposed by Pierre Bourdieu,

The position of a given agent within the social space can be defined by the positions he occupies in the different fields, that is, in the distribution of powers that are active within each of them. These are, principally, economic capital (in its different kinds), cultural capital and social capital, as well as symbolic capital, commonly called prestige, reputation, renown, etc., which is the form in which the different forms of capital are perceived and recognised as legitimate. (Bourdieu 1985: 724)

The theorisation of capital represented Bourdieu’s ambition to develop a general science of the economy of practices, which endeavoured to grasp capital and profit in all their forms and to establish the laws whereby the different types of capital changed into one another. Deeply influenced by Marxist thinking, Bourdieu argued for the fundamental role of economic capital, which was directly and immediately convertible into money, but he agreed on the mutual convertibility of all forms of capital, including those conventionally perceived as intangible and “priceless” in the social process (Bourdieu 1986: 47).

Bourdieu’s theory can be logically extended to describe the constitution and operation of the newly emerged field of multicultural ethnicity, which is characterised by the deliberative manipulation of ethnic capital and its extensive conversions from and into other forms of capital, with the ultimate aim of the maximum appreciation of the

aggregate capitals possessed by the transnational social actors. The inclusion of ethnic capital into Bourdieu's theoretical framework of capital is quite recent in literature. Early use of this term was sometimes interchangeable with "cultural capital" or "ethnic community capital", referring to "the sum of valued knowledge, styles, social and physical (bodily) characteristics and practical behavioural dispositions within the given field" (Hage 2000: 53). Later theorists went beyond the visible cultural traits and defined ethnic capital as an assortment of various types of capital which exerted a direct impact upon the formation and shift of ethnic configurations in a given state. For example, Tabar, Noble and Poynting perceived ethnic capital as:

A complex of forms of capital that can be valorised: both within a perceived community and in relation to mainstream political processes. These capitals include both the most obvious forms of cultural capital (community knowledge, education and so on), social capital (forms of association and connection) and economic capital. (Tabar, Poynting and Noble 2003: 276)

Also noting the manifest phenomenon of capital exchange taking place in the field of ethnic politics, they came up with three commonest modes of conversion—to participate in "ethnic affairs industry" as a professional, to convert economic strength into status within the ethnic community, and to use established mainstream political career as a platform to champion ethnic cause, thereby accumulating more ethnic capital in the process (Tabar, Poynting and Noble 2003: 276-7).

The findings of Tabar, Noble and Poynting give valuable insights into different types of ethnic capital conversion allowable in a multicultural society like Australia. However, when it comes to the specific case of the Chinese overseas, it suffers from its inability to address alternative channels of capital conversion, which are flourishing beyond the domestic policy frame of multiculturalism (Jakubowicz 2011). Moreover, the narrow focus on the Western side of the story could lead to significant analytic oversight when dealing with Chinese community organisations, whose very existence predates the historical specificities of multicultural ideologies in the West and is rooted in one of the world's most ancient civilisations. While pursuit of cultural right and socio-economic equality on behalf of its members constitutes a good portion of agendas advocated by Chinese community organisations in Australia, their actual range of activities far exceed that. Drawing upon the expansion of the Chinese diasporic network, cross-border operation has become a norm for Chinese organisations, a trend becoming all the more

manifest with the erosion of multiculturalism at the domestic front and the external support of a powerful PRC state.

Thus, if we cross the boundary of nation-states, and regard the “domestic” side of the story as mere constituents of a global picture, we may arrive at a more powerful model of ethnic capital conversion well suited for the mammoth scale of the diasporic Chinese. In such an enlarged framework, the flow of ethnic Chinese capital is taking place in all directions along every possible route in the diasporic network. A few key nodes could be identified with the densest traffic and largest volume of transactions, for instance, the US and China. However, this does not prevent the dispersal of capital to other less well-known sites, as directed by “family biopolitics” featuring a series of rational practices to maximise family interest. In this light, it is not rare to see middle-class Chinese obtain passports not only from Canada, Australia, Singapore and the United States, but also from revenue-poor Fiji, the Philippines, Panama and Tonga to evade tax (Ong 1993: 752). The multiplicity of locales involved in the global movement of ethnic Chinese capital results in a hierarchy of the capital itself. For instance, among the Chinese co-ethnics, American and European Chinese have the highest status, followed by Hong Kong Chinese, Taiwanese and Southeast Asian Chinese, the mainland Chinese having the lowest status (Kuah and Hu-Dehart 2006: 19).

The “value differentials” of ethnic Chinese capital from different countries largely determine the direction of capital flow, usually from Western countries to China, the route through which the greatest revenue could be made. Thus, for the particular group of Chinese-Australians, the path from Australia to China represents the artery of capital movement, and China becomes the primary site where the value of ethnic capital is realised. This sets the background for the establishment of a huge number of native-place organisations, which in the name of cultural exchanges, capitalise on the preferential policies introduced by different levels of Chinese governments. Interestingly, it is through such exchanges that the dual nature of the ethnic Chinese capital is exhibited. Again take Chinese-Australians for instance, their ethnic capital is in essence a two-fold complex, comprising “Chineseness” and “Australianness”, the latter being a particular strand of “Whiteness”. When this capital is converted in China for other forms of capital (social, economic or political), the facet of “Chineseness” creates trust and the sense of belonging in the imagined community, while the real capital being converted is “Whiteness”. In the mid-1980s, the quality of “Whiteness”

was readily guaranteed upon production of a “foreign passport”. Nowadays, with more Chinese citizens receiving education overseas, “Whiteness” which counts in the marketplace has to be more specific, embodied in professional qualifications, academic achievement, business strength, established political careers, or any other demonstrable evidence of status in the host society. Once the threshold for capital conversion is met, identity carriers will be given ready access to respectability and power in China, which often means several rungs up the social ladder compared with their status in Australia.

Notably, a reversed form of capital conversion is also taking place at a greater frequency these years due to the expanding influence of China and the growing interest on the part of Australia to tap into emerging opportunities (Nyíri 2005). The emphasis on an “Asia-literate society” and the subsequent valorisation of China-related knowledge and resource serve as strong reasons for an appreciation of the ethnic Chinese capital. As Stephen Fitzgerald excitedly proclaimed:

Across the spectrum of Australian life, there are a thousand other examples of the Asianisation of Australia in the two senses in which I use the term, of interconnectedness with Asia in our external relations and in our daily lives, and of bringing Asia into our social and cultural landscape. (Fitzgerald *Is Australia an Asian Country*, 1997: 67)

Riding on the waves of change, Chinese community leaders, in addition to representing their own communities, are increasingly positing themselves as “China experts” and offering advice to the Australian government and local business sector on the proper way of engaging with China. Only this time the duality of their identity is deployed in exactly the opposite fashion. Accumulated “Whiteness” (“Australianness”) serves as the proof of allegiance to the Australian state, while “Chineseness” is being converted into social and political capital in policy domains such as multiculturalism, foreign affairs and international trade. Broadly speaking, the manipulation of the two-fold ethnic Chinese capital observes a rule of shortage and tradability. In practice, this means an emphasis of “Chineseness” to solve external problems related to the PRC and internal issues of local Chinese communities for the governing class of Australia, together with an accentuation of “Whiteness” which is symbolic of enlightenment, affluence and technological progress when addressing a Chinese audience. What is expected to be achieved through such a situational representation of the “cultural self” is to set up a positive chain of appreciation of ethnic Chinese capital at both sites through multiple

rounds of transactions into new forms of social, economic and political capital, which are then reinvested globally to realise the greatest value for the identity carriers.

The proposed model of ethnic capital conversion represents a valuable contribution of this thesis to comprehend the multifaceted activities undertaken by the Chinese overseas. Though not entirely new in its propositions, it extends the application of capital conversion to the transnational sphere and addresses the multiplicity of locales and availability of transactional resources, which are the key characteristics of transmigrants. While giving ample emphasis on the agency of Chinese transnational actors, it also attends to the specific national contexts of Australia and China to accentuate the dialectical interplay of agency and structure. Essentially, the strength of this model lies in its generalising power. Its application is not confined to Chinese-Australians *per se* and their organisational activism. With minor adjustments, it is equally valid for the analysis of transmigrants of other national backgrounds or any type of observable transnational activities. Moreover, the model calls into question neat divisions of local, national, and global connections. By drawing attention to the simultaneous functioning of multiple political opportunity structures, it points to the complexity of the issue of migrant adaptation and has the predicative potency for the numerous pathways and strategies adopted by transmigrants under different circumstances. This echoes the gradualist view of Levitt and Glick Schiller:

It is more useful to think of the migrant experience as a kind of gauge which, while anchored, pivots between a new land and a transnational incorporation. Movement and attachment is not linear or sequential but capable of rotating back and forth and changing direction over time. The median point on this gauge is not full incorporation but rather simultaneity of connection. (2004: 1011)

The formation of a global system for the circulation of ethnic Chinese capital as suggested by the model has profound implications for the evolution of Chinese organisations anywhere in the world, those in Australia being no exceptions. However, as Messina rightly cautioned:

Macro theories of immigration and immigrant incorporation, while undeniably illuminating and potentially important, nevertheless need to be rooted in the larger political-cultural, historical and institutional settings of one or more of the major immigrant-receiving countries. (2013: 16)

In other words, the specific national, regional, and/or local political settings in which immigration occurs are irreducible to general modellings and have to be analysed case by case. Similarly, Ong highlights the importance of “localising strategies” of transnational subjects in exercising their agency. As she puts it, each kind of regime requires the “localisation of disciplinary subject”, that is, it requires that persons be locatable and confinable to specific spaces and relations defined by the regimes. The transnational migrants in turn, come up with context-specific strategies to evade, deflect and take advantage of the socio-political conditions of countries they reside in (Ong 1993: 113). In recognition of the significance of local specificity, I will supplement the general model of ethnic capital conversion with discussions of the two predominant policy contexts: Australian multiculturalism and overseas Chinese policy of the PRC.

2.2. Australian Multiculturalism

The evolution of cultural ideologies from assimilation to multiculturalism is theoretically premised on a humanist understanding of the inalienability of cultural rights. In practice, it incrementally opens the socio-political space to the ethnic minorities and invites their participation into the mainstream sphere under conditions stipulated by the core community.

In Australia, the official acceptance of the idea of multicultural society began with the reform-minded Whitlam government. In 1973, Al Grassby, the Minister for Immigration, issued a statement entitled *A Multicultural Society for the Future*, in which multiculturalism was advocated with the frequently cited phrase “the family of the nation”, asserting the need to recognise, rather than dismiss the migrants’ cultural distinctiveness (Collins 1992: 115). At this phase, the emphasis was primarily on the cultural aspect, as proven by the publication of the Australian Ethnic Affairs Council (AEAC), “our goal in Australia should be to create a society in which people of non-Anglo-Australian origins are given the opportunity as individuals or groups, to choose to preserve and develop their culture—their languages, traditions and arts—so that these can become living elements in the diverse culture of the society” (AEAC 1977: 16). This stance was also embraced by the prominent sociologist Jerzy Zubrzycki who argued that “justice for all Australians” was only possible within “the framework of cultural pluralism but not structural pluralism” (Zubrzycki 1977: 130-131). The three key principles derived from the cultural pluralist model were social cohesion, cultural

identity and equality of opportunity, to which the fourth principle “equal responsibility for, commitment to and participation in society” was proposed by the Australian Council on Population and Ethnic Affairs (ACPEA) in 1982. As Foster and Stockley argued, the aim of Australian multicultural policy at the time was two-fold—assimilative and ethnic-targeted, which meant that the government assumed common needs but provided some facilitating services such as interpreters and multilingual information (Foster and Stockley 1988: 23). Despite its remnant of assimilative connotation, it laid the foundation of Australian multicultural policy which was to be further interpreted and implemented with concrete legislations, services, and programs by successive governments and eventually evolved into “a full-blown ‘ism’: a comprehensive ideology of what Australia is supposed to be and become” (Bulbeck 1993: 270).

The second watershed in the development of Australian multicultural policy was the formulation of the 1989 *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia*, which proposed the three dimensions of multiculturalism—cultural maintenance and respect for cultural differences, promotion of social justice, and recognition of the economic significance of an ethnically and culturally diverse community (Allbrook et al. 1989: 20). What was innovative about this agenda was its incorporation of “justice” and “cultural capital”. As explained by Peter Vaughan, the Director of the OMA, justice referred to “the complete removal of barriers of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, gender or place of birth” and the realisation of fairness and equity in all areas such as education, workplace, public funds and the others (Vaughan 1989: 3). In accordance with the *Jupp Report* which outlined the persistent disadvantages faced by some migrant communities, the 1989 Agenda touched upon the structural inequalities existing in political, economic and social aspects, and allowed the migrants greater opportunities to participate in and influence government policies, programs and services, thus largely expanding the scope and depth of multicultural policy. The dimension of access and equity entailed the fair distribution of the state resources, identification of the needs of the disadvantaged groups, provision of information in community languages other than English and the efficient service delivery mechanism run by staff with relevant cultural knowledge and language skills. Moreover, the 1989 Agenda began to comprehend language and cultural maintenance from the economic perspective. In contrast to the previous situation where speakers of languages other than English were often regarded as the “disadvantaged”, the rich pool of languages such as Chinese, Arabic, German, Italian

and Spanish, are now seen as assets contributing to Australian trade, finance and the booming tourist industry (OMA 1989). The entrepreneurial spirit displayed by the “model minority”, especially the Asian-Australians, together with the capital, skill and experience brought by business migrants provided economic rationale for more favourable treatments toward the “New Australians” (Jayasuriya and Pookong 1999: 68).

The progressive course of multicultural policy saw a sudden reversal under the Coalition government. In fact, as early as 1988 when Howard was still the Leader of Opposition, he was strongly opposed to the notion of multiculturalism, as captured in his comment, “to me multiculturalism suggests that we can’t make up our minds who we are or what we believe in” (Markus 2001: 81). His proclaimed hostility toward both Asian immigration and multiculturalism caused such uproars that he was soon replaced by Andrew Peacock as the party leader. This bitter experience understandably strengthened his dislike of the multicultural policy and minority politics in general. After assuming office in 1996, Howard substantially reduced funding in multicultural programs and dismantled key institutions such as the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) and the Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research (BIMPR). At the normative level, he pointedly avoided the “M” word in his speech and insisted that it not be used in the joint parliamentary resolution rejecting racism which was passed in 1996.

However, as a very astute, pragmatic politician, Howard was adept in modifying those policies that proved detrimental for his career. Aware of public pressure and the importance of ethnic votes, he finally decided to continue the multicultural policy and established his own institutional bodies—the National Multicultural Advisory Council (NMAC) and the Council for Multicultural Australia (CMA) to work out a new policy framework. A series of policy papers have been launched since 1997, effectuating the step-by-step reorientation of the multicultural policy. They were respectively *Multicultural Australia: the Way Forward* (NMAC 1997), *Australian Multiculturalism for a New Century: Towards Inclusiveness* (NMAC 1999), *A New Agenda for Multicultural Australia* (DIMA 1999) and *Multicultural Australia: United in Diversity* (DIMIA 2003). The refocused multicultural policy attached great importance to basic structures, core values and civic duties, highlighted the potential economic gains from migrants, but virtually eliminated the plank of social justice, which used to be the policy

priority for previous governments. As Jayasuriya suggests, it is highly reminiscent of former Anglo-conformist ideologies, where the basis for national unity and social cohesion lies in conformity to a set of Anglo-Celtic cultural values (2003: 7). It should be noted that this new version of multicultural policy was contextualised in the dramatic transformations of the Australian political culture and intertwined with other key issues such as economic reform, gradual weakening of the welfare state and the general backlash against progressive social movements encompassing groups such as the Indigenous people, feminists, environmentalists and trade unions. While social conservatism reinforced the hegemony of the Anglo-Celtic tradition and crystallised it in the language of “national unity” and “social cohesion”, economic rationalism established the ascendancy of the market in resource distribution and thereby delegitimated the claims of minority groups arguing for proactive government actions. This trend was compounded by subsequent global events such as the 9/11 terrorist attack and London 7/7 bombing, leading to the symbolic act of a departmental name change from the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC).³

Beginning with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and continuing with British Prime Minister David Cameron and then French President Nicolas Sarkozy, mainstream politicians joined hands with conservative scholars in critiquing the multicultural policy (Williams 2013: 1). In this context, it is not surprising that the Gillard Labor government did not intend to restore multiculturalism to its past glory. The most recent policy paper, *The People of Australia: Australia's Multicultural Policy* (2013), though reinstating the term “multiculturalism”, was largely framed in the citizenship model of “national unity” and did not go beyond lip-service. As Pino Migliorino, the Chair of the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA), pointed out in his submission on the 2012-13 Commonwealth budget:

FECCA was disappointed by the 2011-2012 budget allocations to Australia's new multicultural policy. There was only \$4.7 million put toward *The People of Australia* for the following four-year period, and this allocation was not new but instead derived from existing monies...The disconnect between rhetoric and reality in the arena of multiculturalism flows through the whole budget. (FECCAa 2012: 5)

³ The department name was again changed into the Department of Immigration and Border Protection in 2013 due to the mounting concerns over the boat people.

The transformation of Australian multicultural policy has profound impact on the development of ethnic organisations in general. While multiculturalism was never intended for the minority cultures to assume national centrality, it allows for the infusion of cosmopolitan values into the repertoire of the governing culture and enables the transformation of ethnicity into a form of symbolic capital, provided that it is in line with the definition attributed to it by the state and public guardians of ethnic affairs (Tabar, Poynting and Noble 2010: 81). This sharply contrasts with the earlier period of assimilation, when non-Anglo identities were viewed as a deficiency rather than an asset. The valorisation of ethnicity, which is made possible through multicultural discourses, is a prerequisite for the three modes of capital conversion discussed by Tabar and others, and provides a viable upward channel into mainstream politics, which in turn leads to further appreciation of the ethnic capital. The sustainability of this cycle is dependent upon the continued salience of multicultural policy, which ensures a positive assessment of the ethnic culture and the allocation of public resource for its maintenance and development. Ethnic activism in Australia is carried out within such a multicultural framework. While the consolidation of large service-organisations mostly took place in the 1980s, when multiculturalism was accepted as the mainstream ideology to regulate interethnic relations, the recent retreat from it caused considerable difficulties for the survival of these organisations and consequently increased the attraction of overseas opportunities.

2.3. Overseas Chinese Policies

Globalisation is associated with processes which complicate the interplay between national and ethnic affiliations and subvert the concept of the nation-state. International migration is precisely one of the many mechanisms which provide multiple means of self-identification through the dialectics of territorialised and de-territorialised ideologies of nationalism (Barabantseva 2005: 14). This section aims to give a condensed review of the evolution of Chinese governmental policies on overseas Chinese as a prism to investigate how a nation-state successfully or unsuccessfully fills the niche of belonging in the minds of its perceived subjects. The examination of the changing policy trajectory is particularly significant given the rise of China and its growing emphasis on enlisting the support of the Chinese overseas to fulfil its modernisation project. To elucidate the distinction between cultural identity and political belonging, the conceptual pair of “*huaqiao*” and “*huaren*” proposed by

Gungwu Wang will be used where appropriate. While *huaqiao* refers to the Chinese nationals (including those of the PRC, as well as Hong Kong and Taiwan residents without the right of abode elsewhere) who have left to live abroad, *huaren* refers to the ethnic Chinese with foreign nationality or permanent residency rights (Wang 1998: 16-17). In policy terms, the Chinese government usually insists on using the catch-all continuum of *huaqiao-huaren* to encourage Chinese-centered self-identification and practices in as broad a range as possible.

Traditionally, Chinese imperial governments allowed localised foreign trade, but banned overseas residence. This was in line with the Chinese culture, which was premised on familial lineage and the connection with land. Chinese abroad at the time were often perceived as “deserters, traitors, rebels and opium-smugglers” (Pan 1999: 98), who left their families unattended and ancestral sacrifices neglected. The emperors also had deep-seated fear against overseas Chinese for their alleged involvement in secret societies and conspiracies against the imperial rule. For these reasons, severe decrees were meted out by the Qing Court from 1717 onwards, according to which “any Chinese, who lives abroad and does not return to China by making excuses, yet comes back secretly, should be executed immediately upon arrest” (Tan 1986: 42). However, China’s defeat in the Opium Wars was followed by a massive outflow of Chinese contract labourers since the mid-1840s under the credit-ticket system, which was jointly operated by merchant houses, native-place associations and secret societies (Fitzgerald 2007: 66). Only under pressure from Britain and France did the Qing Court agree to the right of its subjects to work and live abroad. The 1866 Chinese Labour Immigration Agreement laid out the framework for Chinese coolie trade and allowed for a more realistic understanding and handling of overseas Chinese issues.

In 1877, the first Chinese consulate was established in Singapore, which was followed by other forty-five consulates by the end of the Qing Dynasty. The Chinese diplomatic and consular officers were instructed to protect Chinese residents abroad, though the implementation of such principles was quite uneven, largely depending on individual initiatives (Zhuang 2013: 34). At the same time, there was a growing recognition of the potential service of Southeast Asian Chinese merchants in making investment in domestic industries, which hopefully could reduce reliance on foreign capital. The cordiality of the Qing government toward wealthy overseas merchants was reflected in the creation of the new class “merchant gentry”. In traditional China, merchants were

placed at the lowest rung of social system for their inherent profit-seeking qualities, as contrasted with the Confucian ideal of scholar gentry. However, repeated humiliation at the hand of Western imperialists enabled the Qing government to realise the imperative of reform and the indispensable role of overseas capital in achieving economic modernisation. Accordingly, proactive policies were introduced to attract overseas Chinese investment.

The provincial governments of Fujian and Guangdong where most emigrants came from made great efforts to publicise industrial projects and raise fund through Chinese diplomats and special missions. To regulate services provided to returned Chinese merchants, the mechanism of the “Merchants Protection Bureau” was established in Xiamen in 1899, which was quickly imitated by other coastal cities like Guangzhou and Shantou. The two major functions of the Bureau were to register the returned overseas Chinese and to look after their welfare while they were in China. In registering the returned subjects, the Bureau sought the cooperation of local Chinese native-place associations, which provided personal details of emigrants. The returned Chinese were required to present to the Bureau certificates issued by approved associations for record-keeping. In terms of welfare, the Bureau was responsible for receiving complaints and transmitting them to relevant officials, as well as helping returned emigrants go back to their home villages (Yen 1995: 34).

Culturally speaking, Qing diplomats encouraged the preservation of Chinese tradition in overseas Chinese communities by helping build up Chinese schools and patronising the movement to revive Confucianism. For example, it awarded overseas Chinese merchants who founded or financed Chinese schools with brevet titles and ranks. Imperial inspectors were sent out to tour around overseas Chinese communities regularly for supervisory purposes, and regular lectures on Confucian values were conducted in Southeast Asia to preserve a strong sense of Chinese identity and kindle the consciousness of a Chinese nation. All these measures served to cultivate loyalty in its overseas subjects and represented the formation of a coherent policy in overseas Chinese affairs. In 1909, the Qing government promulgated the Nationality Law based on the principle of *jus sanguinis*, which allowed a dual citizenship for Chinese nationals living in other countries (Zhuang 2013: 35). Although ultimately overseas Chinese capital failed to boost up Chinese economy and save the dynastic rule, the Qing

government laid out the foundation of overseas Chinese policies, which became the reference point for subsequent governments.

In those tumultuous years, the Qing government represented only one of the political camps courting the favour of the overseas Chinese, who were divided by their support for monarchist, reformist and revolutionary factions in China. With deteriorating conditions in China, failure of reformers, and festering corruption affecting all levels of Chinese bureaucracy, most overseas Chinese gradually became disillusioned with the imperial government and turned their support to revolutionaries. It is no exaggeration to say that the revolution against the dynastic rule would have been impossible without the financial support of wealthy overseas Chinese. It was on this ground that Sun Yat-sen, the founder of Nationalist party, referred to overseas Chinese as the mother of revolution and enlisted a substantial number of distinguished overseas Chinese in the Office of the President to occupy key posts such as Attorney General, General Secretaries and various department chiefs. The proportion of overseas Chinese in local governments of Fujian and Guangdong was even higher (Ren and Zhao 1999: 41). As early as 1921, an Overseas Chinese Bureau was established in Guangzhou, evolving into the first Overseas Chinese Affairs Commission (OCAC) in 1926 and becoming an independent ministry under the Executive Yuan in late 1931 with nationwide responsibilities (Phillips 2013: 66-7). This structure remains intact in today's Taiwan, and was imitated by the PRC government.

In 1926, the Nationalist government introduced three basic objectives for overseas Chinese policy: to ensure that overseas Chinese would have equal treatment in countries of residence, to facilitate the return of children of overseas Chinese to study in China, and to give special guarantees to overseas Chinese who wished to establish industries in China (Fitzgerald 1972: 7). A Nationality Law was passed in 1929, which likewise adopted the principle of *jus sanguinis* and remained in force in Taiwan. Up till its defeat in 1948, the Nationalist government promulgated scores of laws and regulations dealing with overseas Chinese education, investment, migration and Chinese voluntary associations. Not only were articles included in the draft constitution to provide for the protection and political participation of the overseas Chinese, party branches were also established in major overseas Chinese settlements in cooperation with community associations. The Nationalist government proudly positioned itself as the ardent defender of Chinese culture and vigorously promoted overseas Chinese education in

very nationalist terms. From 1927, the Education Ministry, later assisted by the OCAC, instituted a program for the registration and inspection of overseas Chinese schools, the establishment of new schools, training of teachers and cadres and education for overseas Chinese youth. As an indicator of its strong commitment to overseas Chinese education, more than 2,000 schools were set up in various countries as vehicles to strengthen the emigrants' cultural, sentimental and even patriotic ties to China (Pan 1999: 101). Cultural identification was accentuated in the Nationalist agenda and served as a criterion for legitimate rule, as expressed in slogans like "where there are Chinese, there is China" (Barabantseva 2011: 29). Notably, this culturalist approach to cultivate long-distance nationalism was continued by the Overseas Compatriot Affairs Commission of Taiwan until year 2000 when the Taiwan government led by Shui-Bian Chen was pushing the agenda of political independence and subsequently backing off from representing the greater Chinese diaspora.

The founding of the PRC saw the governing divide in overseas Chinese issues. The Taiwan government remained committed to overseas Chinese affairs for half a century, taking responsibility in relocating Chinese refugees from Korea and Vietnam and actively mobilising them for moral and financial support against the PRC government. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in contrast was less enthusiastic. John Fitzgerald vented his frustration in the inaugural issue of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Journal in 1956, "the legacy in the Overseas Chinese affairs field amounted to almost nothing, so that in fact, Overseas Chinese work in New China had to grope its way from the very beginning" (Fitzgerald 1972: 10-11). With two decades' political turmoil under Chairman Mao's rule, connections with overseas Chinese communities were completely cut off. It was not until 1974 that the OCAC was re-established and gradually regained its function of liaising with the Chinese overseas. In 1987, a nationwide overseas Chinese governing mechanism came into being under the State Council: the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (OCAO), the very creation of which testified to the elevated significance of this policy area. Since then, every province, autonomous region and municipality (except Tibet) established their own OCAOs. The OCAO's work was complemented and coordinated by the activities of several mass organisations that acted in parallel to the official organs. The five main bodies responsible for overseas Chinese affairs—OCAO, All-China's Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese (ACFROC), Zhigongdang, National People's Congress Overseas Chinese Committee (NPCOCC) and the aforementioned OCAC, are collectively referred to as the "five bridges" of the

central government (Barabantseva 2011: 113). In policy terms, the emphasis was placed on enlisting the Chinese overseas to contribute to the nation-wide reform toward modernisation. On the one hand, the CCP reiterated the principle of disengagement with ethnic Chinese for political purposes and formally abandoned dual citizenship in 1980 under the first Nationality Law. On the other hand, it made every possible effort to attract overseas capital, technology and human resources for the domestic modernisation project. Not only was the privileged status of returned migrants and relatives of ethnic Chinese fully restored and formally written into the 1982 Constitution, preparations were made from the earliest stage to attract investments from Chinese abroad. Construction of *qiaoxiang* (ancestral villages) was boisterously under way, serving the purpose of nurturing emotional attachment and standing as the locus for remittance and investment (Kinglun, Cheng and Cheng 2004: 158). Moreover, Special Economic Zones were established in Shenzhen and Zhuhai, located opposite Hong Kong and Macau, as well as in Xiamen and Shantou, located opposite Taiwan. These advantageous economic arrangements were supplemented by legislation, which granted special privileges to overseas Chinese investors. As a result, the total amount of foreign direct investment amounted to US\$26.8 billion, of which an estimated two-thirds originated from areas with large ethnic Chinese populations, the majority coming from Hong Kong, Macaw and Taiwan (Thunø 2001: 920).

The 1990s saw the profound policy transformation from passively anticipating incoming resources via relatives living in the PRC to directly appealing to ethnic Chinese and the “new migrants” who left China after 1978. The policy change partly resulted from the growing influence of China in international circles and the increasing number of new migrants living outside Southeast Asia. Multiculturalism as practised in major Western countries like the US, Canada and Australia was also advantageous in preserving Chinese culture and traditions (Barabantseva 2011: 124). The new policy direction was clearly stated at the Nationwide Overseas Chinese Conference in 1989, “To continue successful overseas Chinese policies, our work should pay considerable attention to the overseas Chinese of foreign nationality” (Zhuang 2000: 6). Moreover, the mid-1990s saw the emergence of large-scale “new migrants” to North America, Australia and Europe, consisting mainly of students, professionals and businessmen. The majority of these recent migrants were Chinese citizens, whose extensive connections with the home country in terms of family, education and cultural identity entailed a natural emotional attachment and a sense of allegiance. Currying favour of

the “new migrants” did not challenge international relations as in the case of ethnic Chinese, and also required fewer resources in propaganda. Therefore, diverse streams of recent Chinese migrants were incorporated into the policy parameter, allowing a more realistic and flexible understanding and handling of overseas Chinese affairs.

In 2001, long-term multi-entry visas valid from three to five years were issued by the Bureau of Public Security in Shanghai to enable Chinese professors with foreign passports to enter China any time. Similar policies were implemented in Beijing in the form of “green card”, which granted its holder a two-year multi-entry along with a series of favourable treatments equivalent to those enjoyed by Beijing residents (Liu and Dong 2003: 16). To encourage input into the high-tech sector, various incentives were offered to overseas Chinese professionals to set up enterprises in specially built industrial parks (Biao 2011: 828). Since 1998, the Convention of Overseas Chinese Scholars in Science and Technology has been held annually in Guangzhou. In 2002, over 2,000 overseas Chinese scholars registered for the event, offering more than 1,300 programs primarily in the fields of information technology, biotechnology, new materials, new energy and environmental protection (Barabantseva 2011: 123). By the mid-1990s, with the realisation that most Chinese students were likely to settle down permanently overseas, the government changed its slogan from “returning to serve the country” to “staying but serving the country”, encouraging flexible means of nationalistic engagement (Feng 2011: 132). Physical return is no longer considered a prerequisite for patriotism. Presenting a positive image of the PRC and expanding its cultural influence overseas are also important ways of contributing to the nation-state, therefore giving options for de-territorialised participation in the modernisation project.

The proactive policy line of the PRC government is also reflected in its strengthened engagement with local Chinese organisations (Biao 2003: 28). Interestingly, in its competition with Taiwan in courting the goodwill of the ethnic Chinese, the PRC government is adopting some of the same tactics of the Nationalist Party. In May 1997, the Chinese National Association of Overseas Liaisons was formed under the Ministry of United Front, with some prominent Chinese community leaders invited to the inaugural conference as its founding members (Liu 1998: 596). Not only are ties with existing voluntary organisations, Chinese schools and Chinese media considerably cemented, new ones with pro-Beijing stance are created with the patronage of the PRC government. It is estimated that over 2,000 overseas Chinese students’ associations and

more than 300 professional associations for overseas Chinese scholars were founded with the help or direct involvement of the PRC government under the broad cultural scheme (Zweig 2006: 195). Thunø's research likewise showed that in the 1990s, the PRC supported the establishment of local Chinese schools and exported educational agendas by compiling twenty different sets of teaching materials now used in seventy-eight countries worldwide. Some 150 teachers were dispatched from the PRC to teach Chinese in twenty countries, and several thousand teachers from overseas have received training in the PRC (Thunø 2001: 924). This is accompanied by the upsurge of overseas Chinese media. The multicultural nature of Australia in particular provides fertile ground for the growth of Chinese newspapers and publications. In Sydney alone, there are four major Chinese dailies, respectively *Sing Tao Daily*, *Daily Chinese Herald*, *Australian Chinese Daily* and *Australian New Express Daily* (XKB), in addition to some twenty other magazines and weeklies which circulate in the city (Fitzgerald *Red Tape*, 1997: 2). In addition, Chinese language websites based overseas are also on the rise, thus creating a borderless and virtual world of China. Overseas Chinese media is increasingly perceived as an important channel to "push Chinese perspectives and voices into the international media in order to contest the discursive power of the West" (Sun et al. 2011: 517)

The overseas voluntary associations also experienced significant alterations in their structures and orientations in the 1990s, which could be partly credited to the policy shift of the PRC. Prior to the 1970s, Chinese voluntary associations were predominantly organised according to the principle of locality, dialect, kinship ties and specific trade. Although they still exerted their influence in the 1980s, their relative importance was reduced. Gradually emerging and replacing them are those broad-based associations mainly consisting of bilingual professional migrants from the mainland. One concomitant change is the generational shift of Chinese community leaders. In Nyíri's view, differing from the leaders of the old days who earned their recognition through economic success, today's overseas Chinese leaders have compensated for their lesser economic prominence by their connections with the PRC authorities (Nyíri 1999: 255). The viewpoint might risk oversimplification for its uni-dimensional emphasis on the controlling mechanism of the PRC over overseas associations. The real situation entails greater complexity, as suggested by the proposed model of ethnic capital conversion. But it is true that networking with different levels of Chinese governments has become an important channel of social mobility for the Chinese overseas, especially with the

decline of multicultural policy in Western countries. The enthusiasm to engage with China is evidently reflected in the intensification of two-way exchanges under the policy of “inviting in” and “going out”. The former refers to the invitation and sponsorship of overseas Chinese delegations, many representing Chinese associations, to attend important national events or visit *qiaoxiang*. The latter points to the dispatching of official delegations to places where the Chinese diaspora is concentrated, normally in conjunction with Chinese associations’ world conventions and anniversary ceremonies (Liu 1998: 597). For instance, from 1993 to 1997, Fujianese authorities paid more than 136 visits abroad, leading to formal contact with more than 800 ethnic Chinese associations and visits to Fujian by 235,500 leaders of these associations and 36 prominent business tycoons (Thunø 2001: 924). In its competition with Taiwan, the PRC government strategically adapted to the globalising thrust by offering locations of international conferences and networking partnerships. For example, in 2001 alone, in addition to the much publicised Sixth World Chinese Entrepreneurs Convention held in Nanjing, the Convention of Overseas Chinese Associations in the New Century took place in Beijing and the First Convention of International Hubei Hometown Associations was held in Wuhan (Liu 2005: 307). Apart from major metropolis such as Hong Kong and Beijing, local authorities are also active in hosting international events by bringing together locality associations all over the world. This leads to the paradoxical result that the transnational process in effect reinforces the influence of native-place associations, revives the practice of lineage construction and benefits the economic buildup of local *qiaoxiang*. As Hong Liu puts it, globalisation, in this case, propels the return to the local and the familiar, and these two simultaneous processes are in fact two sides of the same coin which should not be construed as dichotomies (Liu 1998: 608).

As analysed above, Australian multiculturalism and overseas Chinese policies of the PRC government represent the two most influential power structures, which shape the way of thinking, provide the impetus for action, and even furnish the very vocabulary used to articulate issues regarding the Chinese transmigrants. However, this should not be a hindrance to our understanding of the great degree of agency and flexibility exhibited by this unique group, which effectively thwarts any serious governmental attempts for total control. It is quite remarkable to observe how the developmental pattern of Chinese community organisations closely interacts with the broad POSs home and abroad, which ultimately results in a more efficient accumulation of ethnic Chinese

capital. While the boisterous development of local-oriented organisations owes a lot to the introduction of multicultural policy which subsidises ethnic-specific services and activities and enables the conversion of “Chineseness” into a multicultural capital recognised by the mainstream society, the global promotion of the pan-Chinese identity has encouraged qualified ethnic Chinese to re-invest the resource they accumulated overseas back in China for bigger gain, often through the vehicle of new locality associations and refashioned traditional associations. The specific operational mode, strategies and cultural orientations of these organisations will be discussed in Chapter 5-7.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

This research project is exploratory, aimed at studying the multifaceted network of Chinese community organisations in Canberra and Sydney and their socio-political functions in the transnational setting. This chapter addresses the methodological aspects of the research project and gives a full description of the research process including sampling, data collection and interpretation of data. To bring out the nuances of Chinese organisational networks in Canberra and Sydney, a triangulation of research methods is adopted, including a brief survey of Chinese organisations at these two locations, concentrated participant observation, semi-structured, in-depth interviews with selected community leaders, as well as collection and analysis of a variety of documentary materials about these organisations. This chapter also enumerates the practical difficulties I have encountered in the research process and indicates the specific efforts made to tackle those issues. Finally, I will identify the limitations of this research and explain my solutions.

3.1. The Role of the Researcher

In the past few decades, a wide array of ethnographical theories called into question the ethnographic authority of the researcher and emphasised the notion of power and positionality in the conducting of fieldwork (Louie 1996: 19-20). The idea of reflexive ethnography recognises the mutual permeation of perspectives of the researcher and research subjects. In this respect, Scholt's remarks about the ethnographers exploring native-societies could be validly applied to any fieldwork scenarios.

The ethnographic situation is defined not only by the native society in question, but also by the ethnological tradition in the head of the ethnographer. The latter's presuppositions are operative even before entering the field. Once he is actually in the field, the natives' presuppositions also become operative, and the entire situation turns into complex intercultural mediation and a dynamic interpersonal experience. In other words, ethnography entails the personal sensibilities of the field worker, the specific nature of his descriptive methods, and the natives' artistry at disguise and the credibility of their information. (Scholte 1974: 438-9)

As all knowledge is inevitably filtered through the interactive, interpretive fields of the researcher and research subjects, it is imperative for the researcher to straighten out the

intertwined threads of objective reality and internalised perceptions and conduct his or her research in an “explicitly self-aware” and “self-critical” fashion (Payne and Payne 2004: 191). The presence of sound reflexive thinking becomes even more important when the researcher has a partial or complete identification with the subjects under study, as is the case with this research.

A critical self-examination in relation to the research project illuminates my strength and weakness as the primary researcher. As a mainland student coming to Australia to research about overseas Chinese organisations, I have the natural advantage of linguistic skills and cultural literacy. My experience as an overseas student resonates with many first-generation migrants from mainland China and helps break down the artificial division between outsiders and insiders (Madison 2005: 175). When it comes to Cantonese-speaking communities, my functional command of Cantonese enables me to understand their daily conversation, and if the situation requires, conduct interviews in simple language. Contrary to my concerns, my perfunctory Cantonese does not seem to be a problem, for the great majority of community leaders from Cantonese-speaking regions such as Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia, prefer to use English as the language of interview. Linguistic divide of Mandarin-speaking and Cantonese-speaking groups, though obviously reflected in the census data, is not a real issue in my fieldwork, for Mandarin (sometimes simultaneously interpreted into Cantonese) is always the official language adopted for the majority of events, activities and programs hosted by local Chinese organisations. For this reason, many interviewees of Cantonese-speaking background insist on conversing in Mandarin with me, so that they could hone up their skills to handle formal events, liaise with mainland officials and address to an ever-growing community of Mandarin speakers.

Generally speaking, a high level of acceptance is manifest in Canberra, where most Chinese-Australians are student-turned professionals with a deep empathy for me. The situation in Sydney spells more complexity, for the cultural ambience of South China where most long-term settlers came from differ significantly from that of Beijing, my hometown. Fortunately, my familiarity with the essentials of Chinese culture and the extensive reading of early Chinese settlement histories make it easier for me to grasp the commonalities among the plethora of diasporic cultural traditions. This ensures that I am quickly included into the *guanxi* network in Canberra and Sydney and greatly benefit from hospitality, transferrable trust and non-contractual reciprocity, which are

central characteristics of the *guanxi* system. In exchange for favours like personal referrals and supply of internal materials, I am expected to present the community history from the perspective of an insider and publicise the worthy deeds undertaken by these organisations, which are not well-known outside the Chinese community.

While recognising my strength of cultural literacy, I am also conscious of my weakness arising from my partial belonging to the community. Being automatically included as an insider can spawn a series of problems such as internal control, entanglement with factional fights and distorting effects of gossips, all of which may have negative consequences on the quality of collected data. To overcome this problem, I endeavour to gather views from different sides with an open attitude and cross-reference their viewpoints with third-party comments before I come to a conclusion. Moreover, my background as a mainland student makes it very difficult for me to approach a variety of organisations like pan-green Taiwanese associations, dissenting religious organisations like *falungong* and miscellaneous group harbouring mistrust and suspicion of the Chinese Communist government. This could lead to some omissions in my sample, which I will address in the section of limitation.

In general, the Chinese culture is more hierarchical than the Australian one, and face is an extremely sensitive issue when relating to people of senior status. Throughout the research, I grappled with attending to the cultural sensitivities of power hierarchy and asserting my status as an independent researcher. The initial power relationship is clearly in favour of my research participants, as my age, gender and citizenship status (Chinese) all lead to the expectation of me assuming a junior role. Fortunately, this is partly compensated by my academic affiliation with the Australian National University, which significantly improves my symbolic status and is the key factor leading to their eventual consent to my interview requests.

3.2. Sampling

The sampling process was divided in two phases, aimed at building an inventory of organisations in both locations and then selecting the leaders of key organisations for in-depth, semi-structured interview. The initial survey of organisations involved a huge amount of internet research, collection of governmental directories and preliminary discussions with a few contacts. I mainly used the directories published by the ACT

Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA), Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP), together with the local Chinese newspaper *Oriental City* to identify organisations of significance in Canberra. Due to the small size of Canberra Chinese community and the good record keeping of the OMA, it is possible to make a near complete enumeration of all Chinese associations. Centring around the peak body of the Federation of Chinese Associations of ACT (FCA-ACT), there are six big associations with a membership of more than one hundred. As Table 4 shows, they give a good indication of the basic associational types in Australia and are formed by Chinese of different source regions.

Table 4: Standing Associational Members of ACT-FCA

Association	Year of Establishment	Source Regions
Canberra Chinese Club (CCC)	1976 and incorporated in 1993	Taiwanese, Malaysian, Singaporean and Vietnamese
ACT Chinese Australian Association (ACT-CAA)	1988	Mostly from Hong Kong, Guangdong and Malaysia
National Australian Chinese Association (NACA)	1995 (split from ACT-CAC)	Hong Kong, and mainland China
Federation of Chinese Communities of Canberra Inc. (FCCCI)	1991	Mainlanders
Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA)	1980s	Mainlanders
Canberra Branch, Australian Beijing Association (ABA)	1990s	Mainlanders

Source: Table compiled from the data collected in my fieldwork.

Apart from the big six, four other associations with some degree of local impact include Australian Chinese Culture Exchange and Promotion Association (ACCEPA), Chinese Arts & Culture Association (CACA), Canberra Society of Chinese Scholars (CSCS) and Taiwanese Association of Canberra (TAC). The good coordinating work of the ACT

government enables most of these associations to get an office space in the newly-built Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre. As a rule, their activities are either hosted in the function room of the Multicultural Centre or in the old Griffin Centre. The concentration of organisational activities considerably lowered my workload when I entered the field for participant observation. With only nine associations at hand, I managed to get interview opportunities with committee members from every one of them. Moreover, realising the interactive linkages between associations, Chinese schools and Chinese media, I added into my interview list principals of four local Chinese schools, three of which are affiliated with community associations, the founder of Canberra Chinese News, the first Chinese newspaper in Canberra and General Manager of *FM88*, the only Chinese language radio station in Canberra with its own Chinese weekly. Put altogether, I approached ten associations, four Chinese language schools, one radio station and two Chinese newspapers in Canberra and recruited eighteen persons for in-depth interviews, representing a fair distribution of age, gender, occupation, geographical origin and organisational roles.

In comparison, it is far more complex to build up an inventory of organisations in Sydney. Responding to the outreaching strategy of the PRC, hundreds of associations are established in Sydney, a good proportion of which do not survive the first five years. There has been a staggering difference between those shell associations with no more than a dozen members and multi-million service organisations with numerous facilities and thousands of clients. Moreover, the division of traditional and modern associations is manifest in Sydney, respectively supported by the Cantonese-speaking and Mandarin-speaking communities. At first, I tried to use the directory from the DIBP to pinpoint the most influential associations. To my disappointment, it only included the few service associations which voluntarily reported their contact details to the Department. Since the majority of native-place associations and traditional associations do not rely on government funding, they have few incentives to liaise with governmental departments. However, their importance should not be neglected in the context of a surging overseas Chinese nationalism.

In order to come up with a representative sample of organisations, I spent two to three weeks leafing through the community news section of Chinese newspapers. The electronic archives I used consisted of Australia China Weekly, Sing Tao Daily and Australian New Express Daily (XKB). The convenience of inlaid searching engine in

these websites enabled me to identify with ease those organisations which are most active in community life. The selection of organisations was also based on recommendations of Canberra community leaders, who are well connected to their counterparts in Sydney. Acting as *de facto* consultants, they not only gave me contact details of those hard-to-reach figures, but also provided personal reference letters to validate my credibility. Through the help of my informants in Canberra, I established rapport with King Fong, a central figure in the organisational network in Sydney. Arriving in Sydney in 1946 and running the famous “Say Tin Fong & Co” at 56-58 Dixon Street in the 1970s, King Fong is known as the living encyclopaedia of Chinatown. As the Organising Secretary for the Dixon Street Chinese Committee and the chief organiser of the Chinese New Year Carnival, Fong kept detailed records of active associations in Sydney. Three lists of associations were provided to me by Fong, a list of older Chinese organisations in 1978, a personal directory, as well as the invitation letter prepared by the peak body Australian Council of Chinese Organisations (AUSCOCO), which included all the member associations. I carefully compared the three lists, ran internet search of all these associations, and made brief phone calls to their headquarters if a telephone number was available. The basic information I collected about them comprised functional types, founding year, membership and availability of permanent venues. Triangulating this data with my findings through newspaper research, I managed to compile an inventory of active organisations in Sydney, which are of higher research salience and substantive community impact. To ensure its representativeness, I invited some of my informants to go over the list with me and asked for their advice about possible additions. The final list includes 120 organisations and is attached as Appendix A.

Due to limited time and resources, I further narrowed down the scope of my research and selected a group of core organisations for detailed analysis. The choice of core organisations depends on a mixture of factors: historical importance, community impact, functional types, availability of internal documents, and the willingness to cooperate by their committee members. Arranged by functional groupings, they cover most of the main service-providers, long-lasting clan associations, representative locality associations, and other influential professional, social and cultural associations. These associations, including those selected for the site of Canberra, are itemised in Table 5. As a result, a further twenty-four interviewees were recruited in Sydney, including presidents of core organisations, prominent Chinese-Australian politicians, social

dignitaries and long-term community workers. On the whole, the follow-up sample of core associations encompasses the most representative cases in each functional group, and gives a good reflection of the types of organisational activism that can be observed in Sydney today.

Table 5: Representative Organisations Covered by In-Depth Interviews

Type	Organisation	Location
Service Organisations	Australian Chinese Community Association (ACCA)	Sydney
	Australian Nursing Home Foundation (ANHF)	Sydney
	Chinese Australian Services Society (CASS)	Sydney
Professional Organisations	Australian Chinese Culture Exchange and Promotion Association (ACCEPA)	Canberra
	Australian Chinese Performing Artists Association (ACPAA)	Sydney
	Australian International Media Group (AIMG)	Canberra and Sydney
	Australian Medical Exchange and Development Association (AMEDA)	Sydney
	Canberra Society of Chinese Scholars (CSCS)	Canberra
	Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA)	Canberra
Business Organisations	Australia China Economics, Trade & Culture Association (ACETCA)	Sydney
	Australian Chao Shan Association of Commerce (ACSAC)	Sydney
	Australia-China Youth Chamber of Commerce (ACYCC)	Sydney
Sociocultural Organisations	ACT Chinese Australian Association (ACT-CAA)	Canberra
	Chinese Arts & Culture Association	Canberra

	(CACA)	
	Canberra Chinese Club (CCC)	Canberra
	Chinese Heritage Association of Australia (CHAA)	Sydney
	Chinese Youth League of Australia (CYL)	Sydney
	Federation of Chinese Communities of Canberra Inc. (FCCCI)	Canberra
	National Australian Chinese Association (NACA)	Canberra
Traditional Organisations	Australian Chinese Teo Chew Association (ACTCA)	Sydney
	Chungshan Society of Australia (CSA)	Sydney
	Goon Yee Tong (GYT)	Sydney
	Sze Yap Society (SYS)	Sydney
	Yiu Ming Hung Fook Tong (YMHFT)	Sydney
New Locality Organisations	Australian Beijing Association (ABA) (Canberra Branch)	Canberra
	Australian Shanghai Association (ASA)	Sydney
	Taiwanese Association of Canberra (TAC)	Canberra
	Australian Yangzhou Association (AYA)	Sydney
Policy and Advocacy Organisations	Chinese Australian Forum (CAF)	Sydney
	Chinese Community Council of Australia (CCCA)	Sydney
Political Organisations	Australian Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China (ACPPRC)	Sydney
Peak Organisations	Australian Chinese Charity Foundation (ACCF)	Sydney
	Australian Council of Chinese	Sydney

	Organisations (AUSCOCO)	
	Federation of Chinese Associations of ACT (FCA-ACT)	Canberra
Political Party	Unity Party	Sydney
Community Media	Australian New Express Daily (XKB)	Sydney
	Canberra Chinese News (CCN)	Canberra
	FM 88 and Oriental City	Canberra
Community Schools	Australian School of Contemporary Chinese (ASCC)	Canberra and Sydney
	CCC Chinese School	Canberra
	ESSA Chinese School	Canberra
	FCCCI Chinese School	Canberra

3.3. Participant Observation

Historically, field research has been associated most closely with participant observation. The researcher is expected to participate actively, for an extended period of time, in the daily lives of the people and situations under study (McCall and Simmons 1969). Concentrated participant observation was mainly conducted in Canberra at Theo Notaras Centre and Griffin Centre, where the great majority of organisational activities took place. For a whole year from February 2010 to February 2011, I took special notice of the activity schedules of both centres, and participated in most of them as researcher and volunteer. At the early phase of my observation, I mainly attended those public events, such as seniors’ gatherings, community outreach events, fundraising events, end-of-the-year banquets, cultural shows and seminars. As rapport was established between organisational leaders and me, breakthroughs were made in the types of activities I was allowed to participate in. I was gradually accepted into the rank of administration and gained permission to attend committee meetings and contribute to the discussion. The ACT-CAA, for instance, asked me to be their Chinese secretary and involved me in the organisation of their programs. Lyn Ning, Vice President of FCCCI, was happy to let me attend staff meetings and shared with me their financial reports and meeting minutes. A special connection was made with the FM88 Radio Station, which was the focal point of connection for all Chinese associations in Canberra. Meetings of ACT-FCA were usually conducted at the radio station, to which I was allowed access by its manager Bamboo Zhang. Taking a personal interest in my research, Bamboo

invited me to become a regular columnist for their newspaper *Oriental City*, the only Canberra-based Chinese newspaper since 2010. Every week, the newspaper was sent to the Chinese embassy, most of community associations, and Chinese grocery shops at different parts of Canberra. My personal profile and article updates proved to be a good advertisement for my research project. It significantly reversed the power relationship between interviewees and me. After reading my column, many association leaders would approach me instead, asking me to attend their events and writing articles about them.

As Jacqueline Wiseman and Marcia Aron note, a researcher participates along the continuum from a full participant and a nonparticipant observer by either *posing* as a member or announcing himself as a scientific investigator and hoping to be accepted by the group in that role (1970: 40). From the very beginning, I intended for the status of active membership. Assuming a functional role in a number of associations allowed me to become fully immersed in the setting and understand the intricacy of community activism from the perspective of organisers (Royce and Straits 2005: 331). With the knowledge I accumulated in Canberra, I was accepted as a part-time policy officer at CASS, one of the largest service-organisations in Sydney, after several rounds of interviews (more than twenty hours) with its Founding Director Henry Pan. Although it was not intended in my research plan, I found it a wonderful opportunity to learn about the internal workings of multimillion service groups, which could not be found in Canberra. Working closely with Pan from December 2012 to January 2013 and having full access to their internal archives, I gathered rich data about the evolutionary trajectory of service organisations in Sydney, as well as their bargaining strategies with the government. This data was later used to develop chapters on the modernising reforms for local-based Chinese associations.

While making good progress in achieving full immersion, I was always conscious of my primary role as a research investigator and the discrepancies between my subject positions and theirs. As Kolar-Panov rightly warned, a full identification with the research subjects could lead to the danger of engaging in an obsessive, self-reflexive hermeneutics in which the self, not the respondents, could become the subject of inquiry (Kolar-Panov 1997). To minimise such possibilities, I was strictly following the rule of thumb for participant observation— “Don’t sift, just collect” (Browne 1976: 77). I always brought with me my camera and recording device to the field, and with the

consent of the organiser, kept full record of those public events. For internal meeting sessions, note-taking was commonly adopted. In situations where intense participation made it impossible to take lengthy notes, field jottings were taken to pin down those little phrases, quotes, key words and fleeting ideas which sparked the inspiration of the researcher (Lofland and Lofland 1995: 90). To guard against forgetting, I immediately organised those quick jottings and mental notes into systematic field notes after the observation session. These notes provided an extensive, detailed record of the field site, activities participated and observed, major insights and ideas, problems encountered and new questions arising in the process. Together with the interview transcripts, these notes were later on coded and broken into major themes and conceptual sets, which were used to develop thesis chapters.

3.4. Semi-Structured, In-Depth Interviews

In addition to participant observation in the field, I mainly used in-depth interviews to collect the data. The advantages of interviewing for data collection have been stressed by many scholars. It is flexible, spontaneous, and is one of the most effective methods to probe the inner feelings and unravel the complex life experiences of the informants. As Webb noted:

Individual and group interviews can offer a site for people to speak for themselves, and to narrativise their understanding of their society and their particular context in their own words. (Webb 1996: 264)

In this study, I conducted forty-two semi-structured interviews between March 2010 and April 2013. After deciding on the sample of core organisations, I contacted each potential interviewee by telephone and/or email and briefly discussed:

- The purpose of my study;
- My personal information and/or the mutual acquaintance who had refereed me;
- The best time and place for me to talk to the potential interviewee, if he or she is interested in participating in the study.

When potential interviewees responded positively, I sent them the full-version information sheet (Appendix B) and consent form (Appendix C) before proceeding with

the formal interview. In line with the ethical protocols of the university, the consent form advises the respondents of their rights and responsibilities, allows them to choose the degree of anonymity, and asks for their permission for using recording devices. It is not surprising that most interviewees preferred note-taking to recording or they would ask me to turn off the recording device when they were about to say something sensitive. In most cases (32 out of 42), my respondents agreed to have their full name and organisational titles included in my thesis. This is understandable, for unlike individuals, organisations are seeking public exposure for their own interests (Portes, Escobar and Radford 2007: 245). But some caution was taken by my respondents, as reflected in the practice of delayed consent. Instead of signing the consent form prior to the interview, the respondents would only return the consent form by the end of the interview, when they were sure that nothing damaging was put on record inadvertently.

To better direct my data-gathering efforts, an interview schedule was designed, which comprised a combination of closed and open-ended questions covering the following areas (see Appendix D for a full interview schedule):

- Basic information of the association (name, year of founding, ethnic background of founders);
- Structure, culture and operational mode of the association;
- Personal stories of leaders of the association;
- Types of socio-political activism (domestic and transnational);
- Source of funding (government, community and commercial);
- Publicity and community liaisons;
- Major organisational challenges and policy implications for Australia and China.

The interview guide for principals of Chinese schools and Chinese community leaders varied a bit from the one used for heads of Chinese associations, however, the main areas of concern remained the same. The guide allowed me to start with some orienting ideas, but the way questions were framed gave enough room for the respondents to provide detailed accounts of the most significant aspects of their experiences. The respondents were also invited to bring in new perspectives, many of which were later added into the interview guide. Moreover, I incorporated elements of oral history into the design of my interviews, especially for those senior community leaders whose life

stories were an integral part of the community history. In these circumstances, instead of strictly following the prepared interview schedule, I encouraged a free flow of narration, during which I naturally inserted those questions most relevant to my research objectives. The large proportion of open-ended questions and the adoption of the oral history perspective ensured the greatest degree of flexibility and was best suited to get rich, high-quality descriptions from respondents, who could take questions on paths they choose rather than those pre-determined by the researcher.

While giving full play to the agency of my respondents, I was also keenly aware of my role in the interview and strove to present myself in a way conducive to the generation of rich data. As Neuman once notes, interviews are essentially a joint production between the researcher and the participants (Neuman 2006: 406). It is a site where data is co-constructed, where identities are forged through the telling of stories and where meaning-making begins (Doucet and Mauthner 2008: 335). In Mishler's words:

The interviewer's presence and form of involvement—how she or he listens, attends, encourages, interrupts, digresses, initiates topics and terminates responses—is integral to the respondent's account. (Mishler 1986: 82)

In all interviews, I sought to create an atmosphere of mutual trust and posed my questions in a strength-oriented manner. I hesitated between options of presenting myself as an “acceptable incompetent” or an expert in the area (Lofland and Lofland 1995; Taylor and Bogdan 1984). Some researchers recommend presenting oneself as naïve, because it gives the impression of someone who is ignorant, needs to be taught and therefore is expected to ask questions. However, my experience with a few pilot interviews proved that it was more effective to present myself as an insider, who knew the rule of the game. This was especially true for interviewees of higher social status, who did not have the time to waste on basics. In this sense, my documentary research and field experience in Canberra were very crucial. These preparations fostered in me the sensitivity to key issues, major power blocs and hidden agendas. In retrospect, the demonstration of my knowledge, competence and wide connections was a key factor in convincing senior community leaders to share with me sensitive stories only known to insiders. It also helped quicken the pace of interviews, with us fast moving from elementary know-how to more sophisticated discussions of community affairs.

