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MAKING
CHINESE
AUSTRALIA

Urban Elites, Newspapers and the Formation of
Chinese-Australian Identity, 1892–1912

MEI-FEN KUO

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Mei-fen Kuo left her native Taiwan in 2003 to undertake a PhD thesis in Australia. In 2008, she was awarded a PhD degree by La Trobe University, and in 2009 she won an internationally competitive Australian Endeavour Award. From late 2010 to September 2013 she was an Australian Post-doctoral Fellow in the School of Social Science at La Trobe University. There she worked with Professor Judith Brett and Dr James Leibold on 'Unlocking Australia's Chinese Archives: The Political and Social Experience of the Chinese Australian Community, 1909 to 1939', a three-year Linkage grant project supported by the Australian Research Council. She is currently a Research Fellow in the Asia-Pacific Centre for Social Investment and Philanthropy at Swinburne University of Technology, where she is working on an ARC-funded project with Professor John Fitzgerald, entitled 'Asia-Pacific Philanthropies: Transnational Networks, Anti-colonial Nationalism, and the Emergence of Modern Chinese Philanthropy, 1850–1949'.

In *Making Chinese Australia*, Mei-fen has made a significant contribution to research on Australian history through her pioneering study of Chinese Australians from a diasporic perspective; her bilingual research skills have allowed her to make full use of detailed but rarely consulted primary sources that are only available in Chinese. Her research adds much depth to knowledge of the Chinese-Australian urban elite in a transnational setting, and forges a dialogue between international and diasporic Chinese studies. Professor Adam McKeown wrote of her work: "I can only think of two or three other social histories of Chinese anywhere in the world that have captured this period with an equal appreciation of the social fluidity, rapid changes and shifting discourse".

ROMANISATION OF CHINESE TERMS

This thesis makes extensive use of Chinese-language newspapers and manuscripts. Where contemporary English-language transliterations are available for the names of people, newspapers and organisations, I have used the names that were in common usage at the time. In many cases Chinese terms lack contemporary English equivalents. In these cases, names are rendered in English by Mandarin pronunciations written in italicised pinyin spelling. English translations (in addition to transliterations) are supplied on first mention for the names of institutions and used thereafter throughout the text. Further, where pinyin spelling is used for personal names, I follow the customary Chinese sequence of surname followed by given name. Where more than one name was in common this is indicated on first citation. In addition, I keep the same Chinese characters of secondary sources as the authors used either traditional or simplified Chinese.

LUNAR AND SOLAR CALENDARS

Some sources consulted, including the Records of the New South Wales Chinese Empire Reform Association and New South Wales Chinese Chamber of Commerce (Noel Butlin Archives, ANU), *The Chinese Times*, Diplomatic Archives of the Institute of Modern History (Academia Sinica, Taipei) and the Archives of the Chinese Consul-General in Melbourne (1908 to 1911), are dated by the lunar calendar. In the case of *The Chinese Times* I have changed dates to equivalents on the solar calendar. For the other sources I have retained the lunar dating system.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACCG   Archives of Chinese Consul-General (Melbourne)
CAH   *Chinese Australian Herald*
CEDT   Certificate of Exemption from Dictation Test
CERA   NSW Chinese Empire Reform Association
CMDA   Chinese Merchants' Defence Association
CT   *Chinese Times*
DT   *Daily Telegraph*
EA   Enlightenment Association (Melbourne)
EN   *Evening News*
KMT   Kuo Min Tang (Chinese Nationalist Party)
LYT   Lin Yik Tong
NCEA   New Citizen Enlightenment Association (Melbourne)
SMH   *Sydney Morning Herald*
TWN   *Tung Wah News*
TWT   *Tung Wah Times*

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As indicated by its title—*Making Chinese Australia*—this book documents and discusses the historical processes by which Chinese immigrants came to participate in Australian life in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and situate themselves in the history of Australia.[1] Chinese Australians were made, not born. Further, because of the way that people interpret their past, present, and future prospects to give continuity and meaning to their lives, this book views historical awareness, which helps shape communities and identities, as an important element in the making of Chinese Australia. The book argues that the period from the late 1890s through the early 1900s was a critical period in the shaping of Chinese communities and identities in distinctive ways in a variety of local, national and transnational contexts.

There are many ways to tell stories about Chinese Australians and their social, cultural, economic and political experiences and activities. This book primarily focuses on Chinese immigrants in Australia between 1892 and 1912: who they were, what they were talking about, their feelings of belonging or otherwise, what they lost, and the ambitions and dreams they had, some fulfilled, others not.

The voices of Chinese Australians in their own print publications are chosen in this book as best exemplifying the thinking about self, ethnicity, class, gender, society and nation through which Chinese Autralians made sense of their need to make Australia home and at the same time help to build the Republic of China. My aim is for readers to appreciate the richness of Chinese immigrant writing in Australian history and to better illustrate how these people believed they were taking part in a revolutionary movement towards a modern world.

I began this project as a dissertation a long time ago, with a vague idea of my topic. My study, under Professor Chuang Shang-wu's guidance in the History Department at Fu-Jen University in Taiwan, focused on cultural nationalism in the late 19th century and early 20th century. I had received training to develop research into Western History so as to facilitate the flow of culture between East and West. Specifically, my passion was modern

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1   The sense of 'making' is adopted from EP Thompson (1968).

Irish history and diasporic identity. Later I arrived in Melbourne to study in the School of Social Sciences at La Trobe University. I am deeply grateful for Professor John Fitzgerald's commitment to this project. At the outset I had no idea about Chinese immigrants in Australian history. Over the years, he has shown an unfailing enthusiasm which has enabled me to tell the stories which I could only imagine when starting out. His guidance importantly helped me refine my historiographical approach and step through some of the major issues and themes of the book.

While studying in Asian Studies at La Trobe University, I was surrounded by a wonderful group of fellow students and colleagues, each of whom richly contributed to my intellectual life. I am especially grateful to Sophie Couchman, Amanda Rasmussen and the late Kevin Wong Hoy.

From the beginning of this project, I had been fortunate to receive financial support from the Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation, which enabled me to stay and study in Australia. An Australian Endeavour Award and Australian Research Council linkage grant supported my postdoctoral research. I gratefully acknowledge this support that was critical in enabling me to complete this book.

I am also grateful to have worked in the School of Social Science at La Trobe University as a postdoctoral fellow. The School has not only been an institutional but an intellectual home. For making it possible for me to finish this book, my heartfelt gratitude goes to Professor Judith Brett, James Leibold and Tesbin Tchen, ideal collaborators in an ARC funded study. Their indispensable support helped me to revise the dissertation into a book, and I especially appreciate their feedback and advice.