Of the forty-two interviews I completed, thirty-nine were conducted vis-à-vis, and only three were done over telephone. The great majority of respondents (29/42) opted to use Mandarin, and the rest preferred English. As Table 6 shows, the interviewees were of different age brackets, came from a variety of countries and regions and arrived in Australia at different stages of their lives. The traditional gender division meant that more males were involved in community affairs than females, and this was duly reflected in my sample. Two age groups stood out from the rest: 41-50 and 61-70. While the former group were mostly mainland Chinese who arrived in Australia in the late 1980s, the latter group comprised ethnic Chinese from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Southeast Asia, who migrated to Australia as young adults in the 1970s. Both groups settled in Australia for more than twenty years and were well-positioned to assume community leadership. Regarding occupation, the professionals (doctors, lawyers and social professionals) formed the absolute majority, employed in government, not-for-profit organisations and industries or self-employed. This was followed by business people of all types. While some were in charge of large-scale transnational corporations, others were running small businesses such as Chinese restaurants, real estate agencies and grocery shops. Most interviewees were presidents or committee members of core organisations in Sydney and Canberra, which covered all the major functional groupings. In addition, included in my sample were prominent Chinese parliamentarians, local government Councillors, Commissioners of NSW Community Relations Commission (CRC), long-term social workers, principals of Chinese language schools and managers of Chinese media groups. Though not of Chinese background, Pino Migliorino, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA), was also invited for an interview, due to his collaboration with several major Chinese service organisations and his expertise in Australian multiculturalism. Although the sample is not very large, it is sufficient to establish the main patterns of Chinese organisational activism in Canberra and Sydney. The detailed profile of each respondent is available in the Appendix E.

Table 6: General Information of Interviewees

	Number	Per cent (%)
Gender		
Male	31	73.8
Female	11	26.2
Age		
21-30	4	9.5
31-40	4	9.5
41-50	12	28.6
51-60	4	9.5
61-70	12	28.6
71 and above	6	14.3
Country of Origin		
China	21	50.0
Hong Kong	8	19.0
Taiwan	2	4.8
Malaysia	4	9.5
Singapore	2	4.8
Australia	2	4.8
Others	3	7.1
Year of Arrival		
Before 1981	17	40.5
1981-1990	16	38.1
1991-2000	5	11.9
After 2000	4	9.5
Occupation		
Business	12	28.6
Professional	29	69.0
Others	1	2.4
Location		
Sydney	24	57.1
Canberra	18	42.9

On average, these interviews lasted two hours, ranging from one hour to twenty hours per interview participant. Some interviews were completed during one sitting, while others took two or more interview appointments to complete. After each interview, I wrote down detailed notes of what the respondents said, their non-verbal expressions, overall flow of the interview, unanswered questions and silences, unexpected problems, as well as my reflection of the whole process. For those recorded interviews, I transcribed them verbatim into text, and provided my own translation if the original language of interview was Mandarin. These transcribed interviews and related notes were subsequently analysed in accordance with grounded theory coding practices.

In addition to concentrated participant observation and in-depth interviews, all types of documentary materials were collected from cooperating organisations, including organisational brochures, annual reports, community publications, board meeting minutes, historical and archival materials, submissions to the government inquiries, fiscal and funding data, client demographic statistics and so on. I also found internet research quite useful, for influential organisations were generally interested in advertising their goals and achievements as a means to attract new members and win government support. Additional information about these organisations could be found in Chinese newspapers and magazines, official websites of OCAO of the PRC and OCAC of the ROC, as well as personal blogs and columns. All put together, these documents supplemented the data I gathered from the research field and provided precise figures which often escaped the memory of interviewees. In sum, while the building of an organisational inventory gives a brief indication of the full range of Chinese organisations in Canberra and Sydney, the qualitative field research and semi-structured interviews can assist by providing a theoretical framework, validating and interpreting statistical relationships, deciphering puzzling responses, and offering case studies (Fielding and Fielding 2008: 556). The triangulation of research methods and data sources greatly enhances the validity and reliability of the research and is conducive to a comprehensive understanding of the characteristics and activities of different types of Chinese organisations in a global setting.

3.5. Data Analysis

My analysis of the qualitative data was guided by the principles of grounded theory. Grounded theory was introduced by Glaser and Strauss in 1967, who defined it as “the

discovery of theory from data” (1967: 1). As distinguished from theory logically derived from *a priori* assumptions, grounded theory approach advocates loosely structured research designs that allow theoretical ideas to “emerge from the field in the course of the study” (Miles and Huberman 1994: 17). My research method conformed to the idea of grounded theory in that my interviews were semi-structured and contained elements of narrative analysis, which allowed respondents to identify the issues and offer their own interpretation. Having said that, it should be noted that in practice, field researchers invariably bring some orienting ideas and general research questions to fieldwork to guide their thinking. As Ezzy argues, the grounded theory approach “often appears to proceed on the basis of an assumption that the researcher is a *tabula rasa*, who will absorb and understand the meanings of the subjects of the research unfettered by any of the researchers’ previous understandings”, but in reality, the best that can be achieved is to be aware of these preconceptions, and be prepared to have them adjusted, revised or even invalidated through the research process (Ezzy 2002: 10). This open-attitude is particularly crucial for this study, for there are very few existing scholarly works on Chinese organisations in Australia. I was basically starting from scratch, only aided by some general literature on migrant integration and Chinese settlement. The methodological stance of grounded theory makes me ready to be amazed, moved, or even shocked by whatever findings that arise from the exploratory efforts.

In practice, the field approach to data analysis entails the attempt to summarise and order the data by identifying themes, concepts, propositions and theories (Singleton. and Straits 2005: 339). As Winston Tseng points out, there are three general aspects to the coding process: descriptive coding, interpretive coding and analytical coding (Tseng 2003: 141). For descriptive coding, initial codes are generated based on significant aspects of respondents’ stories, whether they are actions, events, feelings or circumstances. At the phase of interpretive coding, codes that are conceptually similar or related are grouped together around the axes of central categories. In the last phase, core categories that are repeating most frequently are developed into key themes of the study, and all other categories are subsequently reorganised around these themes to provide a strong argument.

For this study, phrase by phrase coding was conducted as opposed to line by line coding, for most of my data is recorded in detailed notes rather than full transcripts, as required by my respondents. I noted down all the descriptive codes as I went over the field notes

and transcripts. Similar codes were grouped together to form categories, which later on coalesced into major themes. Strauss and Corbin provide a good description of this process:

Analysis is not a structured, static, or rigid process. Rather it is a free-flowing and creative one in which analysts move quickly back and forth between types of coding, using analytic techniques and procedures freely and in response to the analytic task before analysts. (1998: 58)

The three major themes emerging from this process include: cultural tradition, social integration and transnational exchange, each of which contains several sub-themes and is supported by case studies and narratives of the respondents. In the end, linkages are made between these themes and the three schools of thought introduced in the chapter of literature review, leading to new interpretations of pre-existing theoretical positions.

3.6. Limitations of the Study

The inability to generalise findings beyond the research sample is a limitation inherent in all qualitative researches (Mertens 1998). Surprisingly, only a small proportion of organisations keep good records of their activities. In many cases, presidents of target organisations could only remember a few big events for the immediate past few years, without any clue of what their predecessors did. For details, I had to go through the archives of Chinese community newspapers for specific reportage, which understandably, was not always available. Although I compiled an inventory of organisations in Sydney and Canberra based on the directories provided by King Fong, it was virtually impossible for me to go one step further and acquire systematic data for each of them because of their marked difference in formalisation. While big service organisations like CASS were able to provide year-by-year records of their activities, the majority of small associations did not even have permanent venues or standing public officers. Some of them were merely shell organisations with a few dozen members, which were utilised by Chinese transnational brokers as a platform to liaise with China. In these cases, virtually no written records were available. The tenacity of Chinese *guanxi* system premised on reciprocity and tacit understanding meant that the most interesting facets of their engagements took place behind the scenes, only known to a few insiders. Taking into account these cultural factors, I changed my primary data source in analysing different types of organisations. For service organisations with complete historical records and strong community base, I preferred to employ in-depth

case study, which was supported by rich data from participant observation, interviews and internal archives, but for overseas-oriented organisations whose main activities consisted of transnational exchanges, I tended to rely on interviewing for the majority of my data, supplemented by news reportage and reports issued by the Chinese government.

Secondly, resource constraints and the sensitivity of my own background determine that some omissions have to be made in the sampling process. Not surprisingly, my mainland background could be a barrier for me to access Taiwanese associations and dissenting groups like *falungong*. With several rounds of personal referrals, I managed to talk with the President of the TAC, but the outcome was quite disappointing. Nothing substantive emerged from the interview. The perceived political cleavage (between him and me) had a huge impact on the scope of sharable information and the depth he would like to go into. In fact, more information could be gathered from newspapers than from interviews. The reply I got from Sydney was blunter, as the Nationalist Party never responded to my interview requests, and also aborted were my attempts in liaising with the Cultural Office of the OCAC of Taiwan. For *falungong*, I was never able to go beyond the level of leaflets staff, who showed a high level of wariness toward any inquiries about the functioning of their organisation. Admittedly, the inaccessibility of many Taiwanese associations and miscellaneous dissenting groups could potentially result in the incompleteness of the overall picture. However, as the pro-China camp has become the absolute majority in number and influence since the 1990s and has been continuously growing in strength with the influx of mainland migrants, I am confident that this thesis has addressed the most significant aspects of Chinese organisational activism today, and the broad trends of organisational development discussed in the thesis are congruent with the socio-political realities of the Chinese community in Australia.

On the other hand, my experience with non-political religious organisations was also less than satisfactory. While most leaders of religious organisations were keen to disseminate their religious beliefs, they exhibited an obvious unwillingness to discuss more secular topics like the daily organisation of their groups. The ever-present missionary intent made it very hard for me to orient the conversation toward those issues directly relevant to my research. As I became more familiar with the field, I found out that many of the charity functions of religious organisations had already been

transferred to modern-style, specialised service organisations. Moreover, due to the general disinterest of the PRC on religious matters, transnational liaisons of these organisations were seldom supported by state policies and were instead conducted within a diasporic religious space, which probably merits a separate research project.

Furthermore, the definition of the Chinese diaspora in this thesis and the resultant sampling of overseas Chinese organisations prioritised the popular standpoint of the Han people, which is the dominant nationality within the Chinese diaspora. Although my interviewees included people of minority backgrounds like the Mongolian, Hakka and Miao, their self-identification and activities usually aligned with the official stance of the PRC without a specific non-Han message. Dissenting ethnic minorities with a strong anti-Han agenda like the Tibetan and Uyghur were excluded from my sample, for they no longer identified themselves as the “Chinese”, and their activism was of an entirely different nature, which merits investigations in separate research projects.

Apart from the inaccessibility of Taiwanese groups and dissenters, and the justifiable exclusion of religious organisations and specific non-Han diasporic organisations from the sample, there are organisations which I touched on but did not discuss in full. For example, among the six professional organisations I listed for in-depth interviews, I mentioned all of them in my thesis but only chose three for thorough case studies to avoid data duplication. In order to achieve a better thematic focus, I did not have a full-blown analysis of CSSA or other alumni associations, for their functions largely overlapped with ordinary sociocultural organisations, and their resources and range of activities were nothing comparable to large-scale professional organisations. Similarly, in my choice of interviewees, my focus was on first- and 1.5-generation migrants from mainland China and Hong Kong, who have stayed in Australia for more than twenty years and have been most active in Chinese organisational life. The second generation in my experience became too localised to be interested in the ethnic sector, and their participation in Chinese organisations were indeed negligible.

Thirdly, the issue of confidentiality looms large in the use of data. On the one hand, because of the intense competition between Chinese organisations, many organisational heads were reluctant in allowing me to quote their financial reports in my thesis. On the other hand, mainly engaging in transnational liaisons premised on personalised networks, heads of transnational Chinese organisations were usually not willing to share

details of their interactions with Chinese institutions, especially if the Chinese government was involved directly or indirectly. Some interviewees gave me explicit instruction that they wanted to keep certain information off record. To fill in the gaps of data, I tried my best to find equivalent data from newspapers in China, which were open for public use and did not require consent from participants.

Last but not least, as most interviews were conducted in Mandarin, I had to translate them into English, which could result in some inaccuracies. In cases that no cultural equivalents were available, I had to use paraphrasing. Although I am confident about my translation skills and have had professional translators check my transcription, it is inevitable that semantic precision and linguistic richness is to some extent compromised.

On the whole, while the inventory of Chinese organisations provides a bird's eye view of the organisational network in Canberra and Sydney, participant observation, in-depth interviews and documentary research generate rich data of key organisations, which are then organised into major themes of the thesis. Although the interview sample is not as large as I would have wanted due to limited time and accessibility issues, forty-two participants constitute a reasonable number for a qualitative study and fairly represent community leaders of different gender, age group, geographical origin, migratory stream, occupation and organisational affiliation. Viewed from the outcome, the collected data is sufficient in presenting a clear picture of Chinese organisational activism in Australia and providing insights on new theoretical perspectives on the development of ethnic organisations in the globalising world.

Chapter Four: Comparative Accounts of Chinese Communities in Canberra and Sydney

Before delving into the specific forms of Chinese organisational activities, it is of paramount importance to form an understanding of the community profiles of Canberra and Sydney. This chapter purports to provide a brief analysis of the social conditions of the two cities, their respective histories of Chinese migration, the current outlook of the Chinese communities living within and the organisational network they have fostered. It reveals the parallel development of Chinese communities at these two locales, and in the meantime points to those significant differences arising from local specificities.

4.1. Chinese Story in Canberra

To begin with, Canberra is selected as the site of pilot study, not only because of the feasibility of the sample size, but also due to its strategic position as the capital city of Australia and its top-down mechanism of policy making in relevant areas such as immigration, multicultural affairs and community services. Canberra's case provides a microscopic view of the essential features of Chinese organisational principles and serves as a significant referential point for the investigation of the full-blown ecosystem of Chinese settlement in Sydney.

4.1.1. Demographical Features of the Chinese in Canberra

The ACT is the smallest of Australia's States and Territories, however, the latest CommSec report *State of the States* demonstrates that the ACT economy ranked the third together with Queensland among all States and Territories and had its major strength in population growth (Sebastian 2014: 1). The good economic performance and welcoming policies of the ACT government since 2001 combined to attract a larger number of migrants than before. By 2011, 79,021 persons spoke two or more languages at home, accounting for 22.2 per cent of the Territory population. In a proportional sense, this makes the ACT the third most diverse among all states and territories, only after New South Wales and Victoria.

Among all overseas-born groups in ACT, China is the top birthplace for non-English-speaking population. The Chinese-born population (excluding Hong Kong and Taiwan) reached 6,571 by 2011, representing an 85.4 per cent increase from the figure of 2006. Put together, people of Chinese ancestry added up to 13,781 in 2011, consisting of people born in mainland China (6,280), Australia (3,000), Hong Kong (1,176), Malaysia (1,205), Vietnam (387), Singapore (494), Taiwan (256), Indonesia (178) as well as other countries and regions (ABS 2011).

To give a clear picture of the streams of Chinese migrants to the ACT by year, a customised table entitled “birthplace by year of arrival” is compiled from data of past Censuses. Countries and regions with considerable Chinese population are selected for comparative purposes. A common problem with birth place data was acknowledged by many scholars. As Skrbiš points out, simply using data by country of birth tends to conflate nationality with ethnic identity, therefore suppressing the identity of smaller ethnic groups within sending countries and meanwhile failing to take account of the numerical strength represented by a large number of first- or second-generation members born in places other than the surrogate country (Skrbiš 1999: 13). To tackle this problem, I have only selected those countries and regions with significant proportion of Chinese. Moreover, these figures are later on contextualised in historical accounts and checked up against complementary qualitative data.

Table 7: Birthplace by Year of Arrival

Birthplace	Before 1971	1971- 1980	1981- 1990	1991- 2000	2001- 2010	Total
China (excl. SARS and Taiwan)	145	110	592	1,088	4,032	5,967
Hong Kong	106	175	380	320	338	1,319
Malaysia	275	359	518	202	660	2,014
Vietnam	36	541	884	575	734	2,770
Singapore	98	141	142	95	353	829
Taiwan	9	22	54	74	159	318

Indonesia	92	64	116	140	473	885
Total	761	1,412	2,686	2,494	6,749	14,092

Source: Table compiled from the 2011 Australian Census of Population and Housing (ABS).

Despite difficulties with data by birthplace in pinning down the specific number of Chinese in each stream, it is quite useful in reflecting the broad pattern of migration from major sending countries and regions, notably that of mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, where the majority of migrants are of Chinese origin. As shown by the above table, migration from mainland China to the ACT accelerated in the 1980s and showed a consistent growth in the following decades. Most remarkably, Chinese-born immigrants almost quadrupled in the period from 2000-2010, soaring from 1,088 to 4,032. In comparison, intake from most Southeast Asian countries reached the peak in the 1980s, slowly declined in the 1990s, but regained momentum in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

This aligns with the changing PRC policy governing emigration and the general trends of Chinese migration in Australia. At the national level, the mid-1960s saw the marked increase of affluent ethnic Chinese when the “White Australia” policy was gradually dismantled, and Chinese and other Asians could qualify for admission on the basis of high educational attainments, professional qualifications, skills in demand and guaranteed employment. The origins of newcomers were diverse and underrepresented by Chinese directly migrating from the mainland. According to the 1976 Census, most of the recently arrived Chinese-born had spent some time in Hong Kong, and many had an English education. The higher proportion of ethnic Chinese arrivals in Australia from outside mainland China continued until the mid-1980s. As estimated by ABS, in 1985 five of the top ten countries of residence for visitor arrivals were in Southeast Asia (Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore) or North East Asia (Hong Kong and Japan), with arrivals from these countries representing 44 per cent of all education arrivals for that year (Linacre 2007: 110).

This was confirmed by my interviews with Malaysian and Singaporean migrants arriving in Canberra in the 1960s. In their recollections, under the Long-Term Scholarships Program (LTSP) of the Colombo Plan, about 2,000 to 3,000 merit students from Southeast Asian countries were selected by home governments to study in Australian higher educational institutions free of charge with their living expenses

covered by a scholarship. In the meantime, there were about 20,000 to 30,000 self-funded Southeast Asian students coming to Australia, who were attracted by the lower threshold of Australian universities and the prospect of free higher education, since tertiary fees were not introduced for overseas students until from the 1980s. Of these arrivals, about two to three hundred settled in Canberra. They usually socialised with co-ethnics from Taiwan, Hong Kong, as well as a small number of Chinese from Vietnam. This formed the demographical foundation of early Chinese associations.

4.1.2. Characteristics of Chinese Organisations in Canberra

According to a private note of Sing-wu Wang, distinguished expert in the area of Chinese migrants in Australia and one of the founders of Canberra Chinese Christian Church (CCCC), there were only 227 Chinese living in Canberra in 1971, most of whom were students of the Australian National University (ANU) and University of Canberra (UC), student-turned professionals and staff from diplomatic office of Taiwan.⁴ Established during the similar period was the Canberra Chinese Club (CCC), which was registered under the ACT Ethnic Communities' Council (ECC) in the 1980s, but had frequent informal gatherings as early as 1975. It mainly consisted of Taiwanese families, but also included Chinese families of Hong Kong, Malaysian, Singaporean and Vietnamese backgrounds.

According to my interview with David Ng, President of National Australian Chinese Association (NACA), the first batch of Chinese associations in Canberra were registered in the late 1980s, including the Taiwanese Association of Canberra (TAC), Canberra Chinese Club (CCC), and ACT Chinese Australian Association (ACT-CAA). Because of the limited number of Chinese available in Canberra, membership in these associations was based on a shared Chinese culture rather than distinct nationalities. This is congruent with the concept of "Cultural China", which is represented by three symbolic universes. The first universe is equivalent to the "Greater China", including mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and sometimes Singapore, societies populated predominately by cultural and ethnic Chinese. The second universe comprises scattered Chinese communities throughout the world, corresponding to the idea of Chinese diaspora in today's term. Interestingly, the third symbolic universe enlists individual men and women, such as scholars, teachers, journalists, traders, entrepreneurs and

⁴ The unpublished note was shown to me by the family members of Sing-wu Wang.

writers, who try to understand China intellectually and empirically, and bring their conceptions of China to their own linguistic communities (Tu 1994: 13-14).

The notion of cultural China allows a flexible and context-specific definition of Chineseness and is particularly useful in mobilising the small number of Chinese in Canberra, who are of different national backgrounds. Indeed, early associational life in Canberra was largely cultural in nature with activities like celebrations of traditional Chinese festivals, tours, cooking events and film festivals. However, a political overtone was ever-present through the thin veil of cultural jubilation. Since the PRC had not opened up to the rest of the world until the late 1970s, Taiwan for a long period of time acted as the default representative of Chinese culture, seeing as its rightful mission to enlist the Chinese overseas and uphold the banner of Chinese civilisation. Take CCC for example, the OCAC of Taiwan not only provided a seed funding to cover its setup cost, but also supplied textbooks and teachers for the affiliated CCC Chinese school, enabling it to afford a fifty per cent discount of tuition fee to association members. Even today, a camping activity is organised every year to bring second-generation Chinese all over the world to Taiwan for travelling and Chinese language education, with the two-way airfare and accommodation generously covered by the OCAC. The symbolic status of Taiwan as the centre of Chinese civilisation was cemented in its financial role in sustaining Chinese associations and schools, celebration of the founding of the Republic of China (ROC) in different overseas communities and wide adoption of traditional Chinese as the medium of teaching. These gestures greatly enhanced the legitimacy of the ROC in the minds of early Chinese migrants.

However, as Chapter Two goes, Taiwan's central role in the Chinese diaspora was to be gradually but irreversibly replaced by the PRC with the large-scale emigration of mainland Chinese. The intake of mainlanders in ACT saw a six-fold increase from the 1980s to the period of 2000-2010. While the decline in number of Southeast Asian migrants in the 1990s was reversed in the new century, it was nothing near the absolute number of mainland immigrants. With the changing demographics, power balance within overseas Chinese communities decisively tilted toward the new migrants, whose political orientation more or less leaned in favour of the PRC government. For the older ethnic Chinese, although old attachment lingers, their primary interest now lies with the PRC government, whose proactive strategy makes possible transnational exchanges of unprecedented scale and volume.

In today’s Canberra, there are approximately twenty Chinese groups incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 1991 and registered with the OMA. However, there are only six to seven associations with considerable local influence, which are divided between old ones formed by ethnic Chinese and new ones of mainland background. The expanding influence of the PRC government was strongly reflected in the creation of the Canberra Chinese Special Events Committee (CCSEC) in May 1999, which provided a unified framework for key associations. Founded under the auspices of the Chinese embassy, this Committee was aimed at promoting cooperation between different streams of migrants and putting together resources for the planning of significant events, like celebration of Chinese New Year, disaster reliefs and reception of Chinese politicians and celebrities. In 2001, the Committee evolved into the Federation of Chinese Associations of ACT (FCA-ACT), with six standing association members. The composition of this Federation reflects a balance of established Chinese groups and the new migrants from the mainland.

As the following table shows, Chinese associations in Canberra are differentiated on the basis of place of origin and migratory streams; however, this seldom becomes as an obstacle for their cooperation. Firstly, membership to these associations is not mutually exclusive. Since the 1980s, older associations like ACT-CAA, CCC and NACA started to extend the hand of welcome toward mainland migrants, and meanwhile enlisted Mandarin-speaking volunteers to help with event-planning. Mainlanders in their 60s or 70s prefer to join these associations, for they have a higher proportion of elderly members and provide better elderly services. In general, older associations are more diverse in membership, but with most of their members reaching sixty years old or more, they are faced with the problem of insufficient manpower. In contrast, mainland associations seldom attract the participation of ethnic Chinese, but they are replenished annually by a large number of new arrivals and have more potential for growth.

Table 8: Profiles of Standing Associational Members of FCA-ACT

Association	Year of Establishment	Membership	Origin	Membership Occupation	Affiliated Entities
CCC	1976 and incorporated	50 family units	Taiwanese, Malaysian,	Professionals, small	CCC Chinese

	in 1993		Singaporean and Vietnamese	business owners and public servants	School
ACT-CAA	1988	172	Mostly from Hong Kong, Guangdong and Malaysia	Professionals and public servants	ACT Chinese Aged Care Information Service; E.A.A.S Chinese School
NACA	1995 (split from ACT-CAA)	400	Hong Kong, and mainland China	Restaurateurs and shop owners	ACT Elderly Chinese Welfare Society
FCCCI	1991	500	Mainland China	Academics, professionals and public servants	FCCCI Chinese School
CSSA	1980s	More than 1000	Mainland China	Students and academics	N/A
ABA (Canberra Branch)	1990s	200	Mainland China	Restaurant owners, professionals and civil servants	Australian Chinese Shanghai World Expo Promotion Committee

Source: Table compiled from the data collected in my fieldwork.

Secondly, the peak organisation FCA-ACT makes sure that the power balance within the Canberran Chinese community should be maintained with care. The six core associations include the majority of established community leaders and newly formed

mainland associations are invited to join the Federation. The amended version of FCA-ACT Constitution in 2012 stipulated important changes regarding membership. Instead of specifying six standing member organisations, it states that

...the member organisations of the Federation are those who have paid their full membership fees for the current membership year and shall be represented by no more than two delegates from each organisation, one of which must be their elected President or their nominated Presidential representative of the member organisations. (FCA-ACT 2012: Rule 15.1.(1))

The executive committee consists of delegates from each member organisation, and positions of President and Vice President are to be rotated among the Presidential representatives of member organisations on a four-year basis.

This system, as its current Secretary Chin Wong explains, is aimed at incorporating as many Chinese organisations as possible and reducing potential conflict through a consensus mechanism, so that resources of the Chinese community could be effectively mobilised when occasion requires. Admittedly, rationalised associational structure and open membership play their role in maintaining community harmony, but the fundamental factor lying behind the cohesion of the Canberra Chinese community arises from the small size of the local Chinese population and resulting closeness of interpersonal relations as typically found in small towns. Unlike those densely populated ethnoburbs in Sydney, Chinese community in Canberra is thinly scattered in different suburbs. Anything that bears a slight resemblance to Chinatown (China Street in this context) in Canberra is Wolley Street in Dickson, where Chinese restaurants and shops are mixed with other Asian businesses. As most community studies suggest, there is more community involvement and social interaction in middle-scale towns than in metropolises, and town-dwellers usually have more sense of community (Dempsey 1992: 25). This is certainly true for Canberra's case. According to Jun Xiao's research, of the 4,450 Chinese immigrants in ACT, some 2,700 persons have reported attending activities organised by local Chinese associations and/or Chinese religious groups (Xiao 2001: 7). Membership overlap through intertwining associational networks forges a high level of mutual familiarity among the Canberra Chinese.

During my interviews, I was amazed by the prevalence of gossiping in the community. People relate with relish the family background, personal history, and rise and fall of well-known community figures. The compactness of Canberra Chinese community

helps to strengthen the phenomenon of interlocking leadership, under which arrangement the core leaders assume committee positions in each other's organisations, or collectively set up *ad hoc* organisations in response to crises or changing policy initiatives. For example, Peter Pan, who used to be the Secretary of ACT-CAA, was for a period the Vice President of NACA, and is currently the Principal of E.S.S.A. Chinese School and manager of ACT Chinese Aged Care Information Service. Similarly, Fong Sum Yam, past Honorary President of NACA and current President of Canberra Branch of ABA, is concurrently a member of Australian Chinese Shanghai World Expo Promotion Committee (ACSWEP) and the Australian Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China (ACPPRC). It is fair to conclude that the emergence of interlocking leadership in Canberra chiefly arises from the compactness of the community and the practical necessity of putting together different types of resources for the collective good of the community. Rather than suggesting a monopoly of power, it points to the optimisation of available communal resources and its flexible deployment in the establishment of various platforms such as associations, schools and media in accordance with community needs.

4.1.3. Professional Elite and Government Services

Despite its small scale, the ACT sees the strong concentration of governmental establishment, educational institutions and the flourishing of government-funded services. Meanwhile, local agriculture and manufacturing are almost negligible compared to the vitality of its service industry. The occupational pattern of its residents accords with such an industrial layout. A brief look at the 2011 ACT Census data on employment shows the highest number of people employed in government administration (64,049 persons), followed by professional, scientific and technical services (19,122 persons), health care and social assistance (17,934 persons), education and training (17,128 persons), as well as retail trade (14,822 persons). Professionals across all industries account for 16.3 per cent of total employment, and they are assisted by a huge number of clerical and service workers (10.5 per cent). The number of labourers in comparison is quite small, only comprising 2.6 per cent of the total.

The very high percentage of professionals, especially of those employed in public administration and educational institutions, is also a distinct feature of the Chinese community in Canberra. Under the point-system used for selecting migrants, people

with professional qualifications or desired skills are given preference in acquiring permanent residency status, which, combined with the existing occupational structure in ACT, results in an exceptionally high proportion of professionals. As the following table indicates, professionals are the mainstay of the employed for all major Asian groupings with considerable Chinese population. The proportion of people working in public administration is the highest for all groups except for mainland Chinese, who are well-known for their network of restaurants, food bars and cheap rental houses. However, ranking the second highest at 10.7 per cent among all occupations, public administration is still a preferred job option for mainland Chinese. More importantly, given the sheer number of mainlanders, a slightly lower percentage does not mean that they are under-represented in public service. The occupational profile of more established Asian settlers from Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore is very impressive. With more than twenty per cent of their working population employed in public administration, or working as professionals, they are over-performing the mainlanders, or even the average Australian-born. Comparatively speaking, migrants from Hong Kong are more likely to be involved in catering than Malaysians and Singaporeans, while all three groups are quite active in sectors like education, healthcare and social services.

Table 9: Occupational and Industrial Distribution by Birthplace in ACT

	Australia	China (excl. SARS and Taiwan)	Hong Kong	Malaysia	Singapore
Selected Professions					
Retail Trade	4.4	5.1	4.4	3.4	3.0
Accommodation and Food Services	2.8	12.1	10.6	5.6	4.0
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	5.3	5.7	7.9	7.4	7.0
Public Administration and Services	19.3	10.7	22.2	21.7	20.0

Education and Training	4.8	5.1	4.0	5.6	7.2
Healthcare and Social Assistance	4.7	4.5	7.2	8.1	5.0
Selected Occupations					
Managers	9.4	3.9	8.9	9.6	10.9
Professionals	15.8	19.6	27.4	26.7	22.5
Technicians and Trade Workers	5.8	5.4	5.4	3.6	3.0
Community and Personal Service Workers	5.3	6.0	6.7	4.7	4.3
Clerical and Administrative Workers	11.4	6.3	11.7	10.6	11.1
Sales Workers	4.0	5.0	3.2	2.7	2.7
Machinery Operators and Drivers	1.3	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.8
Labourers	2.3	4.7	3.3	2.7	1.3

Source: Table compiled from the 2011 Australian Census of Population and Housing (ABS).

The occupational distribution of the Chinese in Canberra provides some insight into the type of associations they create and survival strategies they adopt. Unlike the buoyant commercial milieu of Sydney, the population cap of Canberra makes it hard for family-based small business to prosper. Meanwhile, the strong demand of the governmental sector creates attractive opportunities for young graduates, who are looking for career stability, decent lifestyle and well-recognised social status. The push and pull mechanism results in the current occupational structure where the majority of Chinese community elites in Canberra are working as middle-class professionals, public servants, community workers and academics, whose accumulated “Whiteness” lies in their familiarity with governmental policies and procedures, professional expertise and rich knowledge and experiences in administering community services. Thus, it is no coincidence that leaders of the six core organisations are mostly of professional background. For example, Tiemin Wu, President of FCCCI is working at the

Department of Education and Training (DET). Sam Wong, past President and current patron of ACT-CAA, is the principal pharmacist at Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). His wife Chin Wong, working as the Assistant Director of Nursing & Midwifery of ACT Health, is the current President of ACT-CAA. Ken Huang, current President of CCC, is employed at the DIBP. The list could go on with a large number of past Presidents and committee members, who have worked in public service. Without a strong business community, which plays the role of patron for Chinese organisations in Sydney and generously donates toward a wide array of community activities, governmental support is of vital importance for the survival and development of multicultural associations in Canberra. This in turn leads to a heightened value of the capital possessed by the professional elites, who are apt in responding to the flux of local policy environment and utilising their professional expertise and liaising skills for the growth of community organisations.

4.1.4. Structural Reform of Multicultural Affairs in ACT

The predominance of public servants and professionals among the Canberra Chinese elite enhances the central role of the ACT government in promoting multiculturalism and regulating community organisations. In ACT, the administration of multicultural affairs is coordinated by the OMA, which provides strategic advice to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs on issues affecting people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. A tripartite composition of the multicultural community of ACT is conceived as multicultural community groups, international students and diplomatic community comprising 126 diplomatic missions.

As defined by the latest policy paper, *Multicultural Strategy 2010-2013*, the implementation of a multicultural agenda in ACT is achieved through three means: protective laws, enabling policies and community connectedness. The *Multicultural Strategy* emphasised the leadership role played by the government, OMA in particular, in regulating the multicultural policy area, and called for the collaboration of various multicultural community groups. As the strategy explains:

This (community connectedness) may be through formal or informal channels such as feedback and complaint mechanisms at agency level or via the ACT Human Rights Commission. It may be through participation on

committees and working groups or attendance at community forums.
(DHCS 2009: 13)

True enough, the formulation of key policy papers like *Multicultural Strategy 2006-2009* and *2010-2013* greatly benefited from community input. Both strategies were developed as point-to-point response to key issues and recommendations raised in a series of government-hosted fora and subsequent submissions. Six ministerial multicultural fora and a broad-based Multicultural Summit preceded the official launch of *Multicultural Strategy 2006-2009* and defined its ten key themes as human rights, access and equity, aging and aged care issues, cultural and religious acceptance, language policies, leadership and governance, migration of parents, settlement services for newly arrived migrants, terrorism, and young people (OMA 2006: 8).

Obviously, the tackling of these issues requires the cooperation of different governmental departments, and this significantly lifts the profile of OMA in orchestrating changes related to multicultural affairs. A whole-of-government approach is adopted to address a wide range of community concerns covering health, education, law-enforcement and other areas. The *Multicultural Strategy 2010-2013* detailed a list of initiatives introduced in partnership with various governmental agencies as diverse as ACT Health, ACT Police, Chief Minister's Department (CMD), Department of Education and Training (DET), Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DHCS), Department of Justice and Community Safety (JACS), and Department of Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS). The Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) is also included in the network as one of the important stakeholders in providing language and skill training, counseling service and migrant support (DHCS 2009: 19-50).

It is undisputable that the OMA acts as the central facilitator of the multicultural policy and advocates a culturally sensitive approach among different government departments in the handling of their clients' needs. Also evident is the gradual modification of various governmental practices in regards to service delivery to the marginalised non-English-speaking (NES) population. However, it should be noted that the influence of the OMA upon other government agencies is indirect, and is largely qualified by the responsiveness of the latter. It is through liaising and closely working with myriad community organisations that the OMA exerts a direct influence and achieves the greatest policy impact.

Numerous accomplishments are registered under the category of community connectedness, including the establishment of the Canberra Multicultural Community Forum (CMCF), the opening of Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre and the regular hosting of community fora between community delegates and the Minister for Multicultural Affairs. A grant system is established through the administration of Participation (Multicultural) Grants Program, Multicultural Radio Grants Program and Community Languages Grants Program, respectively aimed at improving the quality of multicultural associations, multicultural radio service and ethnic language schools. The most recent funding rounds of these three grants programs saw a combined sum of \$280,000 made available for an array of projects as diverse as Chinese Lantern Festival, International Mother Language Day and African Showcase.⁵

Another symbol of the strengthened relationship between government and community is embodied in the establishment of Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre in Canberra in December 2005, the first fully dedicated multicultural centre in Australia. Meant to replace the old Griffin Centre, the new Centre brings a diverse range of multicultural community groups, peak organisations and service providers together under one roof to share resources and facilities. Flexible leasing agreements are negotiated at reasonable rates, and groups have a choice of a single office, shared office or “hot desk” arrangement, which allows them computer, internet, printing and fax access. Importantly, the OMA is also based in the Centre, enabling the flourishing of daily exchanges between the government and key stakeholders like the ACT Ethnic Schools Association (ACT-ESA), CMCF, Migrant and Refugee Settlement Services of the ACT (MRSS), Multicultural Women’s Advocacy (MWA), and Multicultural Youth Services (MYS). Working with these groups, the OMA takes the responsibility of planning the annual National Multicultural Festival (NMF), which is growing in popularity every year. In 2011, the Festival attracted approximately 260,000 visitors and featured hundreds of cultural performances and 420 stalls, including over seventy diplomatic missions (ACT Legislative Assembly 12/02/2013: 386, 420). It is fair to conclude that the efforts invested by community multicultural groups are indispensable for the stunning success of this flagship event.

⁵ A list of successful applicants for the 2013-14 Participation (Multicultural) Grants Program is provided by the community service division of the ACT government, which is accessible at: http://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/multicultural/services/grants/participation_multicultural_grants_program/2013-14-successful-applicants.

The new millennium witnessed the dramatic increase of migration to ACT, exceeding historical levels of approximately 1,000 persons per annum since 2006. From 351 persons in 2000, net overseas migration grew to 3,775 in 2009, with a net gain of 13,476 for the period 2000-2009 (Burch 2011: 18). The influx of migrants complicated the existing multicultural landscape and gave additional momentum for the improvement and restructuring of the multicultural sector.

Several significant changes took place during the last decade, leading to a thorough structural reform of the multicultural sector in ACT. In 2001, Jun Xiao proposed a multicultural governing framework in ACT, which, upon close examination today, is largely defunct (Xiao 2001: 93). As Figure 1 shows, the OMA used to be within the CMD. It hosted direct consultation between community representatives and the Chief Minister, meanwhile providing funding and support to the Migrant Resource Centre (MRC), the then peak organisation ACT Multicultural Council (ACTMC), 146 ethnic community organisations supposedly represented by ACTMC, Transact and the diplomatic community. Parallel with the OMA was the Chief Minister's Multicultural Consultative Council (MCC) under Gary Humphrey, which was re-created as the Ministerial Advisory Council for Multicultural Affairs (MACMA) with the change of government in 2001. The MACMA, like its predecessor, comprised community leaders of different ethnic backgrounds, and held regular discussion sessions with the Chief Minister about issues of common concern. With the OMA providing secretariat support, MACMA served as a formal platform for elite community leaders to provide policy input and gain political influence. Understandably, the key figures of ACTMC, along with prominent business leaders and social professionals, were appointed as members of MACMA upon the advice of the OMA.

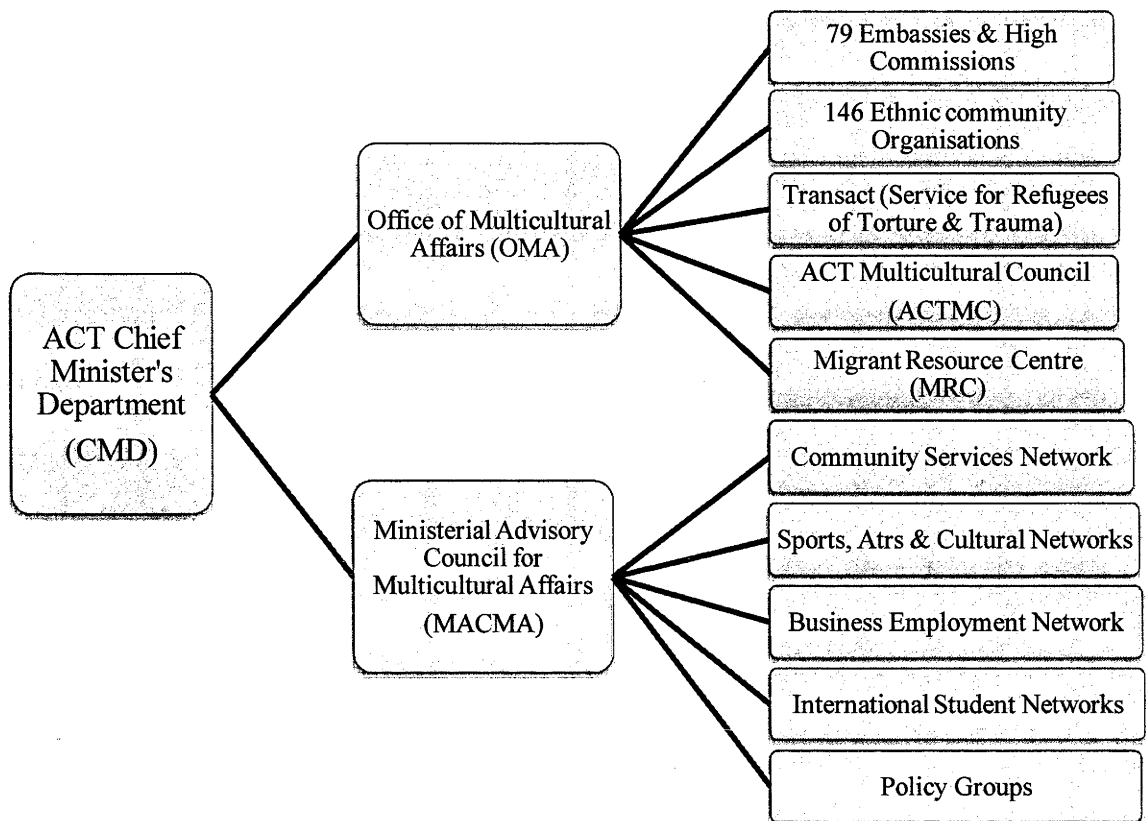


Figure 1: Multicultural Framework in ACT in 2001

The reform of the multicultural structure was carried out by the then Chief Minister Jon Stanhope in 2005, which significantly strengthened the government power in negotiating with the multicultural community and administering the multicultural policy. The central component of the reform pointed to the replacement of ACTMC with the new peak body CMCF, the process of which fully demonstrated the complexity of ethnic politics in Australia. The ACTMC was established in 1979 as the Ethnic Communities' Council (ECC) of ACT. As the peak body with direct access to the Chief Minister, it used to represent over 100 culturally diverse community organisations in Canberra and advocated to the government on their behalf. However, the relationship between the government and ACTMC deteriorated in the early 2000s, and there had been serious concerns over the alleged internal division and dysfunctional operation of the Council. As C2 told me:

Words were there about the cliquish nature of the Council, and some questions were raised over the proper use of government funding. Many ethnic leaders felt that the Council failed to represent them and unfairly excluded them from the decision-making process. From the government's perspective, the Council was supposed to be a medium for it to connect with

the wider multicultural community and exercise effective governance. But what did the Council do? It became so self-absorbed in its own power and authority, that not only did it not deliver the views the government most needed to hear, it practically thwarted other ethnic groups from communicating with the government.

In view of these problems, the government resolved to completely restructure the multicultural governing framework. The reshuffling started with the downgrading of the multicultural portfolio. In November 2004, the OMA was removed from the CMD and relocated under the DHCS, and a Minister of Multicultural Affairs (John Hargreaves) was appointed to take charge. In October 2005, the government decided to entirely axe its MACMA with the intention of wanting “more direct dialogue with ethnic community groups and less contact with peak bodies”. As the then Chief Minister Jon Stanhope publicly explained, the abolition of the Council “allows the community to elect and appoint its own representatives. The feeling that the Minister has is that he can...consult more directly and more deeply with community-based organisations” (ABC News 04/10/2005).

A series of tough measures were under way, aimed at reinforcing government leadership and installing a new mechanism to facilitate community participation. Six multicultural fora were held, during which John Hargreaves discussed the matter with representatives from different ethnic communities, who openly aired their complaints about the poor management of ACTMC and advised the government to take decisive actions. Soon afterwards, John Hargreaves made it clear that if ACTMC did not improve itself in terms of representativeness and service delivery, the government would withdraw funding from it. A direct audit was ordered to investigate its management of grants, which was quite unusual under the circumstances, for as the audit report admitted,

Under the Auditor-General Act 1996, the Auditor-General does not have the power to conduct a direct audit of independent bodies, only government bodies. The Auditor-General, however, decided to examine the issues raised by conducting an audit of DHCS in relation to the administration of funding provided to ACTMC. (Auditor-General 06/04/2005: 1.3)

The ACTMC conceded, coming into agreement that “the ACTMC will allow the Territory, its employees and agents to enter onto the premises of the Organisation to inspect and copy all records and documentation, of a financial nature or otherwise,

relating to the Services, but not including any Service User records” (Auditor-General 06/04/2005: 1.3-1.4).

By then, nothing could save the doomed Council. Suggestions were put forward by community representatives to start a new peak body to replace ACTMC. On Wednesday night, 14 December 2005, over forty leaders and representatives of over thirty ethnic organisations met to look for solutions in response to the many issues that came to a head at the 2005 Multicultural Summit convened by the ACT Government and unanimously accepted that the way forward was the formation of a new peak body CMCF. On 15 February 2006, the ACT Legislative Assembly recognised the existence of the CMCF as one of the two different community councils representing Canberra’s ethnic community groups (Wilson 2005). In reality, CMCF became the sole community council with more than eighty affiliated ethnic groups. The ACTMC, though still existing in name, did not have any real functions.

The significance of these events went beyond the replacement of one peak body by another. Pragmatically speaking, they led to the strengthening of governmental authority in regulating and governing the multicultural sphere, and strictly prescribed the roles and functions performed by so-called peak organisations. The CMCF never enjoyed as much power as ACTMC, for several peak bodies were simultaneously established to be in charge of different policy areas of the multicultural sector. For example, an ACT Muslim Advisory Council (ACTMAC) was created in 2005 to be a conduit between Muslim community and the government independent of CMCF. Meanwhile, many substantial functions were transferred to non-governmental service providers like MYS, MRSS and MWA, which shared resource with CMCF and considerably reduced the latter’s centrality in the community. The flattened structure is laid out in the following figure, which enables the parallel working of different service providers and peak bodies.

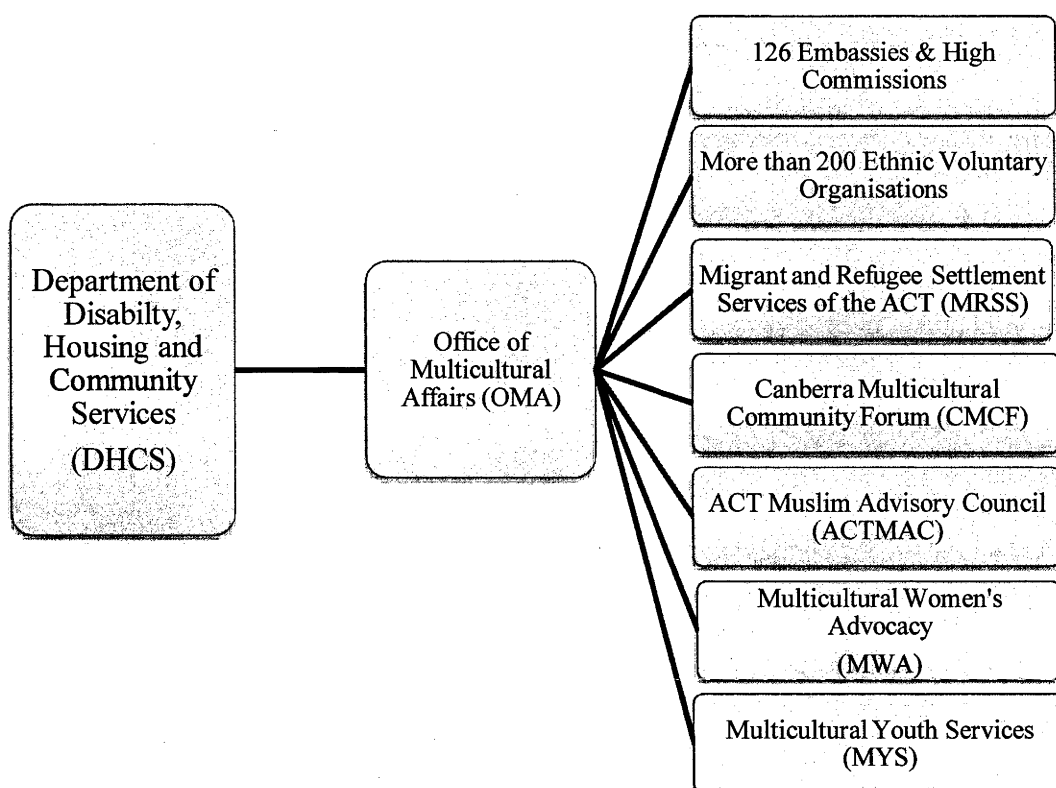


Figure 2: ACT Multicultural Framework in 2012

The division of separate focus areas worked well to enhance the leadership role of the ACT government. For one thing, it prevents the formation of a domineering peak body, which is liable to cause power concentration and corruption. For another, it is quite flexible in practice. New services and organisations could be established any time to adjust to the changing power balance and newly arisen needs of the community. It also makes it easier for the government to mobilise resource around substantial issues, which contributes to the implementation of a whole-of-government approach promoted in *Multicultural Strategy 2006-2009* and *2010-2013*. Most important of all, with such a new framework, government becomes the sole authority to which all community organisations need to subscribe. Apparently, the ACT government was quite satisfied with such an arrangement, which highlighted the leading position of the government and effectuated a close supervision of myriad groups and service providers within the mainstream ambit. On 17 November 2011, when Meredith Hunter MLA directly challenged Joy Burch, Minister of Multicultural Affairs, about the absence of a general

advisory body and asked for a “reconsideration or review” for “reinstating a permanent ministerial level advisory body on multicultural affairs which would represent the diverse interests of the community” (ACT Legislative Assembly 17/11/2011: 5535), Ms Burch’s comment betrayed an obvious reluctance of conceding power to such a body:

There was some level of concern in 2006. It certainly predates my time in this place. We have a very strong and functioning Multicultural Community Forum. We have a ministerial advisory council from the Muslim community. We have very strong representation with a multicultural women’s advisory group as well. So there are multiple groups and registered associations that I have regular contact with...I have a number of advisory councils, but first and foremost it is about making myself available, and my open door policy, to those community groups. (ACT Legislative Assembly 17/11/2011: 5535-6)

The centrality of governmental power in the multicultural sector in Canberra is congruent with the broad industrial layout of Canberra, the very high proportion of professionals and public servants in the circle of community elite, and the lack of alternative pool of resources apart from government grants. In this context, it is relatively easier for the government to exercise centralised control, and community leaders are more likely to adopt the strategy of co-option. In comparison, the highly diversified organisational presence in Sydney has to be understood in the contexts of the unique status of Sydney as a global city, the demographical strength of its ethnic communities, the complex community history and the manifest contestation of multiple power spheres.

4.2. Chinese Story in Sydney

4.2.1. Sydney as a Global City

The differences between Canberra and Sydney arise from the fact that the former is a political and administrative centre and the latter is a commercial and financial centre deeply enmeshed in the Pacific-rim trading zone. The importance of metropolitan Sydney in researching Chinese community organisations lies in its demographical diversity, historical tradition, and most importantly, its strong community strength.

Sydney has been the focal point of several rounds of national immigration debates for the immense attraction it has for overseas migrants. As Jock Collins succinctly points out, the population of Sydney is a testimony to, and a product of, Australian immigration history, particularly the postwar immigration program which was to change the face of Sydney (Collins 2000: 38). Historically speaking, Sydney absorbs a disproportionate share of immigrants among all gateway cities. Although only holding 19.0 per cent of Australia's population, it has received 27.6 per cent of immigrants who arrived in Australia between 2001 and 2010. It is also the preferred place of residence for migrants of NES backgrounds. Accommodating people from over 180 countries, Sydney is unmistakably cosmopolitan "with the smell, taste, feel and look of its contemporary downtown and suburban areas reflecting its two centuries of immigration" (Collins 2006: 135).

According to the 2011 Census, the usual residents of Sydney amounted to 4,391,674, of which 49.4 per cent of people had both parents born overseas. Out of all birthplaces, England was the place of origin for the largest number of migrants to Sydney, accounting for 8.6 per cent of all overseas-born. This was followed by migrants from major Asian countries such as China (8.4 per cent), India (5.0 per cent) and Vietnam (4.0 per cent), as well as traditional English-speaking country like New Zealand (4.8 per cent). Although coming in large numbers, the presence of English-settlers was more or less invisible, not only because of their *de facto* status as the dominant cultural group, but also due to their relatively even distribution across the width and breadth of Sydney. However, the reduction in size of the English community in Sydney since 2001 indicated a weakening hold of traditional cultural sources in comparison with the influx of a multiplicity of minority cultural groups.

Since the mid-1990s, there has been a manifest decrease of immigrants from traditional source countries. Migrants born in England and Scotland saw a major drop from 2001 to 2006. The number of the English-born slowly increased to the 2001 level by mid-2011, but the number for the Scots continued to fall in the period from 2006 to 2011. Southern European migrants such as Greeks and Italians also reduced in number, decreasing by 14.4 per cent and 14.6 per cent respectively from 2001 to 2010. Meanwhile, migrants from Asia, Middle East and the Pacific saw dramatic increase, fed by the skill, familial and humanitarian streams of the immigration program. In the 2011 Census, Chinese and Indian migrants became the two largest ethnic groups from a NES background,

numbering at 148,558 persons (excluding Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan), and 87,874 persons. In terms of growth rate, immigrants born in India, China and Iraq had the fastest growth from 2001 to 2011. The population of Indian-born community more than doubled during this Census period, while the other two birthplace groups experienced a major expansion by more than eighty per cent. With the combined factors of a large population base and an impressive growth rate, the Chinese birth group overtook New Zealanders as the second largest immigrant group just following the Britons. Other major immigrant groups with a population of more than 20,000 include those born in Philippines, Lebanon, South Korea, Greece, Hong Kong, South Africa, Fiji, Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Scotland (See Table 10). In addition, there are another 170 smaller immigrant groups from all corners of the world. The gradual erosion of British influence and diversification of source countries and regions point to the cosmopolitan nature of Sydney, and lead to a consensus on the rising profile of Sydney as one of the global cities, an image cemented by its successful bidding of the 2000 Olympic Games (O'Connor 1993; Searle 1996).

Table 10: Birthplace Groups with a Population of More than 20,000 in 2011 Census in Sydney

Birthplace	2001 Census	2006 Census	2011 Census	per cent change 2001-2010
England	151,650	145,256	151,995	0.2
China (excl. SARS and Taiwan)	82,013	109,143	148,558	81.1
India	34,490	52,985	87,874	154.8
New Zealand	91,963	81,064	84,949	3.6
Vietnam	61,313	62,115	69,780	13.8
Philippines	47,122	52,083	62,840	33.4
Lebanon	51,956	54,487	55,018	5.9
Italy	48,934	44,548	41,782	-14.6
South Korea	26,961	32,119	40,175	49.0
Hong Kong	36,133	36,875	37,169	2.9
South Africa	25,392	28,422	33,649	32.5
Fiji	25,389	26,895	30,191	18.9

Iraq	15,542	20,200	28,849	85.6
Greece	33,645	32,009	28,787	-14.4
Indonesia	19,725	20,594	25,147	27.5
Malaysia	19,024	21,214	24,551	29.1
Sri Lanka	15,772	17,913	22,128	40.3
Scotland	23,909	20,965	20,668	-13.6

Source: Table compiled from the 2011 Australian Census of Population and Housing (ABS).

As Burnley defines it, global cities are primarily metropolitan centres which have at least major regional command functions in the world economy and in which investment, financial markets, transnational corporation headquarters or major branch headquarters either transact with very large hinterlands of a large national economy, as is the case of Chicago in the US, or interact with a large global sub-region, as is the case of Seoul in Korea, or Sydney in Australia (Burnley 1998: 50). Taking advantage of Kingsford Smith Airport's dominance as the hub of international air traffic, Sydney lived up to its reputation as the regional centre of business and finance. It is estimated that of the 259 international companies with major operating centres established in Australia between 1990 and 1998, 163 located in Sydney and 59 in Melbourne. The city hosted headquarters of three-quarters of the international and domestic banks operating in Australia, and ran Australia's largest stock exchange and the country's only futures exchange (Ley and Murphy 2001: 124).

The global nature of Sydney also derived from the major economic restructuring in the 1990s, which significantly transformed the economic opportunity structure for its residents. Manufacturing employment has been falling in proportion to total employment in Australia since the 1970s, plummeting from 22.8 per cent in 1974 to 13 per cent in 1994. Along with the steady decline of the manufacturing industry was a massive industrial reorientation toward finance, telecommunication, media and social services. More jobs were created in the service industry, which was characterised by a clear division between top-end jobs related to managerial, professional and technical occupations and lower level jobs in the service sector. Meanwhile, white-collar clerical and sales jobs have been reduced through automation, computerisation and downsizing, leading to the disappearance of the middle layer of jobs, a phenomenon aptly referred to as "lifesaver effect" (Collins 2000: 54-55). In Sassen's analysis, the restructuring of industrial layout and its differential impact on employment were symptomatic of a new

international economic order, which gave rise to unprecedented wealth accumulation, as well as a staggering level of spatial and class polarisation (Sassen 1991: 221).

Starting with such a socioeconomic perspective, the significance of the global city as a migrant focus is two-fold: for the international elites and the international proletariat (Burnely 1998: 50-51). While the better-resourced migrants ride on the crest of globalisation and prosper via business and investment, the poorer ones, usually NES migrants, were hit hard by the restructuring process, either becoming unemployed or stuck in the least desirable occupational structure. Since the late-1970s, the selectivity of state-regulated immigration program in Australia successfully attracted a large number of affluent migrants equipped with professional qualifications and personal assets. This effectuated a gradual erosion of the rigid segmentation of labour market along ethnic lines. However, it should be noted that while a good class position enabled a substantial number of Asian migrants to get professional and managerial positions, the NES identity still worked to their disadvantage, preventing most of them from getting key promotions and realising their full potential in their career paths. In contrast, migrants of humanitarian and family streams, who were burdened with double disadvantages—class and ethnicity, experienced the greatest difficulties and were overrepresented in the bottom of the labour market. Not only were they the first batch to face unemployment during economic upheavals, they were also more likely to be engaged in insecure work arrangement as a result of low English literacy levels, social isolation, limited information provision in culturally and linguistically sensitive formats and broader intersectional access and equity issues (FECCA 2012b: 5).

Compared with the situation in Canberra, Asian migrants in Sydney are evenly distributed in a wide spectrum of industries and professions. The proportion of professionals is high among all selected Asian groups, although it is a bit lower than the level in ACT. In Sydney, there has been a diversification of industries, which provides a variety of channels to absorb the migrant labour. For instance, many industries which are under-developed in Canberra experience boisterous growth in the hustle-bustle of Sydney and create many job opportunities for the migrant workers. These include manufacturing, financial and insurance services, construction, as well as transport, postal and warehousing (See Table 11). In contrast, public administration, which is the key employer in Canberra, is not nearly as significant in Sydney, only accounting for three per cent of workers of all groups. Moreover, the robust business environment

leads to the prosperity of retail and wholesale trades, which, though based in local ethnic precincts, often have transnational linkages with overseas suppliers, distributors or customers.

Table 11: Occupational and Industrial Distribution by Birthplace in Sydney

	Australia	China (excl. SARS and Taiwan)	Hong Kong	Malaysia	Singapore
Selected Professions					
Accommodation and Food Services	2.6	6.0	5.3	3.5	2.7
Retail Trade	4.8	5.8	5.3	4.1	3.4
Manufacturing	3.4	5.5	3.4	4.5	3.1
Healthcare and Social Assistance	4.7	4.7	9.0	11.2	7.8
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	4.3	4.6	8.5	9.2	8.5
Wholesale Trade	2.3	4.3	3.6	3.9	3.4
Financial and Insurance Services	2.8	3.3	7.3	7.9	6.4
Construction	3.6	2.5	1.4	1.6	1.2
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.3	2.4
Education and Training	4.2	2.0	3.5	4.0	4.2
Public Administration and Safety	3.0	0.9	2.7	2.8	2.2
Selected Occupations					
Professionals	11.5	13.1	24.3	29.1	22.5
Technicians and Trade Workers	5.8	6.4	5.4	4.2	3.3

Clerical and Administrative Workers	8.0	6.4	10.5	10.5	9.9
Managers	6.3	5.7	8.9	9.6	10.9
Labourers	2.8	5.0	2.3	2.1	1.3
Sales Workers	4.6	4.6	4.4	3.5	3.4
Community and Personal Service Workers	4.3	3.9	4.5	3.3	3.2
Machinery Operators and Drivers	2.3	3.3	1.9	1.5	3.2

Source: Table compiled from the 2011 Australian Census of Population and Housing (ABS).

The industrial and occupational pattern as demonstrated above points to the complex terrain of Sydney as a global city and underlies a few central characteristics of ethnic communities in Sydney. Firstly, the diversification of industries and professions leads to a multifaceted composition of the ethnic elite in Sydney, which includes business leaders, public servants, community workers, lawyers, doctors and all kinds of social professionals. The rich reservoir of community resources makes it possible for ethnic organisations to be self-sufficient solely based on community support, especially at the initial setup stage. As the following chapter shows, apart from government funding, ethnic organisations in Sydney mainly rely on fund-raising activities to get their projects under way. The vibrant commercial environment and the large cohort of business leaders greatly contribute to the outcome of these endeavours.

Secondly, the government sector in Sydney is much less centralised than that of Canberra, as reflected by the small percentage of people working in public service. Thus, unlike in ACT where the government directly regulates the activities of major community organisations, the NSW government only exercises judicious supervision through the mechanism of a contracting out system. The service organisations have to report their performance to the government to satisfy the accountability clause of the contract. But apart from that, the government has little knowledge of the range of activities undertaken by the ethnic organisations, especially those exchanges in the transnational sphere. As many community leaders openly admit, the ECC, government-

sponsored peak body for ethnic communities in NSW, does not have any effective binding force and ceases to be active for a long time due to the intense power struggle between different ethnic groups. Without a unified structure, ethnic associations in Sydney are operating independent of each other, each pursuing its own agenda and satisfying the need of a particular niche group. The decentralised system and the multiplicity of organisational forms is one of the key features of the organisational network in Sydney. Finally, the range of occupations listed in the table brings to the forefront the problem of class polarisation, which is a common story in other global cities like New York, London and Tokyo. The gross deprivation of low skilled migrant workers on the one hand, and the much publicised stories of model Asian migrants on the other, aptly illustrate the huge polarising effects of globalisation and the multiplicity of experiences in a global city like Sydney. While the NES identity is normally associated with a series of disadvantages, other social attributes such as educational qualification, personal assets and work experience compensate for the lack of “elite” ethnic identity and enable some NES migrants to establish professional careers, which, by their association with the upper-middle stratum of the productive system, give sound rewards in the form of relatively high salaries and bonuses. However, such success stories do not automatically invalidate the inherent disadvantages arising from the NES identity; instead they point to the intertwining effects of ethnicity and class in shaping the structure of labour market. The erosion of a rigid segmentation based on ethnic cleavage defeats generalised accounts and begs an integrated analysis capable of handling multiple variables required by the research context. Such an approach is conducive to a rediscovery of the highly differentiated reality suppressed by ethnic labels and is useful in tracing long-term dynamism, where transformation often results from the concerted functioning of a whole range of factors, which take their turns to assume primacy in determining outcomes. It also echoes Ang’s warning that we need to go beyond tendencies of “groupism”, which “take discrete, sharply differentiated, internally homogeneous and externally bounded groups” as “fundamental units of social analysis”, and view ethnic groups in “relational, processual, dynamic, eventful and disaggregated terms” (Ang 2013: 1185-6). It is within the socioeconomic climate of a global city, and with a dynamic view of change that the Chinese settlement in Sydney is investigated.

4.2.2. Ethnic Precincts in Sydney

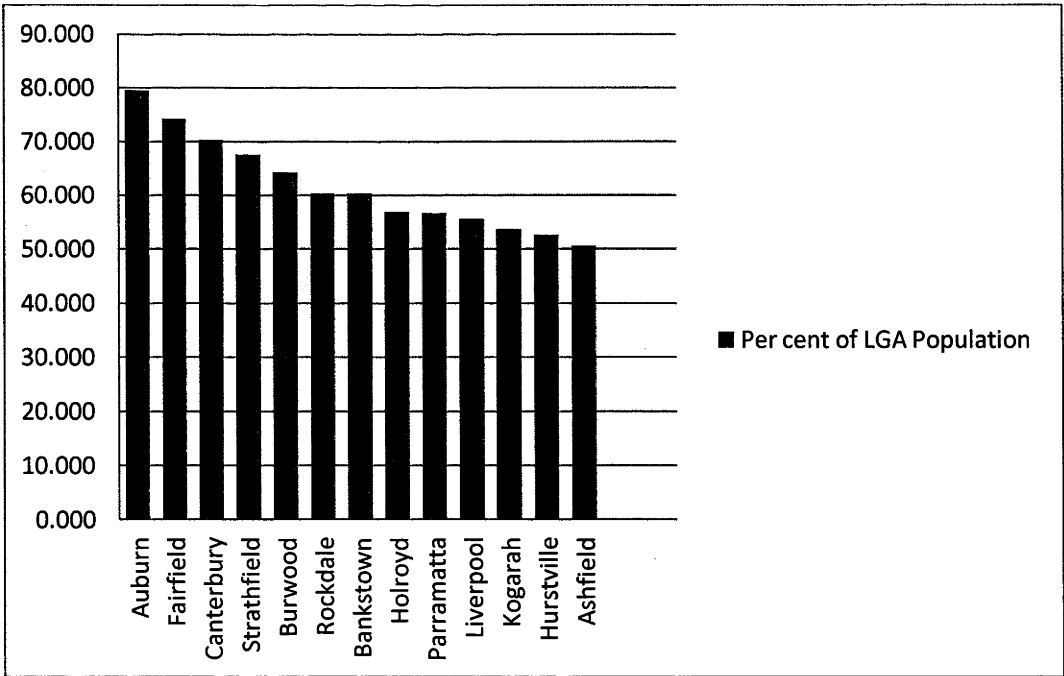
In exploring the settlement pattern of ethnic minorities in Australia, a holistic approach is usually adopted by researchers in demographical and urban studies, such as Ian Burnley (1998), Jock Collins (2002, 2003, 2006), Ernest Healy and Bob Birrell (2003) and James Jupp (2007), just to name a few. Such an approach is attentive to the complex interplay between ethnicity, class and other social configurations and is located in the dual contexts of time and space. Admittedly, with a huge population of overseas-born migrants settling in Sydney, quite a number of ethnic precincts emerged with unmistakable imprints of these minority cultures, the most obvious example being Chinatown around Haymarket-Dixon Street downtown area. Most of other ethnic precincts of Sydney are located in the suburbs of southwestern Sydney. In the inner-southeastern suburban ring, they include Leichhardt (Little Italy), Campsie (Little Korea), Petersham (Portuguese) and Marrickville (once Greek, now Vietnamese). In the middle-southeastern suburban ring, there are Auburn (Turkish quarter), Lakemba and Punchbowl (Middle Eastern) and Bankstown (Asian and Middle Eastern). Further away from the city centre is Fairfield, which is well-known for its established Vietnamese community. One exception to the geographical concentration in southwestern Sydney is the Chinese precinct of Chatswood, which is located in North Shore and is reputedly the centre of well-educated, middle-class Chinese immigrants (Collins 2007: 72).

While most researchers agree that there is a strong correlation between the localised concentration of NES migrants and aggravated socioeconomic disadvantages, the explication of the formation and evolution of ethnic precincts has gone beyond essentialised notion of “ethnic ghetto” in favour of a more dynamic concept of “ethnoburb” raised by Wei Li (1998). The proposed features of an ethnoburb give better description of the reality of ethnic settlement in gateway cities, aimed at grasping the correlation between ethnic residential pattern and ethnic business and exploring linkages between local niche economy and its global integration. Devoid of the derogative connotations of “ethnic ghetto”, “ethnoburb” refers to suburban ethnic clusters of residential areas and business districts in large metropolitan areas, especially in those “global cities”. They are multiethnic communities, in which one ethnic minority group has a significant concentration, but does not necessarily comprise a majority (Li 1998: 482). A survey of Local Government Areas (LGAs) of NSW with relatively high proportions of NES migrants is congruent with such a model. Although most of these local government areas are located in Sydney’s southwestern suburbs, they do not constitute ethnic ghettos as some critics allege. As Dunn rightly argues, even LGAs like

Bankstown, Auburn and Fairfield, which collectively are the home to almost two-third of all the Vietnamese-born residents in Sydney, cannot be described as residential ghettos, for Indo-Chinese do not constitute over thirty per cent of the local population (Dunn 1998: 513). This falls short of the two criteria of ghetto proposed by Massey and Denton, who define it as “a set of neighborhoods that are exclusively inhabited by members of one group, within which virtually all members of that group live” (Massey and Denton 1993: 18). Understandably, in a multicultural state with a firm grip on its immigrant intake, it is virtually impossible for an area to hit high figures on both fronts.

Taking a look at the 2011 Census, we could get the following local government areas with the highest proportion of language other than English (LOTE) speakers: Auburn, Fairfield, Canterbury, Strathfield, Burwood, Rockdale, Bankstown, Holroyd, Parramatta, Liverpool, Kogarah, Hurstville and Ashfield. The proportion of LOTE speakers in these LGAs ranged from 79.5 per cent in Auburn to 50.6 per cent in Ashfield. However, a thorough examination of disaggregated data indicates that while there are nodes of ethnic concentration in Sydney, these concentrations are also manifestations of inner heterogeneity (Burnley 1992: 72).

Figure 3: Local Government Areas with the Highest Proportion of Language other than English Speakers in NSW



Source: Chart compiled from the 2011 Australian Census of Population and Housing (Australian Bureau of Statistics).

Take Fairfield for example, it accommodates people from over one hundred countries and regions, its major ethnic minority groups including Vietnamese, Iraqis, Italians, Cambodians and Chinese (See Table 12). The following table demonstrates the gains and losses of these groups in Fairfield LGA over a ten-year period from 2001 to 2011, which give evidence to the dynamism of “ethnic succession”, during which process newly arrived immigrants from the Middle East (Iraq and Lebanon) replaced earlier Italian and Chinese settlers and took over the ethnic businesses left by former groups. However, with the gradual dispersal of established immigrants into more affluent suburbs and the concurrent inflow of new migrants into areas of cheaper accommodation, local disadvantages associated with the NES identity tended to persist. To the outsiders who are not acquainted with the underlying fluidity, it is understandable why they form the wrong impression about the prevalence of hopelessly entrenched ethnic enclaves in Sydney (Coughlan 2008: 3).

Table 12: Birthplace Groups with a Population of More than 2,000 in 2001, 2006 and 2011 Censuses in Fairfield LGA

Birthplace	2001 Census	2006 Census	2011 Census	per cent change 2001- 2010
Vietnam	24,904	24,697	27,438	10.2
Iraq	7,882	10,476	14,551	84.6
Cambodia	6,654	6,404	7,030	5.7
Italy	5,346	4,714	4,152	-22.3
China (excl. SARS and Taiwan)	4,240	3,818	3,957	-6.7
Croatia	2,584	2,542	2,445	-5.4
Lebanon	2,169	2,374	2,388	10.1

Source: Table compiled from the 2011 Australian Census of Population and Housing (Australian Bureau of Statistics).

To address such analytical blind spots arising from a reified view of community, it is imperative to supplement static community profiles with a time-series analysis of their development. Efforts should also be made to identify the major streams of migration and their impact upon the settlement pattern. The incorporation of a historical

perspective becomes all the more important for the research of modern Chinese diasporas, whose history dated back to the mid-nineteenth century and was shaped by global trends such as expansion of European colonial power, revolution of seaborne technologies and the surge of Chinese labour movements in different parts of the world (McKeown 1999: 313). Chinese settlement in Australia, though only part of this gigantic endeavour, offers a condensed view of its extraordinary complexity in terms of highly variegated modes of existence and the volatility of human politics. The Greater Sydney, as the entry point of the majority of Chinese in Australia, duly witnesses every twist and turn of this historical drama.

4.2.3. Chinese Migration and Settlement in Sydney

The story of Chinese Australians in Sydney shares some significant similarities with their counterparts in Canberra. This is reflected in the basic approaches in community building, major streams of migrant intake, key strategies in dealing with local governments, as well as their outreaching approaches with the home country. However, Sydney’s development into a global city and the sheer scale and diversity of its Chinese community have spawn qualitatively different ways of organisation and representation, which are impossible to be seen in a township city like Canberra. The strength of Sydney’s Chinese community is influenced by multiple factors, the central one being its large population base in a state of relative concentration. This makes the Chinese in Sydney a social force, which can hardly be ignored by mainstream politicians in conceiving policies affecting their interests.

According to the latest estimation, there are currently 283,968 Chinese speakers in Sydney Statistical Division, including 132,135 Cantonese-speakers, 133,888 Mandarin speakers, and 17,945 speakers of miscellaneous Chinese dialects. The figure based on language-spoken at home gives a more accurate gauging of the size of the Chinese community, for it takes into consideration the large number of ethnic Chinese and Chinese of second or third generations. The composition of the Chinese population is highly diversified, itself an indicator of the wide scope of the transnational Chinese network and the prevalence of remigration among ethnic Chinese. The main birthplace groups of Chinese ancestry in Sydney are tabulated as follows (Table 13).

Table 13: Birthplace Groups of Chinese Ancestry in Greater Sydney

Birthplace	People of Chinese Ancestry	Percentage
China (excl. SARS and Taiwan)	141,054	41.1
Australia	82,319	24.0
Hong Kong (SAR of China)	33,816	9.9
Vietnam	18,456	5.4
Malaysia	17,470	5.1
Indonesia	13,457	3.9
Taiwan	6,198	1.8
Singapore	5,720	1.7
Cambodia	4,606	1.3
Timor-Leste	1,171	0.3
New Zealand	2,207	0.6
Other	16,589	4.8
Total	343,063	100.0

Source: Table compiled from the 2011 Australian Census of Population and Housing (Australian Bureau of Statistics).

The disaggregated data of people claiming a Chinese ancestry showed a manifest fragmentation of the Chinese community according to their place of origin. Although migrants from mainland China constituted the largest sub-group (41.1 per cent), ethnic Chinese from Southeast Asia and Hong Kong maintained their stronghold, reflected in the equal number of Cantonese- and Mandarin-speakers in Sydney. My informants from mainland China hold the view that Sydney is dominated by the older migrants from South China and Southeast Asia, while Melbourne is a more welcoming place for new migrants. However, it is obvious that the continual entry of mainlanders have already tipped the balance of power in favour of the new migrants. The equal number of the two speech groups represented a big departure from the comparative figure a decade ago, when the Mandarin-speakers were less than half of the Cantonese speakers. The chain-effects gave momentum to the migration of mainlanders into Sydney, forming a community which is more susceptible to the policy influence of the PRC government. However, the foundational work laid down by older Chinese continues to be the infrastructure *a priori*, which underlies and gives direction to the development of

Chinese community, and the older-generation, Cantonese-speaking elite maintains its leadership status for the time being.

Apart from the first-generation Chinese, a firmly established cohort of Australian-born Chinese has also emerged, accounting for twenty-four per cent of people of Chinese ancestry. Most members of this group attend Chinese language schools at the urge of their parents. The cultural inculcation they received from the family and the broad socialising process of a predominantly Western society foster in them a type of malleable self-identification, which draws its fundamental elements from a continuum of values, beliefs and strategies, and derives its cultural meaning through specific social and political contexts (Honig 1992: 9). All these elements, without doubt, create a highly heterogeneous space where unending struggles and negotiations of myriad sources of power unfold themselves. On the one hand, the transnational Chinese *guanxi* network saw explosive expansion in breadth and width with the newly opened territory of mainland China. On the other hand, increased contact between various streams of the Chinese led to an intensification of intra-ethnic conflict, in spheres as diverse as education, business, employment, accommodation and sure enough in politics, the quintessential arena of struggle. Order could be temporarily established through social conformity, consensus, collective responsibility and fear of disorder, but is easily shaken by shifting loyalties, changing economic incentives and a volatile political environment.

The rough division of the Chinese along linguistics lines provides a broad picture of cultural differentiation and power division with the Chinese community. The particularly high representation of Cantonese speakers reflects the strong migration from Hong Kong, its adjacent provinces of South China, as well as the humanitarian stream from Vietnam. Although Mandarin-speaking migrants could include diverse groups of people such as the majority of Chinese-born, Taiwanese, Malaysians and Singaporeans, Table 14 shows that the big boost of this language group since the 1980s should be attributed to the huge influx of mainlanders.

Table 14: Birthplace by Year of Arrival in Sydney

Birthplace	Before 1971	1971- 1980	1981- 1990	1991- 2000	2001- 2010	Total

China (excl. SARS and Taiwan)	4, 154	3,580	26,535	36,838	68,132	139,239
Hong Kong	1,515	4,011	11,416	12,387	6,577	35,906
Malaysia	1,743	3,634	7,609	3,656	6,760	23,302
Vietnam	198	12,472	26,183	15,739	10,954	63,785
Singapore	749	1,279	2,000	1,720	3,760	9,675
Taiwan	47	178	2,156	2,780	2,565	7,726
Indonesia	860	1,768	4,072	7,152	9,852	23,704
Total	9,266	26,822	79,971	80,272	108,601	304,932

Source: Table compiled from the 2011 Australian Census of Population and Housing (Australian Bureau of Statistics).

As the time-series data suggests, the diversity of Sydney's Chinese community is the cumulative result of centuries' systematic migration. Compared with Canberra, Sydney enjoys a long history of Chinese migration dating back to the early nineteenth century. The oldest record of a Chinese colonist in Sydney was about the publican of *The Lion* in Parramatta in 1818 under the name of Mak Sai Ying or John Pong Shying. Three other Chinese people were said to work on John Macarthur's properties in the 1820s. The entry of a greater number of Chinese people had to wait until the 1840s, when the ending of transportation caused severe labour shortage and led to the recruitment of over three thousand Chinese workers arriving between 1848 and 1853, to the vehement protests of local workers (Williams 1999: 4). By 1901, there were 799 Chinese shopkeepers and grocers in NSW, of whom half were in the Sydney area (Choi 1975: 29). With the introduction of Immigration Restriction Act, the national population of Chinese dwindled to only 6,594 by 1947; however, the number in Sydney remained about the same as it had been throughout the century, and the city's 3,300 Chinese accounted for just over half the total national population (Fitzgerald *Red Tape*, 1997: 41). While inter-state migration to Sydney from other cities and rural areas was a measure of the contracting opportunities for Chinese migrants in general, it also indicated the emergence of a sustainable and self-complete Chinese infrastructure in Sydney, set up in a defensive stance against discrimination on the part of the wider society.

Indeed, virulent protests over the “Chinese Competition” came in waves, directed at various businesses engaged by the Chinese, such as mining, laundry, cabinet-making, retail and banana trade. The only trade which escaped the anti-Chinese crusade was market-gardening, which was not of much interest for Europeans, who had much wider opportunities in various trades and industries. As a result, market-gardening became the staple Chinese enterprise with a reasonable profit margin. The NSW and Victoria Censuses of 1891 and 1901 showed that for that period, Chinese market gardeners represented 30 per cent of the total Chinese population in these two states (Choi 1975: 36-37). Linked with retailing and wholesaling, market gardens acted as the locus for later expansion into fruit and vegetable distribution, import and export, and also the burgeoning catering industry. However, in the exclusionary environment, the livelihood of early Chinese migrants still largely relied on the consumption of their co-ethnics within an embryonic ethnic economic order. In the same vein, the wealthiest Chinese merchants, with few exceptions, were engaged in transnational business operations within the Greater China cultural sphere. This point will be elaborated in Chapter Seven, which is devoted to the transnational dimension of Chinese community organisations.

With the marginalisation of Chinese population and increasing concentration of Chinese niche-market, the Haymarket-Dixon Street area of Sydney gradually developed into the nucleus of modern Chinatown, another important area being the east end of Little Bourke Street in Melbourne (Collins and Castillo 1998: 278-89). Indeed, three of the oldest Chinese associations all had their headquarters in the Haymarket area including Sze Yap Society, Loong Yee Tong and Chinese Chamber of Commerce. As in other immigrant countries like Canada and the US, early Chinese migrants to Australia were mostly from South China and were of poor peasant background. Many of them came as stowaways, while some applied for temporary entry as substitute labourers working on Chinese market gardens or furniture factories. The presence of the Chinese greatly transformed the European spaces they occupied. Early Chinese construction in Sydney was manipulated in a way to secure maximum safety and autonomy. Jane Lydon described the layout of extant tenements such as Unwin stores, 77-85 George Street, where “the basements were closed in and outbuildings constructed in rear yards to provide more space, with access via ladders” (Lydon 1999: 73). Clearly, the evasion of police surveillance and inspection weighed heavily in the design of such lodgements, with lots of enclosing and barricading and sometimes, multiple exits for gambling places.

The defensive stance of the Chinese community as reflected in its building style was in part a deliberate strategy to avoid the malicious probing by the white media, which was preoccupied with providing lurid accounts of Chinese vices to their audience for shocking effects. For the wide public who knew little about the inner working of the Chinese community and was solely relying on media for information, the kind of opinions they formed under the media bombardment could be well expected. Responding to the heightened public concern, a Royal Commission into Chinese Gambling and Immorality was formed in 1891 to carry out further investigation. A report was submitted, which, not without a tinge of irony, represented the most comprehensive and finely conducted research about Chinese in that historical period. Several classes of Chinese were observed, which were in many ways a replica of the Confucius social order back in China. The commission report classified the Chinese into merchants, storekeepers, cabinet-makers, market gardeners, hawkers and gamblers (Royal Commission 1891-92: 34). Merchant gentry replaced scholar gentry as the ruling class of the Chinatown hierarchy and were principally engaged in wholesale businesses, importing tea, rice, opium and ethno-specific products to their compatriots (Bowen 2011). More enterprising members of the business elite set their eyes on transnational trade. The exporting of bananas from Fiji to Australia and New Zealand was dominated by the Chinese from the 1890s onwards and reached a peak around 1914. The business became so profitable that Wing Sang, Tiy Sang and Wing On, three of the most influential firms in this sector, formed the amalgamation Sang On Tiy in 1902. Together they had 500 acres of land under cultivation in Fiji and shipped 10,000 bunches of bananas fortnightly to Sydney during the first season alone (Ali 2002: 117).

The merchant gentry were highly respected in the Chinese community and were appraised by the mainstream society as “well-conducted residents”, who “in their own lives realise to a very large extent the European idea of comfort” (Royal Commission 1891-92 27, 119). As the most responsible group of the Chinese community, they provided leadership in county clubs, political parties, business associations and various co-ethnic activities. Indeed, county associations at the time were usually organised around stores or firms owned by merchants from that country, standing as the linkage between ordinary migrants and their homes. These stores could reach back to individual villages of the county, for they were usually part of a network of stores related by ownership or common partners in Hong Kong and home districts. They played a pivotal

role in passing remittances to the villages and importing exotic Chinese goods such as birds' nests, smoked duck, lychees and medicine herbs (Lydon 1999: 143). They were also instrumental in arranging trips to and from Australia for their countymen. For instance, Lin Yik Tong, the first business association on record, was an agent of three shipping companies in Sydney, including Gibbs, Bright & Co, Burns, Philp and Co, and China Navigation Company Limited. The main financial source of the Tong was commission derived from its services. As the sole agent of Gibbs, Bright & Co, it was granted 7.5 per cent commissions for issuing one ticket and 2.5 per cent for transporting gold and goods to China (Yong 1977: 82). In the exclusionary era, clan and native-place associations acted as the surrogate authority to govern every aspect of community life, offering an extensive range of services such as paying fares, purchasing tickets, arranging immigration and custom papers, providing accommodation, writing letters for the illiterate, allocating jobs and eventually returning their bones back home (Heyer 1953: 84-6).

By the 1890s, there were at least ten native-place societies in Sydney, representing either a single county or a combination of adjacent counties (Williams 1999: 15). Today three of these nineteenth century associations are still running, including the Sze Yap Society, Loong Yee Tong and Yiu Ming Hung Fook Tong, all of them representing different counties of the Guangdong Province. Among the three, Yiu Ming Hung Fook Tong is the oldest and the most influential county association in today's Sydney. After more than a century's development, it has a membership of more than 30,000 mainly consisting of migrants from Gaoyao and Gaoming. According to its President David Chung, in the 1870s, the community leaders from these two counties called on their people to raise money for the construction of a temple, aimed at worshipping Saint Hong, God of Fishermen. This initiative received warm responses from the county members, and the Yiu Ming temple project was started in Retreat Street, Alexandria in 1907 under the supervision of the Tong. Furthermore, two private companies, Tiy Loy and Co. and Wah Hing and Co. were established by society members in 1876, housed in a two-storey building on Botany Road, adjacent to Retreat Street. This building served as the venue of the association and was also used to house the poor and aged, as well as new migrants. Yiu Ming Hung Fook Tong undertook a significant amount of charity work in NSW, raising funds for hospitals and for relief of famine and flood disasters. It was not formally registered with the State government until in 1992, and Yiu Ming temple was subsequently listed on the State Heritage Register in 1999 for its historical,

architectural, religious and social significance (Heritage Council of NSW 2000: 29). The elaborate fittings of the temple provide evidence of strong community commitment and demonstrate the skill of Chinese artisans at the beginning of the twentieth century.

It should be noted that the ardent participation of the Chinese in community affairs at the time arose from the sheer adversity in which they were trapped. Although the actual support and services provided by those county organisations could be very limited, they were usually the only resort for Chinese migrants, who were forsaken by the home country and excluded from mainstream social life. It was expected by the Australian government that through restriction of fresh entry by the Chinese, especially the females, this community would eventually shrink to nothing. The exclusionary immigration policy lasted for more than half a century, during which only noncompetitive labour was admissible, including chefs, assistants, special clerks, importers and substitutes for people dying or returning to China. The White Australia Policy showed its early signs of relaxation in 1966, when a large number of former university students in Australia under the Colombo Plan were allowed to return to Australia under the category of “Distinguished and Highly Qualified” people, most of whom were from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Southeast Asia (Choi 1975: 64-65). This effectively lifted the number of the Chinese in Sydney from 3,300 at the 1947 Census to 9,443 in 1966 and created two areas of moderate Chinese concentration, Ku-ring-gai on the upper north shore and the southern middle-ring suburbs such as Randwick, Canterbury, Rockdale and Hurstville (Burnley 2002: 368).

Not surprisingly, migration from these source countries and regions significantly accelerated with the abolition of the restrictive immigration legislation and the introduction of a universal points system in 1973. This triggered chain migration of children, siblings and parents under family-union and sponsorship schemes in the 1980s and 1990s. The introduction of assimilationist policies in Malaysia and Indonesia sped up this process, with concerned ethnic Chinese parents bringing their children to Australia for better educational opportunities. As a testimony to the open-gate policy adopted by the PRC government, the number of mainlanders who entered NSW during the 1980s increased by seven-fold compared with the intake in the previous decade. The June Fourth incident in 1989 enabled more than 10,000 mainland students to apply for refugee status, and most of them were granted permanent residency after four years. When news was sent back home about the good environment, extensive welfare benefits

and comfortable lifestyle in Australia, more mainlanders packed their suitcases and made their way to Australia in the following decades. In sharp contrast to the reduced intake from Malaysia and Singapore since the 1990s, migration from China expanded at an unprecedented level, resulting in a total intake of more than 100,000 from 1991 onwards. This time, the fad of going overseas was not confined to the South-China region, but spread to every corner of the country, to everyone who could borrow enough money to make the journey.

Different from most mainlanders, who just entered the phase of everyday transnational life, people from Hong Kong were more attuned to the mobility of a global citizen by virtue of their former status as British subjects. Migration from Hong Kong was already quite established in the 1980s with a total entry of 11,416 in that decade. It remained at that level for the better half of the 1990s, experienced a sudden surge prior to the return of Hong Kong to the PRC in 1997 and suffered a drastic fall in the new century. Mainly belonging to the business stream, many Hong Kong migrants made investment in Australia in accordance with their visa requirements. Yet a lot more left their families in Australia and run their businesses in Asia, where they accumulated a rich pool of capital, contacts and information (Pe-Pua and Castles 1996). Apart from all these, there were sporadic influxes of Chinese refugees following outbursts of regional crises. For instance, the Indonesian invasion of East Timor in 1975 sent several thousand refugees to Australia, among whom about 5,000 were Chinese. Also during the Sino-Vietnamese war in 1978, 60,000 Chinese refugees arrived, half of whom settled in Sydney (Burnley 2002: 368). As demographers rightly recognise, the entry of diverse streams of migrants has a multiplying effect, for the creation of one migration type can seed others in the future. For example, humanitarian and skilled migration could start chain migration under the categories of family reunion and sponsorship. The immense variations in migratory experiences and economic backgrounds contributed to marked differences within the Chinese community. While those arriving with limited resources tended to settle in the lower cost suburbs like Auburn, Marrickville, Canterbury, Ashfield, Strathfield and Fairfield, affluent families from Hong Kong and Taiwan became home owners in Ku-ring-gai, Hornsby, Hurstville and Baulkham Hills.

The numerical strength of the Chinese population on the whole and its extraordinary inner diversity give rise to a dialectical interplay of co-ethnic unity and division. On the positive side, the sheer scale of Chinese population and relative visibility of their

communities are translated into strong community capital and greater representative power in different social spheres. As a new concept developed by Walter Lulich, ethnic community capital refers to ethnic collective involvements in the development of infrastructure for community use. It could be embodied in those material accomplishments such as ethnic-specific churches, temples, associations, service centres, social clubs, and different forms of media. It may also incorporate intangible issues like collective cultural image, mode of business operation and local political salience (Lulich 2006: 194-5). The accumulation of substantial community capital is premised on the adequate scale of the community, which determines that Canberra, for the foreseeable future, could not score high in terms of its Chinese community capital. In contrast to the dispersed residential pattern in Canberra, quite a few local areas have emerged in Greater Sydney, which have a moderate concentration of Chinese and possess the potential of developing strong Chinese community capital (See Table 15).

Table 15: Local Government Areas with More than 6,000 Persons of Chinese Ancestry

LGA	Responses	LGA Population	% of LGA Population
Fairfield	24,140	187,767	12.9
Parramatta	21,114	166,858	12.7
Sydney	19,918	169,506	11.8
Hurstville	19,564	78,853	24.8
Ryde	19,462	103,040	18.9
Hornsby	19,173	156,848	12.2
The Hills Shire	17,677	169,872	10.4
Auburn	16,110	73,738	21.8
Randwick	14,923	128,988	11.6
Bankstown	12,942	182,352	7.1
Ku-ring-gai	12,447	109,299	11.4
Kogarah	12,091	55,805	21.7
Willoughby	12,021	67,355	17.8
Rockdale	11,145	97,339	11.4
Blacktown	9,152	301,097	3.0
Canada Bay	8,299	75,762	11.0
Burwood	7,964	32,424	24.6

Liverpool	7,221	180,141	4.0
Strathfield	6,752	35,187	19.2
Ashfield	6,603	41,213	16.0

Source: Table compiled from the 2011 Australian Census of Population and Housing (Australian Bureau of Statistics).

The emergence of a dozen LGAs with more than ten per cent of their residents claiming a Chinese ancestry indicate the availability of considerable Chinese community capital in different parts of Greater Sydney. This, in turn, forges a set of unique characteristics, which cannot be found in the Chinese community of Canberra. Most important of all, a great measure of “institutional completeness” is achieved in the Sydney Chinatown and those suburbs with a strong Chinese presence. This corresponds with the previously mentioned concept of “ethnoburb”, which refers to the convergence of ethnic residential sector and the formation of an ethnic economy. While economic activities serve to incorporate ethnoburbs into the mainstream economy, unmistakable ethnic imprints tend to persist in local residential and business landscapes which make ethnoburbs different from typical suburbs (Li 1998: 504). Indeed, in those Chinese residential areas, a whole range of Chinese businesses have been running for decades, aimed at satisfying every conceivable need of their co-ethnics. In Chinatown alone, there are hundreds of Chinese businesses, including food stores, restaurants, accounting firms, herbalists, acupuncturists, grocers, real estate agencies, technology corporations, clothing stores and many others. Local-trained Chinese professionals like accountants, doctors, lawyers and other specialists have practices across Greater Sydney, in fact in any area with considerable Chinese influence. In addition, there are three Chinese radio stations, four main local Chinese dailies and a dozen weeklies, six Chinese cinemas and a number of Chinese temples and churches, not to mention the huge amount of voluntary services provided by a complex web of Chinese associations and charity groups, which are on their way of gaining mainstream status under the auspices of multicultural policy.

4.2.4. Chinese Organisations in Sydney

The strong population base and the formation of a self-sufficient Chinese community provide the fertile ground for the development of Chinese organisational network in Sydney, which is spearheaded by modern-style multi-functional associations and a multiplicity of transnational Chinese associations. Admittedly, it is quite difficult to

ascertain the total number of Chinese organisations in Sydney, for the establishment of new associations is as spontaneous as the dissolution of older ones. The highly fluid nature of overseas Chinese communities means that there could be a huge disparity between the government compiled lists of organisations and the private estimation of community volunteers, especially when the activities of a given organisation does not fall under the regulatory ambit of the host government. The official undercount of active associations became manifest since the late 1990s, when a huge number of native-place associations were established with the sole purpose of catering to the outreaching zeal of local governments of China. For instance, the community reference book produced by the DIBP only counted about fifty Chinese associations in Australia, most of which are ethnic service-providers relying on government funding and subsidies, while the total number given by longstanding community leaders reached almost four hundred in NSW alone. The overlooking of new locality organisations is evidently reflected in the membership list of AUSCOCO, the umbrella organisation representing more than one hundred active Chinese associations in NSW, the majority of which are locality associations established during the past two decades. As Dr Minshen Zhu, former President of AUSCOCO pointed out,

In the past few decades, we have witnessed an exponential increase in the number of Chinese associations in all States, especially in NSW. The growth mainly comprised new locality associations, as well as all kinds of business, professional and cultural groups with a global outlook. These organisations might be small in size, but they enlisted the most dynamic people who got the calibre to play a bridging role between the two cultures they resided in. The fact that so many such organisations were set up demonstrated a rekindled passion to connect with the home country, a reversal of the mentality back in 1989.

While the numerical strength of new locality associations was nowhere to be seen from the mainstream directories, it was clearly demonstrated by my inventory of key associations, which was compiled by cross-referencing several organisational lists provided by local community leaders. Out of a total of 120 organisations, there are forty-nine native-place associations and fifty-two associations specialising in transnational cultural, economic and professional exchanges. In contrast, there are only ten service organisations, most of which were established in the 1980s or early 1990s. Obviously, it is the growth of home-oriented associations which primarily contributes to the recent expansion of Chinese organisational network in Sydney. Hon. Helen Sham-Ho gave her explanation on the mushrooming of these associations:

There are two broad categories of associations by criterion of longevity: core organisations stabilising over generations' efforts and a huge number of recently established associations in response to the favourable policies of the home country. The core organisations are usually service-providers, which receive money from the host government to run ethno-specific services, such as childcare, aged care, settlement services and so on. On the other hand, the opening up of China and its zeal in attracting overseas talent make home-bound associations a viable choice for the mainlanders, who by virtue of their recent settlement, could readily tap into the *guanxi* resource back in China. The recent call on an "Asian Century of Australia", I believe, would provide a healthy incentive for the growth of this subsector, and in the long run, promote bilateral cooperation in all areas.

The two major threads of development pointed out by Helen Sham-Ho, i.e., the consolidation of core service organisations and the rapid growth of home-bound associations, could also be derived from examining historical records of past associations. One good source would be the assessment study of Chinatown reconstruction project completed by the Australian Chinese Community Association (ACCA) under the grant of the Department of Youth and Community Services (DYCS). As part of its consultative process, the ACCA carried out a survey of major associations in Sydney. Divided by types, the report provided a list of thirty-two active associations, which are divided into four categories: service organisations, social and political organisations, professional organisations and clan organisations (See Appendix F).

Admittedly, the categories presented in the ACCA list are not rigorously devised. The group of clan organisations seems to be a merger of lineage- and locality-based associations, while the category of social and political organisations is too loosely defined to be useful, not to mention the duplications between different categories. However, the ACCA report is important in its factual demonstration of the widely acknowledged key Chinese associations in the early 1980s and useful as a good referential point in investigating the changes of the organisational network since then. After comparing the ACCA list with the current inventory, I found out that in a matter of thirty years, more than one third of those organisations in the list disappeared, and many changed their names or activity focus. Despite the magnitude of changes taking place in the field, some conspicuous trends could be discerned with a careful reading of the list.

Firstly, most of the listed service organisations (three out of four) survive till today. The only non-existing one in the list, Association of Ethnic Chinese from Indo-China, is

replaced by Indo-China Elderly Hostel, a major service provider catering for the elderly in the Indochinese community. These four service organisations, together with Australian Nursing Home Foundation (ANHF) which was an offshoot of ACCA, become highly professionalised over the years and coalesced into the core organisations of today. Secondly, most old political associations became inactive or even obsolete by now, as Taiwan loosened its grip on overseas Chinese affairs under the rule of the secessionist camp (Kinglun, Cheng and Cheng 2004: 167-8). Chinese Nationalist Party of Australia, for example, though keeping its venue, has little political influence in Sydney today. Other smaller political associations such as Australia Free-China Association and Chinese Citizen's Association disappeared in the 1970s. Replacing them are those new locality associations with a pro-PRC orientation. The shifting political tide is testified by the change of umbrella organisation in the Sydney community from Chinese Chamber of Commerce to AUSCOCO, the peak organisation in close liaison with the Chinese government. As King Fong, Organising Secretary of the Dixon Street Chinese Committee reminisced:

The current high profile of the PRC government was inconceivable back in the 1970s. At the time, we rented the second floor of our property to Chinese Youth League of Australia (CYL), which was suspected of communist infiltration. It was also the first organisation to hoist a PRC flag when a diplomatic relationship was concluded between the two countries in 1972. In the 1960s, whenever I went upstairs to collect rent, I always wore an apron, just to distinguish myself from the CYL members. CYL members surely had a rough time then. Of course, now it is all different. CYL is highly commended as one of the most influential Chinese performance providers in Australia.

The changing power balance at the home front proves to be a god-sent opportunity for traditional associations, which are struggling with aging membership and dampened clannish ties. One after another, leaders of these associations set out to renew their connections with the motherland. In a latest newsletter given to me by David Chung about Yiu Ming Hung Fook Tong, it delineated Tong's newfound objectives since the 1980s as

...devoted to the development of friendly exchanges between China and Australia, in particular the promotion of city-level cooperation between Gaoming, Gaoyao and Sydney in economy, science and technology, culture, education, health and charities. (Yiu Ming Hung Fook Tong 2012: 1)

With the support of OCAO, the Tong not only organised regular visiting tours and youth camps back to China to explore cultural roots, it also took responsibility for

receiving official and semi-official delegations from China. It was estimated that since the 1980s, the Tong received more than thirty-nine delegations (altogether 317 persons), and donated more than \$1 million for the infrastructure-building of ancestral places. This has not yet included those donations made for disaster relief in Greater China region.

Just like Yiu Ming Hung Fook Tong, most existing traditional clan associations on the ACCA list have started to reclaim the homebound focus, which makes them operate on a very similar platform to new locality associations established since the 1990s. Compared with traditional associations, new locality associations usually do not own properties, but their strength lies in the uninterrupted, multifarious connections they keep with the elite class back in China. As S3, a renowned Chinese writer in Sydney noted:

Most of the mainland associational members came to Australia in the late 1980s and early 1990s, which coincided with the most dynamic reforming period of China. As they struggled to settle down here in Australia, their relatives, classmates and other acquaintances back in China became exceedingly affluent and started showing an interest in overseas opportunities. Meanwhile, impressed by the wealth and status of their Chinese peers and eager to get a share of China's prosperity, the Chinese overseas often rushed back home as soon as they finalised their initial settlement. By that time, those personal ties were still quite strong, and the wish for mutual exchange was intense for both parties. These factors were behind the emergence of hundreds of locality associations in a relatively short time-span.

Finally, while clan and locality are among the commonest configurations for the formation of Chinese associations, professional affiliations also become important as more Chinese join the professional ranks of the host society (Cooke, Zhang and Wang 2013). This could be seen from the gradual diversification of associational types from student and academic associations in the 1980s to professional establishments of all fields, notably medical sciences, engineering, arts and literature, law and business. Professional associations could be set up as a forum of communication by affiliated peers, a vehicle of advocacy, a collective response to address a certain issue, or as a platform of global exchange. The variety of possible roles played by a professional association makes it a flexible mechanism for the mobilisation and trading of professional skills. While a few of these associations become stabilised by reaching a

stage of unchallenged leadership, most remain to be issue-based, whose fates are largely dependent on the voluntary input of a few committee members.

Henceforth, along the long spectrum of professional associations, we have at one end highly professionalised bodies with heavy-weight figures on their boards, and at the other end, casual gatherings of a few friends who happen to work in the same profession. The weak form of professional associations very much resembles general forms of social, cultural and educational associations which silently emerge and disappear without public knowledge. Originating from small circles of friends of similar circumstances, general associations are convenient to establish and manage, serving as the perfect form of entry-level community associations. However, being small in size and spontaneous in their organisation, these associations usually do not have long-term sustainability unless they evolve into core organisations with a renewable membership base. A number of associations in the ACCA list such as A.E.A. Australian Eurasian Association, Sawto Club and NSW Chinese Tennis Associations are examples of dissolved general organisations, which are known by few and have become totally irrelevant for today's Chinatown members.

The brief analysis of the changing presence of Chinese associations in Sydney unravels the unique dynamism of the Chinese community network, which is characterised by the longevity of a few core organisations aimed at improving their specialties, as well as the transitory presence of a huge number of smaller associations created to fill a niche or respond to urgent situations. The numerical immensity and vast differences between them in scale and social significance mean that an adequate but feasible analysis of the organisational network needs to address two issues: a thorough study of core organisations, which unsurprisingly, are among the most modernised within the network, as well as a description of the broad pattern of community development emerging from the aggregate effects of hundreds of smaller and often short-lived associations. Such an understanding informs my choice of cases for in-depth interviews. Arranged by functional groupings, they cover most of the core service-providers, long-lasting clan associations, representative locality associations, and overseas-oriented professional, social and cultural associations.

This chapter provides a general picture of Chinese communities in Canberra and Sydney, which sets the background for detailed analyses of their organisational

networks in these two locales. While Canberra is characterised by its compact community, predominance of the professional elites, unified platform for organisational activism and strong hold of the government in regulating the multicultural policy area, the story in Sydney spells more complexity, as demonstrated by its global city status, the long history of Chinese migration, robust development of the Chinese ethnoburbs and the multifarious nature of its organisational structure. The ebbs and flows of Chinese organisations as indicated by the ACCA survey reaffirms the profound impact of political opportunity structures on the evolutionary trajectory of ethnic organisations. The longevity of core service organisations and the mushrooming of overseas-oriented associations correspond with the policy frameworks of Australian multiculturalism and overseas Chinese policy of the PRC and require different sets of strategies for success, which will be explored in the following chapters.

Chapter Five: The Stage of Modernisation

With the abandonment of White Australia Policy, the self-enforced isolation of the Chinese community in Australia broke down, heralded by the systematic reform of traditional Chinese organisations. In the civic-multicultural context, ethnic associations are grouped together with other voluntary associations and acquire a newfound meaning as important constituents of the civic community, which provide an alternative, compatible conduit to socio-political activism (Fennema and Tille 2001: 29). For the proponents of deliberative democracy, ethnic associations could help integrate their members into the larger political system by increasing their sense of efficacy, raising salient issues and providing an organisational base for public advocacy (Fugita and O'Brien 1985: 987). Although in reality, only a small number of associations live up to these expectations, ethnic associations as a whole have cemented their status as key stakeholders in the formulation of any social policies with an ethnic dimension. In recognition of their role in government consultation and community management, the state usually allocates some resources for their survival and development, provided that their image accords with its conception of multicultural community associations. Just like other ethnic communities, Chinese communities in Australia also benefited from the heyday of multiculturalism in the 1980s and quickly refashioned themselves to cooperate with the state and maximise opportunities made available by the introduction of the multicultural policy regime. The development of Chinese community strength is paralleled with the broad trend of "going modern", which serves as a sound adaptive strategy to win government support and achieve greater sociopolitical influence.

This chapter explores the structural changes of Chinese community organisations under the evolving paradigm of ethnic governance in Australia. It demonstrates how these organisations are proactively engaging with the multicultural discourses and undertaking modernising reforms to facilitate a smooth conversion of their ethnic identity into symbolic capital recognised by the mainstream society. In practice, the modernising reform is unevenly implemented by different types of organisations depending on their aspiration to exert public influence and more often their practical needs to receive public funding. In a broad-stroke fashion, this chapter investigates the multi-factored manifestation of these modernising efforts made by the majority of Chinese organisations, as reflected in their corporate governance reform, leadership change, organisational culture and finance options. The discussion will be supported by

concrete case studies of major service organisations, which are reputedly the pioneers of reform due to their contract relationships with the government. Other types of organisations more or less display similar tendencies toward the direction of modernisation, though the scope and depth of their reform is not comparable to that of core service groups.

5.1. Broad Trends of Modernisation

“Modernisation” is a nebulous term which requires a context-specific interpretation. When it applies to Chinese associations, it refers to the systematic changes in their composition, structure, management and cultural orientations, which align them with the rules and prescriptions set for civic associations in the modern context. If “modernisation” is not viewed as an inevitable condition of human life, but as a contingent, historical phenomenon rooted in Western history, the manifest changes for an increasing number of Chinese associations could simply be interpreted as a process of acculturation, through which professional expertise, or using Anthony Giddens’s term, “the disembedding system” is replacing the century-old axiom of “the rule of man” to become the prevalent mechanism in regulating the institutional life of the Chinese (Giddens 1990: 22). Indeed, the past few decades saw the gradual integration of the principle of technical rationality into different aspects of associational management of the Chinese community, such as the introduction of modern statistical methods, production of regular reports and reviews, rationalisation of administrative processes and hiring of professional staff in their service teams (Held 1980: 59). The substantive changes of Chinese associations in a relatively short time span are a good reflection of the broad conditions of Western modernity. However, it is important to note that mere exposure to the modern reality does not necessitate structural changes in that direction. This returns us to the importance of political opportunity structures (POSs) in conditioning social transformation. As the isolationist period showed, without a minimum degree of acceptance on the part of the host society, the traditional way of life was strengthened rather than weakened for the Chinese community, leading to a perpetuated ghettoised existence. The rank-and-file members of the community did not have the wish or capacity to overcome the institutional barrier, and the bridging role was played by a small number of merchant elites in very limited measures, often in relation to the punitive attempts of the Europeans. The separatist stage lasted for more than half a century, long enough to demonstrate that being situated in a modern

environment alone did not qualify as a sufficient condition for self-initiated reforms. It was not until modernity itself had reflexively evolved into the stage of multiculturalism that real incentives were provided to set in motion what we called the “modernising movement”.

In a multicultural state where ethnic minorities are admitted into the civic space and promised upward mobility based on merit, the benefits of “modernising themselves” are self-evident. The image of “being modern” not only eases interactions with the larger society, but also serves as a proof of merit when it comes to applying for government grants and other external funding. Moreover, the creation of a separate legal identity for the organisation enables it to buy and sell property, invest and borrow money, enter into enforceable contracts and be sued in its own right. Formalisation of the organisational structure becomes even more significant if the group is undertaking policy advocacy, governmental consultation or public campaigns, which could potentially lead to liability issues. Moreover, since China launched its own modernisation campaign in the mid-1970s, there has also been a greater emphasis on the proper legal status of overseas groups. Incorporation becomes a compulsory requirement even if the organisation is only interested in liaising with the home country.

For all these practical reasons, older Chinese organisations have set out to incorporate themselves one after another since the 1980s, and newly founded ones in the 1990s are usually incorporated from the very beginning. Of course, incorporation only entails compliance with a few formalities and is by no means equal to a thorough modernising reform. The broad trend of modernisation by Chinese organisations is reflected in the following aspects, which could be used as indicators to assess the depth and scope of modernisation of a particular organisation:

- **Corporate governance:** While most organisations become incorporated from the outset, large service-providers have paid great attention to issues like internal democracy, procedural fairness and accountability through the refinement of their constitutions. Modern management strategies are also introduced to improve their performance to the level of government agencies.
- **Leadership:** The leadership ranks have significantly expanded from philanthropic businessmen to social professionals who are enthusiastic about

community affairs. Strategic partnerships between long-established Cantonese-speaking community leaders and talented mainlanders who came to Australia in the late 1980s represent another notable feature of contemporary Chinese community leadership.

- Culture: The patriarchal culture of traditional Chinese organisations is gradually altered in the direction of internal democracy and gender equality. Following the model of civic organisations, voluntarism has become the organising principle for a new generation of Chinese organisations. Most Chinese organisations strive to go beyond the confines of the Chinese community and aim for mainstream recognition through careful cultivation of cross-sectoral partnerships and publicity campaigns.
- Finance: The financing sources become rather diversified to include government grants and subsidies, private donations, sponsorships, rental income and so on. Responding to the thrust of neo-liberal reform, a few core service organisations are experimenting with the concept of social enterprise to enhance their competitiveness in the sector.

The above indicators delineate the general direction of transformation for Chinese organisations which undertake modernising reform. The empirical observation of a multiplicity of Chinese organisations finds out that there is great variation in the degree of modernisation depending on their types, outlook of leaders, and most importantly, their need to interact with the mainstream society. At the end of strong integration are advocacy organisations, community service-providers and representative peak bodies, which are usually invited into the policy-making process as relevant stakeholders and are thereby held publicly accountable for their activities. Somewhere in the middle are a wide array of multifunctional associations and miscellaneous educational, professional and recreational associations, which have limited interactions with the government when it comes to funding application. Unsurprisingly, the least integrated group consists of newly established native-place organisations established with an explicit aim of liaising with China. Primarily funded by rich Chinese merchants, they are under no pressure to introduce corporate governance reform, and their activities center around the networking practices of a few heavyweight leaders. The juxtaposition of modern and traditional elements of differing proportions is found in the great majority of Chinese

organisations, reflecting the pragmatic weighing of costs and benefits associated with the modernising reform. While modernisation is the necessary path toward greater social influence and government support in the resident society, the maintenance of Chinese cultural order is beneficial for internal stability and eases the transnational networking practices, which are premised in the equivalency of exchanges based on mutually recognised power hierarchies. I will leave the discussion of the transnational perspective in Chapter Seven, and for the present chapter, focus on elaborating each proposed indicator of modernisation.

5.2. Corporate Governance

Modernisation of Chinese organisations is first and foremost referring to establishment of a rule-governed structure, which is aimed at achieving internal democracy, transparency and accountability. As defined by the Australian Auditor-General, corporate governance “encompasses how an organisation is managed, its corporate and other structures, its culture, its policies and strategies, and the ways in which it deals with its various stakeholders” (Australian Public Service Commission 2007: 18). For most Chinese Australian organisations, the reform toward better corporate governance incorporates two sets of objectives. Internally, specific provisions are delineated in the Constitution to promote board/committee cooperation, increase procedural transparency and prevent organisational failure by inaction or fraud. These aims are usually achieved through a fair structural division of power and responsibilities, rational design of procedural framework and the setup of a conflict resolution mechanism. Externally, corporate structure reforms are carried out to ensure legal compliance and more importantly enhance the associations’ competitiveness in the public sector. This is particularly relevant for those service organisations, which are bidding for an increasingly dwindling pool of government money.

If we observe the internal structure of Chinese community organisations, most of them are of a simple, two-tier structure, comprising committee members and ordinary members. In such a model, committee members are all volunteers, who by virtue of their enthusiasm, social prestige and better knowledge of the community, take responsibility for organising events, running day-to-day activities and representing the association at official and semi-official events. This model holds true for most Chinese associations in Canberra, new locality associations established in the 1990s, and the

great majority of small-sized educational, cultural and professional associations in Australia. In comparison, service organisations in Sydney usually entail more complex structures, featuring sub-committees, activity groups and an independent management team. In this respect, Australian Chinese Community Association (ACCA), one of the leading Chinese service-providers in Sydney, represents a telling case of the tortuous course of reform taken by large-size Chinese organisations.

Case One: ACCA

The ACCA had its beginning at a public meeting on 25 June 1973 in response to the National Population Inquiry of the Australian Government. More than three hundred people attended the public meeting, and the idea of forming a peak body to liaise with the government was recommended. These recommendations led to two more public meetings in 1973 and 1974, and the association was founded on 7 July 1974 after three-month intensive preparations by the Protem Committee. In hindsight, the story of the ACCA is demonstrative of a transformative trajectory of a rudimentary, entry-level association developing into a full-fledged multi-service organisation, a rare case out of hundreds of randomly established associations every year.

In the immediate founding years, the ACCA adopted the two-tier model based roughly on the constitution of the Apex Club, of which its secretary Andrew Hee was a loyal member. The executive committee consisted of a President, two Vice-Presidents, Hon. Secretary, Treasurer and three other committee members. The development of the ACCA accelerated in the early 1980s, when the blossoming of multiculturalism in Australia coincided with the start of the outsourcing of social services by the government. The ACCA quickly filled the niche of servicing the Chinese community in Sydney and steadily expanded its scope of services as more government departments introduced new programs catering to the needs of ethnic communities. The diversification of services required a finer division of work and led to the creation an additional tier of sub-committees coordinating different areas of activities. The Executive Committee members were formally delegated to chair sub-committees according to their expertise. At its ten-year mark in 1984, ACCA already boasted of eleven subcommittees: Administration, ACCA News, Cultural, Education, Membership, Public Relations, Social, Social Issues, Community Services, Youth and Special Projects (ACCA 1984: 36).

Table 16: Functions of Different Sub-Committees of ACCA in 1984

Sub-Committees	Functions and Activities	Financial Source
Administration	Day-to-Day administrative tasks	Assistance from Ethnic Affairs Commission
ACCA News	Compilation and distribution of ACCA newsletters	Sponsorship and advertisement
Cultural	Promotion of traditional cultural activities such as Taiji, drama and acupuncture	Fees
Education	Administration of Mandarin and Cantonese language classes; Provision of English classes under the Adult Migrant Education Service	Tuition fees, grants from Ethnic Affairs Commission and Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs
Membership	Development of the ACCA Data Base System to manage membership records	Fundraising
Social	Organisation of social functions	Fees
Public Relations	Cultivation of working relationships with other Chinese community groups	Fundraising
Youth	Social activities for the second-generation youth	Fundraising
Social Issues	Various submissions in response to government inquiries; Completion of the Social	Grant from the Department of Youth and Community Services

	Impact Study of Changes to Chinatown	
Community Services	Grant-In-Aid Scheme; Health Education Service; Community Re-settlement Sponsorship Scheme; Wage Pause Program (industrial training and refugee services); Chinese “Meals on Wheels” service; Community Employment Program	Grants from Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Department of Youth and Community Services and Department of Health
Special Projects	A research project of Chinese settlement in NSW	Grant from Premier’s Department (Cultural Affairs)

Source: ACCA (2004). *Australian Chinese Community Association 30th Anniversary 1974-2004*. Sydney, ACCA: 36.

Apparent from the above table, the expansion of ACCA’s service wing was premised on the availability of government grants to support such a move. The heavy dependence of government funding quickened the pace for governance reform, especially in areas of accountability to government, financial reporting, board procedures, risk management and other benchmarks emphasised by the government (Cahill, Armstrong and Storey 2001: 4). In all these respects, the ACCA was quite exemplary in adopting innovative practices. For instance, it was one of the first community organisations to introduce a computerised filing system to manage its membership records. The ACCA Data Base System was acquired as early as September 1982 and started operation in January 1983. It is capable of storing an unlimited number of records and by highlighting different variables, automatically generates reports on annual membership intake, geographical distribution, as well as frequency of service use (ACCA 1984). The rigorously presented facts can be used to identify existing and emerging needs of the community, assist in the application of government grants, and substantiate advocacies for the creation of new services.