I am grateful also to a number of friends and colleagues at other institutions for their feedback and help over the years. My thanks go especially to Professor Ann Curthoys, Adam McKeown and Chi-Kong Lai who made valuable comments on and criticism of drafts of the book. In addition, I would like to thank Professor Mark Finnane, Pauline Rule, Kate Bagnall, Keir Reeves, Paul Macgregor, Barbara Nichol and Professor Marilyn Lake for their help and encouragement.

For help with archival materials I wish to thank the Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia in Sydney and Melbourne. Particularly I owe heartfelt thanks to Eugene Seeto, Bruce Sun-you Lew and William (Bill) Lau who generously provided opportunities for me to access the records of their organisations and others relating to the broader Chinese-Australian community. They gave me a great deal of knowledge about the communities I was researching and writing about.

I am also enormously grateful to the late Dr Henry Chan, Marina Mar, Irene Mavis Mortensen, Elizabeth Kao, John Yen, Ducman Allen Yip, Gordon Mar, Albert Mar, Mary Mar, Wai Wang, Victor Bien, Dennis Wing Leong Chan, Winsome Dong, Michael and Vicki Harrison, James Hayes, Kaylin Simpson Lee, Susan Carter, Lindsay W. Wing, Tony Wing, Hamilton Chan, Maurice and Eunice Leong, Arthur Gar Lock Chang, Mabel Wang, Norma King Koi, Jeanette Mar, Harry and Connie Fay, Daphne Lowe Kelley, Man-Yee Leanfore, Leanne Tam, and Eric Yee: it was my good fortune that through these people I was able to access rich family collections and inspiring stories that fed into the book.

I also acknowledge the help of staff and researchers of the Tung Wah Museum (Hong Kong), the History Department of Hong Kong University, the Hong Kong Public Records Office, the Shanghai Municipal Archives, the National Archives of Australia, the National Library of Australia, the Mitchell Library of the State Library of New South Wales, the State Library of Victoria, the State Records Office of New South Wales, the City of Sydney Archives, the Gold Dragon Museum (Bendigo), the Wing Hing Long Museum (Tingha), the Chinese Museum (Melbourne), the City of Moorabbin Historical Society, the Archives of the New South Wales Presbyterian Church, the Archives and Church records of the Victorian Presbyterian Church, the University of Ballarat Art Historical Collections, the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Melbourne, the Institute of Modern History at Academia Sinica, Academia Historica and the KMT Archives in Taipei.

Some parts of the book were written when I visited the Institute of Modern History (IMH) of Academia Sinica in Taipei, which provided the facilities and opportunity for me to write and complete the book. My thanks go especially to institute director Huang Ko-wu for making the IMH such a good place for research, as well as to the many colleagues whose warmth and generosity so greatly enhanced my Taipei sojourn, especially Professor Chang Li and Lien Ling-ling.

Particular thanks are due to Dr Xu Yuzeng and his family for all of the laughter and the listening over the years. Since arriving in Melbourne I have been overwhelmed by their generosity. Their warm support has helped me through difficult moments, for which I shall be forever grateful.

Also I would like to thank my friends in Australia and Taiwan for their unfailing support. I cannot name them all but I want to thank especially Elisa Hsu, who showed iron will in keeping me in good humour in 2005 and beyond. Finally, I want to express my deepest gratitude to Luisa and Enrico

Civitarese for whom words escape me that are adequate to express just how blessed I feel for their presence in my life and for all they have given me in the way of support, inspiration and exemplary generosity. The Civitarese family sustained the book personally.

I dedicate this book to my grandparents, Tian-fu and Huang Lai-fu, as well as to my parents, Te-cheng and Chiu Hsueh-mei. There is nothing I can say that could properly express my appreciation for all the years of love, patience and support. They have been, in every way, at the centre of it all.

I am thankful for having published this book with Monash University Publishing. My editors took their job seriously. Their suggestions and comments were helpful in guiding my revision.

I am also grateful to the following for giving me permission to republish essays that first appeared in their pages. All of these have been revised substantially for the book.

SOCIAL IDENTITY, DIASPORA, AND THE WRITING OF CHINESE-AUSTRALIAN HISTORY

In the 1890s and early 1900s the Chinese-Australian community underwent a significant transformation. First, in the wake of the gold rush and mining boom of the mid-19th century, the largely male Chinese population declined from 38,077 in 1891, to 33,165 in 1901, and to 25,772 in 1911 (Official Year Book of New South Wales 1921:66). Of greater significance was the rate of mobility among Chinese immigrants to Australia (Fitzgerald 2007:51–54). As Sydney developed into an international trading centre by the late 19th century, it became a hub for mobile Chinese traders and labourers. Michael Williams (1998:85–86) argues that Chinese Australians in Sydney had by this time established identifiable patterns of business and social networking that linked up with communities in Hong Kong and home villages in South China. Thirdly, Chinese settlement tended to be concentrated in urban areas, giving the Chinese-Australian identity a distinctively modern urban inflection by the end of the 1890s. Between 1881 and 1901, the concentration of Chinese in major Australian cities increased between twofold and three-fold, and 50 years later, in 1947, 90% of all Chinese Australians were living in urban centres (Jones 2005:17), especially in the capital cities of each state, such as Sydney and Melbourne (Yong 1977:4–6).

Sydney was not merely a hub for Chinese mobility; it was also a centre of community mobilisation and identity formation from the late 19th century. With their greater concentration in that city, Sydney Chinese established the first Chinese national newspapers, the first modern commercial associations and the earliest political societies during the late 1890s and early 1900s. Their associations and commercial sites had a visible impact on Sydney's urban landscape (Lalich 2006:171–173). The process of forming a Sydney Chinese community encouraged Chinese Australians to participate more fully in national public life in the 20th century.

The increasing visibility of Chinese residents in urban centres had the effect of strengthening racial and cultural distinctions between Chinese and European Australians. The anti-Chinese movement of the late 1880s had led to the passing of legislation that limited Chinese immigration to Australia and fostered an image of Australia as an exclusively white community during the 1890s (Irving 1997:101; Markus 1979:258). The Immigration Restriction Act of 1901 imposed further limitations by introducing a dictation test to screen non-European applicants for entry to Australia and by imposing an extensive system of Certificates of Domicile and Certificates of Exemption from the Dictation Test (hereafter CEDT), which protected and proscribed the rights of travel and residency of the Chinese who were resident in Australia at that time. Many thousands of Chinese were given permission to leave and return to Australia in the first decade of the 20th century (Jones 2005:19). Further legislation enacted in 1903 closed the door to citizenship for Chinese Australians. This pattern of systemic discrimination isolated many Chinese Australians, who were for the most part males without family members in Australia, codifying them as the 'other' in relation to British and European Australians (Williams 2004:36–37).

It is tempting to classify visible patterns of association among Chinese Australians, including the establishment of newspapers and the formation of public associations, during this period, as the response of a particular ethnic community to the hostility of white Australian society. Walter Lalich (2006:171), for example, claims that the establishment of Chinese communal places in Sydney was largely a reflection of Chinese Australians' growing awareness of their ethnic identity, but this interpretation fails to capture the full picture. The growth of benevolent associations, commercial clubs, civil societies, mutual protection associations, occupational unions, lodges of the Chinese Masonic Society and congregations of Chinese Christian churches reflected not just a growing sense of ethnic identity but also extensive patterns of networking and leadership within a community that was undergoing rapid change. Communities of Chinese in urban Australia carved out social and institutional histories of their own in the late 19th and early 20th centuries that were not exclusively related to ethnic identity. Jane Lydon (1999:129) supports the argument that race is not an essential element in understanding the identity of Chinese Australians.

This view is apparent also in the observations of Australian commentators of the day, some of whom pointed to the cosmopolitan character and spirit of enterprise that characterised Chinese-Australian associational life. In 1894, for example, George Ernest ('China') Morrison (1895:222) described the

Cantonese as the 'Catalans of China' in recognition of their secular spirit and wide ambition in settling throughout the world, including Australia where they made up the majority of the Chinese-Australian population.[1] Similarly, in the 1930s, Australian journalist John HC Sleeman (1933:138–140) showed a clear appreciation of the curiosity, adventurousness and open-mindedness of Chinese Australians and emphasised the outgoing 'ocean spirit' revealed in the legends Chinese Australians told about themselves. These observers identified Chinese Australians more by their ambition and enterprise than by their awareness as a particular ethnic community.

White Australia mythology, nevertheless, largely framed Chinese as a timeless ethnic group among the 'others' of monocultural Australian ideology (Fitzgerald 2007:23). As JW Cushman (1984:102) pointed out in the 1980s, the 'wider historiographical possibilities' of Chinese dreams, ambitions, and perspectives have played little part in the recorded history of white Australia. Graeme Davison (1985:101–102) questions Geoffrey Blainey's interpretations of history, which make simple propositions about race relations and cultural difference in Australian nationalism. The influence of historians, journalists, novelists and illustrators on public opinion created racial stereotypes of Chinese immigrants who were powerless against the popular demand for their exclusion (Davison 1985:108–110). In his more recent study, John Fitzgerald (2007:28) observes that Australian historical writings which are based on questionable assumptions about 'timeless' Chinese values consistently explain Chinese exclusion under the White Australia policy as the result of a fundamental clash of values between Chinese and European Australians.

Contemporary scholars have sought to recover Chinese voices with a view to adding new stories and inflections to Chinese-Australian history and to the archive of Australian history generally. The historiography of Chinese immigrants in Australia has not been immune from the larger reworking of non-British aspects of Australian history. This reworking has undermined essentialist claims about Chinese values and has been restoring to Chinese Australians an historical character that overrides essentialist characterisations of earlier scholars (Curthoys 2001:16–17; Ang 1998). An emerging research community is locating its work within different contexts for a better understanding of Chinese community in Australian history (Reeves & Mountford 2011).

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1   Early Chinese immigrants to Australia were predominantly Cantonese-speaking male villagers, most from the Guangdong-province districts of Toishan, Sunwui, Hoiping and Yanping with others from nearer Guangzhou.

The advent of diaspora perspectives in Australian history has offered further insights into the historical significance of Chinese community experience (McKeown 1999:331). References are to be found to the Chinese diaspora in studies dating from the 1960s (Kuah-Pearce & Hu-Dehart 2006:1). The wider concept of diaspora that has come to characterise studies over the last decade refers to a broader 'multiplicity, fluidity, wildness, hybridity and dislocations of modernity' as a possible point of entry into Chinese-Australian historical studies (McKeown 1999:308). This diasporic perspective has also begun to exert a considerable influence in discussions of Australian identity and history. As Ann Curthoys (2001:21) argues, 'Australian identity and history are themselves fractured between a homeland and a new home'; Australian identity broadly conceived has been shaped by 'multiple loyalties, collective memoirs, a sense of belonging and intricacies of identity' among all of its constituent immigrant communities.

At the same time, however, the diaspora perspective compels historians to look beyond the national frames of reference of host nations to appreciate the significance of diaspora nationalisms among dispersed communities. Adam McKeown (1999:322, 326) argues that historians need to take account of the global rise of nationalism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and understand diasporic groups as self-conscious exiles and members of dispersed communities as well as members of their host societies. Chinese-Australian community history clearly calls for attention to the many facets of the historical background that shaped its Chinese diasporic communities, including their sense of themselves as part of a distinctive diaspora in addition to a distinct ethnic group.

This book focuses on the historical processes and diasporic perspectives which shaped Chinese identity and community in late 19th century and early 20th century Australia. Although it draws heavily on Chinese-language sources, it pays relatively little attention to essentialist linguistic and ethnic definitions of identity. Chinese Australians were subject to the same general processes of urbanisation, cosmopolitanism and nationalism that inflected patterns of community behaviour and elite conduct among different ethnic communities in the expanding urban settlements of late colonial and Federation Australia. These forces similarly enhanced the role of community leadership and the importance of newspapers, civic associations and business networks across different ethnic communities. These general processes in turn framed the particular identities of the Chinese-Australian community over time.

To highlight the intricate relationship among elite leadership, urbanisation, community formation and nationalism, this book commences with

a review of an especially bitter conflict that split the Sydney Chinese community in 1892 and ends two decades later with the establishment of the earliest political alliance between Chinese-Australian elites in Sydney and Melbourne in order to support building the Republic of China.