At the structural level, reform was taking place in an ongoing, continuous fashion, facilitated by the mandatory change of presidents after fixed terms, who could be counted on to bring in new perspectives and ideas. As Daphne Low, Secretary of the ACCA, sagaciously points out:

The ACCA has always put a great emphasis on corporate governance reform. We do not always want radical reforms, but incremental changes toward a better structure and procedures are definitely necessary. In Australia, government regulations are annually reviewed and modified. Legal compliance could be quite onerous since we are operating in so many areas regulated by different departments. If we accumulate all the problems and wait for a once-for-all solution, the economic stakes could be higher, and we miss many opportunities during the adjustment period. To encourage positive changes and avoid institutional inertia, we write into the constitution that the term of the president is limited, so that we can always enlist new talent with bold, audacious ideas, and the association will be more attuned to the needs of the community.

All these incremental changes over the years have resulted in a fundamental transformation of the ACCA from an entry-level social organisation into a mature, broad-based service-provider. In 1993, the ACCA became an incorporated association governed under the *NSW Associations Incorporation Act 1984*, thus completing its transition into a formally registered not-for-profit (NFP) organisation. Objects and Rules were subsequently drafted in accordance with the state laws and were approved at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) as the general governing framework in August 1995. If we compare the Objects and Rules of 1995 with the ACCA’s original Constitution in 1974, we could observe a substantive expansion of contents and refinement of provisions regarding membership, management, general procedures and finance, embodied in the lengthening of the Constitution from merely five pages in 1974 to twenty pages in 1995. The following table provides a bird’s eye view of major changes of the ACCA Constitution as precipitated by its formalisation.

Table 17: Major Revisions of the ACCA Constitution upon Incorporation in 1995

Areas	1984	1995
Membership	Definition of four membership categories; General provisions on	Inclusion of new membership categories like corporate membership and

	membership fees and admission of new members.	life membership; Differentiated rights and responsibilities for each category of membership; New provisions about eligibility of members, disciplining of members, cessation of membership, and member's liabilities.
Management	Executive Committee as the governing body; Sub-committees appointed by the Executive Committee; Advisory Committee by nomination.	Establishment of a Council to replace the Advisory Committee as a formal supervisory body; A formal separation of power between the Executive Committee and the Council; Precise definition of the power of delegation of the Executive Committee and its relationship with sub-committees; Fixed tenure of Presidency as no more than three consecutive annual terms.
Procedures	Largely unspecified.	Elaboration of procedures in the following aspects: Vacation of office; Proceedings of the Executive Committee, especially in emergencies; Convening of annual

		general meetings and special general meetings; Notice and nomination.
Finance	General rules about making deposits and payments.	Specification of the responsibility of the Treasurer; Stricter procedures for making payments; New provisions about the sale, purchase and other dealings with the real property.

Source: Table compiled from the data collected in my fieldwork.

Diverging from the less institutionalised Chinese governance practices which are in favour of tacit agreements on strategic directions and operational flexibility in implementation, the amended constitution of 1995 gives a strong emphasis on the rule of law with its meticulous provisions about all aspects of associational governance. Human arbitrariness is suppressed to the largest extent through a deliberate installation of checks and balances and the elaboration of procedural rules in conducting all kinds of business. At the structural level, the Council is created as a formal body to supervise the decision-making of the Executive Committee and protect the core interest of the association. For example, dealings with real property have to be approved by three fourths of all Executive Committee members as well as three fourths of all Councillors before they are brought to a Special General Meeting for a final ratification (ACCA 1995: 30.2). In the rare occasion of power vacuum, i.e. the offices of all the members of the Executive Committee become vacant other than by reason of natural expiration of term of office, the Council is vested with the power to appoint an administrator from the immediate past Executive Committee members to deal with the emergencies (ACCA 1995: 18.4). The separation of the Executive Committee and the Council is enforced by the provision that a person could not simultaneously assume the role of the Councillor and Executive Committee member (1995: 11.6, 12.3).⁶ Furthermore, conflict of interest was addressed by prohibiting both Executive Committee members and Councillors “to

⁶ The only exception of this rule is the immediate past President, who could be an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee and meanwhile stand for election as a Councillor.

concurrently hold any salaried position with the Association or receive fees, remuneration, or any other benefits except as specially defined by the Constitution” (1995: 13.2). This led to a de facto separation between governance and management, which evolves in later years into a full staff team headed by a general manager.

The reform practices of the ACCA are typical among the cohort of large-scale Chinese service providers, whose annual revenue exceeds one million dollars. Driven by the competitive tendering, these organisations started reorienting themselves toward a business model. Increasingly, the separation of governance (Board/Executive Committee) and management (CEO/General Manager) have become the norm in the NFP sector, and the availability of a professional staff team is considered an important criterion determining the outcome of funding applications. To date, the ACCA claims an annual revenue of nearly 1.5 million dollars and employs about eighty staff around the Sydney metropolitan area. Noting the presence of large community groups like the ACCA whose scope of activities goes beyond the regulatory framework of *Associations Incorporation Act* administered by Fair Trading, the federal government is encouraging their voluntary transfer of incorporation from Fair Trading to Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC) under *Corporations Act 2001* (ACCA 2012a: 2). Already, large Chinese service-providers like the Australian Nursing Home Foundation (ANHF) and Chinese Australian Services Society (CASS) have turned into companies by guarantee, and ACCA is currently considering an amendment of its Constitution to facilitate the incorporation transfer. The complex legal issues involved in the process and the resultant restructuring of these organisations will further speed up the buildup of their professional expertise and elevate their corporate standards on par with government agencies (ACCA 2012b: 8). Understandably, such changes have to be initiated by a new generation of community leaders, who are not only receptive to the ideas of reform, but are also well-equipped with the knowledge and skills to anticipate novel institutional arrangements congruent with the prevalent governance culture of the host society.

5.3. Generational Leadership

As the Chinese saying goes, the personality of leaders is always projected onto the organisation they lead and their outlook a determining factor for the future. The modernisation of Chinese organisations followed with the emergence of the Western-

educated professional class, which was replacing traditional clan leaders as the backbone of the Chinese community. Not satisfied with the inward-looking mindset of traditional associations, the new professionals sought to engage with the government in hosting cultural heritage projects, delivering social services and participating in local politics. Due to their ceaseless efforts, Chinese organisations from the mid-1970s onward became fully integrated into the NFP sector and demonstrated similar characteristics of civic organisations despite their ethnic specificity. Upon close inspection, the composition of the new leadership reflects the demographic change of the Chinese community and is featured by a strategic coalition between the 1.5-generation ethnic Chinese and new migrants coming from mainland China since the 1980s.

To begin with, the 1.5 generation refers to those ethnic Chinese, who came to Australia as children, students, and young migrants in the 1960s and 1970s, when the non-discriminatory immigration policy introduced by the Whitlam government led to a spectacular increase of the Chinese population mostly from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Southeast Asian countries (Hon and Coughlan 1997). Upon examination of profiles of Chinese leaders whose names spread far and wide, especially those active in the political arena, we could observe an over-representation of the 1.5 generation, the long list of core figures including Benjamin Chow, Ernest Wong, Helen Sham-Ho, Henry Tsang, Sam Wong, Peter Wong and many others, all of whom migrated to Australia under twenty years old. Located in the middle of the spectrum running from first-generation migrants to the native-born, the 1.5 generation are particularly well-positioned to lead community affairs. An early childhood in Greater China or Southeast Asia and the formative years spent in the Western world make them adept at navigating through the cultural norms of the two worlds and coping with the demographical diversity they grew up with. Generally speaking, they display greater interests in serving their own community than the native-born because of their continuing connections with the mother culture. With fluent Cantonese, they are able to find opportunities from within the community or even back in China when their aspirations are frustrated by the resident society. For those migrating after ten, vivid memories of early-day hardships remain alive, which turn into a profound empathy for new arrivals trapped in similar adversities. Le Lam, the first female mayor of Asian background, traced her decision of going for politics back to the traumatic years she experienced as a refugee:

After the Vietnam War, our family became homeless, and I decided to go on a boat. I failed a dozen times, and every time was captured and put into prison. Eventually I was helped by a sympathetic guard, who gave us a boat. That year, I was only eighteen years old. The specific circumstances in which I grew up made me easily feel for others' sufferings. I want to help others to the best of my capacity. With this thought in mind, I was volunteering to give support to those elderly people of Asian background when I was in my 20s. Later on, as the director of Auburn Asian Welfare Association, I became more aware of the intricate relationship between community organisations and the government, and was gradually realising that ultimately the effects of our work were determined by the policy environment of the time. Henceforth, participating in politics and influencing top-down policy-making should be the way to go if my aim is to help the greatest number of people suffering from structural disadvantages.

Similar sentiments were expressed by many 1.5 generation community activists during my interviews, who felt that their sense of achievement had to be found in social missions aimed at the betterment of their compatriots. Mostly coming to Australia under the economically-oriented point system as students, professionals and businessmen, the majority of them are troubled by the contradictions between their relatively smooth personal advancement and the marginalised presence of the group as a whole. This sets the background for the ascendance of the Chinese social service elite in Australia and the emergence of a large number of welfare organisations cutting across religious, geographical and gender lines. These service-oriented organisations such as ACCA are modelled after the existing NFP associations in the mainstream community, catering to the needs of individual migrants and their families rather than clans. As Le Lam's case tells us, the experience of running social services usually precedes the formation of social ideals and is conducive to the development of political literacy and networking skills. As Tabar, Noble and Poynting observe, participation in "ethnic affairs industry" is one of the major avenues for aspiring ethnics to enter the political field. Conversely, it is also quite common for established politicians of minority background to turn into a champion of ethnic causes (2003: 276-7). While the occupational distribution of the 1.5 generation community leaders could be diffuse, the great majority of them are extensively engaged in community services at varying phases of their life. The three Chinese members of the NSW Legislative Council who came to Australia in the 1960s all derive their fame from their decade-long service to the community. Helen Sham-Ho, the first Chinese-born Australian parliamentarian, for instance, has a background of social work and is instrumental in the running a wide array of high-profile Chinese associations like ACCA and Chinese Australian Forum (CAF). Peter Wong, the primary

founder of the Unity Party, is especially influential in the circle of Catholic Chinese and is widely recognised for his pivotal role in establishing the Welfare Committee for Chinese Students, which provided assistance to stranded Chinese students after the June Fourth incident. Henry Tsang, an accomplished architect himself is a central figure in the implementation of the Beautification of Chinatown project and the construction of the Chinese Garden in Sydney central business district (CBD).

All these cases testify to the common traits of the 1.5 generation: successful personal career, cultural literacy in both worlds, strong identification with the ancestral group, as well as a strong passion in community services. The initial advantage of the 1.5 generation in relation to the new migrants is self-evident. Receiving their university education in Australia, they not only acquire a deep understanding of the working mechanism of the Australian society, but also cultivate a comprehensive web of social connections including alumni, colleagues, friends and other types of acquaintances. The strong social ties made in their youth prove to be an important asset not easily available to migrants coming in their middle age.

Sam Wong, People's Ambassador of Australia, affirmed the significance of personal network in the establishment of Canberra Multicultural Community Forum (CMCF), the peak ethnic organisation in Canberra:

The CMCF started with the consensus of community leaders of different ethnic backgrounds. This organisation was not something conceived overnight to cater for a political fad, but was brewed over a long period of time and conceived by a group of people with the same ideal. We knew each other in universities, at work places or through government consultation sessions. We went through trials and errors together and patiently waited for our time to come. As time passed by, all of us have made ourselves, some in the government, and others in the private sector. When we put together the resources we have, we are amazed by the collective strength there. For instance, John Hargreave, the then ACT Minister of Multicultural Affairs, was my good buddy when he was still an ordinary party member. You would never anticipate him to become the policy-maker of the area we are currently working in. Because he knew our aims all along, he has a lot more trust in us. This helps our cause greatly. In this sense, I would say, make more friends when you are young. You never know if the friendship made thirty or forty years ago will turn into something really powerful when you get old.

Apart from having a close circle of local friends and acquaintances, the 1.5 generation also directly benefited from the launch of multicultural policy in the 1970s, which gave

them first-mover advantage in community development. When the first wave of mainland students and young professionals arrived in Australia, basic community infrastructure was already set up, and the changing fiscal policy made it quite difficult to start new service organisations from scratch. Therefore, the optimal choice for mainlanders was to cohere around existing core organisations and seek to cooperate with the 1.5 generation, who had already accumulated a significant amount of “Whiteness” in the host society. The initial power structure was entirely in favour of the older settlers, as the new arrivals were often haunted for years by the uncertain prospect of residency right. The dire misery was dramatically depicted by many Chinese novelists of the time (Ouyang 2008) and truthfully documented by researchers like Fung and Chen (1996).

Despite the early struggles of mainland migrants, the numerical strength they represented was undeniable. The rapid population growth of the mainlanders across Australia meant that they already became a force to be reckoned with, if any legitimate claim was to be made about community representation. Also important was the educational qualifications they held, which promised social mobility when they passed the survival phase of settlement. In 1993, the Keating government unconditionally granted permanent residency to students arriving in Australia before June 1989, while attaching certain conditions (language requirement and educational qualification) for those coming afterwards up till March 1992. The economic stimulus brought about by the permanent settlement of some 45,000 Chinese migrants and the large-scale chain migration in the following decade (estimated to reach 100, 000) had a transformative impact on the gateway cities. One anonymous interviewee recalled the situation back then in Sydney:

When Chinese students applied for permanent residency following the June Fourth incident, many old settlers were unsure of what to think. They were concerned about the community capacity to absorb so many Chinese students. History proved that old settlers turned out to be the biggest beneficiaries from our stay here. The outlook of the Chinatown and its vicinity were completely changed. The niche economy received a major boost from the availability of cheap labour, proliferation of Chinese newspapers and staggering increase in the consumption of everything Chinese. The enlarged Chinese constituency gave the community leaders a greater leverage in political bargaining and a rich reservoir of human resource to tap into. In the long run, they stand to gain by helping us. (S3)

Indeed, far-sighted community leaders were quick in recognising the opportunities lying in the expansion of the Chinese community and the large pool of intellectually resourced people who could be enlisted to advance the community cause. Henry Tsang, then deputy Lord Mayor of Sydney, was entrusted with the responsibility of negotiating with the students and providing policy assistance to Nick Bolkus, then Minister of Immigration and Citizenship. His sympathetic approach in handling the issue made him one of the most respected leaders in the circle of mainlanders. In his book “All for the People”, Tsang fondly remembered what happened during the banquet “Thank Mr. Nick Bolkus”:

On 9 September 2004, we hosted a “Thank Bolkus” banquet which was attended by more than one hundred people including former students and Chinese friends of Labor. As I was presenting our token present—a bottle of Grange 1982 decorated with Chinese embroidery to Bolkus, a former student rushed onto the stage holding a bunch of flowers for him. Quite unexpectedly, she also had something for me—a framed calligraphy with the Chinese characters meaning “The Father of Overseas Chinese Students”. (Tsang 2006: 56)

Dr Peter Wong, on the other hand, rallied good-willed church leaders to petition to the government for the establishment of a welfare association assisting with the settlement of Chinese students. He rose to prominence by heading the association, which was known as Welfare Committee for Chinese Students and soon gathered around him a group of protégés, who volunteered to play the bridging role between old settlers and the emerging mainland community. Friendship formed during that period had a symbolic significance beyond a small circle of benefactors and beneficiaries. It was in a sense emblematic of the trust between 1.5 generation leaders and new migrants, which as Tsang’s account indicated, etched into the memory of those directly affected and those late-comers, who learned the story from their grateful predecessors. The rippling effect means that the amount of symbolic capital quickly multiplies as it travels across an ever-expanding network, as reflected in the wide acceptance of an established public image by people not experiencing it firsthand.

Community leaders like Henry Tsang and Peter Wong greatly benefited from such a snowballing process, as their political success hinged on the support of voters, the mainland constituency representing a formidable force. In quite a number of cases, we could observe the transfer of power, resources and experience from the ethnic Chinese to the mainlanders or a collaborative relationship between the two with the ethnic

Chinese taking the role of the mentor. For instance, when Peter Wong and Henry Tsang served in the Legislative Council of NSW, both of them had personal assistants of mainland background, who communicated their policies to the mainland community. Phil Tian, President of NSW Chinese Writers Association, used to be the parliamentary secretary for Peter Wong. As a well-received author, he co-wrote a regular column with Peter Wong in a number of core community newspapers like Sing Tao Daily and Australian New Express Daily, introducing policy developments, answering questions from readers, promoting candidates of the Unity Party and giving voting advice upon elections. These articles were later compiled into a book named *Unity Party: Making a Difference* (Wong and Tian 2003). The combination of political education and self-promotion worked to good effects. It ignited the interest of Chinese voters to participate in local political affairs and more importantly, provided a useful platform for a whole group of Chinese activists, who made their debut as candidates of the Unity Party and went on to start their own careers in major parties. Tian wrote of this development in one article:

As a major political platform for Chinese-Australian politicians, the Unity Party has successfully sent eleven candidates into six local councils in NSW. Among them, Ernest Wong (Burwood) and Le Lam (Auburn) were elected as mayors, and Annie Tang (Kogarah), Clifton Wong (Hurstville), Alfred Tsang (Strathfield) and Jack Au (Auburn) served as deputy mayors. The Unity Party are now promoting its candidates from mainland China. The star for the 2012 Hurstville election is Nancy Liu from Zhongshan City of Guangdong. (Tian 2012)

While the Unity Party disseminated political knowledge to a large audience and trained promising candidates en masse, other community leaders preferred to promote a few protégés to their taste, a typical case being the strong tie between Henry Tsang and Jeanette Wang. Like the partnership between Peter Wong and Phil Tian, Wang was working under Henry Tsang, when he was Parliamentary Secretary for NSW Labor. As she later admitted, this experience had a great influence on her decision to go for politics:

I came to Australia in 1992 to re-unite with my husband, who was studying music here. I met Henry Tsang when I was working for Sing Tao Daily as a journalist. My early exposure of politics came from those years when I did interviews with political figures and dignitaries and wrote policy analysis for the newspaper. With the guidance of Henry, I came to appreciate the ideals of the ALP (Australian Labor Party) and then became an active member. My experience at the NSW Parliament working for Henry

intensified my wish of serving the Chinese community as a politician. In September 2008, I ran for the election of Ashfield City Council. With the support of my mentor and local Chinese, I won in my very first try, and kept my seat in the 2012 election. I must say that I am very grateful to Henry, who initiated me onto the political path and gave me unceasing support.

The cooperation between Tsang and Wang was quite fruitful. The book *All for the People: Fifteen Years in Politics and Thirty Years in Community Affairs* (2006) was by far the most comprehensive collection of articles by Tsang, and Wang was its editor. Even after Tsang resigned from the Parliament due to his implication with the Chinese-backed company Hightrade, their friendship remained as strong as before. Whenever Wang was interviewed by journalists, she was quick to acknowledge the valuable guidance she received from Tsang. Their rapport was reflected by the speech they gave at a recent party, which was hosted to celebrate the successful re-election of Labor candidates in Ashfield. Very happy with the outcome, Tsang said with good humour:

In my opinion, Jeanette went to the right university, found the right professor, took the right path, served as a councillor for one term and got re-elected. We are very proud of her, and hereby congratulate her on her success.

At this, Wang immediately added: “Most importantly, I met Henry Tsang, my mentor, who led me onto the path of politics” (Sing Tao 14/10/2012).

Apart from such conspicuous alliance, numerous cases of informal cooperation existed between the ethnic Chinese and mainlanders, with the occasional involvement of the native-born. The generational composition of Chinese community leadership works well in giving a fair representation of different streams of the Chinese migrants and optimising the community resource via a principle of complementariness. While the older ethnic Chinese leaders greatly enlarge their support base and enhance their representative efficacy by liaising with the mainlanders, the latter group is eager to acquire knowledge, experience and political skills from their mentors. As the mainlanders become mature enough to foster their own networks, their mentors are invited as honorary presidents or senior advisors to strengthen the existing ties, thereby creating an interlocking leadership. Up until today, community leadership is largely shared by these two groups, with the mainland group catching up in wealth and political influence. The cooperative relationship gains a new dimension as the 1.5 generation leaders seek to re-establish linkages with China through the help of their mainland

associates. Despite occasional discord, the two generations have a lot in common, both being fully exposed to the Western way of thinking and sharing the same understanding on the importance of integration into the host society. Operating on the policy platform of multiculturalism, the two groups act as the primary social agents to implement the modernising reform, and their teamwork defines the actual shape such reforms shall take and how far they can go in reality. Together, they have forged a new organisational culture, which sees a juxtaposition of voluntarism and traditional Chinese cultural traits.

5.4. Organisational Culture

As elucidated in the previous chapter, traditional Chinese organisations also emphasised the art of power balance and fair representation of all factions, but the application of these democratic principles was largely confined to the elite circle (mostly wealthy businessmen), as manifested in the inclusion of all factions within the committee panel, the vigorous enforcement of a rotation system, as well as internal checks in matters related to finance. However, mostly labourers themselves, the grassroots members were largely excluded from these governing procedures. The huge gap in wealth and status and often, the existence of a contractual relationship between the two classes meant that ordinary members were at the mercy of the headmen of Chinese native-place associations, looking to them for work, accommodation and other support (Lyman 1974: 33). Traditional associations of the late nineteenth century usually had a compulsory element, especially those specialising in the import and settlement of contractual labourers from hometowns in China (Bowen 2011: 35). New arrivals were obliged to join their native-place associations; otherwise, they risked being ostracised, one of the most serious penalties meted out to clansmen (Wang 1978: 110). Prominent businessmen enjoyed the exercise of power as surrogate patriarchs, but in return held the moral responsibility of maintaining internal order and providing welfare services to the destitute (Hsiao 1960: 271-5).

The culture of traditional Chinese associations accorded with the Confucius moral universe of a “benign hierarchy”, which mitigated the ruthlessness of class dominance by interpreting it as a sense of responsibility toward the dominated. The axiom of “creating common good for all under heaven” was passed down through thousands of years’ dynastic rule and was considered the rightful duty of those in power. Correspondently, the subordinates must demonstrate unconditional loyalty in the same

way a son reveres his father, or a wife honours her husband. The concept of essentialised power positions did not sit well with democratic principles of the Western world, which allow people to engage equally in decision-making through direct participation or indirect representation. Concepts of internal democracy and delegated power were not incorporated into the management of Chinese organisations until the late 1960s, when the community hierarchy was flattened by the entry of students and professionals. This compelled reform of the governing style of older associations and led to the establishment of a new generation of Chinese community organisations by members of equal footing.

In cultural terms, most Chinese associations refashioned themselves in line with the protocols of the non-profit sector of the Western world. According to Lyons, starting in the 1920s but retaining the momentum until the 1950s, non-profit organisations such as progressive associations, recreation clubs and service clubs like Rotary, Lions and Apex emerged in many smaller country towns to provide the fabric of facilities and services to the often marginalised populations (Lyons 1993: 309-10). They did not receive government subsidies until the 1960s, and for the large part of their operation, were maintained through the efforts of volunteers. The prevalence of voluntary activities carried out through the vehicle of civic organisations is favourably interpreted by political scientists as a fundamental plank of the larger democratic tradition and an important means to connect everyday civic practices with formal political participation (LeRoux 2007: 410). Observing the community dynamics of Italy and contemporary United States, Putnam proposed a close correlation between the levels of voluntary activities with the formation of social capital, which is one of the central benchmarks to appraise the micro-site functioning of democracy (Putnam 2000). Even after the enlistment of the NFP sector by the welfare state for service provision, the culture of volunteering remained notable in the running of these organisations for a number of reasons. For one thing, as testified by numerous works of political scientists, the undertaking of voluntary and philanthropic activities has acquired a symbolic value in the Western cultural repertoire and becomes a welcoming complement to the welfare state (Van Til and Ross 2001: 116-7). Though not rewarded in monetary terms, the volunteers derive an immense sense of pride and self-fulfilment from the public goods they deliver (Barber 1998: 44). At the practical level, the scarcity of government funding and their narrow focus in a few services areas determine that the majority of daily activities have to be organised by volunteers.

The cultural reorientation of Chinese organisations, to a large extent, was modelled on the operational style of mainstream non-profit associations. International organisations such as the YMCA, Apex, Lions, and Masonic Orders had played a significant role in the evolution of Chinese organisations in Australia and elsewhere through the outreach strategy of their local branches. As Fitzgerald pointed out, today's Chinese Masonic Society of Australia originated from the anti-Manchu Yee Hing secret society and was formally promoted as the "Chinese Masonic Fraternity" back in 1850 (Fitzgerald 2007: 70). Similarly, in the aforementioned case of ACCA, its first constitution was largely adapted from that of Apex Club, to which its first secretary Andrew Hee belonged. The strong influence of these international bodies on overseas Chinese organisations was not only reflected in name change and governance structure, but was also manifest in the transfer of their culture. Recognising the public affirmation accorded to volunteers and faced with limited financing options, modern Chinese organisations unhesitatingly embraced volunteering as an integral part of their culture. At the level of governance, all the committee/board members are essentially unsalaried volunteers. At the operational level, despite the mounting emphasis on professional skills and the broad trend toward formalising volunteers' roles, most Chinese organisations are keen in maintaining and enlarging their team of volunteers (Fabricant and Burghardt 1992; Smith and Lipsky 2009). As Lalich noted after surveying some forty-four Chinese organisations in Sydney, it is virtually impossible to come up with an accurate number of active volunteers in the Chinese community due to a high level of migrant mobility, overlapping membership and the blurred boundary between volunteers and employees. A conservative figure he proposed for the volunteer involvement for those forty-four organisations comprised over 600 committee members, who are assisted by over 2,500 additional volunteers from Sunday schools teachers to organisers of particular events (Lalich 2006: 188).

The actual proportion of volunteers involved in the daily operation of organisations varies greatly according to the type and scale of organisations. While most small organisations largely rely on the efforts of volunteer committee members, large service societies often have a multi-level system of committee members, ordinary volunteers and paid staff, and give particular emphasis on the conferring of awards and honors to ordinary volunteers. For instance, to recognise the contribution of hundreds of volunteers who have provided assistance to the executive committee and staff members, the ACCA developed a Volunteers Award Scheme in 1996. Various categories of

awards were designed based on annual hours of service: Supreme, Gold, Silver, Bronze and Certificate. Eighty-nine awards were made in 1996-97, and in the year 2002-03, there were 140 volunteer award recipients (ACCA 2004: 63). Also benefiting from the year-long dedication of a large number of active volunteers (more than one hundred), CASS defined its culture as professionalism based on the strength of traditional volunteerism (CASS 2012b: 5). To ensure the continued support of volunteers, CASS not only provided regular courses about the theories and practices of volunteering, but also formed the CASS Care Volunteers Team⁷ in 2009, which enlisted the most dedicated volunteers to assume senior administrative roles (CASS 2011a: 49, 119). A merit-based promotional system is also in place to ensure that outstanding volunteers could be nominated to join the board or take up more managerial responsibilities.

The pervasive culture of voluntarism and the fluid boundary between board members and ordinary volunteers result in a gradual modification of many cultural assumptions of traditional Chinese organisations. Most notably, inherent in the idea of voluntarism is the willing contribution of free-thinking citizens of equal standing, who are united by the same social ideal. The underlying sense of equality is destructive of the entrenched hierarchy organised around seniority and social status, and leads to a much flattened power structure. As many community leaders agree on, while in China leadership carries the connotation of unquestioned personal authority, hereditary positions and social privileges not available to rank and file members, in the Western context, presidents of voluntary organisations are essentially volunteers, who willingly contribute their time and energy to community development, but are in no way intrinsically superior to ordinary members. Indeed, if we look at the profiles of community leaders in Australia, they are represented by a wide array of occupations like restaurant owners, small businessmen, educators, doctors and nurses, media professionals as well as social workers, who are not necessarily rich, but usually self-sufficient and with extensive community linkages by virtue of their professions.

As the hegemony of clan leadership irretrievably dissolves under the influence of the mainstream culture, Chinese community leadership in Australia features more like a horizontal mobilisation of a spectrum of social agents than a vertical transmission of

⁷ The CASS Care Volunteers Team included those active volunteers, who have been with CASS for at least three consecutive years with a minimum workload of fifteen hours per week. They are assigned to lead different activity groups of CASS and can be nominated based on merit to join the board or assume managerial roles.

power and authority (Lowe 2003: 136). The identity of a community leader is premised on subjective internalisation (the sense of mission) as well as external appraisal (public recognition), and is sustained by the voluntary investment of various types of capital in community undertakings. While money is the universal currency leading to social status, community leadership could also be built upon other intangible assets such as superior linguistic skills, familiarity with local laws and regulations, professional expertise, social connections, or simply the spirit of selfless devotion. Chinese community activism is supported by an informal collaborative mechanism, which allows different figures to make full use of their respective resources for the successful hosting of key events. For instance, Western-educated leaders are more adept at applying for funding from the Australian government and inviting government representatives to grace the occasion, while leaders with deeper Chinese connections are primarily responsible for networking with the Chinese embassy. Local Chinese media is entrusted to promote the event in their front pages, and wealthy business leaders are counted on to make financial contributions. The availability of several candidates within each functional category ensures a large measure of adaptability and exhibits the trait of “scalability”, which refers to the ability of a given network to expand freely and integrate new nodes as needs decide (Eilstrup-Sangiovanni and Jones 2008: 14).

The recognition of the variegated composition of leadership credentials and the collectivist mode of cooperation result in a rather flat and decentralised community network, with decision-making capacities dispersed among multiple community leaders, which virtually eliminates the possibility of monopolistic control of the whole community. Internally, the transparent electoral procedures and in many cases, the fixed tenure of presidency to a large degree obstruct a direct inheritance of power and in theory give every member an equal chance to compete for leadership regardless of social status. In the extreme case, disaffected members could quit any time from an existing association and create a new one of their liking. The reconfiguration of organisational culture from “benign paternalism” to egalitarianism and internal democracy profoundly changes the way organisational matters are dealt with. When disputes arise, conventional wisdom of established leaders gives way to a legalist interpretation of rules and constitutions, which are premised on the universalistic dignity of citizens (Taylor 1994: 27).

As spelt out in the section of corporate governance reform, the making and constant review of the constitution becomes central to the resolution of organisational affairs. In a contractual manner, the rights and responsibilities of members are laid out in regards to membership qualification, application of membership, membership fees, cessation of membership, disciplining of members, as well as members' liabilities. These provisions in principle place the members on par with the big institution and protect them against the "internal restrictions", which are endemic in old-style patriarchal organisations (Kymlicka 1995: 45). The legal potency of these rules was tested in the famous case of Daphne Lowe VS ACCA, when Daphne Lowe, Anthony Pun and Maggie Wu challenged their expulsion from the association by invoking relevant clauses of the ACCA constitution. The following arguments were advanced to contend the unconstitutional action of ACCA:

- The petition for the expulsion of the three members does not qualify as a "complaint" which warrants action by the ACCA under rule 8.1;⁸
- Procedural fairness is denied because of the "vague and uncertain expressions in the petition", which failed to give any defined particulars of the allegations of relevant misconduct. This made it impossible for the concerned members to make self-defense, a right defined by rule 8.2;
- The proposal to consider five resolutions regarding the expulsion of all three members at a special general meeting is a contravention of rule 8.4, which cautioned against expulsion *en masse*. (Supreme Court of NSW 10/09/2010: 1071)

Eventually, the case was heard in the Supreme Court and three judgments were made by Justice Slattery in favour of the three plaintiffs (Lowe, Pun and Wu). In December 2012, ACCA issued a formal apology to the three plaintiffs for:

...hurt, suffering and financial loss caused by the immediate past President Vincent Pang and certain Executive Committee members passing a resolution to expel them as members, based on an invalid petition organised by Rong Mu Dong in June 2010, on the condition that there is no legal liability to ACCA. (ACCA 2012b: 4)

⁸ Rule 8.1 deals with the disciplining of the members and the procedure for their expulsion.

Daphne Lowe and Maggie Wu were subsequently re-elected as executive committee members at the June 2012 AGM and resumed their roles in the association. The triumph of three members against the organisation demonstrates how a democratically based rule system could lead to the empowerment of grassroots and significantly reduce the risk of institutional abuse.

While it would be erroneous to assume a complete cultural conversion of Chinese organisations to the style of standard Australian NFP entities, it is undeniable that the spirit of voluntarism has profoundly influenced the operation of contemporary Chinese organisations. The deep-seated egalitarian principles as suggested by civic participation and the very act of volunteering help flatten the community power structure and break down conspicuous social hierarchy, leading to the viability of rule-based governance of these associations. Admittedly, the presence of a constitution does not preclude human manipulation, and the history of Chinese communities in Australia is fraught with cases of internal strife and localised monopolies. However, an overall democratic setting decides that abusive acts like branch-stacking and misinterpretation of definitional ambiguity still use existing rules (albeit flawed) as the referential point, and are more about taking advantage of loopholes than arbitrary wielding of power invested in a few persons, no matter how sagacious they prove to be. Although there are numerous cases where a leader tenaciously holds onto power, his agenda has to be achieved through a formal compliance with the constitution. There is always room for challenge by ordinary members upon each AGM, and the outcome of the number game could be quite unpredictable in spite of preconceived calculations. While acknowledging the remnants of Chinese cultural traits such as reciprocity, deference to the elderly and kinship allegiance, these elements could only be realised through the maneuvering of the rule-based platform, which is central in the modern management culture of the Western world.

5.5. Finance

As almost every of my interviewees emphasises, it has always been a matter of struggle for an ethnic organisation to garner enough resources for mere survival, not to mention consolidation and expansion. Traditional Chinese organisations mainly relied on three types of incomes: membership fees, commercial incomes and donations. Contributions of chief business leaders are of critical importance for native-place organisations and business chambers, which covered a good portion of costs for club houses and daily

operation. In contrast, the annual fee of each individual member was set at a minimal amount to be affordable, but the membership could be huge by virtue of clannish and geographical affiliations, as well as economic opportunities offered by these organisations in the niche industry. The establishment of a complicated honorary title system was designed specifically for the purpose of awarding the generous donors. As surveyed by Minghuan Li of Southeast Asian Chinese communities, there were more than twenty different honorary titles set up in various organisations such as honorary president, permanent honorary member, honorary director, honorary advisor and others of similar nature. Usually there were no limits set on the total number of honorary members or rules prohibiting the duplication of roles, the only threshold being the ability to financially contribute to organisational activities (Li 1995: 246-7).

As an anonymous interviewee confided to me, there is an unwritten rule in many native-place organisations that to be eligible for an honorary position in a given organisation, a person had to contribute at least five thousand dollars a year (S4). This resulted in a high degree of interlocking leadership featuring the concentration of power in the hands of a small number of the rich (Choi 2006: 130). For instance, Frank Chou, whose successful import and export business in Australia and the Greater Asian region in the 1980s won him the name of “the Asian Food Magnate”, received honorary titles from more than forty Chinese organisations in Australia for his well-known generosity. As the Founder and Honorary Life President of Australian Chinese Teo Chew Association (ACTCA), Frank Chou was pivotal in raising funds for the building and refurbishment of the club house in Cabramatta in the 1990s, as well as hosting the 14th Teo Chew World Convention in 2007. The high standing of business leaders in new locality organisations as major financial sponsors could still be observed today, prominent Sydney business leaders including Frank Chou of ACTCA, Eng Joo Ang of Australian Hokkien Huay Kuan Association (AHHKA), William Chiu of Australian Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China (ACPPRC) and King Fong of Chungshan Society of Australia (CSA). Even for established service organisations like the ACCA and ANHF, capital injection from wealthy patrons is still essential in the early phase of development. The three nursing homes under ANHF, respectively Chow Cho Poon Nursing Home, Bernard Chan Nursing Home and Lucy Chieng Aged Care Centre all derive their names from the major donors.

Despite the continued importance of business donation for many native-place organisations, it is no longer the chief financial source for most Chinese associations, which have learnt to explore local opportunities and diversify their revenue sources. Of course, there is a great variation in the way different organisations arrange their financial affairs, but several general patterns could be observed, which correlate the type and scale of a given organisation with its revenue sources.

Table 18: Sources of Annual Income of Chinese Community Organisations in Sydney, Year 2011 Estimates (AUD, %)⁹

Sources	Service (n=5)	Social and cultural (n=10)	Educational (n=5)	Native -place (n=20)	Advocacy (n=3)	Total (n=43)
Government Funding	54.7	42.3	35.2	1.3	21.7	54.4
Management Income ¹⁰	38.1	38.3	59.2	20.0	11.8	38.2
Private Contributions ¹¹	7.2	19.4	5.6	78.7	66.5	7.4
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total AUD	44,792,056	42,408	368,054	56,732	10,491	45,269,741

Source: Table compiled from data collected in my fieldwork.

The above table demonstrates a few characteristics of the financial makeup of modern Chinese organisations. Firstly, there has been a greater reliance on government funding by service organisations and various social, cultural, educational and advocacy

⁹ This is a rough estimation of different sources of organisational income based on available financial reports of the participating organisations. Because of the sensitivity of the matter, not all organisations are willing to provide information regarding their revenue. For those cooperative ones, the great majority of them prefer not disclosing their names. Therefore, I choose to present the data in proportional terms. The aggregate amount for each category is also presented to indicate the approximate scale of their financial activities.

¹⁰ Management income includes money generated from running of services, investments and ticket sales for activities.

¹¹ Private contribution includes membership fees, fundraising and private donations.

associations, ranging from 21.7 per cent to 54.7 per cent. Because of the relatively large financial output of service organisations, the aggregate amount of government grants takes up more than half of all gross income of the survey samples. The only exception to this rule is the cohort of native-place associations. Due to their somehow parochial nature, it is virtually impossible for them to obtain government funding. The older ones usually own premises and derive income from rents, activities and private contributions; however, the newly established ones have to rely on membership dues and management of activities. This explains the relatively low aggregate income for this cohort despite its largest size and points to the lower extent of local integration by this group.

Apart from this cohort, most Chinese associations have been eager to learn from the experiences of established Greek and Italian organisations since the 1980s, aligning their activities with the objectives of various governmental funding programs and developing new service areas in line with the policy priorities of the state. The five major multi-million Sydney Chinese service organisations¹² included in the table all listed government grants and subsidies as their major income source, which averages more than half of the total, and this does not yet include money arising from the grant-related service provision and activities. The previously-mentioned structural expansion of ACCA in the 1980s precisely hinged on the introduction of new grant programs under the multicultural policy, and its subsequent reduction of service scale in the late 1990s corresponded with the rise of neo-liberalist ideology and the slash of funding in the domain of social justice during the Howard era. At present, programs of the ACCA consist of home and community care, as well as settlement services, all of which are funded by the government. When government grants are calculated together with income arising from grant-supported services and activities as the following ACCA annual report shows, they amount to more than 91.7 per cent of the revenue, only remotely followed by fundraising activities (4.2 per cent), interest received (2.2 per cent) and membership subscriptions (1.1 per cent). The income pattern of ACCA is representative of most multi-million service organisations in Australia, which derive the overwhelming majority of their income from grants and grant-supported service provisions.

¹² They are respectively Australian Nursing Home Foundation (annual revenue of 18 million), the Indo-Chinese Elderly Hostel (12 million), Chinese Australian Services Society (8 million), Australian Chinese Descendants Mutual Association (5 million) and Australian Chinese Community Association (1.5 million).

Table 19: Itemisation of ACCA's Income in 2007 and 2008

Income	2008 (AUD)	2007 (AUD)
Income from grants, activities and functions	2, 232,143	2,192,210
Fundraising Activities	102,081	29,570
Membership subscriptions	27,601	21,369
Interest Received	53,757	40,739
Donations	2,970	21,330
Sundry Income	--	4,447
Total	2,434,927	2,324,488

Source: ACCA (2008). *ACCA 34th Annual Report 2008*. Sydney, ACCA: 19.

In this context, grantsmanship is increasingly regarded as a fundamental skill for community leaders of social, educational and cultural associations, which have to count on government support to launch new programs. For community language schools, public funding is an established policy, only the exact amount varying periodically and differing from state to state. Boosted by the federal initiative to enhance second-language learning, the NSW Government provides a one-off grant of \$2,500 for organisations that are setting up language classes for the first time, as well as a per capita funding to schools operating for more than twelve months. There has also been a significant increase of funding for community language schools in the ACT, which doubled to reach 25,000 in the 2013-14 budget (ACT Government 2013: 141). In comparison, ordinary cultural and social organisations need to demonstrate more initiative to get a share of the multicultural grants, which are open for competition by all incorporated ethnic organisations. As the membership fees of these organisations are set pretty low to attract the greatest participation, government grants usually have a direct impact on the richness of activities on offer. As the following table shows, multicultural grants are used to maintain websites, purchase equipments and support special events. For middle-sized community associations like FCCCI, ACT-CAA and ACCEPA, which have two to five hundred members and whose annual revenue is around a few thousand dollars, their income is split between government grants, membership fees and ticket sales of sponsored activities. The relatively narrow scope of their activities means that they could get few donations or commercial sponsorships.

Table 20: Recipients of 2012-13 ACT Participation Grants in the Chinese Community¹³

Organisations	Description of Funding	Amount
ACT Chinese Women Cultural Association Inc.	The production of the Association's newsletter.	\$500.00
Federation of Chinese Community of Canberra Inc.	Funding for Chinese New Year "Spring Festival", event showcasing Chinese art and culture and associated costs.	\$5,000.00
	Funding for participation in the 2013 National Multicultural Festival, enhancement and maintenance of website, production of newsletter and table tennis competition.	\$1,500.00
Australia China Friendship Society, ACT Branch, Inc.	Funding for celebration of the Chinese Lantern Festival.	\$1,000.00
Standard Chinese School of Australia Inc.	The celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the Chinese School in Canberra.	\$1,000.00
ACT Chinese Australian Association Inc.	Funding for project "Ring of Friends", an initiative to bring together new migrants who are aged over fifty.	\$500.00
	Funding for project "25UP-Year of Celebration" to mark the 25th Anniversary of ACT Chinese Australian Association Inc, including participation in the 2013 National Multicultural Festival and Centenary year celebrations.	\$1,000.00
Australian Chinese Culture Exchange and Promotion Association	Funding to participate in and perform in the 2013 National Multicultural Festival and Canberra Centenary Celebrations.	\$1,000.00
	Funding to hold a Chinese Art Exhibition at the	\$500.00

¹³ The outcome of the grant recipients could be found in the Community Services section of the ACT Government at:
http://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/multicultural/services/grants/participation_multicultural_grants_program/2012-13_successful_recipients.

	2013 National Multicultural Festival.	
	Funding to develop and maintain the Association's website.	\$500.00

The centrality of government funding as a financial option leads to the heightened status of civil servants in the ranks of community leaders and illustrates how accumulated “Whiteness” could be an essential quality for the survival of ethnic organisations in the multicultural setting. As Peter Pan, former manager of the ACT Chinese Aged Care Information Service pointed out:

Given the fact that so many ethnic organisations are established every year, competition for a set pool of multicultural grants could be quite intense. In order to win, you have to demonstrate a sound track record, come up with interesting programs and moreover skilfully address the selecting criteria with what you have at hand. Of course, it will help immensely if the people in charge know you well enough. Due to the importance of these soft qualities, it is common for many community organisations to be headed by someone who used to work in civil service, with all the social connections and practical know-how to interact with the bureaucracy.

Apart from government funding, fund-raising represents another popular income source for Chinese community associations and is congruent with the volunteering culture in Australia. The income from fundraising is usually not calculated separately in financial reports of most organisations, but is spread across both management incomes and private donations. The ACCA financial report, however, had a separate category of fundraising activities, which accounted for two to four per cent of the total. Though not significant in percentage terms for established associations, fundraising could be extremely important for newly-started associations, which lack a solid track record to win government support. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the completion of major community projects like the Campsie Childcare Centre, Campsie Activity Centre and Croydon Elderly Hostel Project all heavily depended on well-orchestrated fundraising efforts. For the Croydon Elderly Hostel alone, large-scale cultural performance, charity dinners and “Dragon Charity Walks” were organised through the collective efforts of major Chinese associations, which brought in more than \$140,000 to satisfy the capital demand (CASS 2012a: 6). To date, fundraising continues to be a standard approach to

gather resources for major community projects. As Henry Pan, Honorary Executive Director of CASS states:

Nowadays, the government always expects you to meet the capital demand through fundraising. Even if your project is approved by the government and you win a grant for that project, the grant usually only covers half of all expenses. The other half depends on your expertise in fund-raising. For instance, for our current CASS Aged Hostel project, a total budget of about \$13.5 million is proposed. The government agrees to provide a loan of \$8.63 million, and we have to raise about five million dollars from the community.

Unlike the old era when the focus was solely placed on big donors, today’s fundraising activities aim at raising community awareness and soliciting the widest community participation under the catch phrase of “no amount is too small”. The government also actively fosters the culture of civic participation by awarding tax deductions to anyone who donates over \$2 to public benevolent institutions (PBIs). As Table 21 demonstrates, organisations receiving donations usually design different levels of awards to donors, the granting of honorary titles and the naming right being the highest forms of acknowledgement.

Table 21: The Award System for Donors of CASS Aged Hostel Project¹⁴

Amount (AUD)	Award
0-2	--
2-200	Tax deductible receipt.
200-20,000	Names listed on the Honours Board hanging on the wall inside the aged hostel.
20,000-60,000	Names listed on the Honours Wall on the external wall of the aged hostel.
60,000-120,000	One-time preferential consideration to the application for a standard room of the aged hostel by the donors or their nominees.
120,000-250,000	One-time preferential consideration to the application for a deluxe room of the aged hostel by the donors or their nominees with an A4-size commemorative photo of the donor.
Over 250,000	Naming rights to one of three buildings, namely, the aged hostel, the

¹⁴ The information is available in CASS website at: http://cass.chinatown.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=336:cass-aged-hostel-&catid=35:special-project&Itemid=184&lang=en.

	community hall or the administration building. Priority in selecting the building to be named will be given to the person who contributes the highest.
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The public culture of voluntarism not only leads to the increasing popularity of community-wide fundraising activities hosted by modern Chinese organisations, but is also conducive to the emergence of modern Chinese charities as a viable mode of operation. Drawing from the successful fundraising experiences in the late 1980s, Chinese community leaders resolved to create a broad-based Chinese charity, which could keep on generating working capital to serve the whole community. Supported by the generous donations of patrons, trustees and life members, the Australian Chinese Charity Foundation (ACCF) was registered in October 1990 targeting community organisations and individuals in need. Each of the three patrons donated \$50,000 to the foundation, and the twenty-two trustees each donated \$10,000 toward the Foundation’s capital fund, which now exceeded one million dollars. In recent years, an average amount of \$150,000 is raised annually, of which half is distributed in the following priority areas: natural disasters, unfortunate deaths and injuries, scholarships, medical research and aged services (ACCF 2000: 4). The adoption of the charity model allows the transformation from spontaneous fund-raising activities into a sustainable growth of solid capital funds, which can be invested for all kinds of worthy purposes. The management of the fund itself is entrusted to qualified managers in line with contemporary business standards, which in turn enhances the confidence of the general public to donate. The professionalisation of fund-raising activities and the operation of modern charities represent yet another modernising feature of Chinese organisations.

In addition to these conventional financing options like fund-raising and grant application, a new paradigm has emerged in the NFP sector, which further integrates the activities of Chinese associations into the structure of capitalist accumulation. Termed as social enterprise, it refers to those activities undertaken in the public interest using entrepreneurial strategies (Zappalà 2001: 43). The central idea of social enterprise lies in the productive balance between mission and money, which allows the organisation to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage to create greater social values and fulfil its prescribed social mission. Social enterprise has gained popularity in recent years for the NFP sector in Australia, which is faced with a financially stringent environment. As

mentioned before, most of today's core service organisations came into being in the early 1980s, when the contracting out system of service delivery was conceived under the neo-liberal reform of most Western democracies. The influence of welfare multiculturalism enabled selected ethnic organisations to be involved in this structural reform and receive government contracts to deliver ethno-specific services to their own communities.

On the positive note, ethnic service-providers were increasingly viewed as significant stakeholders in policy-making, and their enlistment into the public sector necessitated the reform toward greater accountability and professionalism. But meanwhile, these organisations also became more susceptible to competitive tendering against big and well-experienced mainstream providers, political vicissitudes and bureaucratic control, and were risking losing their edge in advocacy due to their financial dependence to the government (Maddison and Dennis 2005: 386). These problems were exacerbated by the dampening of the multicultural policy from the mid-1990s and the subsequent dwindling pool of funding available to the multicultural communities in general (Jupp 2011: 50-51). Depending on the political climate, the pool of funds available to the ethnic communities could be subjected to severe fluctuations. In 2012, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) drastically cut the settlement grants previously available to the ethnic organisations, and instead transferred all the funding to mainstream migrant resource centres. Although the situation was reverted in 2013 amidst roaring protests from the multicultural communities, such political vicissitudes could still have serious disrupting effects for the operation of ethnic organisations which rely solely on government money. In this context, social enterprising emerged as an adaptive strategy for ethnic organisations to maintain their autonomy, overcome resource dependency, and henceforth better fulfil their social mission. In the Chinese community, the adoption of social enterprise is a relatively new phenomenon mainly confined to the few multi-million service organisations. The following case study of CASS gives a good indication of how this concept is implemented by forward-looking Chinese associations and indicates the potential of this concept in reconfiguring the financing paradigm of Chinese community organisations.

Case Two: CASS

As one of the first Chinese organisations in Sydney to implement the idea of social enterprise, CASS serves as a very good model case to investigate its concrete application in practice and its wider implications for the Chinese service-providers as a whole. Like other organisations, CASS also benefited from the heyday of multiculturalism in the mid-1980s and developed into one of the largest multi-service providers in the community. However, when most multicultural advocates were having high hopes for an increasing level of government funding to the minority groups in the early 1990s, senior executives of CASS were already considering the adoption of business strategies for the creation of greater social values. The rather avant-garde thinking of CASS is largely attributable to the collective wisdom of its committed executive team, in particular the intellectual input of the Founding Director Henry Pan. Assuming a senior management role of the now defunct Electricity Commission of New South Wales for more than thirty years, Pan was familiar with the twists and turns of the public sector reform and had an early exposure to the dramatic impact, sometimes sheer savagery caused by economic deregulation and restructuring in Australia.

In devising the current model of CASS, I am constantly referring to my working experiences from the Electricity Commission of New South Wales and consciously applying them to the area of community organisations. Ultimately, these organisations are performing the role of service delivery on behalf of the government, therefore, lots of knowledge, experiences, and evaluating criteria are mutually transferrable. Working for the government also makes me understand the mindset of the governing group and the likely trends for the future. For example, the power sector was the first one to undertake structural reform. The intention was all good, to create smaller government and encourage economic efficiency. But the reform measures were so radical that in the end, the whole Commission became obsolete. It is reasonable to assume the same level of reform in the multicultural sector, and this helps you see the huge risks in solely relying on public funding.

Highly conscious of the risks of heightened competition, CASS started its internal reform as early as the late 1990s, aimed at attaining the same degree of professional excellence and financial independence as commercial organisations without compromising its charity objectives. Corporate planning conferences were hosted in regular intervals to devise a new management structure for CASS. Following a conference held in 2001, CASS Care Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of CASS was created and most of the services previously run by CASS were gradually transferred

under CASS Care Ltd (See Figure 4 and 5).¹⁵ The new structure enables a clear-cut division of work. As the following figure shows, while the Society retains its grassroots focus and is responsible for organising member-based cultural, social and recreational activities, most of the services are now run by CASS Care Ltd, which as a company by guarantee, enjoys the flexibility of experimenting with innovative service delivery programs and income earning activities. The CASS Care Board of Directors overlaps with the CASS Board, so that the two entities could be run with uniform leadership and consistent principles.

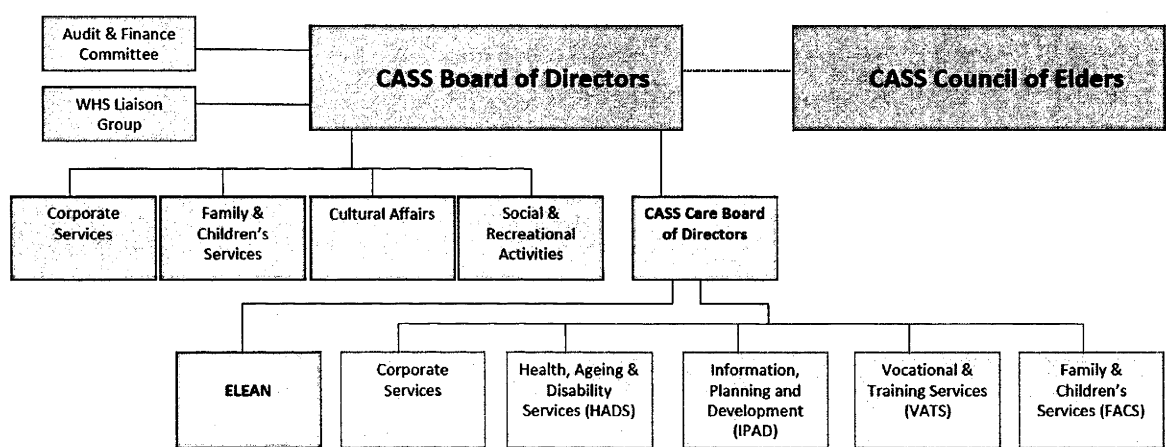


Figure 4: CASS Group Organisational Structure

Source: Figure based on unpublished material provided by CASS.

The separation between the grassroots organisation and the service company is a novel concept for running service-oriented community organisations, which ingeniously resolves the perceived tradeoffs between business professionalism and voluntarism. The division of tasks properly responds to the urgency of reform in the area of service delivery, but in the meantime maintains stability in the grassroots organisation, which is affected by greater inertia due to the large membership. While CASS Care Ltd was established in the year 2000, CASS did not change itself into a company by guarantee until July 2011 when enough experience was accumulated from the practical running of CASS Care Ltd. At the practical level, the creation of CASS Care Ltd which exclusively deals with service provision enables the Society to better tap into the favourable taxation regimes tailored to PBIs and effectively accelerates the building of

¹⁵ The only remaining services under CASS are part of the childcare services, because the Campsie Child Care Centre and Hurstville Child Care Centre were originally registered with CASS. With the change of policy, it becomes very difficult to transfer those licenses to CASS Care without losing places. Till now, the family and children's services are still shared by CASS and CASS Care.

professional staff teams. Soon after its establishment, CASS Care Ltd acquired the PBI status and formalised the professional division of tasks. As Figure 5 shows, the structure of CASS Care is shaped by the division of five major functional units: Health, Aging & Disability Services (HADS), Information, Planning and Development (IPAD), Family & Children’s Services (FACS), Vocational & Training Services (VATS), as well as Corporate Services shared by CASS and CASS Care.¹⁶ These service areas are managed by four Senior Executive Officers, each leading a team of experienced staff. Henry Pan, the Honorary Executive Director, is appointed on a voluntary basis and is responsible for charting out strategic directions for the whole company and coordinating different areas of activities.

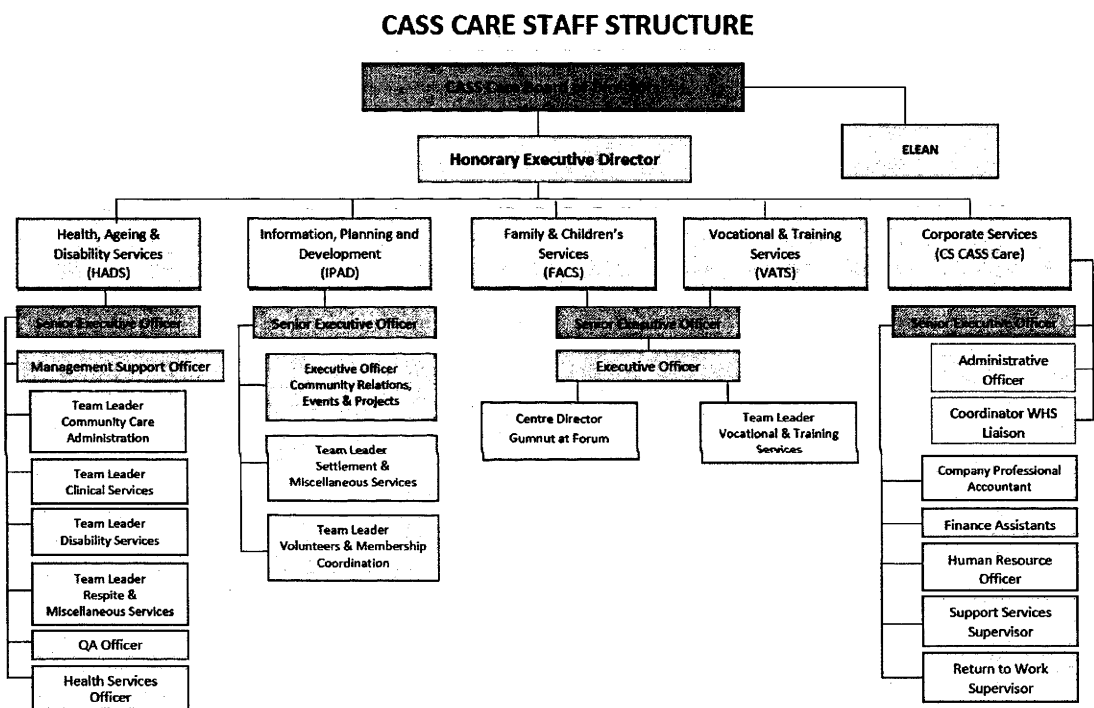


Figure 5: CASS Care Staff Structure

Source: Figure based on unpublished material provided by CASS.

In addition, CASS has been increasingly engaged in new income-earning activities due to a series of factors, including the declining level of donation, increasing competition for the “charity dollar”, the significant growth in number and diversity of charitable organisations and government funding cuts. Vigorous business strategies are adopted to enhance the Society’s income-earning capacities. For instance, CASS has always been paying close attention to the real estate listings and fluctuations of the land price and

¹⁶ The sharing of corporate services within the CASS Group is an innovate measure aimed at reducing service duplication and lowering overhead costs. It includes an integrated payroll system and a specialised corporate team servicing all Units within the CASS Group.

consistently purchasing properties in areas of high migrant concentration for future development purposes. Diversification of service and client base increases the utility rate of those premises and spreads the costs across different sectors. With the steady rise of property value, CASS not only saves up on rent but also significantly improves its financial profile, which makes it easier to get loans from financial institutions. Regarding pricing, CASS does charge a fee close to the market rate for many of its services, but its surpluses are not internally distributed, but reinvested back into the community in a number of ways such as widening the range of services or cross-subsidising below market price provision of quality services to the needy (CASS 2000: 3.1.2).

Furthermore, implementation of social enterprise is manifested in the active cultivation of cross-sectoral partnerships and the endeavour to go beyond the Chinese community and reach out to the mainstream service-users. As Pan pointed out on the 2012 Corporate Planning Day:

We see Anglo Australian organisations (taken as the mainstream) serving various non-English speaking communities. So, why can't a Chinese Australian organisation serve other communities? The suggestion that Chinese Australian organisations should be restricted to serving the Chinese-speaking community only puts Chinese Australians into a separate category. This is certainly a kind of discrimination we impose upon ourselves. (CASS 2012b: 7)

For the past two decades, CASS has been conscientiously building up cooperative relationships with mainstream institutions. This involves active engagement and regular meetings with members, community leaders and politicians, as well as frequent publication of articles about CASS in Chinese and mainstream press. To date, CASS has cultivated a web of institutional partnerships engaging different kinds of social players, including government agencies, local councils, mainstream organisations, business sponsors, local media and other ethnic organisations. Internally, directors of CASS see a cross-representation of politicians, doctors, businessmen and peak body representatives. The sponsors of CASS are not limited to Chinese small businesses, but include mainstream sponsors such as Westpac, State Bank and Optus. Apart from soliciting direct monetary contributions, complementary exchange of intangible resources with other institutions constitutes another important dimension of these partnerships. For instance, in December 2012, CASS signed a Memorandum of

Understanding (MOU) with the Centre for Volunteering, the peak body in NSW supporting volunteering and community participation. The MOU explores opportunities to share resources between the Centre and CASS, enables the recruitment and placement of Chinese-speaking volunteers to mainstream community organisations and creates research capabilities in this area. Having its root in Chinese community, CASS is capable of providing comprehensive training contents tailored to the specific cultural context, an obvious edge compared to traditional mainstream organisations, which can at best employ a few direct care workers with the right language skills. The combination of ethnic specialty and the conscious implementation of the mainstreaming strategy produced very positive outcomes. Up until 2011, CASS was the only ethnic organisation receiving ongoing grants from Department of Aging, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) to provide disability services, and also one of the few ethnic organisations targeting the CALD communities in general (CASS 2011b: 5). Transforming into a high-profile group in recent years, CASS starts paying attention to brand-name building. In Pan's own words:

Finally, what is 'CASS'? Just like "QANTAS", "Coke" etc., CASS is a brand name of an entity, in this case, the brand name of an Australian community service provider. This should be the way for us to promote ourselves. Some years ago, people knew about the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, however, it has been promoted nowadays as HSBC, and it has shaken off its restrictive image. CASS should do the same thing. (CASS 2012b: 8)

As the above case study shows, the adoption of social enterprise has greatly benefited CASS' development in an intensely competitive environment for the past two decades. Among the associations I surveyed, this is the most comprehensive developmental model firmly rooted in the broad sociopolitical conditions of the host society. As competitions intensify and government preference for big players becomes more manifest, this could become the predominant model for core associations which demand significant capital input. For the majority of social, cultural and educational associations, government funding is pivotal for the maintenance of current programs, which generate additional income in the form of fees and ticket sales. While acknowledging the continuing significance of traditional big donors, fund-raising activities are reconfigured to attract broad-based participation of the grassroots. Traditionally, fundraising is event-based and is not considered a stable source of income. However, the emergence of Chinese charities transforms it into an ongoing process, which is materialised in the

continuing growth of the capital fund. A greater proportion of government funding, emergence of modern charities and adoption of social enterprise are all modernising features of the financing regime of the Chinese organisations, and are telling signs of the extent of their incorporation into the local society.

In this chapter, I have answered the question of how Chinese organisations become modernised under the policy paradigm of multiculturalism from the perspectives of corporate governance, leadership transition, cultural orientation and the diversification of financing options. All these structural changes point to the affirmation of “Whiteness” before the “ethnic” dimension of the identity could be actualised and valorised in the mainstream setting. It echoes my previous argument that multiculturalism is ultimately about the conditional admission of the “minority cultures” into the national community with the expectation of their voluntary evolution toward the norms of the core culture. The demand for integration turns stronger with the advent of the post-multicultural era, when the primacy of national loyalty and sacredness of core values are again put on agenda and cloaked in terms like “national unity” and “social cohesion”. In this context, Chinese organisations, especially those having the most interactions with the government, are initiating all-round reforms to maximise the “Whiteness” they possess in order to validate their multicultural credentials and meanwhile fighting hard to safeguard the status of multiculturalism as the main philosophy of ethnic governance. When we observe the range of activities hosted by these organisations in Australia, the oscillation between proactive lobbying and strategic adaptation becomes all the more evident. Despite the situational performance of the organisational players, the policy structure of the host society serves as the perennial referential framework under which localised activism is flexibly negotiated. The various aspects of localised activism of Chinese community organisations and the way they interact with the opportunity structure of the host society shall be the content of the following chapter.

Chapter Six: Local-Based Organisational Activism in Australia

Compared with traditional organisations, Chinese community organisations today have greatly expanded their scope of activities. Subsumed into the larger category of voluntary associations, they comprise part of the civic community and act as “a springboard to further participation in the mainstream political life, either locally or nationally” (Predelli 2008: 940). Under the multicultural policy framework, Chinese organisations are performing a variety of roles, which help to speed up the process of social integration and enhance the general welfare of the ethnic minorities. While some of these roles, such as the delivery of ethno-specific services and indirect political representation, are only made possible through proactive policy support, other basic functions like intra-ethnic social events, cultural ceremonies and language maintenance, though existing in the past, have acquired new meanings under the new regime of ethnic governance. Bolstered by the development of multicultural agendas for the past thirty years, the interplay between the government and the ethnic sector has already entered a mature phase. While the government expects a facilitating role from the ethnic organisations and consciously incorporates them into the policy platform of civic education and social inclusion, ethnic leaders are well versed in accommodating the will of the state, either by introducing government favoured programs, or at least reframing existing programs in official discourses. This chapter examines the reorientation of organisational activities to cater for and push the boundaries of progressive policy-making under an evolving Australian multiculturalism. It argues that the inclusion of ethnic organisations into the parameters of civic governance is conducive to the valorisation of the ethnic capital in the public sphere, and thus opens the various channels by which it could be converted into mainstream currency. The major categories of Chinese organisational activities in the domestic context are proposed as follows: ethnically-based social participation, culture maintenance, service provision, as well as political advocacy and representation, all of which correspond with substantive policy contents under the civic-multicultural framework of Australia.

6.1. Social Participation

Starting with social participation, this is the default function offered by all types of Chinese organisations. Professional and business organisations tend to set entry thresholds for members, but the great majority of sociocultural organisations are open

for all interested persons of Chinese background. In the assimilationist period, the secluded communal life of ethnic minorities was interpreted as a “ghettoised presence”, or a lurking threat to social order. Even today, this discourse is still resurfacing sporadically among populist groups, but is no longer dominating public imagination (Dunn 1998, 2003). Conceptualisation of social capital instead helps erase the negative connotations associated with migrant associations, which are now perceived as a complementary mechanism to forge trust, social capital and the sense of belonging among the migrants and thereby contribute to the proper functioning of democracy (Fennema 2004: 432). Influenced by this concept, the introduction of the Social Inclusion Agenda in Australia around the turn of the century highlights the role of ethnic networks as an integral part of community resources to combat social exclusion faced by migrants, especially those from NES countries. The recent government report *Social Inclusion in Australia: How Australia is Faring* pointed out that people born in NES countries and not proficient in English ranked low in social participation, which took forms like involvement in community groups, attendance of community events and voluntary work (Australian Social Inclusion Board 2010: 17, 35). In this sense, ethnic organisations could easily overcome the linguistic and cultural barriers experienced by newly arrived migrants and provide opportunities for social participation by a detour (Berger, Galonska and Koopmans 2004).

Admittedly, this perspective leads to a heightened awareness of the social significance of those activities, events and functions organised by ethnic organisations. Though not necessarily changing the substance of their activities, Chinese community organisations are consciously evoking the concepts of social capital and community development in describing their programs. For instance, running of seminars, information sessions, interest classes and activity groups, despite being ongoing for decades, is now formally identified as an effective social-capital building practice. With pride, Daphne Lowe, the current Secretary of ACCA showed me the extensive range of interest classes organised by the Association in the past thirty years and stressed their significance in information dissemination, skill-training and the promotion of social connectedness. As the following table shows, the interest classes could be broadly divided into language training, physical exercises, leisure activities, art and craft, musical lessons and practical skills, all of which are conducted in Chinese language.

Table 22: Interest Classes Organised by ACCA in the Past Thirty Years

Language	Exercise	Leisure	Art & Craft	Musical	Practical
English Phonetics	Chinese Folk Dance	Cooking	Drawing	Electronic Keyboard	Start a Small Business
English Conversation	Tai Chi Sword	Knitting	Chinese Painting	Cantonese Opera	Bookkeeping
English Vocabulary	Tai Chi	Floral Arrangement	Chinese Calligraphy	Guitar	Car Maintenance
Learning English Through TV Commercial	Wudang Qigong	Natural Beauty	Chinese Netting	Chinese Flute	Home Electrical Appliances Maintenance
Mandarin	Mulan Kungfu	Make-up	Beading Craft	Zither	Chinese Herbal Medicine
	Social dance	Fishing	Crystal Craft	Pipa	First Aid
		Gift Wrapping	Silk Flower Craft	Dulcimer	
				Er-hu	

Source: ACCA (2004). *Australian Chinese Community Association 30th Anniversary 1974-2004*. Sydney, ACCA: 58.

In the case of CASS, the introduction of a social-capital perspective leads to the structural change of the way activity groups are organised. Running thirteen volunteer-manned activity groups in a wide range of local government areas, including Hurstville, Campsie, Bankstown, Ashfield, Wollongong, Kogarah and Burwood, CASS formulated a set of guidelines to define the division of work between the umbrella organisation and those activity groups, as encapsulated by the term “local management” proposed on 2012 CASS Corporate Planning Day. Under this system, CASS is responsible for providing venues for each activity group and covering their rent and insurance. It also provides administrative support to facilitate the planning and organisation of these activities and promote these groups to the wider community. In return, members of activity groups will form their respective local management committees (LMCs) to take

charge of the running of routine programs and foster community participation through micro-site interactions with community members. Outstanding members of the LMCs with good management skills are nominated to join the board. This greatly improves the understanding of the Board about issues of concern at the grassroots level and provides better representation of activity group members at the governance level. The local management strategy not only promotes social participation among previously marginalised groups, but also serves as a cost-effective approach for member recruitment and brand-name marketing. It is estimated that the average weekly attendance for all the groups adding together is over seven hundred people, with the total membership of the activity groups amounting to about three thousand people covering wide geographical areas.

To recapitulate, social participation is the basic function of most sociocultural associations, though the scale and frequency of their activities might not be comparable to that of CASS or ACCA due to membership constraints and funding issues. However, when put together, they constitute the rich fabric of everyday multiculturalism and serve as effective micro-site solutions to the entrenched issue of “social exclusion” (Anita 2013: 6). In this respect, there is a natural adherence between social activities of ethnic organisations and national initiatives of “social inclusion”. As the previous chapter points out, this nexus gives legitimacy to the creation of small-amount multicultural grants to support localised initiatives, a symbolic gesture in itself to acknowledge the social value of ethnic associations for the Australian society.

6.2. Cultural Maintenance

Self-evidently, cultural maintenance is yet another basic function of Chinese organisations, if not their *raison d'être*. From the outset, “cultural maintenance” is identified as one of the major themes of multicultural policy introduced in Australia, along with the tenets of “social justice” and “productive diversity” (Allbrook et al. 1989: 20). The public endorsement of cultural specificity rests on the expanded discourse of individual rights, which regards a secure cultural context as basic to most people’s prospects for living what they perceive as a good life. In his famous essay “The Politics of Recognition”, Charles Taylor points out that “a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining, demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves” (Taylor 1994: 25). This in

turn requires public institutions “to acknowledge rather than ignore cultural particularities, at least for those people whose self-understanding depends on the vitality of their culture” (Taylor 1994: 5). At the practical level, the preservation of minority languages and cultures could bring about a variety of benefits to the broader society. On the one hand, the ability to appreciate the cultural others is regarded as a central quality of cosmo-multiculturalists, who rejoice in the dynamic cultural exchanges and acquire a symbolic status through their openness to alternative lifestyles and the breadth of knowledge and experiences. On the other hand, “linguistic and cultural skills” are valued for their role in generating economic benefits in domestic and foreign markets, especially for those transnational industries, as the dimension of “productive diversity” suggests (Bertone 2006: 7).

The normalisation of cultural rights and practical value of the “cultural capital” lead to the public appreciation of a multiplicity of community cultures and encourage the consumption of variegated cultural elements which are seen as enrichment of mainstream life (Hage 2000; Khoo 2000). The popularity of the Chinese cultural products is not only reflected in established niches like culinary arts, silk embroidery, martial arts, cultural performances, herbal medicines and acupuncture, but is also materially embodied in large social constructs like the Chinatown area and the lavish display of everything Chinese at special festival occasions like the Chinese New Year Carnival. Impressed by its attraction for tourists, the City Council of Sydney sponsored the printing of a fifty-five-page brochure of the Chinese New Year Festival in 2013 and disseminated it to the public one month before the celebration took place. The long extinct Dragon Ball dance was restored to the amazement of local inhabitants, and many traditional associations made their appearance in the brochure as organisers of multicultural events. Both Yiu Ming Temple (property of Yiu Ming Hung Fook Tong) and Sze Yap Guandi Temple (property of Sze Yap Association) opened to public viewers their worshipping ceremonies, and pictures of sumptuous banquets prepared by Chinatown restaurants adorned the gold-glided pages of the brochure, competing for tourists’ attention. Kong Fong, organiser of the 2013 Chinese New Year celebration, was very happy about impact of this event:

The brochure is a great aid. Last year, we also organised pun-cai activity (tasting a village style cuisine of early Chinese migrants), but we only advertised it on the website of Chinese Heritage Association of Australia. As a result, only twenty people showed up. This year I was thinking of

increasing the number to forty, but the actual attendance exceeded eighty. Other organisations had reported similar positive feedbacks of attendance. Considering the commercial value of this event, we are setting up a Chinatown Promotion Company in collaboration with the *Sing Tao Newspaper* to introduce our cultural specialties to the wider public and possibly attract investment to further develop the Chinatown area.

Seeing the mounting level of public recognition and potential business opportunities in the cultural industry, Chinese organisations are becoming more proactive in positioning themselves as the rightful representative of Chinese culture and aligning their cultural activities with the policy dimension of cultural maintenance. Traditional Chinese associations such as the Chinese Masonic Society, Sze Yap Society, Yiu Ming Hung Fook Tong and NSW Chinese Chamber of Commerce enjoy additional advantages in this respect due to their longevity and the good preservation of their century-old properties, which draw the attention of tourists and researchers alike. The architectural record of Yiu Ming temple in Alexandria Street, historical account of the Chinese Masonic Society and the recent scholarly project on the history of the NSW Chinese Chamber of Commerce all testified to the growing currency of historical studies on local Chinese. One breakthrough was made in 1999 when Yiu Ming Temple was formally listed in the NSW Heritage Register. The grounds for its listing were found in its association with the “continuous occupation by Chinese (a significant group in NSW and Australian history) since the 1870s”, and its role as “a cultural, religious and social centre for the community”. In the register record, the Yiu Ming temple was highly regarded for its combination of Australian and Chinese architectural codes:

The temple is significant as a rare example of its type, a ‘village’ temple. It is one of only a small number of Chinese temples that survive in Australia and contains fittings and objects which are becoming increasingly rare, even in China...Its design, location, orientation and layout demonstrate the principal characteristics of Chinese temple design from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as well as the Chinese traditional philosophy of Fengshui. The introduction of Australian design features, such as Federation detailing demonstrates the process by which cultural practices were modified by immigrants in response to Australian conditions and materials, resulting in a uniquely Chinese-Australian style. (NSW Heritage Register 1999: 2-3)

Recognition like this was hard won, achieved through lengthy negotiations with the government and extensive public education campaigns, often in collaboration with the Chinese business sector and other culturally minded organisations. Henry Tsang, renowned Chinese Australian politician and accomplished architect, was instrumental in

orchestrating a number of key Chinese heritage projects like the beautification of the Chinatown area, the construction of the Chinese Garden of Friendship and the renovation of the Yiu Ming Temple. Drawing on his strength as a registered architect, Tsang made tireless efforts in promoting the oriental aesthetics and cultural significance of Chinese historical sites to the mainstream audience. Once serving as the honorary architect for the Yiu Ming Temple, Tsang was particularly pleased with its inclusion into the NSW Heritage Register:

The Yiu Ming temple was constructed in 1908 with the generous donation from people of Gaoming and Gaoyao counties. Chinese craftsmen from Guangdong were commissioned to do the work. I became personally involved when it was damaged by fire in late 1996. I helped with the inspection and renovation work, and luckily it was restored to its original grandeur. Accidents like this are constant reminders that we need to compete with time to act upon preservation plans. I am quite encouraged by the enthusiasm of the NSW government in protecting these heritage places. Following Yiu Ming Temple, we have got a few other places listed as well, like the three Chinese market gardens at La Perouse, and the Chinese section of Nyngan General Cemetery. In 2006, several grants were awarded to Chinese research and preservation projects, including a \$45,000 grant to the General Cemetery Necropolis Trust for the preservation of a stone carving at the Luk Fook Tong of the Rookwood Cemetery, a \$25,000 grant to Shoalhaven Historical Association to investigate the early records of Chinese activities at South Coast, as well as a \$25,000 grant to Dr McGowan to look for archaeological traces of Chinese settlement at South NSW and the Riverina area. (Tsang 2006 172-3)

With the social environment moving toward a better appreciation of ethnic cultures, many small- to medium-sized Chinese associations find it easier to get government grants for their miscellaneous cultural activities such as art exhibitions, cultural dancing and publication of Chinese literary works. In the meantime, larger associations are developing their professional expertise to have their cultural programs included in the mainstream agenda. One pioneer in this respect is the Chinese Youth League (CYL) of Australia, which evolves from a left-wing workers' organisation to a renowned cultural performance provider in the Sydney community.

Case Three: CYL

CYL was one of the earliest modern-style Chinese voluntary associations in Sydney. Founded as a drama association in 1939 in the midst of Chinese resistance against Japanese invasion, it greatly contributed to the war efforts by giving charity

performances, organising political campaigns and advocating on behalf of Chinese seamen stranded in Australia because of the war. In the 1950s, it was instrumental in uniting indentured Chinese workers to struggle against their exploitative employers and petitioning to the Immigration Department to repeal the War Time Refugee Removal Act to safeguard the residency right of Chinese workers (CYL 1999: 42). CYL's radical politics and its close rapport with the PRC government made it an easy target of McCarthyism rampant in Australia in the 1960s. For many years, it was dubbed a communist organisation and experienced severe difficulties. The dramatic turn of events came in the 1970s with the normalisation of Australia-China relationship and the introduction of multicultural policy. Since then, CYL has tapped into its strength in cultural performances and cemented its image as a mainstream provider of Chinese cultural programs. According to Arthur Gar Lock Chang, respected elder in the Chinese community and early committee member of CYL:

As early as February 1977, CYL organised the first large Chinese cultural concert at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. This won wide renown for CYL and established the foundation of many more cultural concerts to come. Among the items in the program was a recital "The Chinese Are Part of the Australian Family", which formed the draft of the dance drama "Dragon Down Under" presented during the Bicentenary. In 1986, it received the sponsorship of the NSW Government to hold the "Chinatown Carnival Show" at the multicultural festival, which included a rich program of Chinese songs and music, folk dances, acrobatics, *wushu*, lion dances and other cultural performances. The Southern Lion Dance was the favourite of the audience. The crowd burst into joyful roars as the 30 meter-long dragon danced in majestic splendor in the street procession.

The increasing awareness on the part of CYL to integrate Chinese cultural forms into the broader multicultural heritage culminated in the cultural concert "Dragon Down Under" held at the Great Hall of Parliament House for the celebration of the bicentenary of settlement of Australia. The five acts, "A Land of Many Splendors", "Over the Treacherous Seas", "Endurance", "Australia China Friendship" and "A Nation in Jubilation" re-enacted the epic story of Chinese settlement in Australia and contextualised it in the grand picture of Australia's birth as a nation. It moved the then Prime Minister Bob Hawke to remark that:

The performance of Dragon Down Under is an event of great cultural and historic significance. The history of the Chinese people in Australian has never before been portrayed in such an imaginative and colourful manner. (CYL 1999: 45)

The assiduous efforts made by organisations like CYL have achieved a lot in lifting the symbolic value of the Chinese culture and thereby stimulated the interest of the second-generation Chinese-Australians and the non-Chinese to participate in these cultural events. While shadow boxing and Cantonese opera are still the reserve of the elderly Chinese, other cultural activities such as dragon boat and lion dancing are successfully passed down to the younger generation and with their maturity, going beyond the Chinese community. The CYL dragon boat club, which participated in the first Dragon Boat races in Sydney in 1984, is currently one of the few clubs from that day still paddling. Now unquestionably a mainstream sports club, it is joined by young people from all communities. As one of its team members proudly announced:

In my view, the CYL Dragon Boat Club is not only a living heritage of the Chinese community, but also an integral part of the Australian culture. This is why so many young people from the Chinese community, many of them native-born, take pride in joining in this sport. This, in my belief, points to what multiculturalism is really trying to express. The so-called mainstream culture is a dynamic being constantly enriched by different people and communities. Eventually, what originates from the community becomes something of national pride, of world wonder. That is how we see ourselves and how we relate with people from other communities. (S1)

With uneven pace, different aspects of the Chinese culture find their way into the everyday life of ordinary Australians and through a highly dynamic process, become part of the broad Australian culture, which is consumed, appreciated, and reconfigured by people from distinctively different cultural backgrounds. Chinese organisations are not only facilitators of change, but also part of the cultural constructs which acquire new meanings with the much-lauded cosmopolitan outlook. Activities which would have been dubbed signs of “intractable cultural retention” are read in a new light, supported by the government as a legitimate source of the national culture. This reaffirms the view that the depth of Chinese organisational activism largely depends on the socio-cultural space made available through the policy regime of the state. Chinese organisations could of course, try to negotiate for the best deal within the structure, but it is virtually impossible for them to bring about a paradigmatic shift by themselves. This point becomes even more evident when we investigate aspects of service delivery and political participation.

6.3. Service Provision

While social participation and cultural celebration are mainly enacted through spontaneous, micro-level interactions, the role of ethnic organisations as service-providers is the result of deliberate policy design. In the early 1980s, the Australian government began to explore the policy relevance of ethnic organisations in the area of service provision to the disadvantaged communities. Spearheaded by the Victorian Consultative Committee on Social Development comprising academics and community leaders, the strand of welfare multiculturalism was developed to address the systemic disadvantages suffered by migrants in various social domains such as health, housing, language, education, employment and many others. It called for the institutionalisation of a culturally and ethnically pluralistic system of service delivery, with an emphasis on the importance of inclusion of ethnic welfare organisations in this system (Lopez 2000: 447). The ethnically based welfare agencies were perceived as enjoying advantages in supplementing general community services in areas like information dissemination, aged care, child care services, referral services, counselling, and inter-generational conflicts (Lippmann 1982: 18). They were encouraged to help the government identify the need of the community they represented and advocate on its behalf through participation in broad-based consultations.

In practice, the strand of welfare multiculturalism was implemented through government subsidies to ethnic organisations which run ethno-specific services. The onset of the neo-liberalist reform in major Western countries since the mid-1980s and the prevalence of the contracting out practices in service delivery led to the significant growth of the NFP sector in general and contributed to the emergence of the “ethnic affairs industry” (Jakubowicz, Morrissey and Palser 1984). Kramer rightly observed the incipient separation of public responsibility between the state and the NFP sector:

Public responsibility has been retained for policy and planning, financing, regulating, monitoring and audit, whereas nongovernmental providers, both nonprofit and commercial organizations, are increasingly used to deliver a growing number of social services. (Kramer 1994: 34)

The justification for the use of NFP organisations to deliver social services rested on the ideological preference for a smaller government. The incorporation of NFPs in public service delivery arguably had the advantage of saving costs, enhancing citizen

participation and better servicing hard-to-reach communities. As Weisbrod (1986) convincingly observed, the non-profit provision of collective goods were large in societies with high levels of inequality in individuals' effective demand for collective goods or high degrees of religious or ethnic heterogeneity, which entailed highly differentiated levels of needs and policy responses.

With the influx of a large number of NES migrants in the 1980s, especially those from Asian countries, various federal and state government departments introduced new programs to facilitate their settlement and participation in the resident society. Many far-sighted Chinese community organisations embraced these opportunities and in time developed into one-stop service providers with multiple programs in accordance with changing government priorities and funding opportunities.

The most representative case of Chinese multi-service provider is CASS, whose annual revenue exceeds more than seven million dollars. Starting with the Campsie Childcare Centre, CASS boasts of the most extensive range of services among all Chinese service-providers, including health, aging and disability services, child care, settlement services, vocational training, Chinese language education and the building of community capacity in a wide geographical area covering Sydney Inner West, Southern regions, South-West regions, the Northern suburbs and Wollongong. More than 1,800 families access its services and activities weekly, and the clients are not limited to the Chinese community. To date, CASS is still looking to diversify its service scope and to tap into the potential pool of mainstream users. Henry Pan stressed the necessity of diversification strategy in the 2012 Corporate Planning Day:

On the one hand, it is not possible for an organisation (or business entity) to monopolise the provision of service (or products) as clients (consumers) want choice. Generally, there is a certain saturation level in the "market share" that an organisation could capture in a particular geographical region. On the other hand, to provide services at a geographical location to meet the demand, an organisation needs to build up an infrastructure. This infrastructure is costly and the marginal costs can only be reduced with the economy of scale, i.e. expanding the scope of services provided to share the infrastructure costs. If the "client base" has reached the saturation level, the recovery of costs has also reached its limits. Obviously the organisation needs to venture into other "client bases".

Similarly, ACCA also develops a series of programs catering to the welfare needs of the Chinese community with a focus on the elderly and the newly arrived immigrants.

Funded by DoHA, ACCA is currently providing a total of fourteen programs including Community Aged Care Packages (CACP), Home and Community Care Program (HACC), Elderly Social Support Services (ESSS) and National Respite for Carers Services (NRCS). It owns three service centres respectively located in the City, Parramatta, and Chatswood, which are used for centre-based day-care services and regular social activities. Until recently, ACCA has always been receiving the settlement grant from the DIBP to provide assistance to newly arrived Chinese-speaking migrants in NSW. The latest available records showed that in the year 2006-2007, a total of 1,937 client contacts were made (802 in person and 1135 by telephone). Of these contacts, 185 were referred to mainstream service providers for further assistance. The most frequent enquiries and common problem areas were related to citizenship, English learning, visa, income support, immigration, housing, family relationship program, education, employment, disputes and complaints, and other settlement-related information (ACCA 2007: 12). With decades' service experience, ACCA has accumulated enough data to pinpoint the service needs of the community and made it the basis for its advocacy work with the government. In 1999, ACCA used its resources to assist Kim Chung to carry out a survey in the Sydney Chinese community and complete the *Report on Settlement Needs of Chinese New Migrants in Southern Region of Sydney*, which was brought to the attention of the government for the maintenance and possible extension of the settlement program.

Table 23: The Most Useful Services Mentioned by Respondents* (N=255)

Services	Frequency	Percentage
Settlement Information	117	45.9
English Class	157	61/6
Translation	63	24.7
Employment/Training	66	25.9
Health	68	26.6
Tenancy	17	6.7
Social Security	21	8.2
Recognition of Overseas Qualifications	6	2.4
School Education	15	5.9
Others	1	0.4

* Respondents were allowed to choose more than one service

Source: Chung, K. (1999). *Report on Settlement Needs of Chinese New Migrants in Southern Region of Sydney*. Sydney, ACCA: 11.

Research reports of this sort used to play a significant role in pushing the government to create new programs and services in the newly emerged ethnic service industry in the 1980s and early 1990s. As Catherine Chung, ACCA President from 1995-1997, pointed out:

(Making these evidence-based representations) does not require financial outlays like a program activity. It is not a drain on the association's finance and can in some instances result in funding for new or expanded services. Some of the funding that ACCA has received as a result of advocacy efforts included its CSSS (formerly GIA) grants, its HACC funding and the working nation project. (ACCA 2004: 116)

In recent years, however, the prevalent political climate is moving away from the tenet of welfare multiculturalism and in favour of a mainstreaming approach, despite strong empirical evidence of the urgent need for community-based services for the ethnic minorities (Chan and Ritchie 2011; Low et al. 2011; Poon, Joubert and Harvey 2013). The serious shrinking of government funding for general ethno-specific services, saturation of market and the evident government preference for mainstream providers heightened the management risks and reoriented most ethnic providers to go into those safe service areas, which are characterised by greater growth potential and relatively consistent government commitment. Aged care is one of those promising areas which attract the biggest investment from ethnic providers.

In August 2011, the Productive Commission issued its inquiry report *Catering for Older Australians*, which identified the growing diversity of aged care needs and emphasised the valuable roles played by community organisations in serving those special needs. The projection went that there would be an over forty per cent increase of the number of older Australians from NES backgrounds between 2011 and 2026, and that by 2026, one in four Australians aged eighty and over would be from a CALD background. The inquiry suggested that “many current mainstream aged care services may not be sensitive to, nor adequately cater for, the needs of clients with special needs”, resulting in the situation that “clients in these target groups...are often willing to travel significant distances to access services that cater for particular needs”. In view of the high desirability of special services and the higher costs and difficulties in servicing these needs, the report recommended that the capacity of a provider to cater for special

needs should be considered in the determination of grant applications. Also important was the consideration of “alternative funding and/or service delivery arrangements, such as targeted supplements, the use of competitive tendering or block funding...to increase access to services for people from diverse backgrounds” (Productivity Commission 2011: 239-46). Based on the findings and recommendations of the inquiry paper, the federal government announced the *Living Longer Living Better* aged care reform package on 20 April 2012, a comprehensive ten-year plan to reshape aged care and build a fairer and more nationally consistent aged care system. Included in it was a *National Ageing and Aged Care Strategy for People from CALD Backgrounds*, which reaffirmed the government support for ethno-specific and multicultural service providers and specified a range of programs to enhance communication, reduce barriers and improve the participation of the CALD sector in aged care program development (DoHA 2012: 12-14).

The long-term projection of the marked demand growth from the CALD sector and the unwavering support of the government encouraged the entry of major Chinese service organisations into this area. Currently, all the multi-million Chinese service groups are, to different extents, engaged in one or more aspects of aged care.¹⁷ The leading association ANHF boasted of an annual revenue of \$18 million and provided the widest range of aged care services available in the Chinese community, including residential care, elderly housing, centre-based day care, home care services and other community services. Its CEO Ada Cheng expressed her optimism toward the prospect of this service area:

As a former strategic planner of the government, I am very aware of direction of macro-level reform in Australia, the changing customer cohorts affected by immigration and their implication for the development of ethno-specific services. Aged care is one of the areas for which there is an established recognition of the importance of ethnic providers. Research demonstrates that various kinds of disadvantages experienced by NES elderly people are often in small details like food, communication, types of

¹⁷ It used to be the Chinese tradition that the elderly are cared by their children at home. However, due to financial pressure and hardships faced by the first-generation migrants, the majority of Chinese overseas now rely on public services to care for the elderly members of the family. Because of the shortage of specialised aged services for the Chinese, many have to make the difficult decision of sending their ageing parents back to China to receive care. There have been widespread lament over the lost tradition, and questions are raised in community newspapers about the feasibility of relocating older parents to Australia. The Australian New Express Daily, for example, ran a series of articles entitled “The Chinese elderly are having a hard time. Australia is no paradise for them.” available at: <http://www.xkb.com.au/html/news/zuirehuati/2010/0716/38485.html>.

leisure activities and so on, which are hard to be addressed by mainstream service providers. When it comes to Asian communities, we definitely enjoy a competitive edge. Demand for a place at our nursing homes is always huge. In some cases, people can wait for up to one year before they enter the facility. Therefore, I am confident about the future growth of this sector and heaps of opportunities ahead.

Ada's view is surely shared by CEOs of other big Chinese service organisations, most of which are looking to expand their aged care programs. Major projects currently under way include the aforementioned sixty-three-bed CASS Aged Care Hostel and the expansion of the Indo-Chinese Elderly Hostel from thirty beds to eighty-eight beds. In response to the growing service demand for Chinese-specific community services in the greater Western Sydney areas, ACCA also purchased a two-storey building in Parramatta to be used as a service centre. Purchased for \$1.45 million and renovated for another \$160,000, the centre was opened in November 2011 and used for day care, which was easier to manage than residential facilities.

The uniform restructuring of Chinese service organisations toward a greater proportion of aged care programs indicates the strong collaborative relationship between ethnic service-providers and the state, and in the meantime exposes their vulnerability arising from the high dependency on the state. The decision-making capacities of ethnic organisations are, to a large extent, premised upon the “provision—or non-provision—of resources” by the host society (Odmalm 2004: 474). As Tabar and others point out, the State can at any time opt to ensure its political survival and re-assert the cultural hierarchies by devalorising the symbolic capital of ethnicity (2003: 275). The deep-grained superiority of “Whiteness” and the somehow arbitrary pricing of the ethnic capital as reflected in the volatility of ethnicity-related policies create a deep sense of mistrust and anxiety in ethnic communities. While the unexpected cut of settlement grants in the year 2011-12 caused many grim speculations about the potential exclusion of ethnic providers from settlement policy arrangements, Consumer-Directed Care (CDC), the newly introduced service-delivery model, which purported to return the choices back to customers, also led to anxieties about intensified competition to which ethnic providers were most likely to fall casualties. Henry Pan gave a good summary of the feelings of insecurity felt by CALD providers, which was the deep cause behind CASS' adoption of social enterprise to enhance its competitiveness:

Although ethnic providers are increasingly incorporated into the formal service-delivery mechanism, we are still in a marginalised position. Despite all the rhetoric of free market, the supply side is tightly controlled by the government. On the one hand, the government is allocating hundreds of packages to mainstream providers; on the other hand, ethnic providers are very lucky to get a few dozen places. This means that even if customers prefer culturally specific services, we cannot meet their needs because we are not granted that many places in the first place. Under the CDC, customers can shop around and arrange for themselves a package of services with multiple providers. In order to compete, we have to lower our price, but in the meantime, the supply quota is not lifted. In this sense, the ethnic providers are surely at a disadvantage. Honestly, we will be out of business immediately if the government decides it should happen.

Understandably, the popularity of previously discussed mode of social enterprise among ethnic service-providers is driven by such deep-seated anxieties about an uncertain future. In the same vein, though making manifest progress in the political realm, the Chinese communities and their leaders are still affected by a profound sense of insecurity and powerlessness. The unpredictability of local political opportunity structure in a way accentuates the importance of Chinese organisations, which can be used to mobilise community resources in times of adversity.

6.4. Political Participation

According to McAllister, political participation encompasses four discrete but interrelated areas of activities: voting, participation within political parties, communal activity and particularised contact between electors and their elected representatives (McAllister 1981: 65). It represents the highest level of migrants' integration into the host society, which process is often facilitated through the intermediary role of ethnic associations (Castles and Davidson 2000; Kwok 2011; Predelli 2008). In his masterpiece of early history of multiculturalism in Australia, Lopez pinpointed the important input of the ethnic lobby in constructing the incipient multicultural ideologies and highlighted the collaborative relationships between established Greek, Italian and Jewish community organisations and major political parties in advancing a new regime of ethnic governance and accelerating the integrative process for newly emerging communities (Lopez 2000: 188-191). In many ways, Chinese organisations followed the steps of these predecessors and worked on the existing platform of multiculturalism to exert their influence. Observed in a broad-brush approach, the main political functions fulfilled by contemporary Chinese associations comprise promoting political

communication, undertaking representation and advocacy, as well as providing the resource base for Chinese-Australian politicians.

6.4.1. Political Communication

At the most basic level, Chinese organisations represent an important site to disseminate political knowledge, frame political issues of concern and create alternative opportunities of political engagement from a community perspective (Berger, Galonska and Koopmans 2011: 492). As Odmalm points out, participation through voluntary associations could be considered one of the key features of civil society since they function as a supplement to the institutional arrangements of representative democracy (Odmalm 2004: 472). Civic participation in community organisations connects people to politics in several ways: it helps individuals develop skills that are relevant to politics, provides them with greater knowledge of politics by facilitating interactions among people with common interests and concerns, and gives them opportunities to be mobilised by political campaigns that look to organisations as source of votes, financial contributions and campaign volunteers (Ramakrishnan 2008: 32-3). For newly arrived Chinese migrants who encounter linguistic and cultural barriers and do not yet form ideas about the social conditions of the resident country, Chinese organisations serve as an important resource pool to expand the network of social contacts, acquire information and get advice about life arrangements in the new country. Participation in Chinese associational activities, which are scheduled according to both Chinese and Australian festivals, evokes as much nostalgia of home as a sense of belonging to the new land. My fieldwork confirms that Chinese associations usually give equal emphasis to Chinese festivals and local events in planning their activities, the latter category including celebration of Australian festivals, visits to nursing homes and schools, fund-raising for a local cause, and seminars and workshops on Australian social policies. These events, while being largely social in nature, could nevertheless contribute to the formation of civic values such as democracy, trust, social capital and belonging, and more importantly, give the newcomers an initial experience of social engagement, which could then serve as a springboard to more in-depth social and political participation in host society. Apart from these intangible socialising effects, Chinese associations, by cooperating with the Chinese language media, could at times mobilise the sentiments of their members, organise political campaigns and impact on the

direction of votes. The early political relevance of ethnic organisations precisely lies in the power they have in channelling the “ethnic votes”.

In practice, Chinese organisations and Chinese language media normally give equal support to all major parties. However, in times of turmoil, they could be steadfast on their positions and dauntlessly defend the community interest against external hostilities. For example, after Pauline Hanson delivered her parliamentary speech on the “swamping of Australia by Asians”, Chinese community leaders formed a united front to campaign against her statements. Later on, these efforts galvanised into the formation of the Unity Party to counteract the influence of Hanson-led One Nation. As the strategic reticence of the Coalition Government headed by John Howard became apparent, the community sentiment soon swung toward the ALP under the mobilisation of community leaders and the Chinese media. At the time, Dr Peter Wong wrote to the community via several Chinese newspapers, calling on the Chinese electorate to vote for the Unity Party for the Legislative Council and the ALP for the Legislative Assembly. He further explained that as there was a pact between the ALP and Unity to exchange votes, even if Unity did not win any seats in the Upper House, the votes would be automatically transferred to Labor and therefore not wasted (Wong and Tian 2003: 27). These arguments were widely circulated through the Chinese media, reiterated at functions hosted by Chinese organisations, reinforced via gossips along informal networks, and sunk deeply into the psyche of Chinese voters. Apparently, the concerted community efforts had fulfilled some of the preconceived goals, as reflected by the election of Peter Wong into the Upper House in 1999 and the successful contestation of councillors’ seats by eight Unity Party members from 1999 to 2003, all of whom were from local areas with high concentration of Chinese migrants. C. Y. Wong, chief editor of *Sing Tao*, agreed on the impact of their political campaign on the flow of Chinese votes:

As our ethical codes require, we usually remain neutral and give equal coverage to both parties. However, if it becomes obvious that the community interest is at stake, we will not hesitate to express our preference. I remembered at the 2007 Federal election, Kevin Rudd and his team paid great attention to liaising with us and Chinese community leaders in general, a sharp contrast to the total apathy shown by John Howard. As a result, in the series of articles leading to the election, we definitely leaned toward Rudd and the ALP. I would say that Howard’s loss of his own seat could be partially attributed to his total neglect of the Chinese community, which made up 16.9 per cent of the electorate’s population. Nowadays, both

parties are actively liaising with us to make sure that they send a positive message to the Chinese community.

Although it is not exactly clear to what extent Chinese voters can be influenced by community campaigns, the educational potency of Chinese organisations could not be lightly dismissed. The close linkage between organisations and the Chinese constituency lies at the core of the “ethnic community capital” and points to the policy salience of these organisations as the bridging mechanism between the mainstream and the ethnic sector. On the one hand, the community relies on organisational leaders to advocate on their behalf and represent their interests to the government. On the other hand, mainstream political players find it much easier to reach the minority constituency and tap into its resources via a few key nodes in the community network. These practical utilities form the foundation of political activism of Chinese community organisations.

6.4.2. Political Advocacy

Political advocacy represents another important function of Chinese organisations, which is essentially a type of interest-group activity. Entrusted with the task of representing their communities, ethnic organisations could seek to influence policy-makers through requests, petitions and education, through supporting a candidate seeking office, or through lobbying efforts (Freedman 2000: 7). In his seminal study of ethnic politics in Australia, James Jupp identifies the key components of the ethnic lobby, many of which are organisational players including formalised peak bodies, consultative committees, ethnic-specific welfare groups, ethnic media, localised or factional ethnic community groups, as well as ethnic ancillaries or committees of mainstream political parties (Jupp 1993: 207-9). The strong presence of various types of organisations in constituting the ethnic lobby is understandable, for political advocacy by nature requires collaborative efforts, and the rewards go back to the collective entities. Individual migrants, except for a few highly visible public figures, often lack the legitimacy to act on behalf of the group, nor do they have the resource to engage in long-term advocacy activities.

Political advocacy of the Chinese community in Australia could date back to the Gold Rush era, during which community leaders petitioned to the colonial authorities against the passing of discriminatory legislations against the Chinese migrants but often to no

avail. Without any institutional support, political advocacy of the past almost completely relied on community mobilisation, often in direct confrontation to the government. Arthur Gar Lock Chang, one of the earliest members of the CYL, provided a vivid account of the old-era confrontational movement he experienced as a young man:

In 1948, about two years after the war ended, Arthur Calwell, Federal Minister for Immigration insisted on deporting those Asians who had sought refuge in Australia from the Japanese invasion, many of whom settled in Australia for many years with families. This was blatant racism, for at the same time, Calwell was planning to initiate mass-migration programs from Europe. To fight against this unfair treatment, we took the Department to court based on the fact that the dictation test for immigrants could not be applied after a person had stayed five years in Australia and the deportation order would then be invalid. We won the case, but Calwell countered by introducing and passing the “War Time Refugee Removal Act” in parliament, and thirty-three Chinese deportees were jailed at Long Bay pending deportation in the coming weekend. “Feared like Hitler” was how Uncle William Liu, father of the Chinese community, described Calwell in Chinese newspaper headlines. To stop the deportation, our barrister W. J. Lee evoked the Habeas Corpus Act and applied for the case to be heard on Saturday morning in the lounge room of Justice William’s house, which led to further hearings requiring their physical presence. This stopped Calwell on the track. The legal action went on through various levels until it reached the High Court in Melbourne. Although the High Court finally decided in 1953 that the Immigration Department had the constitutional right to act, the deportation orders were rescinded and all the people concerned were eventually given permanent residency by the incoming Liberal Government.

Ethnic protests mobilised by major community organisations could still be observed in recent years, however, with the availability of formal and informal channels to handle disputes, most of the issues are resolved peacefully without protracted court actions. One famous case of Chinese community activism through established channels related to the Ron Casey incident. In 1988, after Ron Casey, broadcaster of Radio 2KY, expressed quite offensive opinions on air regarding the Asian migrants, ACCA and CASS resolutely orchestrated a campaign to encourage people in the Chinese community to lodge complaints to the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal (ABT). A model complaint letter was published in the Chinese newspaper as a sample for those Chinese who had difficulty writing in English. The Tribunal received a total of about 1,200 complaint letters, and had to set up an inquiry committee to examine the case, which resulted in the suspension of Ron Casey from broadcasting for three months (CASS 2012a: 4). Similarly, contended issues like the proposed ban of the food additive MSG in Chinese restaurants and the compulsory removal of Chinese characters from

business signs in Ashfield were all resolved to the advantage of the Chinese community through consultative sessions in which relevant agencies and Chinese organisational representatives participated.

Realising the policy salience of ethnic organisations, the Australian government set out to incorporate key organisational players as stakeholders in policy planning and implementation since 1979, the initial participants being FECCA at the national level and the affiliated ECCs at the state level. While FECCA received most of its funding from the Commonwealth Government through the Department of Immigration, the State ECCs were subsidised either by the Department of Immigration through its grant-in-aid programs or by state governments through their ethnic affairs commissions or equivalents. Different from these multi-ethnic peak bodies, ethnic-specific organisations usually do not receive state sponsorships for their advocacy activities, but they are routinely invited into consultative processes as important partners that “direct political and cultural impulses from the minority groups to decision makers and public government” (Predelli 2008: 939). The consultative role of ethnic organisations was significantly strengthened with the formalisation of the multicultural governance structure at federal and state levels. The often cited model of Ethnic Affairs Policy Statement (EAPS) in NSW, for example, was conceived as early as 1983 as an accountability system to reform state public sector policies and change the bureaucracy towards provision of services to better meet the needs of a diverse population. Under the EAPS system, all the government agencies were required to prepare a detailed plan that included a review of all policies, programs and units, and development of short and longer term goals and strategies to address the diverse needs of the community. To date, up to twenty key government agencies report on EAPS to the Community Relations Commission and around 200 non-key agencies report on EAPS in their annual report (Whelan 2009: 6). Other states also introduced similar principles to guide public agencies to develop specific measures to alleviate the disadvantages experienced by the CALD communities.

In this context, major Chinese organisations are also invited by the government to form committees, make submissions or engage in public debates on issues concerning the interests of the Chinese community. These practices give rise to specialised advocacy organisations (or peak bodies with significant advocacy function), which get a high profile in the community by responding to public issues, monitoring the media coverage

of Chinese-related stories and liaising with government departments and political parties. Serving as the gateway connecting ethnic communities with mainstream society, advocacy organisations usually comprise a small circle of well-known public figures, who are proficient in English, with relatively high social status and different levels of political access. While the small population size of Canberra decides that its peak organisation CMCF is a shared platform for all ethnic communities, Chinese-specific advocacy organisations in Sydney see boisterous development with the support of a large Chinese constituency, the most famous one being the Chinese Australian Forum (CAF).

Case Four: CAF

The CAF was founded in 1985 by Benjamin Chow and several of his friends, who were concerned about the racist upsurge in the mid-1980s. Among all the founding members, Benjamin Chow is the only member who has served the CAF continuously as a committee member since its formation. Known as a personal friend of John Howard and one of the chief organisers of the Chinatown Branch of the NSW Liberal Party, Benjamin Chow is one of the very few Chinese community leaders whose success is purely local-bred. As a dedicated Chinese representative of the NSW Liberal Party, Benjamin is adept in rules of local politics and has a profound understanding of the major problems handicapping the political participation of the local Chinese. As he puts it emphatically,

In my opinion, the lack of political awareness of the Chinese Australians is probably the most entrenched issue, and we probably need a few generations to solve this problem. The CAF was established primarily for this purpose. You remember the Blainey debate of Asian immigration. Things went far deeper than an innocent academic debate in the ivory tower. At the time, rightist groups like League of Right and National Front were painting “Asians Out” everywhere, especially in those areas with a higher proportion of Asians, but there were very few Chinese responses in major English newspapers, which was the real problem. In view of this, Peter Chan, I myself and several other friends started a group called Australians for Racial Equality and began making public statements defending the rights of Asian Australians. As a result, our names were on the blacklist of National Front, our houses broken in, car plates torn off, and car tires destroyed. We refrained from officially registering this organisation for fear of exposing our addresses. Later on, we felt the necessity of having a formal organisation which could continuously monitor the political events and provide a forum of debate accessible to the mainstream audience. This was realised in 1985 and therein the start of CAF.

To date, the CAF is one of the most influential Chinese Australian organisations in NSW, whose main activities include liaising with community groups and organisations, responding to public issues, hosting workshops and fora, as well as conducting a media watch to monitor the coverage of community-related issues. In its recent press releases, the CAF expressed its concern about the rumoured China trade boycott by the Municipality of Marrickville, warned against racial bullying and harassment in schools, critically assessed the Gangnam Style and related Asian stereotypes, supported the campaign to save the Chinese market gardens at La Perouse, and condemned the violent train attack on Chinese students. Also in its archive were past submissions to various government departments on a broad range of policy issues, such as the introduction of Citizenship Test for migrants, the use of personal interview as the central selecting procedure for imported doctors, as well as the Year Seven Placement Process for selective schools and its implications for Asian families.

Apart from Benjamin Chow who has already made his name in mainstream political circle, the committee panel of the CAF includes local government councillors, recipients of Order of Australia and high-ranking public servants, thereby diversifying the channels of ethnic lobbying. Its immediate past president, Tony Pang, was appointed the Commissioner to the Community Relations Commission in 2011, the chief government agency responsible for implementing multicultural policy in NSW. The dense network of Chinese Australians with substantial political capital greatly increases the leverage of CAF as the key advocacy group for the Chinese community. Heavy weight government officials and political party leaders frequent the functions of CAF as Guests of Honour, and are comfortable in using it as the platform to discuss Asian-related issues. For example, immediately after the alleged racial attack on Chinese students, the Opposition Leader, John Robertson told the Sydney Morning Herald that “He would meet the Chinese Australian Forum next week to discuss the attack and what could be done to prevent any recurrence” (Sydney Morning Herald 27/04/2012).

The case of CAF provides an illuminating example of how mainstream social status (acquired “Whiteness”) benefits the promotion of an ethnic cause in the multicultural policy context. The elitist composition of the committee not only lends weight to the voice of CAF, but also points to the availability of the right mindset, skills and resources required to accomplish the role of representation. The CAF committee

members demonstrate remarkable prowess in networking with various stakeholders and hosting collaborative projects across party and factional lines. For example, after the local government election in 2012, CAF invited the six newly elected councillors of Chinese background to a dinner forum to meet with CAF members and friends and participate in Q&A sessions. Coming from three different parties and representing five different constituencies, the councillors reached a consensus on the importance of political education for the Chinese community and enthusiastically shared their thinking on infusing a Chinese perspective in policy design and implementation. Another key event was the “Chinese Australian in Politics Colloquium” hosted in conjunction with the UTS Research Centre on China and Cosmopolitan Civil Societies. Chaired by the former Australian Ambassador to China, Professor Stephen Fitzgerald, the Colloquium included distinguished speakers from a variety of backgrounds, such as Clr Justin Li (Ryde), Clr Marc Receretnam (Ashfield), Dr Peter Wong, Clr Lo Jieh-Yung (Monash, Melbourne), Clr Henson Liang (Burwood), Francis Lee (Media) and Professor Wanning Sun (UTS). Cross-sectoral events like these form an important part of the program agenda of the CAF and work effectively to help different parties arrive at reason-based consensus through a deliberative process.

Generally speaking, the operating mode of other advocacy organisations is similar to that of CAF, albeit at a smaller scale. Just like CAF, their committees consist of elite members of the community, whose mainstream capital enables them to legitimately act as the spokespersons of their community. As a rule, it is very difficult for advocacy organisations to receive government funding. Most of them solely rely on private sponsorships, donations and membership fees. While this could lead to considerable difficulties for these groups at the initial stage, it also removes self-censorship associated with financial dependency on the government, a malaise suffered by government-sponsored peak bodies like FECCA (Zappla 2001: 150). Luckily, the proper functioning of advocacy organisations seems to rely more on brain power than money. As Anthony Pun, President of the Chinese Community Council of Australia (CCCA) explained:

Advocacy organisations do not need a lot of money. A few thousand bucks will do. But we definitely need talented people, who could produce polished ideas and powerful arguments, the kind of people who have public impact. Therefore, we are not interested in mass membership. Instead, we look for the right people and send out invitations for them to join. A dozen qualified people on board are enough to turn the tables.

6.4.3. Resource Base for Political Participation

As analysed above, Chinese community organisations are pivotal in encouraging political participation at the grassroots level and interacting with the state policy of ethnic governance through public consultation and advocacy. Realising the significant linkage role played by these ethnic organisations, Jupp, York and McBorrie observed as early as 1989 that “ethnic organisation of a strong community is probably the best avenue for bringing NESB immigrants into the political system as participants” (1989: 50). Unsurprisingly, most of the Chinese-Australian politicians, especially those of first generation, have served executive roles in Chinese community organisations before launching a formal political career. The experiences with these organisations equip them with the knowledge of community needs, advocacy skills, as well as personal networks both within the community and in the government sector. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the 1.5 generation community leaders have all been involved in community services at varying stages of their life. The four parliamentarians in NSW, Helen Sham-Ho, Peter Wong, Henry Tsang and Ernest Wong, all act as core nodes in the dense network of community leadership and are assuming executive or/and honorary roles in a huge number of organisations established along kinship, native-place, professional and political lines. Their election into the parliament often bestows on them a symbolic significance which “extends beyond the geographical confines of their immediate electorates” (Anthony 2006: 47). Once a Chinese politician gets elected, it is the usual practice for Chinese organisations to initiate contact with them, seek help and invite them to become honorary presidents or advisors. For instance, Helen Sham-Ho, the first Chinese-born parliamentarian in Australia, has received honorary titles from more than two hundred associations. In her words:

When I was serving in the parliament, I received hundreds of inquiries on monthly basis. These were from Chinese people all over Australia, all kinds of voluntary associations, and those back in China. Their inquiries were of all types: immigration, commercial disputes, aged care, racial discrimination, legal problem, family violence and mediation. Clearly, these issues go beyond my assigned portfolio, but because of my Chinese background, they would trust me with their problems, and I had to step in or at least talk to the right people on their behalf. Because I regularly talked to my colleagues about problems of the Chinese constituency, they gave me the nickname “Ms Chinese Minister”.

This is somehow related to one of the three modes of ethnic politics discussed by Tabar and others (2003), in which ethnic leaders convert some of the acquired political capital back into ethnic capital. No doubt, the possession of formal political capital acts as a magnet to attract support and resources from the ethnic community, but the usual scenario is that major parties will deliberately choose those candidates who are already deeply enmeshed in the community network and have the ability to tap into existing community resources for the party, either by canvassing votes or political fund-raising.

As James Jupp rightly argues, early incorporation of the ethnic communities into the political process is premised on the realisation that “such a large component of the electorate cannot be ignored or alienated” (Jupp 1993: 218). Considering the presence of language barriers and cultural incommensurability, one of the most effective means for mainstream players to engage and build connections with ethnic communities is to use the organisational platform. Zappalà provides a concise account of the four phases of political participation of ethnic minorities in Australian politics: as non-participants, as extra-party organisations, as internal party structures and finally as active-agents and participants (Zappalà 1999: 66). It is manifest that in all these phases, ethnic organisations have consistently served as the resource base for aspiring ethnic leaders to get involved in the political process. Mainstream political players often find it easier to approach organisations headed by linguistically and culturally competent community leaders than talking directly to the wider electorate, and this confers on those organisational leaders considerable bargaining power, which is eventually translated into formal political status. At the initial stage, frequent appearances were made by representatives from major parties at social functions of Chinese associations, which would help them disseminate pamphlets in Chinese language and clarify their positions on issues of concern. As contact became regular and trust was built up, community leaders gradually assumed the role of ethnic intermediaries and were encouraged to establish “extra-party adherent organisations” or special ethnic branches with an explicit political message (Zappalà 1999: 67). In NSW, the Liberal Party was particularly active in creating these semi-formal organs catering to the Asian voters. As early as 1995, the Liberal Party Chinatown Special Branch was established under the leadership of Robert Wu, Chris Yam and Benjamin Chow, which consisted of community leaders from major Asian communities. Deriving its name from the geographical location of Haymarket, it aimed at uniting politically-minded elites of Asian background and

providing resources and guidance for their political participation. As Helen Sham-Ho proudly announced in NSW Parliament:

The Chinatown special branch is the first political forum that has a special interest in attracting members of the Chinese community. It is my hope that many Chinese will be drawn to this organisation as the Liberal Party's ideals of stressing the importance of family values and free enterprise are also the ideals of the Chinese community. (NSW Legislative Council 08/06/1995: 945)

With the first-generation Chinese-Australian politicians approaching retirement and a new generation of native-born youth coming to age, the Chinatown branch gradually became defunct and was replaced in 2010 by the Liberal Party Chinese Council led by Hudson Chen and Benjamin Chow, both of whom were dedicated Liberal Party members and core MP intermediaries. While Benjamin Chow has worked very closely with successive NSW Liberal Leaders since Nick Greiner and sits on the Fund Raising Committee of NSW Liberal Headquarters, Hudson Chen serves as the current Chairperson of the Australian Chinese Charity Foundation and is reputed to be the "Gateway to the Mainstream" for the political access he enjoys with many Liberal Ministers. Hudson Chen briefly introduced to me the purpose of the Chinese Council:

The Chinatown Branch of the 1990s did not truly fulfil the goals we set. Many people approached us, but some were opportunists, and others were not really familiar with party politics. Nowadays, we focus on enlisting young people of Chinese ancestry, who are exposed to party disciplines and rules of the game from the very start, but in the meantime can also connect with the Chinese community. And then we will put these candidates to the community through major associations. To date, we launched ten local candidates, and four of them were already elected.