Unlocking Chinese-Australian voices in White Australia

Newspapers have an important role to play in understanding Chinese-Australian history—mundanely through the historical archives they supply, and more profoundly through the windows they offer on community formation and everyday historical awareness via the agency of print culture. Greg Dening (1996:41) argues that 'the past is ordered in itself in such a way that we can make a narrative of it.' Chinese-Australian communities derived coherence, continuity and a sense of 'community spirit' (Yong 1977:224) from their participation in shared historical narratives of belonging and becoming, elaborated through the Chinese-language press. The local Chinese press offers a rich resource for exploring the making of Chinese Australia through reflections on the desires, demands and activities of its constituent communities.

Newspapers were not merely 'reflections' of Chinese community spirit, as some have suggested, but were active agents in the shaping of urban elites and community leadership for the Chinese community from the late 19th century. This is nowhere more apparent than in the complex relationships and occasional conflicts that arose among local Chinese newspapers and civic associations in the 1890s and early 1900s and the transnational connections established by these Chinese newspapers with other Chinese newspapers and associations outside Australia. Consequently, Australian Chinese-language newspapers provide an important source for the study of local elite formation and transnational networking and of associated narratives of belonging in the wider Chinese diasporic community.

The *Chinese Advertiser* (later *English and Chinese Advertiser*, 英唐招帖 *Ying-tangzhaotie*), established on the Victorian goldfields in the 1850s, was the earliest bilingual Chinese–English language newspaper in Australia. It was short-lived.[2] On 20 September 1883, one Hong Kong newspaper, the *Daily Press* (孖剌西報 *Zilaxibao*), remarked that Chinese merchants in Australia had attempted to publish a bilingual newspaper in Sydney, Melbourne or

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2   The *Chinese Advertiser* was published by Robert Bell in Ballarat from 1856 to c.1858. It was published every Saturday and had a circulation of 400 copies. Its primary aim was to carry advertisements and inform the Chinese community in the goldfields about government regulations.

Brisbane.[3] The first Chinese-language newspaper with a national Australian circulation, the *Chinese Australian Herald* (廣益華報 *Guangyi huabao*, 1894–1923, hereafter *CAH*) was launched in Sydney in 1894. The second, the *Tung Wah News* (東華新報 *Donghua xinbao*, 1898–1902, hereafter *TWN*) commenced publication in 1898, also in Sydney and continued as the *Tung Wah Times* (東華報 *Donghuabao*, 1902–1936, hereafter *TWT*). The third was *Chinese Republic News* (民國報 *Minguo bao*, 1913–1937). In Melbourne, the first comparable newspaper to appear, the *Chinese Times* (愛國報 *Aiguobao*, 1902–1905, 警東新報 *Jingdongxinbao*, 1905–1914, 平報 *Pingbao*, 1917, 民報 *Minbao*, 1919–1922, hereafter *CT*), later moved to Sydney where it continued to be published until 1949. These newspapers have been a major resource in researching the history of Chinese community formation presented in this book.

At this point it should be noted that the Chinese press was the largest foreign-language press in Sydney in the late 19th century. (German newspapers made up the largest foreign-press group in Australia as a whole, because of the growth of the German immigrant population during the last decades of the 19th century, chiefly in South Australia, Queensland and Melbourne, but less so in Sydney (Gilson & Zubrzycki 1967:10–13).) The Chinese press was also the only foreign-language press in Sydney to publish without interruption over three decades from the 1890s to the 1920s and no foreign-language newspapers of any stamp could match the record of continuous circulation of Chinese-language newspapers in Sydney from the 1890s into the 1950s (Gilson 1962:209; Jones 2005:1–2).[4]

As I have noted, these newspapers not only reported on community events but were also significant agents in their own right in the shaping of communities and patterns of urban leadership. In Australia, the Chinese

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3   See also Hong Kong Public Records Office, Carl Smith Collection, card no. 174485.

4   During the 1920s and 1930s, there were six Chinese language newpapers circulated in Sydney. However, no archive holds a complete set of publications of the *Chinese Times* (in Sydney), *Chinese World's News* and *Chinese Weekly Press* during the 1920s and 1930s. Copies of these three newspapers and information about them are rare. The State records of NSW have registration information about the *Chinese Times* and *Chinese World's News*. See State records of NSW, item title: Chinese Times Ltd., Packet no. 7978 in 17/5530 and item: Chinese Masonic Newspaper Co. Ltd. Packet no. 8021 in 17/5531. The National Archives of Australia also has a collection of material related to the *Chinese Times*, *Chinese World's News* and *Chinese Weekly Press*. The archives of the Chinese Consul-General in Melbourne contain some letters and documents from the *Chinese Times*, *Chinese World's News* and *Chinese Weekly Press* related to their early issues. See Correspondence of Chinese Consul-General (hereafter ACCG), Melbourne, archives files no. 522-122, 522-138, 522-228, 522-229, 522-236, 522-274.

press included newspapers representing Chinese revolutionary parties, constitutionalists and Masonic networks, each of which sought to influence supportive political constituencies and social networks in Australia. In the process, they helped to shape the social networks to which they appealed. Each argued its case as though history mattered, inflecting their political propositions with historical narratives that based their claims in contested visions of the past and of the future.

Signs of this contest can be found in contemporary reflections by Chinese writers of the day on newspapers and community leadership. In one case, an Australian-born revolutionary leader and journalist, Tse Tsan Tai, writing in Hong Kong in 1924 closely documented the early history of Chinese-Australian revolutionaries (Tse 1924). Writing in Shanghai in the early 1930s, another Australian-born journalist, Vivian Yung Chow (1933a), set out a similar revolutionary genealogy. Sydney journalist John HC Sleeman (1933) reiterated their account of the early Chinese revolutionary movement, further emphasising the contribution of Chinese Australians to the building of an independent and free China. All three journalists sought to recount the activities of the Chinese Independence Party of Australia, said to have been led by Loong Hong Pung (龍興邦 Long Xingbang) from around 1850 to 1878 and subsequently by Stephen King (荊秀 Jing Xiu, also known as Jung Sao) from around 1878 to 1904, as an offshoot of the transnational Hung Men secret society (洪門 Hongmen, also known as Hung League and Yee Hing Society (義興公司 Yixinggongsi), later Chinese Masonic Society). The indirect target of these historical claims was Sun Yatsen, who was said to have speciously taken leadership of the revolutionary movement from these early Australian revolutionaries and to have been falsely elevated to the status of the 'father of the nation' in Republican China.

The Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia (中國國民黨駐澳洲總支部 Zhongguo Guomindang zhu Aozhouzongzhibu, also known as Kuo Min Tang, hereafter KMT) fiercely contested these claims. The party's Sydney headquarters strongly disagreed with VY Chow's account and commissioned an alternative Chinese-language history of the Chinese revolutionary movement that was published in 1935.[5] The KMT's account of the history of the Chinese-Australian republican movement (Chen 1935) failed to mention the part played by the Chinese Masonic legends and completely ignored the story of Loong Hong Pung. Instead it emphasised the establishment of the Young China League in Melbourne and later in Sydney, which it argued

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5   See KMT Archives, Sydney, no. 523-01-230, Minute records of meeting, Headquarters, 10 December 1933.

provided the historical foundation for Chinese-Australian revolutionary and nationalist organisations. This claim was strongly endorsed by Nationalist historians abroad, including Feng Ziyou (馮自由) in China,[6] and by Chinese community historians such as CF Yong in Australia (Yong 1977:138–142). The official KMT history devoted several chapters to the party's extensive branch network in urban Australia, its overseas branches in Oceania and its mobile seamen's branches in the merchant marine, reflecting the urban and oceanic style of mobilisation and membership that characterised the KMT in Australasia in the 1920s and 1930s (Kuo & Tchen 2010).

These disputes among Chinese-Australian journalists and historians reflect the role of Chinese newspapers and journalists in the making of Chinese-Australian history in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. First, they illustrate Greg Dening's contention that 'histories are the texted past' which 'bind together past and present in an interpretive act' (Dening 1996:42–44). Their debates reflected their understanding of present conditions and helped to shape community responses to their conditions. This book argues that the interpretations and narratives of journalists and editors of Chinese-Australian newspapers played an important role in shaping the social identities and historical awareness of Chinese Australians.

The conflict traced above between two different perspectives on Chinese-Australian history was engaged in by Chinese-Australian journalists in Sydney, Hong Kong and Shanghai. The intensity of that conflict highlights the transformation that Chinese communities were undergoing in eastern Australia at the time, particularly their transition from rural to urban settings. On the one hand, the rise of Chinese-language newspapers and professional journalists was a sign of this transition. On the other, in concert with urbanisation, the Chinese press played an active role in heightening the tone of political rhetoric and expanding the scale of political and social participation in the first decade of the 20th century. The Chinese-language press stood at the crossroads of the local, national and transnational paths of community networking in the years immediately after Australian Federation.

The alternative historical narratives of Loong Hong Pung in the mid-19th century and of the KMT over the first three decades of the 20th century reflect not only the different political perspectives of their narrators but also the diversity of the Chinese community and distinctive styles of social

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6   Feng Ziyou (1953:110, 1948:164–165) further noted the origin of Chinese nationalists in Australia as being related to the Young China League in Melbourne and Sydney, in order to enhance the connection between Chinese-Australian nationalists and Sun Yatsen.

mobilisation at work in Australia. John Fitzgerald (2007:84–93) argues that the legend of Loong Hung Pung reflects the rural networks and family genealogies of Chinese Masonic networks in mid-19th century Australia. These networks later relocated to urban Sydney where they were transformed into the Chinese Masonic Society in the first decade of the 20th century. The alternative historical narratives of the KMT demonstrate its key role among international networks of Chinese-Australian nationalists. Not surprisingly, seamen became important conduits in the second and third decades of the 20th century for the Australian KMT and its connection with other KMT branches and Chinese communities in the region.[7] Significantly, Loong's followers and champions of the Chinese Nationalist Party all claimed connections with transnational networks in order to enhance their power and influence.

This book does not dwell at length on Chinese-Australian journalists and historians of the 1920s and 1930s but rather on the foundation of the Chinese-language press in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In this period the foundations for the flourishing of Chinese-Australian news-papers in the 1910s and 1920s were laid, which was then followed by their heightened political mobilisation of the 1930s. The social and institutional alliances formed by the newspapers in the late 19th century shaped Chinese-Australian identity in the White Australia period that followed Federation in 1901.

The significance and development of Chinese-Australian newspapers was little appreciated until the 1970s and not well understood even then. In their pioneering study of the foreign-language press in Australia, Miriam Gilson and Jerzy Zubrzycki (1967:vi) excluded the Chinese press from their sample because its history was markedly distinct from that of European-language newspapers. They argue, for example, that the growth of German newspapers in Australia resulted from increasing rates of German migration in the middle and late 19th century, whereas the emergence and development of Chinese newspapers coincided with immigration restriction and a decline in the resident Chinese population (Gilson & Zubrzycki 1967:13, 21–22).

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7 Although seamen's branches in the KMT were not established until 1926, seamen were important messengers connecting Chinese nationalists with the KMT and the revolutionary purpose of Sun Yatsen from 1915. A report from Chinese Consul-General to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Spring 1915 (in Archives of the Chinese Consul-General (ACCG), Melbourne, no. 522-202) stated that a seaman called Pan Qichu (潘其初) travelled from Singapore to Australia to spread information about Sun Yatsen's party and his proposed political purpose of insurrection.

Needless to say, white-Australian attitudes towards Chinese immigration also played a role in the development of the Chinese press that was not matched in the development of the press of European ethnic groups that were not English-speaking (Gilson & Zubrzycki 1967:vi).

In the 1970s, CF Yong made extensive use of Chinese-language newspapers in his book *New Gold Mountain*. He claimed that, in the face of the White Australia policy, Chinese newspapers help to foster a sense of Chinese 'community spirit' (Yong 1977:224), although he does not make clear what he means by 'community spirit' or describe how it was reflected in Chinese-Australian newspapers. While making extensive use of Chinese newspapers for historical reference, he largely overlooks the role that Chinese newspapers actually had in the development of Chinese community and elite formation in Australia.[8]

Poon Yuk Lan offers another reading of Chinese-language newspapers in a later study of the Chinese community which takes the period immediately after Federation as its point of departure. Like Yong, Poon (1986) ignores the early stage of Chinese newspaper circulation and community development in the 1890s and claims that the appearance of the Chinese press hardened racial boundaries separating Chinese and European Australians. Poon fails, however, to demonstrate that Chinese Australians sought to expand their newspaper publications as a vehicle for building racial boundaries rather than for pursuing legitimate community objectives or the rights they felt were due to them as Australian residents. I argue that the appearance and growth of the Chinese press in the years leading up to Federation and the early years of the Commonwealth of Australia was not simply a reaction to racism. Poon, like Yong, overlooks the role of the Chinese press as an active agent in shaping a wider Chinese diasporic community in Australia.