Although the ALP did not have a formal Chinese branch, it also cultivated its team of "Chinese intermediaries" with substantive ethnic capital to further the party cause, the NSW list alone including key community leaders like Hatton Kwok, Henry Tsang, Robert Ho and lately Ernest Wong. As Zappalà rightly points out, ethnic intermediaries play a tentacle role between mainstream politicians and ethnic communities. On the one hand, they act as walking advertisements for the MPs in the electorate and as a result increase the accessibility of the MP to his or her ethnic constituents. On the other hand, they play the role of the messenger, relaying the party position to the community and conversely informing the minister of the events taking place in the community and their political significance (Zappalà 1998: 392). Understandably, a strong organisational

background on the part of ethnic intermediaries could greatly help with the fulfilment of these roles. If we examine the profile of the inaugural members of the Chinese Ministerial Consultative Committee (CMCC) created under the Labor Government in early 2012, it comes as no surprise that all ten members are established community leaders with strong organisational support.

Table 24: Organisational Profiles of the Inaugural Members of the Chinese Ministerial Consultative Committee¹⁸

Mr Eng Joo Ang (NSW)	President of the Australian Hokkien Huay Kuan Association; Vice-President of the Australian Council of Chinese Organisations; Vice-President of the Australian Council for the Peaceful Reunification of China; and Chinese Medicine Industry Council.
Dr Stanley C. Chiang (VIC)	President of the Chinese Community Council of Australia (VIC); Member of the Australia-Chinese United Association of Business; Member of the North-Eastern Melbourne Chinese Association; and Adviser of the Federation of Chinese Association.
Mr Lewis Lee OAM (QLD)	Advisor to the World Arts & Multi-Culture; Member and past President of the Lions Club of Brisbane Chinese; Asian and Chinese Community Liaison for the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital Research Foundation; and Citizens Auxiliary Member of Sunnybank & District RSL Sub Branch.
Ms Marion Lau (VIC)	Deputy Chair of the Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria; Member of the Chinese Community Society of Victoria; Member and past President of the Elderly Chinese Welfare Society; founding Member and past President of the Chinese Health Foundation of Australia; Member of the Multicultural Business Ministerial Council; Member of the Chinese Professional and Business Association; Director of Dousta Gala Aged Services; and Inductee into the Victorian Honour Roll of Women.
Mr Chun-Ting	Secretary-General of the Federation of Taiwanese Association in Queensland; President of the Taiwan Friendship Association of

¹⁸ The information is available in the media release published on 22/08/2012 in the website of Chris Bowen, Federal Member for McMahon available at: <http://www.chrisbowen.net/media-centre/media-releases.do?newsId=6236>.

Anthony Lin (QLD)	Queensland; Member of the Queensland Federation of Taiwanese Associations; Member of the Ethnic Communities' Council of Queensland; Member of the Queensland Multicultural Council; Chinese Community Citizen Police Consultation Committee; and Secretary of the Lions Club of Brisbane Chinese.
Dr Tiemin Tim Wu (ACT)	President of the Federation of Chinese Community of Canberra; and former member of the Australian Capital Territory Council of Cultural and Community Organisations.
Mr Peter Sinn (NSW)	Member for the Australian Council for the Promotion of the Peaceful Reunification of China; Member of the Australian Hokkien Huay Kuan Association; Member of the Sydney Executive Business Lions Club; Vice-President of the Australian International Association of Trade and Commerce; and President of the Hong Kong Australia Business Association (NSW).
Ms Yvonne Wu (QLD)	Deputy President of the Australian Chinese Chamber of Commerce; Member of the Queensland China Council; Delegate to the Queensland Chinese Forum; and Director of the Yong Foundation.
Mr Michael Yau (QLD)	President of the Hong Kong Association of Queensland; President of the Australia Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce; Queensland Convenor of the National Liaison Council of Chinese Australians; Member of the Lions Club of Brisbane Chinese; Member of the Queensland Chinese Museum; Director of the Ethnic Communities' Council of Queensland; and Director of the Chinese Club of Queensland.
Dr Minshen Zhu (NSW)	Member and former President of the Australian Council of Chinese Organisations; founding member of the New South Wales-East Asia Business Advisory Council (now New South Wales-Asia Business Council); Adviser to the Australian Council for the Promotion of the Peaceful Reunification of China.

The creation of the CMCC as a formal platform for the discussion of issues, ideas and public policy between the government and the leaders of the Chinese Australian community reflects the burgeoning spirit of deliberative politics, in which political

decisions are arrived at through a process of public reasoning and discussion to which each citizen can freely contribute, but is equally willing to listen to and reflect upon opposing views (O'Flynn 2006: 7). In the meantime, it testifies to the strength of large ethnic groups, such as the Chinese, Indians, Koreans and Russians, for which government has set up parallel committees. These committees meet regularly with co-chairs and at least twice a year with ministers. The government also holds an annual forum for the committees to meet with the Prime Minister. The co-option of organisational leaders into the governing framework, while conducive to informed policy-making, is also driven by pragmatic considerations of utilising the latent resources within these communities.¹⁹

Indeed, the immense potential of the Chinese community to contribute in votes and political donation probably provides the single most powerful incentive for mainstream institutions to enlist Chinese community leaders into the governing ranks, either by setting up high-level committees and councils or grooming political candidates of Chinese background. In the recollection of Helen Sham-Ho, the start of her political career was rather coincidental, but the timing was surely an indicator of the maturity of the Asian community:

As part of my legal training, I was arranged to complete my work placement with the then Shadow Attorney General, Hon. Justice John Dowd, who played a mentor role in my life. Before that, I already knew Dowd through my experiences working in the Chinese community. Mind you, at the time, Dowd was one of the few politicians who took a genuine interest in the Chinese community and was considered a "patron saint" by the community in the 1980s. After completing the law degree, I threw a celebratory dinner, during which Dowd asked me whether I would consider going into politics. "What if" was my thought then. Later that year, the Hon. John Hannaford, then a Liberal member in the NSW Legislative Council, contacted me and suggested that I run for pre-selection. It was only six weeks before the pre-selection ballot, and until that point I had not been an active member of the party. But with my double degree in social work and law, rich experience in community work and support of the Chinese community, I won endorsement out of thirty-six candidates, which was rather amazing.

¹⁹ In my interview with Dr Minshen Zhu, one of the inaugural members of the CMCC, he expressed his delight at the creation of CMCC, and was in the process of preparing a long draft paper about the future challenges faced by Australia and his suggestions to the government. Despite his optimism, he had some reservations about how much the CMCC could really achieve. He agreed that the primary motivation of the government to set up CMCC was to liaise with the Chinese community and tap into latent community resources with the help of Chinese organisations and their leaders.

Benjamin Chow, then acting as Sham-Ho's campaign manager, still remembered the excitement of the entire community over the prospect of having the first Chinese-born parliamentarian.

That moment was history-making. People were enthusiastic in making all kinds of contributions. I mainly liaised with the Chinese media, most of which gave full-page coverage of her campaign. Frank Chou, President of Australian Chinese Teo Chew Association, helped us put up posters and called on his clansmen to donate for the cause. Helen held her inaugural election campaign dinner in Chinatown, which was attended by a few hundred people. The election campaign was a huge success, and it was the first time that the Chinese community flex its muscle.

Admittedly, Sham-Ho's election into the parliament was a case of "right time, right place, and right people". With the influx of Asian immigrants into Australia in the 1970s and 80s, the Liberal Party needed a candidate who could attract votes from the expanding Asian communities. To this day, Sham-Ho matter-of-factly stated that she was recruited by the Liberal as the "token Asian" to provide the party with a bilingual link to the Asian community. But once the first move was made, the politicisation of the Chinese community gained a momentum of its own. The successful election of Helen Sham-Ho and euphoria of the Chinese community provided the direct catalyst for the establishment of the Liberal Party Chinatown Branch, which trained the first group of politically minded Chinese party members like Hudson Chen, Benjamin Chow, Dr Peter Wong and many others. It also prompted the ALP to promote its own Chinese candidates, the famous one being Henry Tsang, who was the first Asian to be elected into the City of Sydney Council and later on became the Deputy Lord Mayor. In 1999, when Dr Peter Wong ran for the NSW Legislative Council in the State Election and took the first place on the Unity Party ticket, Labor decided to put Henry Tsang on the ticket as a counter-measure. The strategic intention of splitting the Asian votes was self-evident, for Henry Tsang was put to number eight on the ticket, practically a "death seat". It was only because Labor had a landslide victory that Henry Tsang got elected.

Apart from the obvious intention of capturing votes, political donation also bears heavily on the decision of major parties to support Asian community leaders to run for elections. As Kwok points out, at the material level, the organisational network can be tactically turned into what he calls "contribution network", which resembles a "contagion effect" with "people influencing people, and contributions begetting more contributions" (Kwok 2008: 468-9). While Zappalà inclines to explain this phenomenon

from the notion of “clientelism” characterised by an “instrumental relationship” under which the patron offers protection and other benefits in exchange for support and loyalty, in the case of the Chinese community, the expansion of the contribution network has more to do with the activation of traditional *guanxi* system than the manifestation of a pronounced “patron-client” relationship. Unlike Middle-Eastern groups which bolster their strength by enlisting a huge number of grassroots members, as the term “branchstacking” suggests, the political participation of the Chinese is premised on the high publicity of a few elite power-brokers and the whole-hearted support of the community network, especially of the business community. Often, the business sector is not committed to party ideals or policy positions, but donates money to both parties as a networking strategy. The juxtaposition of the Chinese social codes of reciprocity with Australian political practices leads to the particular prowess of Chinese community leaders to raise money for the party. The political fundraising banquets are intuitively combined with the community routine of annual dinners hosted by various associations. These symbolic gestures, when perceived in Chinese cultural context, create a moral responsibility for Chinese business leaders to participate and contribute in accordance with their status and proper etiquette.

Many of my interviewees confided to me that the candidacy for party preselection usually hinged on the pre-set target of political fundraising. Robert Ho was said to have raised \$400,000 for Labor before he was nominated to run for the position of Sydney Mayor. This was largely achieved through his pivotal role in the Chinatown Chamber of Commerce and Sze-Yap Society. One convenience about these fundraising activities lies in the absence of power by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) to properly monitor disclosure of these events, making the ticket sales to fundraising banquets less transparent than more direct forms of political donations. Nowadays, there seems to be an even closer linkage between preselection and fundraising targets. As Anthony Pun and Daphne Low, leading figures of CCCA wryly put it:

Major political parties treat the Chinese community as cash cows and milk them with the assistance of their party faithful. Some of them behave like “Uncle Tom”, whilst others tend to play exclusion games by disallowing participation of certain community leaders who may be a threat to their political career. It would appear that candidates are preselected on the basis of their fund raising capabilities and not talent.

Notwithstanding the instrumental mentality of Australian parties when dealing with ethnic minorities, Chinese organisations and their leaders soon learned to turn their numerical and financial strength into bargaining power and in times of crisis, stood up to pursue independent political actions. The story of the Unity Party with its spiritual leader Dr Peter Wong is one good example to demonstrate the political agency of minority groups under very stringent circumstances.

Case Five: The Unity Party

The Unity Party is a small multicultural party in Australia formed in 1997 with the aim of opposing the rise of the controversial anti-immigration politician Pauline Hanson. Its founder Dr Peter Wong used to be an active member of the Liberal Party, serving as secretary of the party's Chinatown branch and acting as an advisor to Philip Ruddock. Deeply troubled by the rise of the populist politician Pauline Hanson and One Nation and disaffected by the inaction of the Liberal Party, Peter Wong resolutely resigned from the party and went on to establish a separate political party—the Unity Party. Describing himself as a rebellious thinker, Dr Peter Wong highlighted the spirit of independence as his guiding principle throughout his community and political career:

I am not the type of person to be bound by conventions. As you might be aware, I am the co-founder of the Chinese Catholic Community, a formally registered group with more than 200 followers. We have an independent committee and our own fundraising sources. We also conduct our own catechisms, prayer groups and religious preaching, and we even pay the priests and sisters ourselves. It is rather revolutionary, for it is not dictated by a priest. The church was wary in the beginning, but eventually gave us consent and support. In a way, the Unity Party is the Chinese Catholic Community in politics. Yes, Pauline Hanson and One Nation are important triggers, but the deep reasons lie in the political tokenism everyone knows about. Ethnic candidates are often selected for the major parties because of their ethnic background, but once selected they are required to shut up. During question time in Parliament, you are not asking your own questions. You are being handed a piece of paper, maybe one or two hours beforehand. You don't even know what the questions are all about, and you are expected to ask the question and sit down. Ultimately, the Unity Party is created to rectify this situation. We might be small and under-resourced, but we give our candidates a genuine feeling of engagement with the political process. It is the first step to change the awkward scenario of "always seen, but never heard" for politicians of minority background.

Purporting to give voice to marginalised ethnic communities and safeguard multiculturalism against racist encroachment, the Unity Party soon became the focal

point of Asian-Australian political activities. Although many Anglo-Australians were invited to assume leadership roles to enhance Unity's appeal to the mainstream, the great majority of its candidates and active members were from Asian communities such as the Chinese, Vietnamese and Indonesian. Peter Wong admitted to the large proportion of Asian members, but still inclined to describe Unity as a policy-based rather than race-based party:

To be precise, Unity is a multicultural party, which has a membership reflecting the diverse origins of people in this country. We are endeavouring to include the participation of Anglo-Saxon members. Robert Donnelly, Alan Jacobs, Bill Cope, Paul Mortimer and many other high-profile members are all very Anglo-looking. Our policies are broad-based, covering social welfare, education, health, immigration, community and many other aspects...Unity has a very high percentage of ethnic members not because we prefer it that way, but because ethnic communities have a stronger sense of being ignored, marginalised and not involved in politics, which makes them more eager to participate.

For the period from 1997 to 2007, the Unity Party provided the major platform of political participation to aspiring political minds from the Asian communities and brought to the surface the pent-up energies of these groups. Just a few weeks after its founding, membership of the Unity Party boosted to some two thousand, and the figure doubled in early 2000. In cooperation with community leaders all over Australia, it soon established branches in NSW, Victoria, Western Australia and Queensland, and ran candidates in almost every House of Representatives seat at the 1998 election. Although the primary motive of picking up a Senate seat in NSW with Jason Li was not achieved, they did manage to outpoll the Australian Democrats and the Australian Greens in some House of Representative seats. Lacking money and manpower, the entire electoral campaign of Unity relied on the mobilising efforts of key community organisations. The Chinese and Vietnamese organisations joined force to host fundraising events for the election, and three hundred volunteers were organised to man the booths. As the budget was very small, only at about 100,000 dollars a year, it was unpractical to run high-cost campaigns like the major parties.²⁰ As an alternative, Unity mainly used freebies through ABC, SBS, community radios and newspapers, as well as words of mouth traversing the entire community network.

²⁰ Dr Peter Wong jokingly said that he was repelled that one single ad for a tiny strip of Sydney Morning Herald page 8 cost about \$8,000.

Importantly, the case of the Unity Party provides a prism to observe the transition of political style of Asian community leaders from passive cooption with major parties to active exertion of political agency founded on the strength of organisational network. Most key members of the Unity Party were experienced political players either through participation of major parties or consultative experiences with the government on behalf of community organisations. Dr Peter Wong, long-term active member of the Liberal Party and secretary of the Liberal Party Chinatown Branch, is adept at negotiating deals like vote-swapping with minor parties or exchange of preferences with major parties like the ALP. These skills and the personal network he cultivated while working for the Liberal Party contributed to the initial impact of the Unity Party and led to his election into the Legislative Council in 1999 with just one per cent of votes. Despite sharp criticism over the manipulation of electoral procedures, such maneuvers are also common dealings of the major parties and are part and parcel of the political knowledge required for surviving the savagery of political struggles.

The Unity Party, though petering off after the disintegration of One Nation and suffering from several bouts of internal strife, has made a real contribution in educating the community of the importance of direct political representation and fostering a pool of young talent through mentoring programs. In collaboration with various Chinese organisations such as ACCA, ACTCA, Australian Fuqing Association and Australian Chinese Descendants Mutual Association (ACDMA), Unity Party leaders held regular workshops at their venues, disseminating political knowledge to the minority-background young people and providing training sessions for skills like public speaking, networking and political advocacy. Prior to the NSW State Election in March 2007, a grand banquet was held to raise money for the forty-eight candidates of the Unity Party. On that occasion, Dr Peter Wong proudly announced that over the past decade, Unity has provided political training to more than 450 young people from Asian communities (OCAO of the State Council 20/03/2007). After failing in that election, the party changed its priority to encouraging grassroots participation in politics and committed its resources to local government council elections. According to Peter Wong, the long-term strategy would be to have Unity representatives in most local government councils.

In practice, local government councils rely on funding from the state government and have very little power at hand. But they could be important in bringing people together, clearing up misunderstandings and promoting everyday, cross-cultural communication. Without this, multiculturalism we

are talking about becomes a mere slogan. Joining in local councils could become the channel for the young Chinese to get the first taste of politics. Starting from there, with the experience and community support, they could aim for higher positions. The Unity Party might not be the ultimate political choice, but it could definitely serve as the launching pad for future stars.

In retrospect, the long-term goal of mobilising from below was realistically set and achieved remarkable results. As early as 2001, the Unity Party already made four mayors and deputy mayors, as well as eight councillors, six of whom were of Chinese descent (Wong and Tian 2003: 24). Prominent Unity members like Le Lam and Ernest Wong all fared well in their respective political careers. Le Lam was elected the Mayor of Auburn City Council in 1999 for three consecutive terms and became the first female mayor of Asian background in Australia. Nowadays, she is still serving the Auburn City Council as an independent. Ernest Wong, in contrast, left the Unity Party to join the ALP in 2007. Since then, he has served on Burwood City Council as Deputy Mayor and Mayor by Labor ticket, and was appointed to fill a casual vacancy in NSW Legislative Council following the suspension of Eric Roozendaal in May 2013.

Although the Unity Party ceased to be politically important these days, it has made direct political representation, at least at the local government level, an achievable aspiration for the Chinese community. Nowadays, it has become a norm for Chinese candidates to contend for the local council seats in those areas with high concentration of Asian migrants, such as Fairfield, Auburn, Hurstville, Burwood, Cabramatta, Ashfield and many others. While Jupp's observation that "Australians of non-English-speaking background are marginal to the exercise of political power and influence in Australia" is still valid today, the Chinese community has become highly conscious of the multiple ways of expanding its political influence, as reflected by the frequency of high-profile fora and conferences on Chinese political participation, which are hosted by Chinese organisations and Chinese language media. For example, immediately after the resignation of Henry Tsang, the Australian New Express Daily created a special issue on this topic, for which four Chinese Australian politicians (Peter Wong, Le Lam, Ernest Wong, and Henson Liang) were invited to offer their views on the likely role of the Chinese in the Australian political system. In the discussion, these politicians identified a series of problems faced by the community, including lack of interest and motivation, internal strife, inadequate policy platform and lack of recognition from the mainstream society (XKB 23/11/2009). Regardless of their different political affiliations, all of them agreed on the centrality of organisational engagement as a

common route toward political representation, but were equally conscious of its limitations. Henson Liang's observation was very typical of the four:

In these years, we have experienced the bottleneck in political participation. Most of the current Chinese-Australian politicians are from the ALP or the Unity Party. The majority of them are professionals in social work or community work, and are mostly selected as political candidates due to their organisational background. While this could be a good starting point, it could lead to potential problems like personal worship and disinterest in engaging with mainstream institutions...There also seems to be an under-representation of the new migrants, business community and professional groups...Therefore, it is recommendable for Chinese community organisations to diversify their activities, cooperate with mainstream institutions and enable the mainstream society to hear the voice of the Chinese community.

Ernest Wong's view echoed that of Liang's, but rather than emphasising the limitation of organisational engagement, he was more interested in utilising the strength of community network to advance the political cause. In a special interview with *Oriental Beijing Youth Weekly*, he proposed a new mode of participation based on established organisational network:

In the past, when community leaders participated in politics, all the power gravitated to those few individuals. They could do anything they want. I feel this is somehow wrong. The history of Chinese settlement in Australia is considerably longer than any other ethnic minorities, but our political influence is quite limited, why? Because we didn't give enough opportunities to the younger generation...The Lebanese, Greeks and Jews all have power brokers, but we Chinese don't. I knew one Lebanese MP who mentored a group of young Labors, assigning them with tasks of different policy areas and encouraging them to run for elections at the State and local levels. Although many young people eventually reached higher positions than he did, he was the most influential figure in the circle. In the Chinese community, there are three types of associations, the established ones, including those lasting more than one hundred years; the Western Sydney associations mainly consisting of Vietnamese and Chinese from Southeast Asia; and the new associations established by mainlanders coming to Australia in the past ten to fifteen years. It is quite feasible for Chinese political leaders to provide a mentoring role through the platform of these organisations. (*Oriental Beijing Youth Weekly* 2011: 25)

Despite the different perspectives of Liang and Wong, it is quite evident that community organisations will continue to be the focal point of Chinese political activism for the foreseeable future, though their specific roles in the political system might change with time. At the grassroots level, the organisational network provides the

necessary political education to the mass and channels their votes in a direction beneficial for the whole community. At the official level, it serves as a uniform lobby group and is incorporated into the governmental consultative structure to communicate the concerns of the Chinese constituency. When it comes to the stage of direct political representation, Chinese organisations serve as the resource base for aspiring political candidates to garner support and gain practical experience. At least for the present stage, organisational background is highly valued by major parties interested in selecting their own candidates.

In this chapter, I have analysed the different forms of socio-political activism of Chinese organisations in the domestic context. Acting as the intermediary between the state and the Chinese community, Chinese organisations fulfil a range of significant roles, including promoting ethnically-based social participation, preserving the Chinese culture, providing ethnic-specific services and enhancing political advocacy and representation. Supported by Australian multiculturalism, their expertise is recognised as a form of ethnic capital, which could be usefully invested in the governance of ethnic minorities in Australia. In this context, Chinese community leaders are actively cooperating with policy-makers, launching new programs or reinterpreting old ones which are congruent with the policy emphasis of the government. While remarkable progress is made in multiple areas, Chinese organisational activism continues to be seriously constrained by the volatility of the policy regime, which defines the default value and direction of change for the whole sphere of ethnic affairs. In the past decade, we observed the dismantling of the multicultural policy planks, which led to the reinforcement of core values such as parliamentary democracy, rule of law and social cohesion, defunding of ethnic service providers and serious depreciation of ethnic capital in various domains. The somehow inferior status of “Chineseness” in relation to “Whiteness” and the latent sense of insecurity arising from the entrenched power hierarchy in Australia compel Chinese community leaders to conceive alternative means to invest their ethnic capital. China, in this context, emerges as the ideal destination for their enterprising activities in the transnational sphere.

Chapter Seven: The Stage of Transnationalism

As elaborated in the previous chapter, the relaxed policy environment in Australia has led to a conditional valorisation of the ethnic capital and significantly widened the scope of community activism for Chinese organisations within Australia. Initiating modernising reform, local-oriented organisations, especially the core service ones, converged with the operational mode of mainstream civic organisations and sought to interpret their activities under the paradigm of multiculturalism to secure the greatest public support. The previous chapter discussed the main areas of their engagement, including social integration, cultural maintenance, service delivery and political participation, which saw robust developments during the 1980s and allowed for the consolidation of today's core organisations. These progresses correspond with the domestic side of the model of capital conversion, under which the organisations strive for mainstream credentials through reforms to prove the worthiness of their "Chineseness".

However, as Hage argues, the discourse of tolerance and the need for self-affirmation on the part of ethnic minorities are already good indications of the underlying power hierarchy of identities in the Western society (Hage 2000: 79). No matter how much room is given for the celebration of diversity under multiculturalism, the ethnic side of identity is perpetually construed and experienced as something inferior in relation to the mainstream identity, and this, unsurprisingly, leads to a very disadvantaged position of resource allocation for the ethnic sector. As discussed in Chapter Six, periodic political setbacks, funding constraints and the inherently vulnerable status of the "ethnics" are all real factors which could hurt the viability of many organisations without strong financial base. The three-decade struggle for political representation by Chinese-Australians has showed some achievements, especially at the local government level, but if demographics are considered, under-representation at the higher level of political institutions is still an entrenched issue without short-term solutions. Given the recent turn toward "post-multicultural" politics, it is highly possible that special policy considerations for minority groups will be petering out. In this context, it comes as no surprise that the promising beckoning of the powerful Chinese state helps to reorient the flow of ethnic Chinese capital back to China, which results in an explosive growth of home-bound organisations in Australia as well as other destination countries. This chapter aims to explore the contemporary transnational activities of Chinese

organisations based in Australia and analyse their policy relevance for both China and Australia. It argues that while these transnational activities could be seen as deliberative attempts to cater to the policy imperatives of the Chinese state, they are also in the interest of Australia, which looks to enhance its political standing in the Greater Asian region. In this sense, it supports the observation that transnational endeavours are not inherently contradictory with local incorporation, but can be perceived as a viable alternative of social mobility (Itzigsohn and Saucedo 2002: 770). Underlying the triadic interactions of the Chinese transmigrants is the psychological state of simultaneity, which allows them to constantly shift between national contexts and gain access to the greatest amount of resources through the creation of the transnational field. The characteristics and operational mode of the transnational Chinese associations are well-suited for the task of cross-border mobilisation of resources. With the strengthening of Australia-China ties, they are increasingly becoming useful vehicles to facilitate the formal and informal exchanges between the two countries.

7.1. Overview of Overseas-Oriented Organisations

Indeed, China's growing influence in the international arena and its welcoming gestures toward the Chinese overseas these years probably have done more than anything else in lifting the symbolic status of ethnic Chinese capital and attracting its flow back to the homeland. In the 1990s, hundreds of overseas-oriented organisations were founded in Australia, most of which were established with the explicit aim of reviving links with China and promoting exchanges between homeland and resident countries. A survey in 2006 by OCAO of Guangdong province found about three hundred Chinese organisations in Sydney. However, according to my interviewees, the actual figure could hit more than five hundred if the unregistered ones are included. As one anonymous interviewee confided:

Nobody could be quite sure about how many organisations are out there. The service organisations are pretty easy to pin down, but when it comes to new native-place associations and all kinds of professional associations, they are in hundreds. Many of them just quietly come and go, only known to the immediate circle of friends. (S6)

As introduced in Methodology Chapter, in order to focus on those organisations with some degree of community impact, I opted to use the list provided by the Sydney peak body AUSCOCO as the primary source cross-referencing with other materials. This

eventually turned into an inventory of 120 organisations, which were tabulated by year of founding and type.

Table 25: Inventory of Organisations by Year of Founding and Type

	Service	Native-Place ²¹	Mutual Exchange ²²	Political	Miscellaneous	Total
Pre-1980	Nil	3	1	Nil	2	6
1980-1990	6	7	Nil	1	Nil	14
1991-2000	4	21	12	2	Nil	39
Post-2000	Nil	18	39	4	Nil	61
Total	10	49	52	7	2	120

Source: Table compiled from the data collected in my fieldwork.

As the table indicates, native-place, professional and mutual exchange organisations accounted for more than eighty per cent of the total, the great majority of which were established in the 1990s or early twenty-first century. Comprising new migrants with strong familial and social connections with China, they are the most dynamic players in the transnational field. Also included in the category of overseas-oriented organisations are political organisations like Councils for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China (CPPRC), which are established all over the world. In the cohort of native-place associations, a distinction could be made about the traditional groups which are associated with historical emigration zones in Guangdong and Fujian, and those new locality organisations set up by mainlanders arriving in Australia since the late 1980s. Traditional organisations in the pre-1990 brackets normally have their own premises and could still act as a unifying force for their clansmen, though they do face the problem of an ageing membership. The hundred-year old Yiu Ming Hung Fook Tong,

²¹ It refers to organisations created based on common descent and geographical origins. It comprises traditional clan and native-place associations and new locality associations established since the late 1980s.

²² It refers to organisations with an explicit aim of promoting mutual exchanges between Australia and China in a wide range of domains. By this definition, it comprises most cultural, social, economic and professional associations with an overseas focus. However, native-place associations and transnational political organisations are put under separate categories.

for instance, has under its name a magnificent temple, several lodges to accommodate the elderly, an affiliated company Tiy Loy & Co, as well as more than nine thousand members from the two counties of Gaoyao and Gaoming in Guangdong province. Similarly, the Australian Chinese Teo Chew Association (ACTCA), with more than 1,000 active members, is supported by its large diaporic community from Chaozhou, a historically renowned emigration area for transnational entrepreneurs. According to one of its committee members,

The Australian Chinese Teo Chew Association is the youngest member in the global Teo Chew organisational network. Even so, when it was conceived in 1987, it had a demographical base of about 20,000 to 30,000 persons in Sydney, which at the time, accounted for one fourth of the Chinese population in Sydney. With generous donations of business leaders and enthusiastic support of our clansmen, we built our first *huiguan* in 1990, which was later rebuilt into a two-storey building in Cabramatta in 1998.
(S4)

The same could be said about other ancient clans like Chung Shan, Sze Yap, Doong Goong, Jung Sing, and the Hokkien. The presence of sizable and cohesive membership base enables these associations to do well financially and keep alive the tradition of intra-clan mutual help. Up until today, these organisations are still offering services to members, such as cheap accommodation for the elderly, awards to achieving young people and funeral funding for the deceased. Since the late 1980s, traditional associations have considerably strengthened their connections with hometown governments, but they still managed to self-fund basic services to clan members.

In comparison, the establishment of new locality, professional and mutual exchange associations is associated with the sporadic influx of mainland migrants in the 1990s, and demonstrates a high level of spontaneity and randomness. While most overseas-oriented organisations included in the sample are of medium size with more than one hundred members, there are hundreds of undocumented, small-size associations in the field, whose membership never goes beyond the circle of close associates. Given the highly fluid nature of this cohort, it is neither possible nor constructive to develop a complete inventory of all these mini-associations, many of which are not incorporated at all and could be defunct in a few years. However, while size and membership are important criteria to assess the relative importance of a given association, they do not necessarily constitute the essential qualities for overseas-oriented organisations, which are characterised by different cultural configurations and developmental strategies.

Compared with service organisations, overseas-oriented organisations usually do not receive policy support from the host society. They are easy to set up, funded by members and are less influenced by local regulatory regimes, apart from the basic requirements for registration. As a result, they are under no obligation to reform themselves toward the paradigm of local voluntary associations. Culturally speaking, they are closer to the paradigm of “headman rule”, under which the leadership ranks remain stable by virtue of their status, influence and contribution to the association. Many locality and mutual exchange associations never change their presidents since their formation, and some adopt a rotational system to ensure the stability of core members. The community members are ambiguous about this phenomenon. On the one hand, a greater degree of democracy and transparency is indeed desirable for many interviewees. Gossips are circulating about the unfortunate split of many organisations, which results from the tenacious grip on power by the Chairperson. On the other hand, people are not entirely against such a system and are quick to point out its necessity and rationality. King Fong’s comment is representative in this regard:

Without government funding, how could we support these associations? Personal contribution of course! In Chungshan Society, presidents have to donate \$5,000 dollars when being elected. Apart from that, they need to make additional contributions at all kinds of events. To maintain face, they have to be the first to pay, and in big sums. For the Queen’s visit alone, heavy-weights in the community gave away from \$5,000 to \$20,000. Not everyone wants to or has the resource to be in that position.

The expectation to commit personal resources in exchange for power is very common in overseas-oriented associations. High-profile transnational associations like Australian Chinese Chamber of Commerce (ACCC), Australian Beijing Association (ABA) and ACPPRC all set up a pretty high threshold for membership, which is based on an intangible appraisal of social status. For example, the ACPPRC requires that all members have to be high-ranking members of the society, whether they be doctors, lawyers, senior professionals, industrialists, scientists, artists, religious leaders, community leaders or other accomplished figures within the community. Also the recruitment of new members is by invitation rather than application. For small-scale locality associations, the eligibility rules are not as strict; but at the very least, their members must have the capacity to contribute to the organisation in a substantial

way through the use of their personal resources, such as wealth, status, connections or professional expertise. While there is a material limit to the possible amount of monetary contributions, intangible assets like status and personal connections could be repeatedly invested. Therefore, it is quite usual to see social dignitaries sitting in the executive committees of a variety of locality associations, resulting in the manifest phenomenon of interlocking leadership in the Chinese community (Choi 2006: 130). In my interview with Monica Chen, Secretary of Australian Shanghai Association, she explained to me the working mechanism of locality associations:

Our association is very famous in Sydney Chinese community. It was instrumental in the promotion of Shanghai World Expo 2010 in Australia and the advocacy of China's bidding of the 2008 Olympic Games. Many activities you do not know of included the exhibition of Chinese paintings at NSW Parliament House, organisation of Chinese New Year celebrations and reception of Chinese officials. It might be hard for you to believe that all these things are done by a dozen committee members. In fact, we do not even have any real ordinary members. The membership fee is too high for many, a few hundred a year. Besides monetary input, every committee member has his or her specialities. Some are good at getting funding from the Australian government, and others might have useful connections in China. People like me are experienced in organising big events. When we put everything together, we can accomplish a lot with a small team. If we find something is lacking, we might seek another member equipped with that resource.

Apparently, such a system could be very effective, for it mobilises with great efficiency all the resources required to accomplish a pre-conceived task. Essentially, it could be interpreted as an extension of traditional *guanxi* system, where exchange of interests is taking place among people of similar social standing on a dual principle of equivalency and reciprocity (Smith 1994: 69-70). In practice, community leaders rise to prominence due to different types of capital. Some derive their significance from their amicable relationship with the Chinese government, while others might benefit from their superior linguistic skills and familiarity with Australian laws and regulations. Wealth is also one of the key factors in determining the ranking of community leaders. The collaborative mechanism allows different people to make full use of their respective resources for the successful hosting of key events, and is capable of indefinitely extending the range of useful contacts according to the set agendas (Lever-Tracy, Ip and Tracy 1996: 137).

All considered, the management style of overseas-oriented organisations is well-suited for their agenda of promoting transnational exchanges and liaising with the home country. Acting like power-brokers, the strength of these organisations lies in their ability to network with the governing class home and abroad and influencing policy-making in areas related to diasporic politics. In this sense, the symbolic status and political access of the leaders is the single most important factor in evaluating their impact. To a large degree, we could observe a conflation of key leaders and their organisations in the sense that organisations are more aptly perceived as a performative vehicle to achieve predefined goals than a platform of democratic representation. Dr Anthony Pun, a prominent leader associated with many Chinese organisations, frankly admits to the instrumental considerations in the creation of new associations:

Ultimately, organisations work for the people, not vice versa. Transnational exchange is a multi-dimensional undertaking, and different kinds of organisational vehicles are required for different occasions. If you talk with a local government official, a locality association should serve the purpose. But when it comes to business, something like the Association for the Promotion of Trade is more up to the task. In the same way, we need all types of cultural, professional and educational associations to facilitate different goals. It is a matter of matching the activities with the right organisational form.

Indeed, included in the CV of Dr Pun are quite a number of organisational titles corresponding with different aspects of his identity and preoccupations. At present, he is the Chairperson of Chinese Australian Union, Chinese Australian Celebrations Committee and Australia China Culture Association. He also serves as the Honorary Chairperson of Indonesian Ethnic Chinese Community Association, Australian Mainland Chinese Association and Australia Guangdong Association. Anthony's case is by no means an exceptional one. Simultaneous involvement in a multitude of organisations is a common feature for key Chinese community leaders. Helen Sham-Ho and Frank Chou all reported being the Honorary President for more than one hundred organisations, the majority of which are overseas-oriented organisations. This reaffirms the centrality of leadership in transnational associations and demonstrates how symbolic capital could be repeatedly invested through the creation of new organisational bodies of different socio-cultural configurations.

From the above analysis, it is obvious that overseas-oriented organisations are qualitatively different from service-oriented associations in their agenda, culture, and

management style. Easy to establish and maintain, they serve as flexible vehicles to fulfil the purpose of multi-dimensional transnational exchange. The operation of transnational organisations sheds light on the remarkable agency of the Chinese migrants, which is well reflected in the collaborative mechanism of governance and the versatility of key community leaders. The Chinese cultural premises of power and hierarchy and the actual tasks of liaising with the governing rank point to the overriding importance of leadership for transnational organisations, which in turn decides on the scope and depth of activities undertaken by these organisations.

7.2. Transnational Activities

As analysed in the previous section, there is a huge difference among the hundreds of overseas-oriented associations in Sydney. At one end of the spectrum are century-old native-place associations with thousands of members, while at the other end are mini-size associations headed by a few activists interested in transnational exchange. To elucidate the multiplicity of transnational activities available in the field, I intend to follow the basic topology proposed by Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt and categorise the observed activities according to their types: economic, socio-cultural and political (1999: 221). Although they also suggest a further distinction based on the type of actors, i.e. powerful instructional actors such as multinational corporations and states versus grassroots participants like immigrants and their home country counterparts, as captured by the distinctions of transnationalism “from above” and “from below”, the research subject of immigrant associations surely belongs to the latter category and does not require separate discussions (Guarnizo 1997).

7.2.1. Transnational Economic Activities

Among all types of transnational activities, the economic activities of Chinese transnational entrepreneurs receive the greatest attention from the academic community. Researches in this area range from the ancient diasporic trading network in Southeast Asia (McKeown 1999, 2001; Tagliacozzo and Chang 2011), to investment endeavours in homeland (Cheok, Hing and Lee 2012; Niu 2002; Yow 2013; Zhuang 2001), and to the analysis of multinational corporations headed by ethnic Chinese (Weidenbaum and Hughes 1996; Wong 2008). The history of Chinese-Australians provided rich accounts of how early settlers sent back the gold through the help of local Chinese businesses

affiliated to clan associations and invested it in different parts of the world, a famous case being the Sincere and Co. department store in Hong Kong. King Fong used to tell this story to visitors to Chinatown:

Back in the 1890s, the Australian authorities were concerned about the flow of gold back to China and levied a heavy tax. They set up strict custom checks and confiscated the untaxed gold. To circumvent this regulation, local businesses came up with the idea of mixing the gold with dead men's ashes, which were to be sent back to China. The custom officers would ask what that was. When they knew the fact, they wanted to have nothing to do with it.

Overseas investments were robust at the turn of the nineteenth century, as restrictive legislation in Australia prohibited large-scale investment in the local economy. As Shirley Fitzgerald remarked:

One outcome of this was that businesses in Sydney which appeared small and unprepossessing might, in fact, be the headquarters of much more complex organisations investing primarily elsewhere. (Fitzgerald *Red Tape*, 1997: 48)

The often-cited miracles of Wing Sang and Co. and Wing On and Co. demonstrated how Chinatown-based fruit-companies in the late 1890s prospered from their investment overseas and eventually developed into multinational corporations, which expanded into retailing, banking, hotels, manufacturing and a whole range of new sectors in the 1960s (Yong 1977: 56-8).

After prolonged political instability and internal unrest in mainland China, its opening to foreign investment in the 1970s was a crucial moment in the evolution of Chinese diasporic businesses. Lever-Tracy, Ip and Tracy pointed to the three waves of foreign investment in China since 1979, each stronger than the preceding one (1996: 63-4). Notably, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) mainly came from areas with large ethnic Chinese populations (Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand), which together made up 55 per cent of actually used FDI in 1999 and were largely channelled into regional economics of Guangdong (26 per cent), Fujian (9 per cent), Jiangsu (12 per cent) and the larger municipalities (Thunø 2001: 926). Guangdong and Fujian, the traditional home provinces of the Chinese overseas, have greatly benefited from the economic input from their expatriates. According to the official website of OCAO of Guangdong, there are about 36,800 enterprises invested by

Chinese overseas (including Hong Kong and Macao), accounting for 63 per cent of all foreign enterprises. Direct investment by Chinese overseas amounts to 96 billion dollars, accounting for 64 per cent of all used foreign direct investment. At the national level, direct investment by Chinese overseas also grows from strength to strength. As pointed out in the newly released report on the development of enterprises invested by Chinese overseas:

The investment of Chinese overseas is the dominant factor contributing to the sustainable growth of FDI in China, especially in the context of global financial crisis and European credit crisis... In 2010, FDI in China exceeded 100 billion dollars for the first time and rose to 117.7 billion in 2011. Compared to the level of 60.3 billion in 2005, they represented an increase of 45.4 billion dollars and 57.4 billion dollars respectively, all of which came from the ethnic Chinese sector. In particular, FDI in real estate accounted for one fifth of the total, the majority of which were managed by ethnic Chinese investors. (Long and Zhang 2012: 1.1, 6.1)

Interestingly, with the steady rise of its foreign currency reserve, China adopted a strategic approach of investing overseas, especially in the resource sector (Drysdale and Findlay 2009; Mendelsohn and Fels 2014; Wilson 2011). This made Australia a favoured destination of investment for Chinese State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs). According to Dr Daojiong Zha, Inaugural Lowy Institute-Rio Tinto China Analyst Fellow, Chinese FDI grew from 0.92 per cent in 2008 of total FDI in Australia to 2.63 per cent in 2011. Approved investment flows from China into Australia rose dramatically in 2008, followed by downward fluctuations in subsequent years before it surged to a new peak in 2012. Australia has been the top destination for Chinese SOEs investing overseas since the mid-2000s (Zha 2013: 1). In addition, private Chinese businessmen also showed a strong interest in investing in Australia, with the expectation of good economic returns and permanent residency. The series of visa programs linking business investment with migration, in particular the 188 visa type (jokingly referred to as the “five million dollars for permanent residency program”) reflects the Australian government’s resolve to compete for FDI with other countries. As the auspicious number 188 suggests, the primary target is the new rich from China.

With the economic connections growing strong between the two countries, we have seen a burgeoning of business associations in Australia, especially in Sydney, which is the locus for small ethnic businesses. In my inventory of associations, there are altogether sixteen associations related to commerce and trade. In addition, many new

locality associations could also fulfil functions of economic exchange. According to the responses they gave me, I have generalised three types of activities undertaken by this cohort.

First and foremost, business associations are established as a resource pool for exchange of information and formation of potential business partnerships. By setting up a high threshold of entry, they bring entrepreneurs of similar backgrounds together and give them the opportunity to discuss projects of mutual interest. For example, the Australia-China Youth Chamber of Commerce (ACYCC), one of the earliest business associations established by new migrants from the mainland brought together more than one hundred young entrepreneurs from a wide range of industries such as manufacturing, real estate, import & export, food processing, textile and so on. By December 1993, the trading volume of all its member enterprises had reached more than 57 million dollars in Australia and 42 million dollars in the Asia Pacific region. It is affiliated with various chambers of commerce located in China and provided the conduit between mainland entrepreneurs and their Chinese-Australian counterparts.²³ Acting as the platform for networking, it plays a constructive role in effectuating the establishment of more than sixteen joint ventures in China by its members. In most cases, business associations are usually not directly involved in trading and investment; instead, they are part of the “trust and reputation-based, personalised networks for wider business dealings”, mostly used for “getting advice and information, and finding labour, suppliers and customers” (Lever-Tracy, Ip and Tracy 2002: 283). These roles are central for the operation of ethnic businesses, for the majority of them are involved in some way in international trade in goods or services or have active plans to that end. In the study carried out by Landolt and her associates on transnational business communities, the importance of “the web of social relations” is frequently used by economic entities like “circuit firms, cultural enterprises, ethnic enterprises and return migrant microenterprises”, which are professional importers and distributors catering to the desire of immigrants to consume products from the country of their origin (Landolt, Autler and Baires 1999: 296).

In Sydney, there are a good proportion of Chinese business leaders who are actively engaged in import-export industry. Frank Chou and Shaowei Chen, representing two generations of business leaders from Teochew community, both prospered from

²³ The information of the Australia-China Youth Chamber of Commerce is listed on the official website of the Federation of Commerce and Industry of Jiangsu Province of China at: http://www.jssh.org.cn/jssh_1/jssh_07_005.htm.

importing Asian products into Australia. Migrating to Australia in 1977, Frank Chou founded the Yong Guang Import and Export Pty Ltd in 1979 and developed into a major supplier of more than one thousand kinds of Asian foodstuff to Chinese shops, restaurants and supermarkets in Australia. Following Chou's footsteps, Shaowei Chen established the Weihua International Trading Pty Ltd to engage in wholesale trade, importing all types of products from China and distributing them to retailers in Australia and New Zealand. Owning a 4,000 square-metre warehouse in Lansvale and a team of trucks, the company imported more than 200 freight cars of goods annually and the maximum capability could reach 600 freight cars (XKB 25/05/2009). In 2007, the Australian Chao Shan Association of Commerce (ACSAC) was set up with Chen as its honorary president. This becomes the focus of business activities for the Teochew community in Australia and serves as the Australian representative for the international Teochew conventions.

As Hong Liu wisely remarks, the cross-border operation of Chinese business network has resulted in the globalisation of overseas Chinese organisations, which is culminated in the frequent hosting and growing impact of large-scale international business conventions, often with the sponsorship of the PRC (1998: 595-6). As a most recent case, the Twelfth World Chinese Entrepreneurs Convention was hosted in Chengdu of Sichuan Province in 2013 with the wholehearted support of the OCAO of PRC State Council. It attracted the participation of 3,000 delegates from 105 countries and regions and highlighted the immense opportunities lying ahead for Chinese overseas to invest in China and cooperate with Chinese national enterprises interested in overseas ventures (CNS 26/09/2013). As a mechanism to establish contact and facilitate investment, such conferences often give a major boost to local economy. Upon the conclusion of the conference, it is reported that Sichuan Province attracted an overall investment of 132.3 billion Chinese dollars, which involved 241 projects with Chinese entrepreneurs home and abroad (CNS 26/09/2013).

Co-ethnic economic fora of similar nature are also spearheaded by Chinese-Australian business leaders. In October 1999, the Fifth World Chinese Entrepreneurs Convention was hosted in Melbourne by the Chinese Chamber of Commerce (Victoria), which turned out to be the grandest gathering of Chinese business elites in the Southern Hemisphere. Themed "Challenges of the New Millennium", it was attended by John Howard, then Prime Minister, Bill Honeywood, representative of the Premier of

Victoria, Wellington Lee, the Deputy Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Wenzhong Zhou, the Chinese Ambassador in Australia and more than 600 delegates from over twenty countries. World conventions like these are intimately linked with the expansion of ethnic Chinese business network, which transcends national borders. This view is eloquently expressed by Tay Beng Chuan, President of Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI), which is the main sponsor of the World Chinese Entrepreneurs Convention (WCEC):

We have received strong support for this and past Conventions not only from Chinese entrepreneurs from all over the world but also governments and general business communities of the hosting and participating Chinese chambers of commerce and industry regardless of their political and cultural background. This is because we meet at each Convention solely for the purpose of strengthening business networking ties and enhancing the economic well-being of our respective countries and regions. (SCCCI 1999)

To strengthen existing business connections, decisions were made upon the conclusion of the Convention to set up a Secretariat, which is responsible for coordinating follow-up contacts. A bilingual World Chinese Business Network (WCBN) was established by SCCCI back in December 1995 to develop a global database of enterprises and Chinese business organisations. After the conference in Melbourne, more resources were committed to this project and resulted in the restructuring of the WCBN, which integrated “trade opportunities, business data, news, and emails into a single platform” (SCCCI 1999).

The deepened integration into the global diasporic business network propels the interest of Chinese-Australian businessmen to independently host regional economic fora and establish contact with the Chinese government. In this respect, the Australia China Economics, Trade & Culture Association (ACETCA) is a good case in point. Established in 2012, it catered for the mounting need to enhance trade and cultural communication between China and Australia and received the warm support of business and political heavyweights from the Sydney Chinese community. Having its head-office in Harbour Plaza, it has already established branches in Beijing, Fuzhou, Guangzhou, Hong Kong and Macau, and is looking for breakthroughs with more Chinese cities. Its Executive Director Mr Amen Lee is the founder of Transways Logistics International, one of the top-ranking logistics and freight forwarders in Australia with offices worldwide including New Zealand, the US, Vietnam, Malaysia, Cambodia, Hong Kong,

China, Singapore and Taiwan. Needless to say, the activities of the ACETCA align neatly with the transnational business strategies of its core members and provide opportunities for semi-formal liaisons with multiple government agencies. On 16 October 2012, the ACETCA cooperated with the Asian Media Centre to jointly host the Asia-Pacific Business Communication Forum at MLC Centre, which was attended by Australian business and political leaders, as well as representatives from Chambers of Commerce from numerous Asian countries like China, Japan, Korea, India, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam and many others. Sitting on its Honorary Advisory Committee, Helen Sham-Ho has a high regard for the mission of ACETCA:

Associations like ACETCA represent a new milestone for the development of local Chinese business organisations. They are modern, professionally-run, and are not bound by geographical divisions or clan connections. Young business leaders like Amen Lee have a broad vision in line with their business ambitions. They are unburdened by old, ethnic politics and by their sheer economic calibre, are highly regarded by both Australian and Chinese governments. I believe that this new generation of business leaders are to assume greater influence in the near future, and that is why we are happy to give our support.

While the Chinese business network is expanding its reach worldwide at an unprecedented velocity, China has increasingly become the focal point of exchange. This is reflected in the intensive interactions between Chinese business associations and the PRC government, both at national and regional levels. As Hong Liu observes, the globalisation of Chinese associations is accompanied by the contradictory trend of localisation, which involves “higher levels of aggregation such as provincial-based associations and county-level and lower associations, which collectively formed their respective international federation” (1998: 590). On the one hand, traditional native-place associations are revitalising themselves through renewed links with their ancestral cities. On the other hand, new locality associations are established all the time by mainland migrants, who are organising trips back home to meet with local officials for trading concessions and investment opportunities.

Past literature indicates that there have been considerable difficulties for foreign enterprises to enter the Chinese market. The reasons behind are manifold: language barrier, the incompatibility of Western management styles with Chinese practices, the distinctive bureaucratic organisation of the workforce, differences in negotiating practices and the long time-frames needed for their completion, and most of all, the lack

of an established legal framework (Lever-Tracy, Ip and Tracy 1996: 67). The success of diasporic business, on the contrary, is built on their flexible deployment of ethnic capital to circumvent such cultural and institutional barriers (Zhou and Lin 2005: 262). Direct liaison with the local government to secure project approval and favourable terms of investment is a common strategy for transnational entrepreneurs, who usually conduct negotiations through the platform of locality associations. The provincial and local branches of OCAO in turn are keeping an updated list of active organisations in different parts of the world and regularly sending out program fliers for their participation. In the latter half of year 2013, provincial OCAOs of Sichuan, Fujian, Guangzhou, Shanghai and Jiangsu all initiated their own programs to invite accomplished overseas business leaders back to China, giving them briefings of local policies and matching them with potential local partners.²⁴

Prominent business leaders like Amen Lee and Chaowei Chen all put China as their top destination of investment and greatly benefit from their networking efforts with Chinese local governments. For instance, as early as late 1990s, Amen Lee started his round-China trip to plan for the expansion of his logistic company in China. As a prominent community leader in more than twenty associations, he was warmly received by high-ranking officials in every city and concluded business deals for the setup of branch companies in twelve large- to medium-sized cities such as Shanghai, Ningbo, Guangzhou, Xiamen, Shenzhen, Fuzhou, Tianjin, Dalian, Qingdao and so on. To achieve the ambition of providing one-stop, uniform services in China, he managed to get the approval for constructing a huge storage terminal at Jiangyin County of Fujian Province, which has been in a long-term, amicable relationship with those locality associations under Amen Lee's leadership. In 2010, Lee further established the Australian Foshan Association to expand the circle of networking in Guangdong Province.²⁵ Similarly, the Teochew leader Chaowei Chen is most active in the West-Strait Economic Zone of Fujian Province, which is his ancestral place. In 2013, He was invited by the Shantou government (part of Fujian Province) to participate in the twelfth session of Shantou Political Consultative Conference, during which he stressed the

²⁴ The OCAO of the State Council regularly updated the programs and exchanges hosted by local OCAOs in the section of Local Overseas Chinese Affairs of its website at: <http://www.gqb.gov.cn/sqxx/index.shtml>.

²⁵ The information of Mr Amen Lee could be found in the website of Australia Foshan Association at: http://www.australiafoshan.org.au/amen_lee.html.

importance of upgrading the regional industry with imported technologies and catching up with the corporate standard of advanced countries (Chen 30/01/2013).

For many business leaders, liaisons with local government are much more effective in business terms than bluntly venturing into big cities. As Fong Sum Yam, Chairperson of Australian Yangzhou Association, pointed out:

We are well received by the Mayor of Yangzhou City and are introduced to all the local dignitaries. They give us lots of respect and pay attention to our views. We find it very easy to relate to them in our mother tongue. In some occasions, if you have all the right people with you, you could sign the letter of intent over dinner. Or at least, you get the word of promise, and you rest assured that you just need to follow through. Important deals are hard to cut without these tacit understandings.

Yam's words converge with the observation that compared with Western investors who mostly focus on large metropolis like Beijing and Shanghai, ethnic Chinese investors have the majority of their investments away from the older established industrial areas and instead put them in smaller cities, townships and villages, where they have been able to deal with a much lower level of government than is generally possible for non-Chinese investors (Lever-Tracy, Ip and Tracy 1996: 67-8). In this way, they could keep their initial investment relatively smaller and therefore within the decision-making competence of the local officials and beneath both provincial and central government scrutiny. David Ng, Chairperson of NACA, agreed with the strategy of developing from below:

If you look at the famous case of Suntech Power, it is obvious that its miracle success is inalienable from the support of Wuxi city government. I have closely followed this story, for it is the most well-known case of Chinese-Australian entrepreneurs in China. When Shi Zhengrong returned to China in 2000 and tried his luck in Shanghai, his project proposal was mercilessly turned down. He failed in every big city, and had to lower his target to small cities. This worked. He managed to convince the Party Secretary in Wuxi, and this marked the start of Suntech Power. The local officials helped with the seed capital of six million dollars by asking the heads of state-owned enterprises in Wuxi to lend money to Shi. They also provided free warehouses for his use. When the plan was made for Suntech Power go public in the United States, the local government voluntarily gave up state-owned stocks and helped Suntech to restructure into a private enterprise. You know the rest of the story. When Suntech did go public, Shi became one of the wealthiest persons in China with a personal net worth of three billion dollars. Yes, the legend was made by Shi, but would have been impossible without the support of the Wuxi government. When you start

something new, not everything is written in the rule book, especially in China. Networking helps you know the people who can make new rules for your sake. Surely this is more likely to happen at the local level.

Apart from forming global networks and liaising with Chinese government, transnational Chinese associations have also assumed an advisory role for Chinese investors and enterprises from the PRC to venture overseas. In Sydney, a whole chain of consulting firms, real estate agencies and business associations are established to provide information to interested Chinese investors. In the 1980s, when the first batch of Chinese state-owned enterprises entered Australia, they often sought the cooperation of local Chinese, who, by virtue of their citizenship status, helped ease the procedural barriers set against foreign companies. Admittedly, such transnational Chinese partnerships could backfire when disputes arose from within, especially when a heavy reliance on *guanxi* weakened the binding force of formal contracts. However, with the modernisation of the ethnic Chinese network, such problems are becoming less prevalent, for the new class of transnational Chinese intermediaries are fully adapted to the professional codes and practices of the Western world, in addition to their familiarity with the Chinese language and culture. Dr Minshen Zhu, Principal of Top Education and past member of NSW-Asia Business Advisory Council, shared with me his experience of cooperating with China International Trust and Investment Corporation (CITIC):

The CITIC Group is one of the earliest Chinese transnational conglomerates to enter the Australian market. In 1985, it already invested hundreds of millions of dollars in the mines of Western Australia. It was quite rare at the time. The first wave of Chinese investment in Australia had to wait until early 1990s. In 1991, I assisted the Shandong government in hosting the first exhibition of Chinese goods in Sydney. Even Whitlam attended the event, and the volume of exchange hit 9.6 million dollars. The state visit of Premier Wen to Australia gave additional momentum to the investment endeavours of state-owned enterprises and individual investors in China. Also in that year, the Australian government announced its plan to cancel the import quota for clothing. By then, I had been working in my own clothing factory for three years. Spotting the opportunity, I talked to the CEO of the CITIC Group based in Melbourne and asked if they would be interested to start a branch company in clothing. It turned out that they also looked to diversify their businesses with local partners. Together we set up the CITIFASHION.

To guarantee timely supply to Australia, Dr Zhu and the CITIC group established a clothing factory in Beijing to deal with orders placed by CITIFASHION. The

partnership proved to be a success. The annual turnover grew from ten million dollars in 1992 to fifty million dollars in 1997. While Dr Zhu had ideas, local experience and contacts, the Chinese group could finance the endeavour. This model held true for his later business ventures in other areas such as real estate and education.

In the past decade, direct investment from China to Australia grew from strength to strength. Recent data from the Foreign Investment Review Board (FIRB) indicated that China became the third largest source of foreign investment for the Australian real estate sector in the 2012 fiscal year behind the US and Singapore, with \$4.2 billion in purchases. This volume of transactions marked a staggering 75 per cent leap compared to investment levels just two years ago. According to McGrath Estate Agents, in some parts of Sydney as many as eighty per cent of homes are being sold to Chinese buyers, spurred by capital growth expectations as well as the practical exigency of housing children who may be studying abroad at universities in Australia (Howe 17/09/2013). The current development profoundly changed the pattern of business cooperation between ethnic Chinese and Chinese nationals. The mainland investors are becoming the more affluent party, while the ethnic Chinese are increasingly playing a bridging role with their soft qualities like knowledge, contacts and supporting services. Leading scholars from Tsinghua University agreed with such a trend:

Since China's entry into WTO, Chinese economy will become fully integrated into the world economic system. By the end of the five-year transition, Chinese enterprises have to compete in the international arena without any protections...This requires the Chinese enterprises (state-owned and private ones) to adopt the strategy of "going out" and consequently accentuates the bridging role played by ethnic Chinese entrepreneurs. (Long, Zhao and Ding 2008: 15)

At the individual level, business leaders are creating their own organisational platforms and going back to China to give seminars on investment in Australia. According to S2, past student refugee and now successful entrepreneur with a chain of Optus stores in Sydney, investment advice is badly needed by new Chinese investors:

Obviously, Chinese businessmen from the PRC are really rich. They want to invest in Australia, but do not know how because of the cultural difference. Here is an example. One friend consulted me about setting up a nightclub in Sydney for the business and government elite. I said, "I'm very excited about the idea of bringing all the hot Chinese girls here, but sorry, this is simply not the way business is done in Australia." Negotiations are usually taking place in a café in the morning rather than at night. And on Friday,

most people go back home to be with their family. This is so different from the default business practice in China, where businessmen cut their deals over dinner surrounded by girls.

The example given by S2 shows the importance of cultural literacy in conducting transnational businesses, which is becoming the selling point for ethnic Chinese. In September 2013, the first Australia-China Business Summit was convened in Shanghai after intensive preparations by the Australian Chinese Organising Committee, which included five key business associations in Sydney, as well as Australian Beijing Association. As early as April 2013, the committee visited Shanghai, Hangzhou, Yuyao, Hengdian and Yantai and was warmly welcomed by high-ranking officials in charge of trade and overseas Chinese Affairs. The summit became the focus of the media, and the committee members emphasised the purpose of the summit as follows:

We are to set up a platform for Chinese entrepreneurs to invest in Australia, to settle down here and become prosperous. We shall also influence the Australian federal and state governments to introduce good policies and launch new programs for Chinese investors to participate in. Some of us are already working with Chinese SOEs and participating in the making of their investment strategies in Australia. (XKB 06/09/2013)

The high publicity given to this kind of business summit keenly reflects the information deficit suffered by Chinese investors. The economic stakes could be especially high for large Chinese SOEs engaging in multi-billion projects. In a recent lecture by Professor Daojiong Zha at Lowy Institute, he highlighted the two “gaps in expectation” of newcomer investors from China in the mining industry:

In China, foreign companies are allowed to hold a controlling share (51%) and even have 100% ownership of a project. In Australia, there is no clear written definition on what enterprises, particularly SOEs, can or cannot invest in. Instead, there is an intentionally vague “national interest test” with no legislated rules for what constitutes the “national interest”. The second “gap in expectation”...is the need for the investor to provide major infrastructure such as roads, ports, electricity and water for green field resource projects. In Western Australia, that infrastructure is the responsibility of the mine operator. But in China, it is the local government that builds those facilities as a pre-condition for establishing a green field investment project. (Zha 2013: 16-17)

The ignorance about tacit rules of thumb creates considerable difficulties for Chinese investors and sometimes leads to heavy losses. Cases are often heard about how Chinese enterprises purchased the entire mine only to discover that their right solely

consisted of excavation, and they did not have any say on the pricing of the ore. In this context, Chinese transnational associations are highly valued for their advisory role for China's deep integration into the world economy. With the staggering rise of China, transnational economic activities spearheaded by business associations prosper, so does the development of transnational cultural and professional exchanges undertaken by mutual exchange associations.

7.2.2. Transnational Socio-Cultural Activities

Transnational socio-cultural exchanges between Australia and China are increasing in volume and intensity these days, undertaken by individuals, organisations and relevant government agencies. It is a diverse sphere which comprises the "manifold socio-cultural enterprises oriented towards the reinforcement of a national identity abroad or the collective enjoyment of cultural events and goods" (Portes, Guranizo and Landolt 1999: 221). In the previous chapter, I have discussed the theme of cultural preservation under the policy framework of multiculturalism, which allows for a conditional acceptance of the minority culture into the public sphere. The popularity of Chinese cultural products among Australian mainstream consumers is a good testimony to the achievement of multiculturalism. However, with the innate constraints of multiculturalism and the deep-seated cultural hierarchy it implies, it is foreseeable that the cultural enterprises of the Chinese community would hardly grow out of its peripheral existence, not to mention major breakthroughs, if they had only relied on the meagre resources available in the multicultural policy area. But in reality, the cultural sphere of transnational activism has seen robust development, and produced the first batch of key associational players, which are experiencing the transition from community organisations to cultural enterprises and are showing initial signs of dominance in their respective fields. These could never have happened without access to the abundant resources in the transnational field, and in particular the PRC policy to support these exchanges. It is fair to say that the mounting power of China not only leads to the appreciation of ethnic capital in the global market, but also elevates the entire field of transnational cultural activities to a new level of sophistication.

In the globalising world, transnational cultural exchanges are a norm of our life. They include the travel of musical folk groups to perform before immigrant audiences, the organisation of sports games between immigrant teams and those of the home country,

the cultural trips of young immigrant children to their ancestral villages, the exhibition of masterpieces from the country of origin, and the celebration of traditional festivals abroad with the participation of home country artists. Although such activities have always existed, their impact would have been very limited if solely relying on the voluntary initiative of community members. However, when grassroots activism meets with active policy support from the home government, it soon improves in standard and develops into a scale to be reckoned with.

The blossoming of transnational cultural exchanges is inseparable from China's agenda of developing its soft power in the global sphere. The Chinese overseas are perceived as important players to further this goal through the dissemination of Chinese values, promotion of its culture and art, participation of people-to-people diplomacy as well as a positive representation of China's developmental model to the world (Chen and Fan 2010: 17). Diasporic nationalism is consciously cultivated through the state support of Chinese associations, Chinese language schools and Chinese language media in different parts of the world. The Chinese government may not be involved in the direct sponsorship of overseas Chinese organisations, but it has all kinds of bonus policies, which make it easier for overseas groups to link with their home-country counterparts and tap into the resources back in China. For instance, the four Chinese language schools I have visited in Canberra, though not receiving monetary support from China, are getting other benefits such as donation of textbooks, opportunities for cultural tours in China, as well as the provision of trained professionals. Fuxin Li, Principal of Australian School of Contemporary Chinese (ASCC), admits that while funding for Chinese schools mainly comes from tuition fees and subsidies of the Australian government, the key to their future success hinges on the symbolic status of China and its global strategy of promoting the Chinese language:

Firstly, there is the problem of the source of students. Chinese parents may want their children to learn the mother tongue. But that is no strong incentive for students to persist in such a difficult language. Indeed, during the past ten years, we only had about thirty students who completed the whole range of courses up to high school level. However, as China becomes stronger, our students begin to view Chinese-learning as a worthwhile investment of time and efforts. With that prospect, we are now having a greater proportion of students from non-traditional sources, like Anglo children, children of "well-assimilated Chinese families", and grown-ups who have missed the learning opportunity in their childhood. Secondly, we are talking about the policy dimension. The ASCC is one of the fifty-eight model Chinese schools rated by the OCAO of the State Council, and is one

of the key partners of the Confucius Institute headquarters. The Confucius Institute is sending volunteer teachers to us every year, and giving us priority in participating in a wide range of exciting cultural activities, including essay competitions, Chinese cultural day events, and mutual exchanges with schools in China.

The close rapport with educational institutions in China puts ASCC in an advantageous position in comparison with other schools and is a central factor for its successful refashioning into an educational enterprise. As early as 1996, Principal Li established the Trilong International Pty Ltd to distribute Chinese textbooks for overseas Chinese language schools. Drawing on his personal links with Department of Education of the PRC and famous Chinese publishers, Fuxin managed to get the right to distribute more than three hundred kinds of Chinese language materials including those published by the Confucius Institute, People's Education Press, Higher Education Press in Beijing and SDX Joint Publishing Company in Hong Kong. In some cases, Li was appointed as the sole distributor in Australia and New Zealand. Therefore, when ASCC was founded in 2003, it had Trilong as its financial wing to underwrite all the costs. With this sound background, ASCC achieved several rounds of expansion in ten years, making it the biggest Chinese school in Canberra with four campuses and more than 400 students. When most Chinese language schools in Canberra could barely make their ends meet with lowered level of government subsidies, the ASCC has adequate resources to broaden its range of courses, employ experienced, full-time teaching staff, and improve its standard of administration. These factors make ASCC the only fully-accredited Chinese language school in Canberra, whose test results are accepted for entrance exams for Australian universities. Principal Li was received by the Chinese President Jintao Hu during his state visit to Australia in 2007 and was named as "the person who introduced Chinese language courses to Australia" in an exclusive interview conducted by the CCTV International Channel in 2012.²⁶ The case of ASCC is nothing exceptional. Leading Chinese organisational players specialising in cultural, educational and professional exchanges all heavily depend on the resource input from China, though there is great variation in their degree of institutionalisation and commercialisation. In this section, I will introduce three cases, which cover the categories of media, cultural and professional associations. Active in different fields, they share similar developmental trajectories, leaping into prominence through proactive interactions with Chinese policy agendas and the skilful deployment of transnational resources.

²⁶ The profile of Dr Fuxin Li could be found in the official website of Australian School of Contemporary Chinese at: <http://www.standardchineseschool.act.edu.au/home.html>.

Case Six: Austar International Media Group (AIMG)

The spectacular evolution of Austar International Media Group (AIMG) from a humble community radio station to one of the most influential Chinese media groups in Australia largely owes to the unreserved support of the PRC. In his interview with the China Radio International, Zhaoqing Jiang, founder of the AIMG, recounted the immense difficulties when he started the first Chinese Radio Station 3CW in 1999:

Back then, people thought it was mission impossible. You have to self-fund it and make the programs. But where is the profit? You couldn't find advertisers in the beginning. Very few sponsors were interested in funding the project. We bought a second-hand radio transmitter from an Italian guy, who immediately disappeared after selling it. We didn't know how to operate the machine, and managed to get it work with half-guessing. Money was always a big issue. Soon afterwards, the transmitter broke down. We would have closed down the radio station right then. Fortunately, our listeners came to our rescue with donations.²⁷

Given the obscure beginning and the very thin profit margin of community media, it is hardly imaginable that in a span of twenty years that Jiang moved from 3CW to AIMG, a broad-base multidimensional media platform including radio broadcast, weekly newspapers, lifestyle magazines, events, webcast, television and internet-based media, which covers metropolitan areas across NSW, Victoria, Western Australia, Queensland and the ACT. It becomes fully commercialised and is expanding its sphere of influence in Oceania and the Asia-Pacific. Although the full story of its development is not available due to business considerations, we could get some clues by looking at its long list of strategic partners, the kind of activities it hosts and the way it ventures into a new market. Regarded by the Chinese government as a reliable ally in constructing the pan-Chinese media space, the AIMG enters into a series of strategic partnerships with major Chinese media groups, including China Radio International, China National Radio, Radio Beijing Corporation, Radio Liaoning Corporation, Radio Zhengzhou Corporation and many other regional media groups in China, most of which are state-owned. Bamboo Zhang, general manager of the ACT Branch of the AIMG, explained to me how the miraculous expansion of AIMG was made possible through the cooperation of these Chinese partners:

²⁷ The full interview was available at: <http://gb.cri.cn/1321/2008/08/25/542s2210890.htm>.

The launch of the C-Radio FM88 in Canberra on 8 May 2009 was attended by Mr Junsai Zhang, the Chinese Ambassador to Australia. There were over 200 guests at the ceremony, and one distinguished guest was Mr Gengnian Wang, Director of China Radio International and our biggest sponsor. According to our agreements, China Radio International allowed us to air their English programs for free. We also managed to secure many free Chinese-language materials, and thus only needed to make two to three hours' original programs every day. The amount of work could be perfectly completed with a five-person core producing team and a number of student volunteers from surrounding universities. As you know, we also have a chain of newspapers and magazines, many of which are simply overseas editions of existing mainstream Chinese publications. One good example is the Australian edition of Beijing Youth Magazine. We get the permission to use its format and share news with its producing team. These connections enable us to get things done with great efficiency. If we are able to be the first one to establish our foothold in each city in Australia, it definitely gives us a competitive edge.

Moreover, the amicable relationship with the Chinese government makes AIMG one of the most preferred Australian media platforms in broadcasting China-sponsored cultural feasts. Since its inception in 1999, the AIMG has successfully organised over three hundred corporate events and performances. One of its icon events, "Miss Chinese Cosmos Pageant", was authorised by the world famous media "Phoenix TV" in Hong Kong and achieved broad reputation of building an international platform for the Chinese ladies living in Australia. In 2008, the AIMG set up its Beijing Office to handle public relations. Through this office, hundreds of business and cultural delegations (up to more than five hundred people every year) were arranged to visit Australia. The intensive networking efforts paid off. In September 2009, AIMG was contracted as the exclusive Oceania corporate partner with "Charming China IPTV", thus consolidating its position in the market of Chinese TV programs in Australia and New Zealand. Nowadays, AIMG is firmly established as a media pioneer to facilitate Sino-Australia cultural exchange. When asked about the interplay between overseas Chinese media and the PRC, Zhang offered his views along the line of complementarity:

As Australians, there is no doubt that our first loyalty lies with Australia. However, we believe in the intrinsic value of the Chinese tradition, from which we form our understandings of who we are. We will definitely feel a sense of pride if the Chinese culture is more widely recognised in the Western world, and we are happy to take that as our mission. For the Chinese government, it realises that in terms of soft-power building, it is better to give support to self-initiated, local-bred Chinese activism than directly exporting Chinese materials overseas. Ultimately, this is a win-win situation. We get the resources we need to pursue the goal we identify with.

Case Seven: Australian Chinese Performing Artists Association (ACPAA)

Compared with AIMG, the ACPAA is still incorporated as a community organisation, though it describes its long-term goal as “promoting Chinese arts to the world, creating immigrant art forms with a fusion of Western and Chinese cultural elements and developing into a key player in the transnational cultural industry”. The development of the ACPAA could be divided into three stages, reflecting the shifting focus of the association and its dynamic interactions with multiple political opportunity structures. The ACPAA was founded in August 1990 by eighty-four young artists from the mainland. Its Founding President and current Chief Executive Producer, William JW Yu graduated from the Central Academy of Drama, which is reputed to be the cradle of the first-generation, world-class Chinese directors and actors. Driven by the restless soul of an artist, Yu gave up his tenure at the Academy and came to Australia in 1987. His maiden piece “Searching for a Dream” was a poignant representation of intense inner conflict of an artist who gave up everything in pursuit of an ephemeral ideal. Exhibited at the 1992 National Arts Festival, this drama won the Australian Council of Creative Arts Award and helped Yu establish his name in the community of overseas Chinese artists. For Yu, the success of “Searching for a Dream” was a life-changing event:

Soon after I came to Australia, I regretted. The local market for Chinese culture was virtually non-existent. I did manual labour at a paper factory all day long to earn my livelihood. I asked myself two important questions: what are you searching for in this foreign land? What is it exactly that you have lost in your faraway home? “Searching for a Dream” represented a spiritual journey to find my self-worth. It boosted my confidence. I did not regret any more. If I have forever missed the season of harvest, I will just devote myself to sowing in the spring.

With this commitment in mind, Yu and his fellow artists started from scratch, organising a variety of shows, dramas, concerts and cultural festivals with a distinctive Chinese theme and assisting in the training of a large number of grassroots performing groups in different suburbs of Sydney. The first five-year plan was to mobilise the collective strength of Chinese immigrant artists, cultivate local talent and popularise Chinese performing art on Australian stage. From 1990 to 1995, ACPAA organised a number of dramas and shows such as “Thunderstorm”, “The Great Wall”, “Sydney International Students Gala Night”, “Big Apartments”, “Golden Spear of King Wu, Magic Sword of King Yue”, “Wet”, “Malan Flower”, “Under the Same Blue Sky” and “Searching for a Dream” (ACPAA 2010: 118-21). Through the organisation of these

performances, ACPAA brought together existing amateur Chinese performing groups in Australia and encouraged the establishment of new ones by enthusiastic community members. These efforts culminated in the organisation of the large-scale variety show “Chinese Spirit” in Sydney Opera House in 1993, which, for many young immigrant artists, was the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to present their skills on the iconic stage of Australia. More than 2,700 people watched the show, most of whom were Chinese. Yu had a vivid memory of that special night:

On that day, we had the thrill of warriors conquering the Holy Temple. The guard of the Opera House had never seen so many Chinese coming to a performance before. In the end, he just kept the door open and let every Chinese go in without checking their tickets. The audience were more excited than the performers. Many were not walking to their seats, but climbing through rows of chairs to their spot. Upon hearing the familiar tunes, the audience passionately clapped their hands and screamed at the top of their lungs. It took a long time to calm them down.

The successful hosting of these events enabled the ACPAA to enhance its publicity, accumulate experience of performance and organisation and gather around it a large number of community choirs, dance groups and performing art companies. The strong record of past performances has proven its capacity of integrating community resources for the mission of cultural promotion. In the meantime, the 1990s saw the robust development of performing arts in China. Many of Yu’s Chinese alumni rose into prominence as actors and directors, and they were eager to test the water overseas. Tapping into these opportunities, ACPAA moved beyond the frame of localised activism and set out to bring Chinese performers to Australia. This marked the second phase of ACPAA’s development. The first major transnational project was the theatrical show titled “Australian-Chinese Spring Festival Gala 1994”. The performance showcased renowned Chinese stars including Xiaoqing Liu, Jie Zhou, Ji Ma, Wei Liu and Mingying Zhu. Interestingly, with the alumni connection, none of these artists charged the ACPAA for their performance. The sound cooperation with these leading stars in China paved the way for ACPAA to become the preferred local platform for Chinese performers. Since 2000, ACPAA has been entrusted to organise a wide range of visiting performances by Chinese troupes, including China Anhui Huangmei Art Troupe, China Xinjiang Performing Art Troupe, China Coal Mine Art Troupe, China Seniors Art Troupe, Yunnan Troupe, Guiyang Acrobatics Troupe, China Guangzhou Ballet Troupe and the famous Shanghai Little Companions Art Troupe, just to name a few. As ACPAA grew in scale and influence, it was enlisted by the Chinese government

as a reliable cultural-broker to coordinate state-level performances in Australia, the list of its official and semi-official collaborators consisting of the OCAO of the State Council, Beijing Chinese Overseas Friendship Association, the Chinese People's Liberation Army Military Band, China Sung Ching Ling Foundation, CCTV and Chinese regional TV networks. The involvement of the Chinese governmental sponsors and business partners considerably improved the quality of shows presented by ACPAA and resulted in a closer synchronisation between the nationalist agenda of China and activities of ACPAA. Indeed, a good proportion of shows organised by ACPAA after year 2000 could be seen as a direct response to the changing policy concerns of the Chinese government. Themed shows were hosted in celebration of the tenth anniversary of the return of Hong Kong, 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, thirty-five years of diplomatic relations between China and Australia, and even the successful launch of Shenzhou Number Seven Spacecraft into the outer space. The partial political alignment between transnational players and the PRC government will be explored in the following section.

If the first two stages of ACPAA's development are about the construction of a transnational cultural space and the gradualist accumulation of resources at multiple sites within that space, then the final stage is characterised by the creative integration of diverse resources to forge a new brand of immigrant culture, which arises from but yet transcends cultural tradition. Yu gave me a sketch of his understanding of the immigrant culture:

My chief concern is to explore a path for the immigrant culture. Its core should be the cream of the Chinese civilisation, but in a modified form with imported cultural elements from the Western world. It is a composite entity, alternating between themes of patriotism, self-realisation and multicultural celebration, therefore having relevance for both countries. Essentially, it is a sublimation of the life journey of the new migrants, a condensed expression of our inner world. Differing from the early shows which are replicas of what we have in China, ours should be an adapted version, an Australian offshoot of Chinese civilisation.

In the past five years, the ACPAA launched a number of large-scale experimental shows highlighting the theme of immigrant culture, which won wide acclaim in both Australia and China. For example, the well-regarded 2013 Global Internet Chinese Spring Festival Show was filmed in a luxurious cruise, which toured around Sydney shooting scenic spots such as Sydney Opera House, Sydney Harbour Bridge, the Tower and

Darling Harbour. The show presented a rich assortment of Chinese and Australian programs like dances, conjuring, quartet, male and female solos, Beijing Opera and Chinese drama. Attended by the Mayor of Sydney, Consul General of the Chinese Embassy and prominent Chinese community leaders, the show featured the performance of more than twenty local Chinese performing troupes, the NSW City Band and overseas stars. Shootings were also taken in the home of ordinary Chinese-Australians, who sent warm festival greetings to the people in China. The show was aired through four different channels of Shandong TV Station, and a modified version could be accessed online on the eve of the Spring Festival. Cleverly fusing diasporic sentiments with the tourist campaign of the City of Sydney, this show was widely covered in major news networks of China and was listed as a key project in the cultural campaign of Sydney.

Organising hundreds of shows, ACPAA has reformed itself after the model of a specialised performing company. It does not have its own performing troupe, but has gained the reputation as the best platform for local Chinese troupes and visiting troupes from China. It builds up a large inventory of artistic groups in Australia and China and has the capacity of staging large-scale cultural shows with one month's notice. Yu's aspiration is for the ACPAA to assume leadership roles in the emerging domain of transnational artistic exchange:

To achieve this aim, we will have to adopt business strategies for sure. We are currently conceiving an affiliated performing company to deal with the business side. But we should not forget that our strength lies in the local community and our connections in China. The resources are already there. It is a matter of using them to convey the message you have in mind. Our message is always bifocal, be part of the Australian mainstream, and be part of the pan-Chinese civilisational sphere.

Case Eight: Professional Medical Associations and Healthpac International Medical Corporation

As the cases of AIMG and ACPAA indicate, the deployment of transnational resource is the key factor in upgrading the capacities of transnational associations and accelerating their pace toward industrial development. The presence of a local associational base serves as the magnet to attract overseas resources, which are in turn invested into major transnational projects with commercial values. In managerial terms, transnational associations often go hand in hand with business entities for different

functional roles. Community associations are vehicles for community development, exchange and communication, as well as the mobilisation of resources, while related business entities are responsible for the operational side, turning the resource input into profit. This model could be observed in the synergy between the professional Chinese medical associations in Sydney and the Healthpac International Medical Corporation.

The central figure linking the association with the corporation is Dr Ven Tan, who is famous for turning a small Healthpac practice into a chain of multilingual medical centres in different suburbs of Sydney. Receiving formal qualifications in medical science at University of New South Wales (UNSW) and having good knowledge of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) through associational activities, Dr Van Tan dedicated himself to the research of integrative medical approach which combines conventional Western clinical practices with complementary TCM methodologies. The chain of Healthpac clinics become crucial sites for the application of this approach in health care.

As the President of the Australian Traditional Chinese Medicine Association (ATCMA), Dr Ven Tan worked closely with TCM practitioners and other medical associations to lobby for the legislation and registration of the TCM industry in Australia and tirelessly promoted the exchange programs of TCM practitioners and institutions in both countries. Over the years, he received hundreds of Chinese medical delegations from the Chinese Health Department, the National Bureau of Traditional Chinese Medicine, top Chinese medical institutions and a large number of regional health centres in China. Through the platform of the Association, Dr Van Tan also arranged for the visits of Chinese TCM specialists to Australia to share experience and improve local practices. A big event was the visit of the renowned orthopedics expert, Dr Ennian Gong, who made important breakthroughs in treating femoral head necrosis through a combination of Western diagnostic methods, Chinese massage, acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicines.

Frequent exchanges of this sort enable Dr Ven Tan to keep abreast with the latest development of the TCM industry in China and elsewhere in the world, and grasp those opportunities in promoting integrative medical practices in Australia. To better facilitate the transnational exchange, he established the Australian Medical Exchange and Development Association (AMEDA) on 11 March 2006, which brought together

Australian government representatives, key community leaders, as well as more than one hundred medical professionals from Australia and China. The AMEDA was conceived as a major platform to “formalise exchange between Chinese and Western medicine practitioners, organise international conference, disseminate new knowledge and popularise the use of new medical approaches and equipment”.²⁸ In June 2006, Dr Van Tan led the association members to attend the Trade Fair in Guangdong, surveying new medicines and equipments and negotiating with Chinese medical manufacturers about the prospect of business cooperation.

On 4 March 2010, a MOU to develop closer scientific and strategic research links was signed by Jodi McKay, Australian Minister for Science and Medical Research, and Dr Jianlin Cao, Vice Minister for Science and Technology of the PRC. Agendas were set to support joint research projects involving both NSW and Chinese researchers working in areas including TCM and biotechnology. The role model effect of Healthpac, Dr Tan’s strong connections with TCM communities of both countries and his persistent lobbying work through associational activities made Healthpac a suitable institution to undertake researches in complementary medical practices. In the MOU, it was decided that a new Healthpac Centre of Excellence in Integrative Medicine would be built in Chatswood “aimed at holistic patient care, wellness, health prevention and early intervention of chronic diseases” (Willoughby City Council 18/01/2011). Dr Van Tan could hardly suppress his excitement at the news:

I always know that integrative medical approach will be the way to go, but I did not see this coming so early. The new centre is supported by both governments with a total investment of \$75 million. China will provide specialist visiting medical staff and support services, while Australian partners in the venture such as the University of Western Sydney will support clinical education and research with PhD students and post-doctoral staff. We, Healthpac, are chosen to operate and manage the Centre. We already have another mature Healthpac facility in Chatswood. We are the expert in this area. We are honored, but this is not entirely unexpected.

According to the news release of the Willoughby City Council, the centre will be developed by Wu International Investments and will include two nine-storey towers. One tower will house the medical facility with a day surgery, consulting rooms, hydrotherapy and physiotherapy facilities, a lecture theatre and meeting rooms. The

²⁸ The information of the Australian Medical Exchange and Development Association could be found in the website of Healthpac Medical Centre at: <http://www.healthpac.com.au/cn/news/ycxj06>.

second tower will comprise sixty-three residential units, and the ground level will include retail outlets, a pharmacy and basement car park (Willoughby City Council 18/01/2011). As Australia's first centre of excellence in integrative medicine, it surely makes Healthpac the leading group of the industry and will in turn give a boost to the transnational activities orchestrated by affiliated medical associations.

Obvious from the above analysis, transnational exchange of scale hinges on the integration of resources home and abroad. Common developmental stages as derived from the three cases are primitive resource accumulation in the host society, resource input from the home country, and generation of profit through industrial expansion. In the case of ACPAA and Healthpac, the associational base is separated from the business entity, and in comparison, AIMG becomes fully commercialised from the starting point of a community radio station. In all these scenarios, resources from China, either directly or indirectly supplied by the PRC, are essential for the strategic development of transnational associations if they want to go beyond the state of subsistence. Though not entirely out of pragmatic considerations, resource dependence on the home country necessitates the expression of nationalist sentiments among overseas Chinese community leaders. This is reflected in the multiple forms of transnational political activities undertaken by transnational Chinese associations.

7.2.3. Transnational Political Activities

As conceptualised by Østergaard-Nielsen, transnational political practices refer to “various forms of direct cross-border participation in the politics of their country of origin by both migrants and refugees (such as voting, support to political parties and participation in the debates in the press), as well as their indirect participation via the political institutions of the host country” (2003: 762). However, as the PRC has a one-party system, political activities of the Chinese overseas seldom involve confrontational politics or public debates.²⁹ There is a strong tendency for transnational Chinese

²⁹ The most conspicuous confrontational organisations are *falungong*, pan-green Taiwanese associations and Tibetan organisations for independence, the latter two not identifying themselves as “Chinese groups”. Unfortunately, due to the accessibility issue, I did not get to interview those organisations. Older Chinese associations established in the 1980s by migrants from Hong Kong or Southeast Asia usually stay above political forays and keep neutral in public debates. Although leaders of these organisations might have private concerns about issues like human rights, corruptions and political reform of China, they seldom involve themselves in confrontational politics against the PRC. The more recent organisations established by mainlanders usually adopt a pro-China stance, though there is great variation in the degree of their conviction and the motivation behind their display of nationalist sentiment. While

associations to comply with the pan-nationalist discourse of China. In Hong Liu's words, the manifestations of the resurgence of overseas Chinese nationalism are simultaneously emerging in China and various overseas communities. The former is demonstrated in the rising contributions of the new migrants to China's socio-economic development. For the latter, the new migrants play a major role in projecting a positive international image of China and advancing the cause of its reunification with Taiwan (Liu 2005: 308).

At the most basic level, overseas Chinese associations express their nationalist sentiments through charity activities premised on their emotional bonds with the people in China. Those include disaster reliefs, donations, poverty reliefs and other types of assistance to the Chinese people. When major disasters strike China, Chinese community organisations are the preferred channel for the Chinese overseas to offer their help. From earthquakes in Sichuan and Qinghai, to the snowstorm in South China, and to the mudslide disaster in Gansu, Chinese organisations and well-known community leaders all over the world were eager to contribute to the disaster relief efforts. For example, when South China was badly hit by the snow storm in 2008, the Sydney Chinese community soon formed a Special Fund-Raising Committee for the Snowstorm Disaster in China, which was headed by the President of ACPPRC, Mr William Chiu. The fund-raising event was attended by embassy officials, leaders from more than one hundred Chinese associations and local businessmen. In merely ten days, 280,000 RMB were raised and sent back to China (CNS 19/02/2008). In Australia, a trademark charity program orchestrated by the transnational organisational network is the China Vision program. As its founder Dr Peter Wong briefed to the NSW Parliament House:

China Vision is an eye project initiated by me in 1997 when I was the Chairman of the Australian Chinese Charity Foundation. The foundation was established in 1990. It is a tax-deductible charity in which the Hon. Helen Sham-Ho is an adviser and her husband, Councillor Robert Ho, is a trustee and a former chair. The purpose of our visit this time was to treat patients from lower socioeconomic backgrounds who are suffering from cataracts and other eye diseases. At the same time, we were able to transfer

complete identification with the Chinese Communist Party is less often observed, emotional bonds with the people back in China are usually running deep, reflected in disaster relief efforts and support for big events in China. Pragmatic considerations of tapping into the opportunities in China also weigh heavily on their decision of adopting of a pro-China stance in public. Despite these different intentions, the Chinese Australian community on the whole does give the impression of actively engaging in pro-China activities.

the high technology of cataract surgery to the Chinese doctors. Our future intention is to bring eye specialists from China to Australia to further their training and bring back to their country a wealth of medical experience and knowledge which are still not yet available to many cities in China. (NSW Legislative Council 24/05/2000: 5653)

For the first trip, the medical team visited the Meizhou City of Guangdong Province and provided eye treatment for more than thirty-five patients, many of whom regained their eyesight after the surgery. Identifying with the cause, the Sydney Chinese community was more than supportive. According to Dr Peter Wong, over \$40,000 was raised for the trip. Sydney Pacific Lions Club, through its founding president, Nelson Wong, and the incoming president, Michael Chung, contributed greatly toward the success of the project. Michael Chung himself donated an eye surgery bus to the China Vision Inc. for its trips. Moreover, thirty-two individuals each donated \$200 towards the purchase of a set of lenses for a patient in China. Apart from the community efforts, Ansett Airlines sponsored air tickets for the team, and the PRC Consulate-General in Sydney provided the paperwork to ensure the smooth running of the project in China.

The China Vision program created very positive social impact and soon evolved into a joint venture between Australia and Guangdong government. With the support of the OCAO of Guangdong, the team established a working partnership with Jinan University and Guangzhou Medical College, through which China Vision provided technical support, advice and training for local Chinese medical staff. The provision of training and technical support enabled China Vision to cover its operating costs and thus provide virtually free cataract surgery for more than one thousand patients from 1996 to 2000. By 2000, the China Vision program has achieved brand effect and attracted the participation of volunteer doctors from Australia, China and Taiwan. In 2003, it was taken over by ACPPRC, which extended the reach of the project to the remotest corners of China. Since then, the ACPPRC organised eleven trips to different parts of China, including the most secluded areas like Tibet, Xinjiang, Qinghai and Yunnan, curing more than five thousand eye patients. Dr Van Tan, team leader of the 2003 Tibetan trip, still remembered the details of that trip:

We had fifteen experts from mainland China and Taiwan in our team. We chose Tibet as our first stop, because the very strong radiation in that area had made hundreds of thousands of people blind from cataract. We returned sight to 160 patients, the oldest aged 82 and youngest aged nine. The support from the community was unprecedented. The fund-raising party was

attended by the Premier of NSW, Mr Bob Carr, and the Chinese Ambassador to Australia, Mr Tao Wu. More than 200, 000 dollars were raised overnight. How unbelievable!

Apart from charity activities which connect the diasporic Chinese with their co-ethnics from the homeland, Chinese overseas also expressed their nationalist sentiments through a strong identification with China's economic and cultural progress in the international arena, as marked by events like the entry into the WTO, successful bidding of the 2008 Olympic Games and the hosting of Shanghai World Expo 2010. This is grounded in the strong conviction that the experience and status of the Chinese abroad, or in other words, the symbolic value of "Chineseness" bears a direct relationship with the status of China within the international system (McKeown 1999: 326). Therefore, it is not hard to comprehend the euphoria of the new migrants over every major achievement of China. When China won the bid for the 2008 Olympic Games, enthusiasm of the diasporic Chinese was reaching fever pitch. The famous Olympic natatorium "Water Cube" was constructed solely with the donation of Chinese overseas, which amounted to 900 million RMB from 350,000 donors of more than one hundred countries and regions (Li 22/01/2008). Mr Huiyuan Lin, President of ACETCA, was the biggest donor in Australia. Not only did he contribute 100,000 dollars for the cause, he also recruited another 120 donors through the network of ACETCA.³⁰ In recognition of the contribution of Chinese overseas, a screen was constructed within the natatorium with names of people donating over 100 dollars inscribed on it. As an architect, Henry Tsang has also played a role in the design of the name screen:

Due to the prior experience of Sydney in hosting the 2000 Games, Beijing was consulting us about the preparatory work for the event. The most important contract won by an Australian company was the construction of the Water Cube by TPW. At the time, I was holding meetings with the Secretary of the Organising Committee of Beijing Olympic Games, Mr Wei Wang and the Deputy Director of OCAO of Beijing, Mr Wei Qiao, to discuss this matter. The initial design was to carve the names of donors on the ground. But I received some feedback from our community that many of them did not want their names to be under the feet of tourists. They would prefer it at any other places. I referred this opinion to the Beijing authority and TPW, suggesting that they could possibly build a crystal monument, or

³⁰ The contribution of Mr Huiyuan Lin was acclaimed by the Chinese government as an exemplary case of overseas Chinese patriotism. His generous deeds were acknowledged in the official website of OCAO of Fujian Province at: <http://www.fjqw.gov.cn/qbcmsapp/www2/fjqw.gov.cn/zh-cn/1C86CAD4E6226D1E6D8DCED43596B98C/2008-01-22/A86B9100E5EC590D6749B8CADD9FB0E94.htm>.

something of that nature, but definitely not on the ground. (Tsang 2006: 35-36)

Equally excited about the 2010 Shanghai World Expo, an Australian Chinese Shanghai World Expo Promotion Committee (ACSWEPAC) was spearheaded by leaders of Australian Shanghai Association in 2005 and was joined by representatives from more than one hundred associations. Henson Liang, Deputy Mayor of the Burwood City Council, was appointed the honorary advisor of the Committee. During his visit to Shanghai in 2010, Committee President Dongdong Yang introduced their achievements to the Deputy Director of the OCAO of Shanghai, Mr Junnan Ni:

For the five years leading to the Expo, we have organised quite a number of large-scale activities to introduce it to the local community. For example, on the 100th day countdown of the Expo, a grand parade was organised, with two 50-people phalanxes dressed in colourful costumes of different Chinese nationalities. Big shows were hosted in six cities in Australia to popularise the concept of the Shanghai World Expo, and volunteers were sent out to collect signatures from Chinese local residents. Moreover, for the duration of the Expo, four Australian delegations were arranged to visit Shanghai and witness the remarkable planning of the city. (Zhong 2010)

The early preparation and intensive promotional work of the Chinese organisational network resulted in the highest ticket sales in Australia and the quickest decision of the Australian government to invest in this event in comparison to other participating countries and regions (Zhong 2010). The Committee hosted regular talks with the Chinese embassy, facilitating the distribution of tickets and making visa and travel arrangements for Australian delegates. It was also lobbying the Australian government about the importance of the event and potential benefits it could bring to Australia. Mr Junsai Zhang, Chinese Ambassador to Australia, highly regarded the work of the Committee:

With the work of the Committee, the Australian government came to regard the Shanghai World Expo as an important platform to promote itself and decided to invest a total of eighty million dollars in this project. Now when I am talking with Australian officials and social dignitaries, the topic is always about the Expo. The Governor-General, Premiers of each state and directors of major corporations are all going to visit the Shanghai World Expo. During the Expo, the Australian partner will host thirty-four major events in a wide range of areas: economy, trading, culture, education and tourism. Among all participating countries, investment from Australia is the earliest and quickest. The construction of the Australian Pavilion has become a model case for other countries to follow. It is also the only

overseas pavilion visited by President Jintao Hu during his visit to Shanghai.
(Chen 19/10/2010)

The close rapport between Chinese diasporic communities and the PRC government led to a resurgence of extraterritorial patriotism, which, of course, was actively cultivated by China through the assistance of existing overseas Chinese associations (Feng 1999: 159). In the past decade, the political position of Chinese Australian associations, especially those formed by the new migrants, was closely following that of the PRC, as testified by the voluntary defence of the Olympic torch relay against Tibetan separatists, condemnation of *falungong* and the concerted support for the reunification of China with Taiwan. To celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the PRC, a huge number of social groups and associations representing the Chinese community in Sydney jointly organised a large-scale march on 6 September 2009. Thousands of people gathered on the steps of the Sydney Opera House, carrying flags representing some two hundred Chinese associations (ACPAA: 2010: 25). When Chinese President Jintao Hu visited Sydney in 2007, he was welcomed by more than two hundred community representatives from over one hundred associations, who considered it a rare honour to take photographs with the President. In fact, as the then Chinese Consul-General Shan Hu pointed out in his farewell speech in 2011, for the past two years alone, more than three hundred high-ranking Chinese officials (provincial level or above) visited NSW, all of whom were well received by leaders of local Chinese associations.³¹

Responding to the call for the reunification of China, Councils for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China are established all over the world, representing the most politicised form of Chinese organisations in the diasporic community. The ACPPRC was established in 2000 in the background of the independent movement of Taiwan. Chaired by the famous Sydney business leader William Chiu, the ACPPRC includes in its successive committees and advisory councils sympathetic Australian politicians and the great majority of China-oriented community leaders. Dr Van Tan of Healthpac, Zhaoqing Jiang of AIMG, and William Yu of ACPAA are all committee members of ACPPRC. The aim of ACPPRC is to unite all overseas efforts to promote and support the reunification of China and to help strengthen the friendly relations between China and Australia. For the past twenty years, ACPPRC has been making great efforts in achieving these aims. In 2002, it hosted the “China’s Peaceful

³¹ The farewell speech of Chinese Consul-General Mr Shan Hu could be found in the website of the Chinese Consulate in Sydney at: <http://sydney.chineseconsulate.org/chn/gdxw/t802690.htm>.

Reunification and World Peace” World Congress in Sydney, which attracted over one thousand delegates from mainland China, Taiwan, Europe, America, Africa, Oceania and other Asian countries. Former US President Bill Clinton was invited as one of the key-note speakers at the Congress, and former Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser also delivered a speech at the Congress. The Congress sent a strong message to the separatist factions of the community and pushed the Australian government to take a firmer stance on issues concerning China’s reunification. As mentioned before, the ACPPRC also took over the “China Vision” project in 2003 and organised eleven trips to different parts of China, including Tibet, Xinjiang and Mongolia. Obviously, the selection of these destinations not only arose from considerations of local medical needs, but was also related to the broad aim of safeguarding political stability in those regions.

The close alignment between these associational activities and the political agenda of the PRC leads to a greater level of institutionalisation of the diasporic Chinese into the Chinese political system. A good number of Chinese community leaders undertook transnational exchanges through the channel of different levels of OCAOs or the dense network of Overseas Exchange Associations (OEAs), which were established in 1990 under the patronage of the Chinese government to liaise with overseas Chinese communities. The most distinguished Chinese community leaders are enlisted to become council members of provincial branches of OCAs according to their ancestral origins, and in some cases, invited to participate in the national and provincial Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), the highest consultative organ of the Chinese government. William Chiu, for example, is one of the overseas representatives of the national CPPCC. Sam Wong, the Council Member of the OEA of Guangdong Province, talked about his experience of participating in the fourteenth CPPCC in Guangdong in 2011:

We, the overseas representatives, formed a special discussion group at the conference. Unlike a few decades ago when all they (the Chinese government) wanted was foreign investment, now China is rich. They are not interested in money *per se*. Instead, they want to improve those soft qualities, say how to implement the rule of law, how to reform the corporate structure and how to strike a deal with Western countries. We are invited to give our views on these topics and help China accelerate its pace toward modernisation.

7.3. Understanding the Triadic Relationship

As the previous section demonstrates, overseas-oriented organisations are participating in a wide array of economic, socio-cultural and political activities beyond the boundary of the nation-states and benefiting from their access to the resources in the transnational field, especially from the home country. Through these exchanges, locally accumulated “Whiteness” is converted into power and status in China, while expression of Chinese nationalism is used to create trust in those interactions with the PRC. Contrary to the belief that transnational Chinese associations are merely puppets of China, most of them in reality operate more like power-brokers, which strike a balance in the vicissitudes of international politics and thrive from a cordial relationship between the two countries. This accords with Ong’s remarks that as “citizens on the edge of empires”, the diasporic Chinese are “seeking a flexible position among the myriad possibilities (and problems) found in the global sphere through complex strategies of manoeuvres in political, spatial and affective relationships” (Ong 1993: 747, 752). The simultaneous liaisons with multiple political forces are the usual strategy of most new locality associations, though they probably pay more attention to the homeland. For instance, if we examine the report of Australian Hangzhou Association for the first half of year 2010, its main activities included reception of officials from Hangzhou, participation in conferences hosted by the OCAO of Hangzhou government, as well as a short-course on social issues of contemporary China organised by Zhejiang Province, to which the city of Hangzhou belonged. Despite all these home-bound activities, the Association did not lose touch with the mainstream society in Australia. It actively participated in the electoral campaigns of the Opposition Leader Tony Abbot, made donations to the NSW Labor Party, and in the meantime spared no efforts in promoting business opportunities available in Hangzhou to Australian political and business leaders (Australian Hangzhou Association 2010).

Even for the overtly pro-China association ACPPRC, it does not risk losing the support of the resident society. While embracing the official stance of the PRC government on Cross-Straits relations, it is also recognised as a mainstream Australian organisation with significant contributions made in promoting exchanges and cooperation between the two countries. Its Chairperson William Chiu is a member of the Asia Business Advisory Council of NSW and an associate member of NSW Parliament Asia-Pacific Friendship Group, the one and only non-NSW-MP member. He initiated and organised official visits by NSW parliamentary delegations to Tibet and helped conclude the sister city relationship ties between Kogarah, Burwood and Willoughby Councils and China’s

Dunhuang City, Liuzhou City and Maoming City. As a very influential community organisation, ACPPRC generously donated to the bushfire, drought and flood disaster relief efforts in NSW and Victoria, and provided funding for the “Chinese Philosophy Symposium” hosted by the University of Western Sydney. All these efforts won for it acclaim and support from both China and Australia. In fact, among its patrons were three former Australian Prime Ministers, i.e. Whitlam, Fraser and Hawke, and many distinguished Australian MPs were found sitting in its advisory committees.³² The example of ACPPRC aptly demonstrates how transnational Chinese organisations navigate through different political contexts in search of an optimal outcome. While China benefits from the infusion of knowledge, experience and expertise accumulated by ethnic Chinese in the Western world, Australia also stands to gain by enlisting them as advisors for the conception of its national strategy of “engaging with Asia”, not to mention the multiplicity of micro-level interactions they initiate, which greatly improve the mutual understanding of both countries.

Indeed, with the mounting interest of the Australian policy-makers to engage with China, there has been a greater appreciation of the value of China-related knowledge and resources, leading to the reversed form of ethnic capital conversions. Chinese community leaders gain acknowledgement in the host society not only for their facilitating roles in the governance of local Chinese communities, but also for their contributions for helping Australia tap into the latent opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region, especially in the development of bilateral relationship between Australia and China. With a slight adjustment of national perspective, transnational activities discussed above could equally be perceived as channels to advance the Australian interests. Economically speaking, the significant increase of bilateral trade and investment is the common goal sought by both countries. As much as China encourages its private sector to venture overseas, Australia has always espoused the policy of attracting overseas investment. To better communicate the goodwill of NSW government to overseas investors, the Labor government led by Bob Carr decided to establish the NSW-Asia Business Advisory Council in 1999, the first Advisory Council specialising in developing trade links with Asia. In 2000, the Council was in place with twelve appointed council members of Asian backgrounds, including William Chiu, Minshen Zhu and Henry Tsang, all of whom are influential transnational players

³² Information regarding the ACPPRC is publicly available through their official website at: <http://www.acpprc.org.au/english/>.

mentioned in previous sections. As Minshen Zhu told me, apart from giving strategic advice to Australian policy makers, one major role of the Advisory Council was to receive governmental, business and diplomatic representatives from Asian countries and familiarise them with local policy environment and business opportunities. The Council could also nominate Asian business delegations to the NSW government and arrange them to visit Australia and hold talks with relevant officials (Tsang 2006: 107-108). Apparently, access to and close linkage with the elite circle of China, in this case, could be fruitfully utilised to fulfil policy aims of the Australian government.

Culturally speaking, the sponsorship of overseas offshoots of Chinese culture by PRC, while being congruent with its global strategy of cultural diplomacy, could also be incorporated into the caveats of Australian multiculturalism. The major transnational cultural groups such as AIMG and ACPAA have always defined their mission as a bifocal one: to promote Chinese culture to a global audience and to contribute to the cultural diversity of Australia. As the previous analysis goes, cultural programs initiated by transnational Chinese organisations are usually presented in a hybrid form with the Chinese cultural core contextualised in the geographical and social environment of the host society. The juxtaposition of cultural elements from multiple sources makes it possible for the host society and home country to equally identify with and lay claims to the variety of immigrant cultural products. In this context, cultural investment from China could be legitimately seen as valuable resource input conducive to the enrichment and commercialisation of Australian ethnic culture. Notably, for the project to redevelop Sydney Chinatown into a tourist and business hub in the 1970s, the Taiwan government originally planned to share the cost. Although the agreement eventually broke down when Australia recognised the PRC government in 1972, all the tiles used for the project were imported from Taiwan. With the power transition from Taiwan to PRC as the centre of Chinese diaspora, the PRC government is now assuming the role of the major sponsor of overseas Chinese culture. The Chinese Garden of Friendship, built on a site in Darling Harbor to mark Australia's bicentenary in 1988, could not have been completed without the assistance of Guangzhou government. S5 had the insider's story on this:

First, I suggested the idea of a Chinese Garden at Darling Harbour to the then NSW Premier Neville Wran at a fundraising event in Chinatown. He agreed and promised it to our community. However, the government was unwilling to commit resources to complete it. It dragged on and on, until the

time came when NSW started to have the sister province relationship with Guangdong. When the Premier of Guangdong came to visit Australia, I said to him: "Look, the Premier of NSW, your sister province, has promised us a Chinese garden. Could you give us some assistance?" The Premier said yes on spot, and this agreement was written into the MOU. Eventually, the Guangdong government gave us lots of free material, and the Chinese garden was commissioned to the Guangdong Landscape Bureau, which designed it for free and helped us supervise the construction of the garden.

The style of multilateral negotiation, as evidenced by S5's case, is very typical among the class of Chinese transnational power brokers. Rarely reported in the press, the political consultation and mediation they undertook behind the scenes is often pivotal in initiating joint projects or finalising new agreements between the two countries. Sam Wong emphasised the importance of confidentiality in these dealings:

We never go to the press to talk about what we did. This is a tacit understanding between the officials and us. With that trust, we are allowed access to ministers or premiers. They always seek our opinions when formulating policies regarding China. Or they include us in the delegations when they visit China. They appreciate blunt honesty over gloss, and in many cases, they do listen. But all these are off record, of course.

Although it is difficult to gauge the extent and impact of these off-record activities, their underlying significance could be established through my interview with key community leaders. Helen Sham-Ho talked to me about her role of being a "Chinese Minister" when serving in the Parliament:

After I became a member of the Parliament, to my great surprise, all the files concerning the Chinese were forwarded to me, no matter whether they were about the local Chinese community, or about trading with China. The first time I visited China with an Australian government delegation was in 1978, which was followed by more visits in the 1980s and 1990s. As one of the very few people in that circle who could speak Cantonese, I made friends with many Chinese officials. Then, it was my turn to invite Chinese delegations to visit the NSW Parliament. In 1999, I received a trade delegation from Jining City of Shandong Province and talked to them about the prospect of investing in NSW. In the end, the delegation decided to invest in a wool-processing plant worth \$20 million and a canola oil plan worth \$15 million. On another occasion, I was sent to Hong Kong to run an electoral campaign for John Howard in the Australian expatriate community in Hong Kong. With my linkage there, I helped him get 70,000 votes from Hong Kong Australians.

With the influx of new migrants into Australia in the 1990s, whose ties with mainland China remain strong, there is even stronger incentive for them to engage in transnational

political brokerage. As analysed before, Chinese Australian politicians are most active at the state and local council levels, where there is a sizable Chinese population. This leads to a heightened interest in establishing province-level or city-level sister relationship ties between China and Australia. By the end of 2012, there were 81 pairs of sister states and cities, many of which were achieved through the efforts of Chinese community leaders. As a most recent example, the conclusion of sister city relationship ties between Beijing and Canberra owed a lot to the liaison of Chinese community leaders in Canberra. Fong Sum Yam, President of Australian Beijing Association (Canberra Branch), was one of the central figures in this matter:

At the time, Mr Junsai Zhang (then Chinese Ambassador to Australia) was about to finish his tenure in Australia. He mentioned to me his wish of leaving some legacy behind. The idea of having a sister-city relationship between Beijing and Canberra occurred to us. Then I spoke with Dr David Lee, who was well-connected to the political elite in Canberra due to his profession. He then talked to political heavy-weights in Canberra, and both sides reached an understanding over this. This is how the whole thing was started.

After the idea was raised, other key leaders in Canberra joined force in turning this idea into reality. All major Chinese associations in Canberra wrote letters of support to the then Chief Minister Kate Carnell. These included the ACT Multicultural Council, the ACT Chinese Australian Association, the Australia Canberra Beijing Association, the Federation of Chinese Communities of Canberra and the Dickson Business Group (ACT Legislative Assembly 07/09/2000: 3026). David Ng, Vice President of the ACT Multicultural Council and President of National Australian Chinese Association, was said to have written the first letter to Carnell about the benefits of establishing such a relationship. Soon afterwards, four big delegations led by the Chief Minister were organised in succession to negotiate relevant issues with the Beijing authority. Included in the entourage were those community leaders who had advocated for the cause. "I have yet another role to play in this", said David Ng:

When the motion for passing the Canberra Beijing Sister City Agreement was put to vote in the ACT Legislative Assembly, the Labor Party led by John Stanhope was initially opposed to it due to human right issues. The matter was then postponed to the next day, which coincided with the AGM of National Australian Chinese Association. Both meetings were hosted in the Multicultural Centre, and I happened to come across Stanhope during tea break. He asked me, "You have been to China three times with Carnell. How do you view the matter?" I told him: "If I were you, I would not block the motion. I would abstain instead. You could win the next election, and in

that case, have to deal with China. There are two things about the Chinese. One, you need patience when dealing with the Chinese. Two, the Chinese will never forget those who do them a favour at a critical moment.” I could not say that my words were the determining factor. But Labor did change its position, and it abstained. The agreement was passed.

These concrete cases illustrate that the Chinese overseas are not blindly following the political position of the Chinese government. Instead, they are in constant pursuit of a middle path, which is acceptable to both sides, and in the process consolidate their status as competent intercultural mediators. Underlying these flexible cross-border operations is what Tseen-ling Khoo described as “the postmodern and performative ethnicity”, an ethnicity that comes into being through the enactment of strategies and positions (Lo, Khoo and Gilbert 2000: 5). Straddling the two national contexts, behaviours of Chinese transmigrants are informed by multiple sets of cultural repertoires, which give shape to the transnational habitus (Vertovec 1999: 67). Employing a dual frame of reference, they constantly compare their situation in the home country to their life conditions in the host society, and through the selective use of cultural practices, manage to achieve the optimal result in their transnational exchanges. The impulse against fixity and the situational self-representation have spawned very complex webs of political belongings among the Chinese Australians. Regarding the host society, their attitude is characterised by a mixed sense of pride and inferiority complex. While their pride derives from the acquired “Whiteness”, which is embodied in the democratic system, rule of law and scientific progress of the Western world, the inferiority complex results from the undercurrent of racialisation, which projects “Asian looks” as “a ‘cue’ denoting perpetual ‘foreignness’ and ‘Otherness’” (Tan 2006: 67). The launch of the multicultural discourse, though alleviating the crudest form of racism, never truly intends to topple the inherent hierarchical order between the core culture and minority cultures. The new Race Discrimination Commissioner Tim Soutphommasane angrily shouted out about the “invisibility of Asianness”:

With one or two notable exceptions, Asian-Australians aren’t in the room when it matters. Where are they represented in our ministerial cabinets, our corporate boardrooms and our editorial offices? Will they be represented in such settings soon? (05/11/2012)

The devalued Asianness, reflected in the intractable problem of “bamboo ceiling”, is the main factor motivating the immigrant population to liaise with the home country, where they could play the leading role, a social status generally unavailable to them in the

racially stratified environment of Australia (Glick Schiller, Basch and Blanc 1992: 3). The rejuvenation of China as a global power and its warm courting of the expatriate population make it a viable option for the Chinese overseas to reconnect and achieve social mobility in the overseas setting. In this context, perceptions of China move closer to the favourable image of “the homeland”, though specific mindset, motivation and level of politicisation of the Chinese overseas do vary greatly. The most common mindset I come across in my interviews is the professed allegiance to both Australia and China. As Helen Sham-Ho humorously puts it, “China is like my father, and Australia is like my husband. I will stay with my husband, but my love and respect for my father is everlasting.” For the new migrants from China, they tend to have a stronger identification with the PRC than those re-migrating from Southeast Asia. In their opinion, China is not a mythical, romantic designation viewed from a distance, but forms an integral part of their everyday life, its intimacy arising from the spontaneity of transnational media and uninterrupted linkages sustained by familial connections and business opportunities (Skrbiš 1999: 44). C4, a young Chinese leader in his 30s, passionately expresses his patriotic feelings:

China will be a great nation! I am very confident about it. In the past thirty years, it has achieved economic miracles, and the world is held in amazement. Like Singapore, China is likely to develop a unique model of modernisation different from the Western world. As one of the continuing civilisations in the world, China has its sense of history, value systems and societal conditions, which warrant special policy solutions. We could introduce elements of Western governance to China, but those have to be molded in a way to be compatible with the socio-political conditions of China.

For 1.5 generation community leaders from Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia, they are more likely to identify with the broader Chinese civilisation than with the state. This mentality is also commonly seen among native-born youth, who appreciate the value of Chinese culture *per se* without subscribing to a specific political power (Shi 2005: 23-24). Having his ancestry in Guangdong province but growing up in Malaysia, Anthony Pun’s words are representative of those ethnic Chinese, whose connection with China is diluted over generations:

I am very proud of the Chinese heritage I get from my ancestors. Up until today, I am reading Chinese classics translated into English. I am not a communist, but I am concerned about the future of China. When China becomes stronger, all of us, people of Chinese origin, benefit from it. I am

more than happy to offer my views to the Chinese policy-makers about its policies on overseas Chinese affairs. They put all the emphasis on new migrants, because that is easier. But as time passes, they have to reconnect with people like us, as well as the local youth of Chinese background. Otherwise, they are losing their base.

As William Yu notes, one of the chief indicators of China's rejuvenation is the rekindled interest of assimilated Chinese families to renew their linkage with the home country. S1, Director of Accountancy Invest, provides a case in point:

I was growing up under the roof of Goon Yee Tong, one of the oldest Chinese associations in Chinatown. My father used to be an influential figure in the Sydney Chinese community, and he pushed all his children to learn Chinese. Later on, I was sent to Sydney Boys High School, got a decent university degree and then became a professional investor. I did not have anything to do with the local Chinese until recently, when I realised that my root was after all in China. Moreover, as I was invited as the Australian member of the Global Board of Entrepreneurs and exposed to the big picture, it occurred to me that China held out the greatest promise for our region. Now I also urge my son to learn Chinese. If Sydney Boys High School does not offer Chinese course, I probably will send him to the best international school in China.

Obvious from the above accounts is a juxtaposition of genuine appreciation of the Chinese civilisation and pragmatic considerations of the potential opportunities in China. Indeed, one problem arising from the model of ethnic capital conversion is the blurred boundary between collective goods and self-interest. Advocacy on behalf of the marginalised community in the domestic setting or bridging efforts in the transnational field to promote bilateral exchange could at the same time be construed as calculated measures to gain status and fulfil personal ambitions. In Australia and China alike, there are fierce competitions over the status of "officially recognised community leaders", which could then be translated into political access to high-level decision-makers. However, such contestations are much fiercer in China than in Australia for two important reasons.

For one thing, if we examine the community profile of the Chinese in Australia, it is crystal clear that despite their reputation as the "model migrants", they are still largely excluded from the upper echelon of the society. As Peter Wong poignantly observes:

Yes, Chinese Australians are rich. Our children study hard to become well-paid professionals in medical science, engineering, finance or IT industry. But how many are appointed to the High Court? How many could have real

influence in mainstream political parties? We are really poorly represented in that sense. Our kids have to study hard, for their appearance is an innate disadvantage they have to live with all their life. By studying hard and entering professions, at least they could have an affluent life. But it will take another ten to twenty years before we could make any breakthroughs in the centre of power of this country.

The collective disadvantage serves as a powerful bond to unite Chinese-Australians in time of crisis. This is aptly reflected in many joint actions taken by the Chinese of variegated geographical origins and political factions to fight racial discrimination. For instance, during the heated debates over the proposed removal of section 18 (c)³³ from Racial Discrimination Act in early 2014, more than fifty major Chinese community leaders in Sydney formed a united front to campaign against this move by organising petitions, speaking in mainstream media and liaising with parliamentarians. The common adversity they suffer as a minority group enhances their sense of solidarity and provides a perennial cause to fight for. Organisational activism in China, however, lacks such a focal point. There are no externally imposed issues of common concern. The reward of transnational liaison (in the form of power and status) goes to individual power broker rather than flowing back to the community. This is the socio-political factor behind the propensity of opportunistic behaviours in the Chinese context.