A number of studies published more recently in China, Hong Kong and Singapore (for example, Chiu (1992), Chiu & Yeung (1999 and 2005), Yeung (2004 and 2005), Qiu (2005)) have drawn on the Chinese-Australian press to trace the lineages of international ideological and political conflicts played out in Australasia. Making extensive use of Chinese-language materials, these studies focus overwhelmingly on how the press reflected the public issues or on economic and political networks of the day. Other studies (for example, Wong (2001)) have drawn on the Chinese-language press to highlight the significant Chinese-Australian influence in the anti-American

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8   JW Cushman (1984:106) also notes that Yong's study offered little analysis of the changes within the Chinese community, even though he used substantial Chinese materials in his book.

boycott of 1905. In each case the press is approached as a repository of historical data for exploring national and transnational issues and the actual role of the press is not directly addressed.

The conflicts traced in each of these studies do more than reflect the views of Chinese Australians on issues of international importance; they also reflect the diversity of the Chinese-Australian community. Signs of contestation and coherence in the Chinese press on the eve of Federation and in the years immediately after offer a point of entry into the intricate tracery of Chinese voices and values of the time. While Chinese newspapers provide a repository of historical materials for this book, I also approach signs of contestation and coherence among Chinese newspapers as a window through which the interplay of social forces and cultural identities that have gone into the making of Chinese Australia can be viewed. Newspapers were an integral part of the making of Chinese Australia.

The imagined community: newspapers, leadership and the diasporic community

Two related perspectives inform the way in which this book explores how newspapers shaped the Chinese diasporic community both locally and globally. One is recognition of how newspapers help to establish new models of urban leadership and to effect connections with wider international networks. The growth of Chinese newspapers and civic associations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was not merely a reflection of Chinese concerns at a particular stage in the development of Chinese Australia. By helping to shape the communities they serve, newspapers provide insight into broader issues of modern identity and community formation, and into the claims of diaspora, nationalism, modernity and racism on identity and community. The second perspective involves rethinking questions of Chinese diasporic identity through attention to the distinctive narratives and institutional status of newspapers. Chinese-language newspapers shaped their imagined communities through the power of narrative, their institutional innovations and the images that their narratives and institutional presence conveyed of communities of readers embedded in national and transnational networks.

Benedict Anderson has drawn attention to the significance of print culture in shaping nationalism through elaboration of the idea of 'imagined communities'. As secular time becomes a point of reference for people participating in the modern world, people simultaneously imagine themselves and others going about their daily lives at the same point in time

without evidence of tangible social relations or visible validation (Anderson 1983:26). With the aid of newspapers and novels, modern print cultures expand the scale of this sensibility to the point where people can imagine their existence within wider communities of fellow readers (Anderson 1983:24–36). Print cultures also shape the modern social imagery by linking modern large-scale social systems to the lived experience of personal life. As Craig Calhoun (1991:95–97) has noted, the division between the world of direct interpersonal relationships and large-scale impersonal organisations has been enlarged in the modern world. Modern political and economic affairs are distinguished by webs of indirect social relationships which override direct interpersonal relationships which take up less and less space in public life (Calhoun 1991:102–103). Modern systems of communication, including newspapers, enable people to make sense of large-scale social systems in their lived experience. The complex process of constructing imagined communities takes place at the juncture, mediated by print culture, of indirect social relationships and direct interpersonal relationships. Print culture serves to sustain the disjuncture between the world of indirect social relationships and individual daily life.

Anderson's overriding emphasis on print capitalism as the foundation for modern nationalism has been criticised by some historians for ignoring the many levels at which imagined print communities can and do operate (Calhoun 1991:3). Early 20th century Chinese diasporic publications certainly went beyond the national boundaries envisaged in Anderson's 'imagined community'. Bryna Goodman (2004:2) has recently argued that, as a rule, Chinese diasporic publications imagined extra-national spaces through their journalistic evocations. She also notes that contemporary discussion of the bourgeois public sphere largely overlooks the extra-national dimensions of Chinese diasporic publications (Goodman 2004:4).

Chinese-Australian newspapers were no exception. They too located Chinese-Australian publishers and readers in local, national and transnational diasporic print communities in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The flow of narratives in the regular press guided urban communities into daily conversation with transnational networks. Furthermore, the institutional alliances forged between newspapers and civic associations in Australia shaped new patterns of urban leadership, situating leadership contenders in a fluid environment where local concerns were blended with sentiments about home, the motherland and the world. The diversity of voices in the Chinese-Australian press reveal intricate patterns of contention that were embedded in social networks and in turn sustained by wider global networks.

The role of Chinese newspapers in the making of Chinese Australia extends beyond their role as social mobilisers through rhetoric and exhortation. As McKeown (1999:322) has argued, 'any successful discourse of imagined communities is always underwritten by the existence of concrete institutions and networks'. The Chinese press was an instance of concrete institutions and networks of this kind. It played an instrumental role in forging new forms of civic association. In the first decade of the 20th century the *TWN*, for example, established the first modern Chinese-Australian political association in Sydney and the *CT* initiated the earliest political and social associations in Melbourne. An important focus of this book is the way that, from the late 19th century, the Chinese-language press in Australia, an innovator in its own right, acted as a catalyst in the historical transformation of urban Chinese communities. Though writing of another time and place, Karl Deutsch (1961:492) noted that a seminal period was marked when 'old social, economic and psychological commitments are eroded or broken and people become available for new patterns of socialization and behavior'.

Being 'Chinese' means different things in different contexts, but I do not propose to focus exclusively on the diversity of Chinese-Australian voices within the press. My aim is to look within this diversity for signs of coherence. Discrimination made the Chinese aware of their difference but this does not mean it enhanced their ethnic identity. Banton's study of race relations argues that difference in physical appearance and history do not create groups, but cultural significance does become a basis of ethnicity (Banton 1983:135). The distinct and overlapping spheres of local, national and transnational imaginaries constructed by Chinese-Australian newspapers for Chinese-language readers created a sense of 'diaspora' as a coherent category and marked the boundaries of a common language and culture which tied them together across geographical boundaries (McKeown 1999:309). Narrative identities forged in a common-language press reflected the coherence of dispersed Chinese diasporic communities no less than the differences that divided them.

Contemporary studies on identity have drawn attention to the limitations of the epistemology and the empirical bias of the traditional social sciences in approaching problems of identity (Tilly 1979:29–32,41,65; Somers & Gibson 1994:40–47). An excessive emphasis on social systems as sites of rational decision-making tends to undervalue meaning and subjectivity. By focusing on the rational interests of Chinese immigrants, studies of Chinese Australia have tended to undervalue the significance of identities embedded in informal social networks. Thus the sociology of action and identity presents

notable dilemmas in the study of Chinese Australia. By what specific routes were rational 'interests' arrived at within Chinese communities in Australia?