Viewed from a cultural perspective, there has been a significant difference in the perception of the meaning of community leadership in China and Australia. Indeed, the identity of a community leader is a curious combination of subjective internalisation and objective appraisal, and is premised on various types of capital which engender staggeringly divergent interpretations in different civilisational contexts. According to the Western way of thinking, presidents of voluntary associations are respected members of the community, who sacrifice their time and energy for the goodness of the community. In spite of their good reputation, they are essentially volunteers, who are not intrinsically different from ordinary members apart from a heavier responsibility. From a rationalist perspective, material rewards for volunteering in a Western context are simply not attractive enough to propel actions from purely self-interested persons.

³³ The section currently bans actions “reasonably likely, in all the circumstances, to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate others because of the race, colour or national or ethnic origin”.

In contrast, contemporary Chinese society is much more hierarchical. Though not necessarily enjoying high salaries, privilege-holders of different social realms may deploy their respective resources in a series of power exchanges, resulting in an egregious polarisation of status between those holding power and the powerless. Since the 1990s, the PRC government has adopted a proactive policy of courting eminent Chinese overseas as part of its strategy to promote China's soft power. In this context, overseas community leaders are readily incorporated into the cadre class, entitled to all kind of preferential treatments unimagined in Australia. Prominent Chinese overseas are regularly invited to attend embassy functions and state banquets. They are encouraged to participate in political consultative conferences of national and provincial levels, coming into close proximity to high-profile officials in China, a rare privilege for rank-and-file Chinese.

If we regard ethnic capital conversion as a special form of business practice, it is not surprising that the immense status differentials between China and the West would give rise to rampant speculations. In the past two decades, a huge number of ethnic Chinese flocked back to China, all claiming to be "overseas Chinese leaders". Such issues were brought to the forefront of public attention in an article appearing in Beijing Youth Daily on 18 December 2009, whose content was based on a discussion paper arising from consultations organised by the Policy and Regulation Bureau of OCAO of State Council. Entitled *Inquiry of Establishing a Civilised Image of Overseas Chinese*, the report alerted the policy-makers of the malignant competition among overseas Chinese associations, which met with scathing criticisms in numerous host countries such as Italy, Spain, France, Britain and South Africa. A rough estimate gave a staggering figure of some 227 associations created for migrants from Wenzhou area all over the world. It is not difficult to imagine the severity and extensiveness of duplication and disunity between these parallel associations, which are fighting over the issue of legitimacy. It is not without a tinge of irony that there should be more than one Councils for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China in one single region, which purport to unite myriad associations under one patriotic Chinese banner (Beijing Youth Daily 18/12/2009). To solve these problems, the report advocated for better coordination between different governmental organs in charge of overseas Chinese affairs and a stricter evaluative mechanism to measure up the performance of registered overseas Chinese associations.

Chinese associations in Australia are not free from such problems. “More than half of all registered associations are merely shells headed by one so-called leader, without any real impact in the community.” One interviewee confided to me, “Nevertheless, carrying that title, certain opportunists are able to liaise with the Chinese government for self-interest. Believe it or not, some community leaders spend more time cultivating *guanxi* with Chinese officials than staying in Australia” (S6). Admittedly, this can lead to unintended outcomes for many enlightened provincial governments which are eager to import overseas Chinese experts and consult them on Western mode of development. It usually turns out that persons who are most responsive to such calls are usually those with the deepest Chinese hue, quite contrary to the expectation of local Chinese officials. “There is a long way to go for the Chinese government to figure out the structural difference between Australia and China, which are taken advantage of by some people”, says Kim Cai, long-term community worker in Sydney:

Some of our local councillors, when they go back to China, would claim to be the mayor of Australian cities and get to meet with the mayor or deputy mayor of a Chinese city. You and I know the difference. A mayor in China has great power. He has the final say over finance, investment, and even appointment of public servants. In contrast, some local government areas in Australia only have a population of less than 100,000, and they rely on the funding of the State government. It is a laugh stock that Australian local councillors should be regarded as political equivalents of Chinese mayors.

Aware of the extent of opportunistic behaviours, the Chinese central and provincial governments resolve to build up a strict evaluative mechanism to review the performance of overseas Chinese associations and distinguish between the worthy and the opportunists.³⁴

Interestingly, although speculative activities are not nearly as serious in Australia due to the two factors discussed above, the “bad reputation” associated with corruption and fraud circulate freely in the diasporic space and could have extremely negative impact on the symbolic values of “Chineseness” at multiple locales. Media alarms in Australia over “unscrupulous Chinese businessmen” and their collusion with “corrupt Chinese officials” could escalate into suspicions (sometimes unwarranted) of well-established

³⁴ However, for the present stage, there is still a significant gap of information for the Chinese government to evaluate the quality of self-claimed “community leaders”. The assessment largely depends on past experience and reference letters provided by the Chinese embassy rather than a set of objective criteria. There is a long way to go before a systematic approach could be developed to verify the overall credentials of the Chinese overseas.

Chinese organisations. The early retirement of Henry Tsang, former member of the NSW Legislative Council, was precisely due to his connection with Chinese-backed construction company Hightrade, which was investigated for serious tax fraud and alleged “phoenixing”.³⁵ The transnational interconnectivity means that actions in one national context could start a chain of events, which engender real political and policy consequences in another country. In terms of ethnic capital of the Chinese overseas, it means that “Whiteness” accumulated in a Western country could be cancelled out by the depreciation of “Chineseness” in the global stage, and conversely the rising soft power of China (improved “Chineseness”) could facilitate the collective struggle against racial discrimination and bring about a more efficient accumulation of “Whiteness” in host societies. This reaffirms the importance of “mutually-referential” policy-making in the transnational era. In the long run, PRC’s resolve to lift the threshold for transnational exchange and weed out speculative activities could potentially usher in a new power dynamics for the triadic interactions between Australia, China and the diasporic Chinese.

In this chapter, I have analysed various dimensions of transnational exchanges of Chinese associations in Australia. A wide range of economic, sociocultural and political activities are discussed in full, supported by concrete cases. Obviously, overseas-oriented associations are culturally different from service associations, for their viability lies in the capacity of networking with the political elites of both countries. To fulfil this purpose, they have demonstrated a greater reliance on the *guanxi* system home and abroad and displayed a willingness to comply with the pan-nationalist strategy of the Chinese state. However, the Chinese transmigrants have never lost their autonomy. On the one hand, they skillfully convert the “Whiteness” they accumulated in the host society into power and status in the home country. On the other hand, their China-related expertise is promoted to the Australian decision-makers, who are interested in using the platform of immigrant associations to deepen their relationship with China. Underlying these fluid interactions is the diasporic consciousness of the Chinese overseas, who are always looking for the optimal position within the twin structures of Australian multiculturalism and overseas Chinese policies of the PRC. The flexible strategies of the transnational Chinese in turn accelerate the policy reform in both

³⁵ Details of the case could be found at: http://newsstore.fairfax.com.au/apps/viewDocument.ac?sessionId=023BEB43217911AC7E9675D5B7529CE7?sy=afr&pb=all_ffx&dt=selectRange&dr=1month&so=relevance&sf=text&sf=headline&rc=10&rm=200&sp=brs&cls=890&clsPage=1&docID=NCH091024PN24S6F4JNM.

countries, as reflected in the broad Asian strategy of Australia and the conceived evaluative mechanism of China. To date, transnationalism has emerged as a viable alternative for the Chinese overseas to garner resources and achieve social mobility in multiple national contexts, and is posing challenges for nation-states to devise policies to better harness the strength of immigrant associations for their interests.

Conclusion

The above analysis contextualises the latest trends of Chinese organisational development in Australia within a unified model of ethnic capital conversion. A fusion of the domestic and transnational fields is achieved by recognising Australian multiculturalism and overseas Chinese policy of the PRC government as interacting political opportunity structures, within which exchanges of various types of capital are taking place observing a rule of profitability. The strength of this approach lies in its inclusiveness, as well as its emphasis on the agency of the Chinese transmigrants, whose adaptability enables them to realise the greatest value through tactical negotiations with multiple powers.

1. Major Findings

Under the synthesised POS, it is obvious that most Chinese organisations are positively attuning themselves to one or both sets of policy imperatives. Domestically speaking, the emergence and prosperity of local-oriented Chinese organisations in the 1980s was a direct result of the incorporation of the multicultural philosophy in public policy making. Inextricably linked with the vibrant movement of identity politics in the late 1960s, the whole idea of multiculturalism in Australia was shaped by official discourses legitimating public assistance to the disadvantaged groups, ethnic groups included. The establishment of central coordinating agencies like the Office of Multicultural Affairs and Community Relations Commission, the introduction of accountability systems as represented by the whole-of-government approach in the ACT and the Ethnic Affairs Policy Statement in NSW, as well as the comprehensive grant programs for ethnic service providers and multicultural associations are all substantive policy measures to implement the multicultural principle.

The formalisation of the multicultural policy framework undoubtedly helps set the direction for ethnic organisations, which are incrementally enlisted into the state-sponsored welfare institution. Chinese associations, like their counterparts in other ethnic communities, greatly benefit from this societal change. To make themselves eligible for various kinds of public support, local-oriented Chinese associations set out to reform themselves according to Western managerial standards. The past decade witnessed the incorporation of the great majority of Chinese associations under the

Associations Incorporation Act, which is the basic eligibility requirement for funding application. At the end of strong integration are advocacy organisations, community service-providers and representative peak groups, which are thoroughly optimising their corporate governance structure through constant review of their constitutions and regular improvements of the procedural roles. The case study of ACCA aptly demonstrates the transformative trajectory of an entry-level association evolving into a full-fledged, multi-million service provider through continuous, ongoing modernising reform. To work toward the end of modernisation, local-oriented organisations include in their committees and advisory councils a large proportion of social professionals and public servants, who have the right mindset and are equipped with the knowledge, skills and social connections to engage with the government sector. The change of managerial style toward that of general public institutions leads to a subtle transformation of the organisational culture from “benign hierarchy” to voluntarism. At the governance level, all the committee members are essentially unsalaried volunteers, who are on equal footing with ordinary members. The act of volunteering has acquired a symbolic value in the Chinese community and is given formal acknowledgement upon annual banquets of most associations. The breakdown of the hegemonic rule and the burgeoning sense of internal equality determine that internal disputes should solely be resolved through agreed written rules, whose definitive authority was tested by the recent ruling of the Daphne Low VS ACCA case, which was concluded in favour of the three committee members unjustifiably expelled by the organisation. Moreover, the urgency for reform on the part of local-oriented organisations comes from their heavy dependence on government funding. As I found out in my survey, government grants and relevant management income account for more than ninety per cent of the total income of large service organisations. In contrast, state sponsorship for native-place associations and those active in the transnational space is virtually non-existing, which points to a different developmental path for overseas-oriented associations.

The modernising strategy of local-based Chinese organisations has smoothed out their integration into the mainstream governing structure and led to the expansion of cooperative areas between the multicultural state and the Chinese organisational sector. Admittedly, even in its most enlightened version, Australian multiculturalism is always about a conditional recognition of the “cultural other”. Ethnic minorities are rarely portrayed as the national subject by themselves, but as an object to be creatively managed by the governing group. Yet the very admission of cultural diversity into the

field of national power represents a breakthrough in the domain of ethnic affairs and offers new ideological weapons for ethnic leaders aspiring for more national influence. From an ethnic capital perspective, multiculturalism enables the transformation of ethnic identities into a type of symbolic capital, albeit of lesser value, as long as they are safely interpreted within the ambit of preconceived governing structure. Despite the peripheral status of ethnic capital, this already represents a substantial progress compared with the phase of assimilation, when non-Anglo identities are viewed as a deficit rather than asset. The continuing salience of the multicultural policy is essential for the valorisation of ethnicity, which underlies all types of activities in the field of ethnic politics and ensures the allocation of public resources to the ethnic sector.

Local-based Chinese organisational activities are precisely carried out within such a framework. At the most basic level, interest classes, social gatherings, community events and voluntary work are organised by these associations to provide a sense of belonging to community members, many of whom are handicapped by linguistic and cultural barriers. The conscious incorporation of the “social capital perspective” into the organisation of grassroots activities is well reflected in the “local management” strategy introduced by CASS, which encourages the independent management of social activities by its affiliated activity groups and welcomes outstanding volunteers to join the board of governance through a nominating process. In addition, Chinese organisations are working hard toward the preservation and promotion of Chinese tradition in Australia. As Chapter Six introduces, this may take several forms. While entry-level Chinese associations could apply for multicultural grants for their cultural and social activities through the OMA, CRC and local government councils, traditional associations have the natural advantage in turning their history, artefacts and properties into a living part of the broad Australian heritage. The official listing of the Yiu Ming temple and other Chinese sites into the NSW Heritage Register, the increasing local influence of Chinese performing groups like CYL and the government-sponsored Chinatown tourist project are all solid achievements made in this area.

Bolstered by the strand of welfare multiculturalism, Chinese organisations are invited by the state to identify the need of the community and deliver ethno-specific services with subsidies from the government. Core service-organisations like ACCA, ANHF and CASS are all consolidated multi-million service providers with thousands of clients distributed in different parts of Sydney. CASS, for example, provides an extensive

range of services, including health, ageing and disability services, child care, settlement services, vocational training, Chinese language education, as well as counselling services. In recent years, the strong government support of aged care services leads to a conspicuous increase of investment in this area by all Chinese service providers. While ACCA has just opened a new centre in Parramatta for day care services, CASS is constructing its first residential facility. The unstable funding prospect is the key factor which drives all providers to go for the same area, which is characterised by greater growth potential and consistent government commitment.

Politically speaking, Chinese organisations fulfil a number of roles including promoting political communication to the Chinese constituency, undertaking representation and advocacy on behalf of the community and providing the resource base for aspiring Chinese-Australian politicians. To begin with, Chinese organisations serve as an important site to disseminate political knowledge and mobilise community members on sensitive issues. The effect of community mobilisation on the flow of the “Chinese votes” is partially confirmed by my interviews with key community leaders and managers of major Chinese newspapers. At the very least, this factor is crucial enough for mainstream party leaders and government representatives to frequent social functions of Chinese associations, especially before election time, to ensure that a positive message is sent across. Secondly, as part of the established ethnic lobby, key Chinese organisations are invited by the government to form committees, make submissions and participate in policy planning and implementation. The Chinese Ministerial Consultative Committee created under the Labor government in 2012 consisted of prominent Chinese community leaders from across Australia and represented the highest-level, Chinese-specific consultative body for the government. The normalisation of the consultative role of Chinese organisations gives rise to specialised advocacy associations and peak bodies with significant advocacy function. The case of CAF gives a good indication of how advocacy groups engage in public debate, monitor media coverage, liaise with the government and help raise the political awareness of the community. Finally, Chinese organisations serve as the resource base to support the direct political representation of Chinese community leaders. Prominent Chinese-Australian politicians like Helen Sham-Ho Peter Wong, Henry Tsang and Ernest Wong have all been involved in community services at varying stages of their life and are assuming executive and advisory roles in a huge number of Chinese organisations. Strong organisational background is a highly valued quality when major

parties select their ethnic intermediaries. Despite the underlying instrumental motives for ethnic votes and political donation, the inherent value of ethnic capital is recognised, thus creating chances for Chinese leaders to participate in mainstream politics.

The multiple roles played by local-based Chinese organisations under the sponsorship of the Australian state are demonstrative of the degree of their integration into the host society. Not without frictions, an uneasy alliance is formed between ethnic activists and “white multiculturalists” to create a new power order, in which ethnic resources and the ability to appreciate and utilise them are taken into account in the accumulation of “Whiteness”. As Hage rightly points out, an ongoing struggle unfolds itself between Australo-Britishness and white cosmo-multiculturalists, both competing for the national aristocratic status (Hage 2000: 207). Essentially, the war of identities is waged between Caucasians of different cultural orientations, and the role left for ethnic leaders, in this broad picture, is a rather supplementary one, usually as collaborators of “white multiculturalists” to keep interethnic conflict in check and maintain harmonious community relations. Incremental changes toward greater tolerance and wider scope of socio-political participation might be achieved through advocacy and community mobilisation, but structural reforms with the potential of changing the predominant power structure is not even remotely possible. This became quite evident with the reinterpretation of multiculturalism under the Howard administration and the shifting emphasis from ethnic rights to a bland discourse of social cohesion, resulting in the serious regression of community activism led by Chinese associations.

However, the agency of Chinese organisations is best shown in these grim circumstances. Faced with the unfavourable situation of budget cuts, policy bias and political tokenism, Chinese community leaders are conceiving new ways of adapting themselves to the situation. While the adoption of social enterprising by CASS is a viable strategy to ensure financial sustainability, the establishment of the Unity Party signals the transition of political styles of Asian community leaders from passive cooperation with major parties to active engagement with mainstream politics based on the strength of community organisational network. Although the Unity Party ceased to be important after the demise of One Nation, it fostered a pool of young talent through its mentoring programs. Ultimately, Chinese organisations do not resist integration into the host society, and on the contrary, are constantly improving their profiles through modernising reform to fight for greater socio-political space in the host society. When

the policy regime of Australia proves to be too volatile, Chinese community leaders are conceiving alternative channels of social mobility, which are manifest in the transnational networking of overseas-oriented organisations.

True enough, China's rising profile in the international arena and its proactive policy in overseas Chinese affairs are probably the most crucial factors in improving the symbolic status of ethnic capital, re-orienting its flow in the transnational network and creating new ways of capital conversion at the global level. Rather than undermining the kinds of capital conversion mentioned by Tabar and others, they have led to an explosive growth of new forms of exchanges on a scale unimagined in the pre-globalisation era. In the past few decades, hundreds of Chinese organisations were founded in Australia to cultivate links between mainland China and overseas Chinese communities. Particularly important are those new locality associations created by mainlanders and a wide variety of cultural, professional and economic associations specialising in transnational exchanges. As Weidenbaum and Hughes grudgingly admit in analysing the "bamboo network" of expatriate Chinese entrepreneurs:

There has been a recent turnaround in the relationship between the overseas Chinese and their homeland. Ironically, overseas Chinese who once fled the mainland under difficult circumstances are now by far the largest investors in mainland China...So far, a tentative symbiotic relationship has developed. The living standard of mainland China is rising rapidly with the influx of foreign investment; that investment, in turn appears to be earning substantial profits for overseas Chinese investors. (1996: 11)

In sharp contrast to service organisations, overseas-oriented organisations are less affected by the local regulatory regime apart from the obvious necessity of registration. Self-managed and self-funded, they are under no pressure to undertake reform for a greater chance of getting public funding. As a result, their management style is closer to the traditional paradigm of "headman rule", in which organisational leaders enjoy greater power and influence, but in exchange are expected to commit their personal resources to maintain the influence of organisations. Acting like power-brokers, the strength of transnational Chinese organisations lies in their ability to network with the governing class home and abroad and exercise policy influence through their lobbying efforts. To this end, most of these associations have a high threshold for membership, which is based on an intangible appraisal of status deriving from wealth, political influence, personal network and professional expertise.

In recent years, there has been an intensification of transnational exchanges conducted by overseas-oriented organisations in a variety of domains. In terms of economy and trade, business organisations serve as important vehicles for the exchange of information and making of business partnerships among the class of ethnic Chinese entrepreneurs. Large-scale international business conventions and fora are frequently hosted by prominent transnational organisations, often in collaboration with the local government. The biannual World Chinese Entrepreneurs Convention, for example, has evolved into a world feast, attracting thousands of delegates from all over the world. The regular hosting of these world-class conventions and fora is not only conducive to the formation of an integrated Chinese business network at the global level, but also brings about tangible benefits for the economies of the hosting and participating countries. Interestingly, the globalising process is accompanied by the contradictory trend of localisation, as reflected by the dynamic interactions between native-place associations and Chinese regional and local governments. Compared with big metropolises, small cities and towns often provide a more favourable environment for investment, which is characterised by stronger policy support and less bureaucratic constraints. The linguistic advantage, cultural literacy and sometimes ancestral affiliation enable Chinese business organisations to tap into those opportunities at the local government level through direct liaison with officials in charge, an approach hard to be imitated by ordinary foreign investors. Moreover, with the rejuvenation of China and its global economic expansion, transnational business organisations are increasingly assuming an advisory role for Chinese investors and enterprises to venture overseas. At the individual level, business leaders in Australia are flocking back to China to give seminars on investment opportunities or forming business partnerships with Chinese nationals. My research shows that nowadays money is no longer the primary concern of the Chinese government. Soft qualities of ethnic Chinese leaders such as local knowledge, connections and experiences are gaining currency and creating new forms of cross-border collaborations.

In the socio-cultural domain, we have observed the remarkable industrial development of overseas-oriented associations through the integration of resources in the transnational field. The three cases of AIMG, ACPAA and Healthpac demonstrate the centrality of resource input from China in their transition from community groups into highly professionalised transnational players in their respective fields. It shows that while ethnic activism is allowed for in the multicultural setting, it could hardly develop

into scale without alternative resource input, especially that from the home country. Primordial bond with China, when combined with pragmatic considerations of potential opportunities, gives rise to the revival of overseas Chinese nationalism and a wide range of transnational political activities. Nationalist sentiments are expressed through disaster relief efforts, donations, moral support for China's policy in the international arena and sometimes proactive movements to safeguard the national interest of the PRC. The expanding reach and growing influence of the Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China illustrates the closer alignment of political positions between the PRC and overseas Chinese communities.

Underlying all these transnational activities is the reverse form of ethnic capital conversion. While the facet of Chineseness is activated to create trust when engaging with the Chinese government, the actual capital being converted is "Whiteness", which is embodied in professional qualifications, business strength, political careers or any other proof of accomplishment in the host society. The hierarchical social structure of China means that through such converting practices, ethnic Chinese leaders could be readily enlisted into the elite class, who are entitled to all kinds of privileges not accessible in Australia. The immense status differential between China and Australia is the major cause behind the emergence of hundreds of transnational associations in a matter of ten years, resulting in the awkward situation that China has to conceive an evaluative mechanism to assess their actual worth.

It is not without a sense of irony that upon encounters with the more "authentic" carriers of Chinese culture, for instance, Chinese citizens or Chinese government officials, a good number of ethnic Chinese could not help flaunting their "Whiteness", and are unreserved in their criticism about unsatisfactory aspects of the Chinese society, the very comments which would probably enrage them if aired by Caucasians. However, it should be noted that such critical remarks do not imply a self-imposed alienation from the Chinese affairs. On the contrary, by positing themselves as principled critics who know the quick cure to various social evils, they passionately embrace opportunities made available through the eagerness of Chinese government to tackle many emerging problems with advanced Western experience.

Similarly, this strategy is used in a reverse fashion when dialogues are held with the host government. Through formal consultative mechanism or behind-the-scenes

advisory sessions, Chinese community leaders assume expertise in China-related issues and offer advice to Australian policy-makers on the proper way of engaging with China. In this context, proof of allegiance lies in their “Whiteness”, and their “Chineseness” is converted into social and political capitals in policy areas such as foreign diplomacy, international trade and multiculturalism. As I have argued in the chapter of interpretive framework, the dual nature of ethnic capital and its situational representation in different national contexts observe the rule of profitability and tradability and are conducive to the realisation of the greatest value for the capital agents.

2. Research Significance

The expanded model of ethnic capital conversion provides a useful perspective to analyse the different pathways of overseas Chinese organisations, those in Australia being no exceptions. The development of these organisations basically follows the twin threads of modernisation and transnationalism, both of which point to the direction of a more efficient accumulation of ethnic capital. While the development of local-oriented organisations could be attributed to the introduction of multicultural policy which subsidises ethnic-specific services and enables the conversion of “Chineseness” into a multicultural capital recognised by the mainstream society, the global promotion of the overseas Chinese nationalism has propelled ambitious ethnic Chinese to invest the resources they accumulated overseas back in China for greater profits, often through the vehicle of transnational associations. The centrality of service organisations and transnational organisations in Chinese-Australian communities corresponds with the two major channels of capital conversion, which require varying strategies for success. These are quintessentially reflected in the modernising reform of local-oriented organisations and transnational networking of overseas-oriented organisations.

The proposed model and its application to the developmental patterns of Chinese organisational network in Australia engender significant policy implications for decision-makers of both countries. It poses important questions about feasible policies which could enable nation-states to better harness the strength of diasporic communities. Indeed, past literature on ethnic associations often rests upon the competing claims of home country and host society, and most analyses are based on normative views about the desirability, possibility and expected timelines of migrants’ assimilation into the new society. Too often, the progressive integration of the migrants is posited in

opposition to their lingering or rekindled affections for the home country, and such a zero-sum worldview, as my fieldwork shows, is detrimental to a realistic appraisal of diasporic activities and is not conducive to sound policy-making.

My analysis of Chinese organisations shows that though at times acting as willing accomplice of state initiatives, Chinese transmigrants never truly surrender themselves to the dictates of governmentality. Instead, they are in constant pursuit of a middle path, which is acceptable to multiple political powers and in the process consolidate their positions as competent intercultural mediators. In the specific case of Chinese Australians, the prospective national strength of Australia and China, the present and potential cooperation between the two countries and the degree of their reliance on the local Chinese community all have significant bearing on the pricing of the ethnic capital. The closer the bilateral tie becomes, the more benefits there are because of a higher pricing of the ethnic capital and a greater volume of exchanges. This means that apart from moments of unbridled speculation, pursuit of self-interest for Chinese Australians, in most cases, is not in conflict with the national interests of the countries they interact with. Those transnational activities, when carried out with a sound political mind, could be mutually enhancing in producing a win-win situation for all three parties involved in the converting process. The optimal result for the Chinese Australians will be, in this context, a balanced expression of two sets of belonging, one not leading to the compromise of the other, and the appreciation of the twin facets of the ethnic Chinese capital due to the positivities arising from constructive Australia-China relations.

The overall compatibility of interests between the three parties means that the bridging role of Chinese Australians could be equally useful for Australian and Chinese policy-makers. As I pointed out in Chapter Seven, a wide range of transnational activities are welcomed by both countries. Common grounds could be found in the increase of bilateral trade, making of sister-city relationship ties and various joint undertakings in cultural, professional and scientific areas, most of which could be well facilitated by the organisational network. Admittedly, China is more experienced than Australia in channeling the agency of the diasporic community for its use, given its long history of courting the Chinese overseas. But with the professed goal of “Engaging with Asia”, Australia also has a vested interest in activating the latent ethnic resources available in the community. While the newly proposed policy theme of “Productive Diversity” in Australia has already touched on the issue, a major expansion of the caveats of

multiculturalism is probably required for Australia to explore the full range of opportunities in relation to its internal Chinese population. In this regard, Andrew Jakubowicz shared a similar view:

The “Chinese” question raises for Australian political life the major case of a post-multicultural politics, where people who have settled in Australia also remain connected to an immigration source country with large scale economic ties to Australia...For the first time the Australian government’s exploration of multicultural policy was framed by issues associated with globalisation, with particular emphasis placed on source countries “in the region”, code primarily for China, and the role of diaspora populations in sustaining economic, cultural and political links. (2011: 702)

On the part of China, the main issue lies in the rational assessment and selective adoption of the imported knowledge and experiences from the Western countries. As Huntington famously claims:

Modernization and economic development neither require nor produce cultural westernization. To the contrary, they promote a resurgence of, and renewed commitment to, indigenous cultures. (1996: 37-41)

Past history of interactions between the Chinese overseas and the PRC points to an increasingly rational attitude of China in assessing the value of “Whiteness”. Compared with the early euphoria over everything Western in the 1980s, China is now selectively incorporating those elements which could help advance “an alternative vision of modernity” (Chen and Goodman 2012; Zhao 2010). Dialectically viewed, the speculative activities of certain Chinese organisations will hasten the process of weeding out of the unworthy and give impetus to the systematic restructuring of the entire domain of overseas Chinese policies. To learn from trial and error will be the inevitable course for both countries to forsake unrealistic expectations and reach an in-depth understanding of the common ground and structural differences of each other.

On a final note, this thesis is by no means a final step in establishing a transnational perspective to comprehend the organisational activities of Chinese Australians. It is true that the thesis proffers an explanation of the divergent developmental patterns of overseas Chinese organisations from the lens of ethnic capital conversion, but in the meantime it also raises more questions. Firstly, although the flexible self-positioning of the Chinese transmigrants could in principle advance the national interests of both countries, in practice, it requires a huge amount of work to carefully examine potential

risks and conceive viable modes of “mutually-referential” policy-making, which could reduce such risks to the greatest extent. Secondly, the current organisational activism is largely sustained by 1.5 generation ethnic Chinese and first-generation mainlanders. My research finds out that native-born youth tend to have few incentives in participating in ethnic community activities. Although the rise of China has rekindled some interest in reconnecting with China, it is not clear whether it is sufficient to sustain the current level of organisational activism for the next twenty to thirty years. It remains to be seen whether these organisations will simply be phased out with the maturity of the native-youth or evolve to be mainstream enough so that they cease to be ethnic organisations. Last but not least, the analytical potency of the model of ethnic capital conversion lies in its uniform interpretation of the wide array of activities undertaken by ethnic transnational brokers from an economic perspective. However, in doing so, it risks suppressing the multiplicity of subjective positions and the metaphysical possibility of the altruistic side of human nature, which cannot be addressed by this model. To remedy this problem, I have provided an account of the typical perceptions of China and Australia by Chinese overseas and tried to balance the rationalist view with personal narratives of my interviewees. But it is surely worth the efforts to conduct a full-scale research on the subjectivities of the transnational Chinese, which could complement the rationalist analysis of patterns and trends. All considered, this thesis satisfactorily answers all the research questions raised in Introduction and provides a unified model to account for the variety of Chinese organisational activities in the transnational space. Despite its limitations, it represents a fair attempt to contribute to the general literature on ethnic organisations and fill the gap about the specific case of Chinese organisations in Australia.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Inventory of Chinese Community Organisations in Sydney and Canberra (in alphabetic order)

1. ACT Chinese Australian Association Inc.
堪培拉澳华会
2. Auhua (Australian-Chinese) Friendship Association
澳华友好协会
3. Aus-China Interchange Inc.
澳华交流中心
4. Ausinan Science & Technology Society
澳华科学技术协会
5. Australia Ann Kway Association Inc.
澳大利亚福建安溪同乡联谊会
6. Australia Beijing Association Inc. (Canberra)
澳大利亚北京会
7. Australia China Economics, Trade & Cultural Association
澳洲中华经贸文化交流促进会
8. Australia China Friendship Society NSW Inc.
澳中友好协会
9. Australia China Real Estate & Finance Association
澳大利亚中国房地产金融协会
10. Australia-China Youth Chamber of Commerce
澳大利亚澳华青年商会
11. Australia-China Zhanjiang International United Association of Commerce
澳中湛江国际联合商会
12. Australia Chinese Cultural Exchange Association
澳大利亚中国文化交流会
13. Australia Chinese Cultural Promotion Association
澳大利亚中华文化促进会
14. Australia-Chinese Education Exchange Association
澳中教育交流协会

15. Australia Chinese Language Teachers Association Inc.
全澳中文教师协会
16. Australia Chinese Opera and Media Association
澳洲中国大众传媒及戏曲文化协会
17. Australia Community Multicultural Arts & Education Association Inc.
澳洲多元文化艺术教育联合会
18. Australia Foshan Association
澳洲佛山联谊总会
19. Australia Fujian Chamber of Commerce Ltd.
澳大利亚福建工商联谊总会
20. Australia Fujian Entrepreneurs Inc.
澳大利亚福建总商会
21. Australia Fuqing Association Inc.
澳大利亚福清同乡联谊会
22. Australia Fuzhou Association Inc.
澳洲福州同乡会
23. Australia Fuzhou Business Association
澳洲福州商会
24. Australia Guangdong Friendship Association
澳洲广东友好协会
25. Australia Guangzhou Association Inc.
澳大利亚广州同乡会
26. Australia Tianjin Association
澳大利亚天津同乡会
27. Australia Tianjin Chinese Association
澳大利亚天津同乡联谊会
28. Australian Anhui Association
澳大利亚安徽乡友联合会
29. Australian Cambodian Chinese Association
澳洲柬华同胞会
30. Australian Chao Shan Association of Commerce Inc.
澳大利亚潮汕商会
31. Australian Chao Shan Youth Association

- 澳大利亚潮汕青年联谊会
32. Australian Chinese Association
澳大利亚华人协会
33. Australian Chinese Chamber of Commerce
澳联商会
34. Australian Chinese Charity Foundation
澳洲华人公益金
35. Australian Chinese Community Association of NSW
澳洲新南威尔士州澳华公会
36. Australian Chinese Culture and Economic Association Inc.
澳中文化经济促进会
37. Australian Chinese Descendants Mutual Association Inc.
澳洲华裔相济会
38. Australian Chinese Folk Dancers Association
澳大利亚舞蹈家协会
39. Australian-Chinese International Association of Commerce
澳华国际商会
40. Australian Chinese Masonic Society
澳洲洪门致公总堂
41. Australian Chinese Media Group
澳洲华人传媒集团
42. Australian-Chinese & Overseas Chinese Association
澳洲华侨华人友好协会
43. Australian Chinese Performing Artists' Association
澳华文联
44. Australian Chinese Seniors Club
澳洲华谊会
45. Australian Chinese Sports Federation
澳大利亚华人体育联合会
46. Australian Chinese Teo Chew Association Inc.
澳洲潮州同乡会
47. Australian Chinese Violinists Association
澳大利亚华人小提琴家协会

48. Australian Chinese Youth Council
澳大利亚中华青年联合总会
49. Australian Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China
澳洲中国和平统一促进会
50. Australian Council of Chinese Organisations
澳大利亚华人团体协会
51. Australian F Q X Art Association
澳洲傅全香民族艺术协会
52. Australian Fujian Association
澳洲福建乡情联谊会
53. Australian Hangzhou Association
澳大利亚杭州同乡会
54. Australian Hokien Huay Kuan Inc.
澳洲福建会馆
55. Australian Hunan Association
澳大利亚湖南会
56. Australian International Association of Trade & Commerce Inc.
澳洲国际联合总商会
57. Australian International Youth Association
澳大利亚国际青年商会
58. Australian Longyan Association
澳洲龙岩同乡会
59. Australian Mainland Chinese Association
澳洲中国公民公会
60. Australian Medical Exchange & Development Association
澳洲医学交流促进会
61. Australian Minnan Association Inc.
澳大利亚闽南同乡会
62. Australian Nursing Home Foundation
澳华疗养院基金
63. Australian Panyu Association
澳洲番禺同乡会
64. Australian Pinnan Association

- 澳大利亚平潭同乡会
65. Australian Qi Gong Association
澳大利亚气功总会
66. Australian Shenzhen Association
澳洲深圳联谊会
67. Australian Traditional Chinese Medicine Association
澳洲（全国）中医药协会
68. Australian Wuxi Association
澳大利亚无锡同乡会
69. Australian Wuxi Chamber of Commerce
澳大利亚无锡商会
70. Australian Yangzhou Association
澳大利亚扬州同乡会
71. Australian Yong Chun Association
澳大利亚永春同乡会
72. Beijing University of Aeronautical Engineer Alumni Association
澳大利亚北航校友会
73. Canberra Multicultural Community Forum
堪培拉多元文化社区论坛
74. Canberra Society of Chinese Scholars
堪培拉中华学社
75. Central Coast Chinese Association Inc.
中海岸华人总会
76. Chi Woo Athletics Association Inc.
澳洲纽省精武体育会
77. China Chamber of Commerce in Australia
澳大利亚中国总商会
78. Chinese Australian Forum
澳华论坛
79. Chinese Australian Services Society Ltd.
澳洲华人服务社
80. Chinese Community Council of Australia
澳大利亚华人社区议会

81. Chinese Heritage Association of Australia
澳洲华人历史文物会
82. Chinese Students and Scholars Association of Canberra
堪培拉中国学生学者联谊会
83. Chinese Youth League of Australia
澳洲侨青社
84. Chung Chin Hakka Association of Australia Inc.
澳洲崇正会
85. Chungshan Society of Australia
澳大利亚中山同乡会
86. Confederation of Australasia Association of Business & Industry
澳纽工商联合会
87. Confucius Research Society Inc.
澳洲孔子研究会
88. East Timor Chinese Community Association of NSW, Australia
澳大利亚新州东帝汶华裔同乡会
89. Federation of Chinese Associations of ACT Inc.
堪培拉华人联合会
90. Federation of Chinese Communities of Canberra Inc.
堪培拉华联社
91. Foochow Association of Australia Inc.
澳洲福州十邑同乡会
92. Global Union for Tsung Tsin & Hakka Association
全球客家崇正会联合总会（澳洲分会）
93. Goon Yee Tong Inc.
澳洲东莞同乡会公义堂
94. Hainanese Association of NSW, Australia Inc.
澳大利亚新州海南同乡会
95. Hakka Association of NSW
纽省客属联谊会
96. Healthpac International Medical Corporation
澳大利亚康平国际医疗中心
97. Hing-Ling Community Services Association

- 澳洲兴宁同乡会
98. Hubei Association of Australia
澳大利亚湖北同乡会
99. Jiangxi Association of Australia Inc.
澳大利亚江西同乡会
100. Lao-Chinese Association Inc.
澳洲寮华联谊会
101. Lions Club of Sydney North West Inc.
雪梨西北区狮子会
102. National Australian Chinese Association Inc.
澳大利亚华人会
103. NSW Association of Chinese Medicine
澳华中医学会
104. Oceania Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China
大洋洲中国和平统一促进会
105. Oriental Culture & Art Association Australia Inc.
澳洲东方文化艺术总会
106. Overseas Chinese University Alumni (Australian Chapter)
华侨大学澳大利亚校友会
107. Oz-Sino Association for Advancement of Culture, Science & Technology
澳洲文化科技促进会
108. Professionals & Specialists Club Inc.
澳洲专业人士俱乐部
109. Sydney Chinese Women's Network
雪梨华人妇女联谊会
110. Sydney Chinese Zhi-Qing Association
悉尼中国知青协会
111. Sze Yap Society
澳洲雪梨四邑同乡会
112. Taiwanese Association of Canberra
堪培拉台湾同乡会
113. Timor Chinese Association of NSW
纽省帝汶华人联谊会

114. West Region Chinese Association
西区华人协会
115. Western Suburb Hainanese Association
西区海南同乡会
116. Yiu Ming Hung Fook Tong Society
澳洲要明洪福堂同乡会
117. Zhe Hang Association of Australia Inc.
澳大利亚浙江杭州同乡联谊会
118. Zhejiang Chinese Society of Australia
澳大利亚浙江同乡会
119. Zhigong Overseas Friendship Association (Australia)
致公海外联谊会（澳大利亚）
120. Zhongshan Medical University Alumni Association (Australian Chapter)
中山医科大学澳洲校友会

Appendix B: Information Sheet

Please read this sheet carefully and keep it throughout the period of research.

Title of Project: The socio-political activism of Chinese community organisations in Canberra and Sydney

Period of Investigation: November 2010-November 2013

Details of researcher: This research is being independently undertaken by Ms Jingjing Shen towards her Doctorate (PhD) degree at the Research School of Social Sciences, College of Arts and Social Sciences, Australian National University.

Supervisor: Dr Rachel Bloul, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University.

Purpose of research: The research is exploratory, aimed at studying the network of Chinese community organisations in Sydney and Canberra. The research focus will be the latest organisational development of Chinese communities in multicultural Australia in terms of organisational structure, socio-political activeness, two-way interactions with the broad national community and its significance in the construction of a transnational Chinese diaspora.

What the research involves: The research involves the researcher, Ms Jingjing Shen, conducting fieldwork in Canberra and Sydney for approximately one year, where she will participate in, observe and ask questions about activities hosted by various Chinese community organisations. She will also conduct in-depth interviews with key members of Chinese voluntary associations, principals of Chinese language schools, prominent Chinese Australians and a number of public figures, who made significant contributions toward community development and policy making.

Participation: If you so wish, you are invited to participate in an interview lasting one hour or longer depending on how much information you would like to offer. Participation is completely voluntary. The interview can be conducted at the ANU or at your office at a mutually convenient time. You may withdraw from participation in the

project at any time, and you do not need to provide any reason. If you decide to withdraw from the project, record of your involvement will be destroyed. You are welcome to request a copy of the summary notes from the interview. With your permission, I may also record the interview using a digital audio recorder.

Use of information: The results of this research will be reported in a doctoral thesis and may be published in academic journals or books. However, your permission will be sought before your material is used. Neither your name nor your position titles will be reported in connection with any of the information collected during interviews, unless you have explicitly consented to be identified. Once published, the results of this research will be made available upon request.

Protection of data: The researcher will make best efforts to protect your privacy. Any physical materials (written notes, consent forms, etc.) will be stored in locked filing cabinets in her office at the Research School of Social Sciences of the ANU; and any electronic materials (transcribed notes and audio files) will be protected by password and stored in office computer. Both the room and the computer are only accessible by the researcher.

Potential impact on participants: This research does not intend to seek any information in interviews, which is particularly sensitive or confidential. However, in case others may be able to guess the source of information provided in interviews, even if it is not attributed to any person, it is important that you do not disclose information which is of confidential status or defamatory to other persons or organisations.

All contributions used will be appropriately attributed.

Questions and concerns: The researcher can be contacted in writing at the Research School of Social Sciences, Haydon-Allen Building, ANU, ACT, 0200; or by phone: (02) 61253977 or (02) 61943382; by mobile: 0432 581 724; or by email: jingjing.shen@anu.edu.au. This research is being supervised by Dr Rachel Bloul in the Research School of Social Sciences, who can be contacted on (02) 6125 5178.

If you have any ethical concerns about this research, you may contact the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Australian National University by phone: (02) 6125 7945 or by email: human.ethics.officer@anu.edu.au.

Thank you for your interest!

Appendix C: Consent Form

Title of Project: The socio-political activism of Chinese community organisations in Canberra and Sydney

1. I consent to take part in the research project of *The socio-political activism of Chinese community organisations in Canberra and Sydney*. I have read the information sheet for this project and understood its contents. I have had the nature and purpose of the research project, so far as it affects me, fully explained to my satisfaction by the researcher. My consent is freely given.
2. I understand that if I agree to participate in the research project, I will be asked to attend an interview. This will take one hour or more and will involve questions about Australian multicultural policy, Chinese migration and settlement, and socio-political functions of Chinese community organisations in Australia.
3. I understand that while information gained during the research project may be published in academic journals or books, my name and position title will not be used in relation to any of the information I have provided, unless I explicitly indicate that I am willing to be identified when quoted.
4. I understand that any personal, sensitive or potentially incriminating information will be kept confidential so far as the law allows. This form and any other data collected throughout the duration of the interview will be stored separately in a locked office at the Australian National University. Electronic data will be kept in a computer accessible only by password by the researcher.
5. I understand that although any comments I make will not be attributed to me in any publication without my consent, it is possible that others may guess the source of information; and I should avoid disclosing information which is of confidential status or which is defamatory of any person or organisation.
6. I understand that I may withdraw from the research project at any stage without providing any reason, and that this will not have any adverse consequences for me. If I withdraw, the information I provided will not be used in the research project.
7. In any publications produced as a result of this research I consent to be identified by (check one)
 - ☐ My full name, position and organisation
 - ☐ My position and organisation (it is possible that others could identify you by these)

- ☐ My organisation
- ☐ Complete anonymity

Signed..... Date.....

Audio Taping

I consent to have my interview (if any) audio-taped by the interviewer. I understand that the tapes will be stored securely at the Australian National University and will be erased at the conclusion of the study.

Signed..... Date.....

Appendix D: Interview Schedule

A. Questions to Head of Chinese Community Organisations

Basic Information

1. What is the name of the organisation? Was there any change of names since its formation?
2. When was the association founded? Who were the founders? How many generations of leaders are there?
3. What's the ethnic background of the founder or founders of the association? Does it impact on the geographical origin of its members?

Structure

1. How is the association organised? Is there a hierarchical structure comprising the central committee, ordinary members, paid staff and volunteers? What's the approximate number for each category?
2. How is the central committee selected? How long is the tenure for chairmanship?
3. To what extent does traditional Chinese culture influence the structure and management of the organisation?
4. Does the association have local branches in other States? Or does it affiliate to a national or international body?
5. Are there schools, newspapers or community service programs affiliated to the association?
6. Is the association incorporated? Is there a formal annual general meeting for all the members to attend? Are there any records or documents for the AGM?

Leadership

1. Are there any historical records of the founder or the founding story of the organisation?
2. How many generations of leaders are there? What are their places of origin? Does the place of origin impact upon recruitment of members or management styles?
3. How does the president define his or her identity as a Chinese-Australian?
4. Basic information of the current leader: age, year of migration, place of origin, profession, etc.?

5. Do you serve in any advisory bodies for the making of migration and settlement policies? Or are you directly involved in the implementation of policies?

Activities

1. What's the aim of the association? Has the aim undergone any changes?
2. In what sense is a Chinese community organisation different from general ones, which do not have an ethnic focus?
3. What are the main local activities and services offered by the association?
4. Does the association engage in any transnational activities?
5. Do Chinese community organisations play a unique socio-political role, which cannot be replaced or fulfilled by mainstream organisations? If so, what kind of role is that?

Funding

1. What are the sources of funding for the organisation (membership fee, donation, funding by government, sponsorship, etc.)? Which source accounts for the majority of income?
2. Does the organisation receive any non-monetary support or concessions, which help reduce operating cost?
3. Does the organisation actively seek commercial sponsorship or intend to do so in the long run?

Publicity

1. Is there a permanent venue for the association? Does the association have its own official website?
2. What kind of liaisons does the association enjoy (e.g. Chinese embassy, Australian government agencies, other Chinese or ethnic associations home and abroad)?
3. What's the major channel of member recruitment for the association?
4. Does the association have any regular publications or newsletters?

Vision

1. What's the future agenda for the association? Does the association seek greater involvement in mainstream Australian social and political life?

2. Does the association actively engage with China? If so, how does the association position itself in the framework of Australia-China relations?
3. What are the perceived problems which might impede the realisation of such goals?
4. What kind of strategies do you have in mind for the future development of the organisation?

B. Questions to Principals of Chinese Language Schools

1. When was the school founded, by whom?
2. Is the school affiliated to a Chinese community organisation or other peak bodies?
3. Where does the funding come from? Does the school receive donations or non-monetary support of any kind?
4. What is the textbook used by the school?
5. What is the number of board members, students, teachers and volunteers?
6. What is the main source of students who attend language schools?
7. What measures does the school take to enrol more students?
8. How are the second-generation, Chinese-Australian children different from Chinese ones? What teaching strategies are used to adapt to their special characteristics?
9. How are the teachers enlisted? What is their nationality?
10. How are the volunteers enlisted? What is their nationality? What's the incentive for volunteering?
11. Are you satisfied with the current level of governmental support in community language schools? What are the perceived problems in running community language schools in Australia?
12. What kind of strategies do you have in mind for the future development of the school?

C. Questions to prominent Chinese-Australian leaders and public figures, who have made significant contributions to community life and policy development

1. What is your place of origin? How does your ancestry influence your perception of self-identity?
2. Are you head or member of any Chinese community organisations? If so, please specify.
3. Do you serve in any advisory bodies for the making of migration and settlement policies? Or are you directly involved in the implementation of policies?
4. How will you evaluate the current development of Chinese community organisations in Australia?
5. What are the major strengths of Chinese community in Australia? How will such strengths be used to create a more cohesive and equal society?
6. What are the perceived problems in community development? Are there any strategies to cope with such challenges?
7. Do you think that special grants should be provided for cultural maintenance and realisation of social justice? If so, what are the areas to be covered?
8. How do you evaluate the practical implementation of multicultural policy from your own observation or experience?
9. How do you envisage the future development of Chinese community with the maturity of the second-generation Chinese Australians? How will the demographical change influence the pattern and organisation of Chinese community associations in Australia?
10. What kind of role can Chinese community organisations play to facilitate better bilateral relations between Australia and China?

Appendix E: Details of Interviewees

Name/Code ³⁶	Place of Birth	Profile
C1	China	Active in the promotion of Chinese culture by creating the first Chinese language newspaper in Canberra.
C2	China	Active in the circle of Chinese Australian writers; Organiser of Chinese children's dancing troupe in Canberra.
C3	Taiwan	Young academic in China-related issues; Past committee member of Taiwanese Association in Australia.
C4	China	Past President of Chinese Students and Scholars Association of Canberra; Secretary of Federation of Chinese Associations of ACT.
S1	Australia	Committee member of Goon Yee Tong; Global Board Director of Entrepreneurs' Organisation.
S2	China	Past student refugee in the June Fourth incident; Long-term welfare worker in the Sydney Chinese community.
S3	China	Renowned Chinese writer in Sydney; President of NSW Chinese Writers Association.
S4	China	Owner of a Chinese store in Sydney; Committee member of Australian Chao Shan Association of Commerce Inc.; Committee member of Australian Chinese Teo Chew Association Inc..
S5	China	Famous Chinese-Australian politician;

³⁶ The interviewees have indicated their preferred level of anonymity. For those who opt for complete anonymity, they are given codes as identifiers. The letter in the code represents the location (C-Canberra, S-Sydney), while the number is sequential for each location.

		Prominent community leader.
S6	China	Past student refugee in the June Fourth incident; Member of the Australia-China Youth Chamber of Commerce; Currently successful entrepreneur in Sydney.
Cai, Kim	China	Long-term social worker in the Sydney Chinese community.
Chang, Arthur Gar Lock	China	Past President of Chinese Youth League of Australia; Founder and Vice President of Australia-China Friendship Association; The first person to hoist a PRC national flag in Australia in 1972.
Chen, Hudson	Hong Kong	Current Vice President of Chinese Catholic Community Inc.; Founding Trustee and current President of Australian Chinese Charity Foundation; Founding Co-Chairman of Liberal Party Chinese Council; Honorary Advisor of Australia China Economics, Trade & Culture Association.
Cheng, Ada	Hong Kong	Former public servant of Department of Health and Ageing; Current CEO of Australian Nursing Home Foundation.
Chow, Benjamin	Hong Kong	Past President of Australian Chinese Community Association of NSW; Founder and current committee member of Chinese Australian Forum; Past President of Multicultural Council of Australia (2000-2006).
Chow, Fred W.S.	Shanghai-Malaysia	Former Principal of Canberra Chinese Club School.
Chu, Alice	Hong Kong	Former President of ACT Chinese Australian

		Association Inc.
Chung, David	China	Current President of Yiu Ming Hung Fook Tong.
Fong, King Moo	Fiji	Vice President of Chinese Heritage Association of Australia; Trustee of Australian Chinese Charity Foundation; Past President of Chungshan Society of Australia; Past President of the Chinatown Branch of Chamber of Commerce.
Lai, Yangmu	Taiwan	President of Taiwanese Association of Canberra.
Lam, Le	Vietnamese	Current Councillor of Auburn Council; Past Mayor of Auburn Council; Past President of the Unity Party.
Li, Fuxin	China	Current Principal of Australian School of Contemporary Chinese; Vice President of Australian Chinese Language Teachers Association Inc.; Overseas committee member of the OCAO of Shandong Province.
Liu, Mingzu	China	Famous Chinese restaurateur in Canberra.
Lowe, Daphne	New Zealand	Past Vice President of Australian Chinese Community Association; Current President of Loong Yee Association; President of Chinese Heritage Association of Australia; Current National Secretary of Chinese Community Council of Australia.
Migliorino, Pino	Australia	Past President of Co. As. It; Current CEO of Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia.
Ng, David	Hong Kong	President of National Australian Chinese

		Association Inc.; Past President of Chinese Mandarin Club in Canberra.
Ning, Lyn	China	Vice President of Federation of Chinese Community of Canberra Inc.; Principal of FCCCI Chinese School.
Pan, Henry	Singapore	Founder and Honorary Executive Director of Chinese Australian Service Society Ltd; Past Commissioner of Community Relations Commission; Past member of Administrative Decision Tribunal.
Pan, Peter	Singapore	Founder and project manager of ACT Chinese Aged Care Information Service; Founder and Principal of E.A.A.S Chinese School Inc.; Founder and current treasurer of the ACT Ethnic Schools Association.
Pun, Anthony	Malaysia	Past President of Australian Chinese Community Association of NSW; National President of Chinese Community Council of Australia.
Ruan, Lingbin	China	Secretary of Chinese Arts & Culture Association.
Sham-Ho, Helen	Hong Kong	First Chinese-born parliamentarian in Australia; Honorary President of more than 100 Chinese associations in NSW.
Tan, Van	Malaysia	Founder of Healthpac; Founder of Australian Medical Exchange and Development Association; Acting President of Australian Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China.
Wang, Jeanette	China	Councillor of Ashfield Council; President of Australian Yangzhou Association;

		Parliamentary secretary for Henry Tsang.
Wong, Chin	Malaysia	President of ACT Chinese Australian Association; Past President of Federation of Chinese Associations of ACT.
Wong, K. C.	Hong Kong	Chief Editor of Sing Tao Daily, the largest Chinese newspaper in Australia.
Wong, Peter	China	Past Member of NSW Legislative Council; Founder of the Unity Party; Prominent community leader.
Wong, Sam	Hong Kong	Current President of Canberra Multicultural Community Forum; Patron of ACT Chinese Australian Association; Chair of the ACT Divisional Advisory Board of Australian Red Cross; Council Member of the Overseas Exchange Association of Guangdong Province.
Yam, Fong Sum	China	President of Australian Beijing Association (Canberra); President of ACT Council for the Promotion of Peaceful Reunification of China; Executive Chairman of Australian Chinese Shanghai World Expo Promotion Committee.
Yu, Junwu	China	Founder and President of Australian Chinese Performing Artists Association.
Zhang, Bamboo	China	General Manager of FM88 Radio Station in Canberra; Past President of Chinese Students and Scholars Association of Canberra.
Zhu, Minshen	China	Current member of the Chinese Ministerial Consultative Committee; Past member of NSW-Asia Business Advisory Council; Principal of Top Education Institute, the first

		private university founded by a Chinese Australian.
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Appendix F: Past and Present of Chinese Organisations as Recorded in the ACCA Survey

	Name	Founding Year	Existing Today	Notes
Service Organisations	Australian Chinese Community Association	1974	Yes	Very active as a multi-service provider.
	Association of Ethnic Chinese from Indo-China	In the 1970s	No	Today's equivalent: Indo-China Elderly Hostel.
	Australian Chinese Descendants Mutual Association	1980	Yes	Very active with an elderly hostel.
	Sydney Chinese Child Care and Community Co-op	1981	Yes	Renamed into Australian Chinese Services Society Ltd; Very active as a multi-service provider.
Social and Political Organisations	A.E.A. Australian Eurasian Association	In the 1950s	No	English speaking; Chinese wives of local Australians.
	Australian Chinese Women's Association	1975	Yes	Started by the Taiwanese Consul-General's wife, but not very active today.
	Australia Free China	In the 1950s	No	Established by an Australian in support

	Association			of the <i>Kuomintang</i> in Taiwan.
	Chinese Cemetery Trust of NSW	1877	Yes	Promote the Chinese cemetery section at the Rookwood Cemetery.
	Chinese Citizen's Association	In the 1950s	No	Affiliated with Chinese Chamber of Commerce; <i>Pro-Kuomintang</i> .
	Chinese Masonic Society	Founded in 1867 and registered in 1919	Yes	Ageing membership and no longer active.
	Chinese Nationalist Party of Australia	1916	Yes	Ageing membership and no longer active.
	Chinese Kwai Kee Masonic Lodge	In the 1950s	No	A Chinese lodge affiliated with the International Masonic Society.
	Chinese Youth League	1939	Yes	Very active, evolving into a major Chinese performance provider.
	Council of Chinese Organisations	1950s	No	In support of the PRC government; Predecessor of AUSCOCO.
	Dixon Street Chinese Committee	1976	Yes	Organising committee for the beautification of Chinatown and celebration of Chinese New Year.

	Goon Yee Tong	Founded in the 1890s and registered in 1993	Yes	Aging membership, but reviving transnational links.
	Mandarin Club	1963	No	Closed down in 2011 due to declining membership.
	NSW Chinese Tennis Association	In the 1950s	No	Second-generation Chinese only; English speaking.
Professional Organisations	Chinese Academic Association of NSW	In the 1970s	No	Mostly professionals from Hong Kong and Southeast Asia.
	Chinese Chamber of Commerce	1898	Yes	With venue but inactive; Succeeded by Sydney Chinatown Chamber of Commerce headed by Robert Ho in 1988 and Haymarket Chamber of Commerce in the 1990s.
	Chinese Cooking Fraternity Association	In the 1950s	No	Succeeded by Chinese Chefs Association, Chinese Restaurant Owners Association and Australian Dim Sum Association.
	Chinese Language Broadcast	In the 1950s	No	Chinese media in Sydney today is dominated by four

	Group			major dailies and several broadcasting services.
	Chinese Graduate Association	In the 1970s	No	Mostly students from Hong Kong and Southeast Asia.
	Chinese Hong Kong Student Association	In the 1970s	Yes	Expanded with the influx of Hong Kong students in the 1990s.
Clan Associations	Chinese Singapore-Malaysian Association	In the 1970s	Yes	Renamed as Australian Malaysian Singaporean Association.
	Hainanese Association	1957	Yes	Reviving transnational links.
	Hokkien Association	1982	Yes	Renamed as Australian Hokien Huay Kuan Association; Reviving transnational links.
	Yiu Ming Hung Fook Tong Society	1876	Yes	Included in the NSW Heritage Register in 1999; Reviving transnational links.
	Shantung Club of Australia	1959	Yes	Influx of new migrants since the 1990s; Reviving transnational links.

	Sawto Club	In the 1950s	No	
	Sze Yap Society	In the 1890s	Yes	Aging membership, but reviving transnational links.
	Zhongshan Clan Association	Created in the 1890s and registered in 1981 as Chungshan Society of Australia	Yes	Aging membership, but reviving transnational links.