This study takes note of recent research which argues that identity formation is both historically conditioned and an ongoing dialectical process involving a dialogue between the inner and the outer self, the personal and the world (Hall 1996:595–634). I approach modern identity as a series of 'social arrangements reinforced by socially constructed and continuously renegotiated stories' (Tilly 1979:xiii). From this perspective, language and narrative forms take on a special significance when framing identities. Narrative itself is an ontological condition of social life and social identity (Somers & Gibson 1994:38,58–59). The narrative understanding of life refers to 'a sense of what I have become which can only be given in a story' (Taylor 1989:48). Humans are self-interpreting beings; people tell stories to make sense of their actions and their relationship with others (Tilly 1979:36–37). The never-ending act of making sense and meaning of one's life in turn shapes relations among actors and conditions social behaviour (Ringmar 1996:66). The subjectivity of individuals is then central to social identity and social interaction. This subjectivity is reflected in stories they tell which in turn give meaning to their existence and help to fashion relations between the self and the world, past and present. The subjectivity and behaviour of individuals are embedded in language. Identities only become relevant 'through the spoken word in which [the individual] identifies himself as the actor' (Arendt 1998:179).

Narrative is also an important element in the making of communities. People interpret their goals, aspirations and actions in society through narratives in order to attain self-coherence (Tilly 1979:38–39). At the same time, however, narrative is dialogic, relating the self to other interlocutors (Taylor 1989:36). The language of self-interpretation has a moral dimension in which a subject is located within an ethical community sanctioned by reference to the norms of others in society and, often as not, by reference to a higher being. Hence a community can itself be approached as a network of intersubjective meanings derived through negotiation between self and others (Tilly 1979:33–35, 49–71). In this sense public narratives provide a key to understanding communities as well as the individuals who comprise them. Narratives contribute to the social imaginary, which Charles Taylor (2004:23) defines as the 'common understanding that makes possible common practices and a widely shared sense of legitimacy', whereby people imagine their social surroundings through a common repository of images, stories and legends.

The social imaginary of Chinese Australia can fruitfully be approached through the study of the stories narrated in the Chinese-Australian press. The diversity of these stories shows that making Chinese Australia was both an historically-conditioned and a dialectical process traversing local, national and transnational domains. The narratives of Chinese Australians helped to shape their particular social imaginary and, at the same time, mobilised Chinese immigrants to remake themselves in the style of their modern imagined community.

Outline of this book

This book traces the making of a distinctively Chinese-Australian community in Sydney and Melbourne at a time of growing urbanisation and emerging Australian and Chinese nationalism from 1892 to 1912, chiefly by reference to the narratives related through Chinese newspapers and the social institutions and networks associated with them. Following this chapter's survey of the social background underlying the development of Chinese newspapers in Sydney, Chapter 2 focuses primarily on problems of urbanisation and commercial development and argues that the Sydney Chinese community was transformed from the 1880s as it adapted to commercial opportunities that arose at the time. The transition was confirmed by the rise of a group of bilingual Chinese leaders and institutionalised by the publication of Australia's first two Chinese-language newspapers in Sydney.

Chapter 3 follows events arising from the publication of those two newspapers, the *CAH* and the *TWN*, including growing public participation by the Sydney Chinese community in the 1890s. At this point the printed word began to give shape to an imagined Chinese-Australian community. The *CAH* provided a forum for leadership contention in the late 1890s and the *TWN* was instrumental in founding the New South Wales Chinese Empire Reform Association in 1899. These two newspapers expanded the vision of their Chinese readership and enlarged the scope of public discussion to embrace national political systems and international networks—in the one case those of the British Empire and in the other those of the Chinese empire. Chapter 4 turns to the period immediately after Federation, paying particular attention to Chinese merchant networks in Sydney and the growth of anti-Chinese sentiment, which further transformed the leadership and civic culture of the Chinese community of Sydney. Two models of leadership were tried and tested in the White Australia era, one involving new forms of civic association, the other involving the re-invention of clan associations and secret societies.

Chapter 5 discusses the progression of Sydney Chinese merchants towards becoming an international elite, in terms of the growing self-consciousness of the Sydney Chinese urban elite, the Chinese Convention of 1905 and the anti-American boycott in 1905 and 1908. From 1905 Sydney Chinese merchants emerged as a distinctly modern merchant stratum, exercising a growing influence over the Chinese-Australian community. In this movement, Chinese Australians were encouraged to mobilise their resources by linking up with an international network of patriots among the Chinese diaspora. The influence of the Sydney Chinese merchants was at its peak in 1907 and 1908, when other Chinese community leaders began to challenge their dominance, not least in Melbourne.

Chapter 6 introduces the second model of leadership introduced during the White Australia era, specifically the renovation of clan, native-place and secret organisations to adapt to the new urban circumstances in which they found themselves. Older notions of clan identity and secret brotherhood were reinterpreted to embrace ethnic nationalism. The renovated organisations developed newspapers on their own account and pressed for greater recognition within Australia through the appointment of an Imperial Chinese Consul-General, a position for which they agitated successfully. Disappointed, however, by the poor performance of the imperial government's appointees to the position, they moved to build local branches of the republican revolutionary movement in Melbourne and Sydney.

Chapter 7 traces the introduction of the idea of the Chinese diaspora (in this case *huaqiao*) into Chinese-Australian political rhetoric through contending voices in the Chinese-language press. The anti-Chinese racism of White Australia converged with partisan Chinese nationalist politics to engender a shared vision of a transnational community that pined for a homeland and yet was rooted in Australian soil. A growing preoccupation with the idea of *huaqiao* in the local Chinese press reflected the increasing nationalisation of Chinese-Australian identity within a transnational frame of reference. Newspaper commentaries of the time confirm that social identities and patterns of mobilisation were grounded in competing narratives, but were now within a larger and more coherent narrative of a *huaqiao* diaspora.

COMING TO THE CITY,
LATE 1880s – 1892

By 1890 urbanisation had begun to dominate the everyday life of a majority of Australians (Briggs 1965:73; McCarty 1978:19–20; Glynn 1975:76–77). The process of urbanisation influenced the concentration of Chinese in Sydney and Melbourne in the wake of the gold rush and mining boom. By the end of the 19th century, Sydney had become the fourth largest seaport in the British Empire, its commercial and geographical status having been enhanced by the increasing importance of the Pacific (Coghlan & Ewing 1903:185,447). Chinese immigrants en route to other parts of Australasia passed through Sydney on their way, and by 1880 Sydney was a hub of Chinese migration in the Pacific. On 28 April 1881, for example, over 600 Chinese passengers reporting to the Hong Kong Harbour Office claimed they were heading for Sydney.[1] In that month alone, a total of over 2,000 Chinese came to Australia by way of Sydney (Fitzgerald 1997:24). Between 1878 and 1888, 28,810 Chinese arrived in Australia and 12,690 left via Sydney (Wang 1978:317).

After gold and tin mining resources in New South Wales and the other Australian colonies were exhausted, Sydney also became home to many Chinese already resident in Australia (Coghlan & Ewing 1903:96; Wang 1987:208–211 Yong 1977:4), with a significant increase in internal migration of Chinese to New South Wales between 1878 and 1881 (Coghlan 1894:185). The Chinese population of metropolitan Sydney steadily increased from 336 in 1871 to 2,232 in 1881 (Fitzgerald 1997:23; New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:486). The concentration of the Chinese population in a few areas of Sydney eventually contributed to a rise in anti-Chinese feelings (Fitzgerald 1997:28). However, neither the increasing racism nor the restrictive legislation targeting Chinese in 1881 could halt the growth of

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1   Hong Kong Public Records Office, Colonial Office files, 1842–1951, CO 129/193, 13795.

Sydney's Chinese population, which in 1888 reached 4,202 (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:486). In the three years following the passing in New South Wales of the Chinese Restriction and Regulation Act of 1888, which required that the number of Chinese immigrants be sharply reduced, 2,100 Chinese left Australia and only 39 arrived (Choi 1975:23). In 1891 Sydney continued to boast the largest Chinese population in New South Wales and the other Australian colonies; it was home to 3,499 Chinese residents, compared with 2,143 in Melbourne (Yong 1977:4; Williams 1998:16).

Although numbers had decreased after 1888, in 1901 there were still 3,680 Chinese in Sydney, which was home to a quarter of the Chinese population of New South Wales. In Melbourne in 1901 there were 2,500 Chinese residents, amounting to 38.3% of Victoria's Chinese population (Jones 2005:16–17; Choi 1975:29,52; Yong 1977:4–6). An official report from the Chinese Consul-General of Singapore, who visited Australia in 1902, confirmed that the largest Chinese-Australian communities were to be found in Sydney and Melbourne. His report also noted that Sydney had the largest number of Chinese engaged in commerce and trade.[2]

The importance of the Sydney Chinese community lay not just in the size of its population but also in its position in a developing Australian identity and Chinese diaspora identity. From the 1880s anti-Chinese sentiment in New South Wales was on the increase. Homogeneity of society and nation had become a core goal in the development of Australian identity, leading to greater prejudice against Chinese immigrants (Elder 2007:53–54). The success of the Sydney Chinese community between the late 1880s and the early 1890s did not pass unnoticed among white Australians. On the other side of the Pacific Ocean, Chinese Americans seeking to avoid widespread hostility gradually deserted the west-coast cities of the United States to settle in its mid-western and eastern cities from the 1870s (Kwong 2001:38; Chan 1986:76). The development of Sydney's Chinese community, however, shows a distinctly Australian approach; rather than avoiding the Pacific shores, Chinese Australians sought opportunities to improve their circumstances by settling in the coastal cities, under the hostile gaze of ubiquitous and officially sanctioned racism.

It appears that kinship and native-place associations did not establish hegemony over Sydney Chinese as they did over Chinese Americans and Chinese in Southeast Asia at the end of the 19th century. During the 1890s,

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2   Academia Sinica, Institute of Modern History, Taiwan (hereafter AS:IMH), Diplomatic Archives, 02-13-008-02-061.

faced with a particular set of economic and political conditions, bilingual elites enhanced their leadership positions in urban Sydney. The decline of the clan associations and native-place societies in Sydney is an indication that the kinship paradigm did not work out as successfully in urban Sydney as it did in China. Even though immigrants generally had a strong sense of attachment toward their native-places, it was not strong enough to provide a model for Chinese-Australian identity. In fact, Chinese-Australian identity emerged from the growth of social and business networks in metropolitan Sydney. The formation of the Sydney Chinese community serves to illustrate how Australia's commercial circumstances and social transformation from the 1880s gradually pushed Chinese immigrants to seek an alternative pattern of social leadership that was suited to the environment in which they found themselves.

This chapter focuses on the transition of the Sydney Chinese leadership from county-based societies to bilingual Chinese elites from the late 1880s to the early 1890s. The first section of the chapter examines distinctive features of Sydney's Chinese community associated with its social structure and local economic circumstances. It discusses conflict within the Sydney Chinese community in 1892 that was a significant symptom of the transformation of social leadership and networks among the Chinese community. The development of a bilingual Chinese leadership and of concomitant new associations formed the background to the flowering of the Chinese press and of a sense of public identity and participation, marking the entry of the Chinese community into political life in the late 1890s.

Merchant leadership and native-place society formation in Sydney

Sydney historian, Shirley Fitzgerald (1997:6) emphasised the contribution of the Chinese community toward the creation of the City of Sydney, but Sydney's position as an international trade centre also needs to be acknowledged for its contribution to the development of the Chinese community. From the 1860s to late 1880s, the Sydney Chinese community established its centre on the harbour foreshore in The Rocks district, the area beneath the Sydney Harbour Bridge today, with the help of county headmen. In the late 1880s commercial circumstances influenced the growth of the Chinese corner of The Rocks, which until 1891, when shipping began to shift further west to Darling Harbour, had been one of the most cosmopolitan precincts of Sydney (Fitzgerald 1997:67–68).

A number of agents acted on behalf of Chinese immigrants from the early days of the Chinese-Australian transaction system, which relied on a 'credit-ticket' system (Wang 1978:112–118). Chinese passengers in China bought their steamship tickets, with the assistance of family and friends, in the shops of their countrymen. The tickets were issued under unwritten contracts that were supported by arrangements in place between their local connections and international networks of Chinese firms in Hong Kong and Australia. After the emigrants had gathered in Hong Kong with other Chinese from different districts, several headmen were contracted to accompany them to Australia. These headmen worked to secure the international transactions and the migrants' settlement at their destination. They also ensured that the immigrants repaid their passenger fees and any accrued interest to their creditors after they began earning their keep in Australia.[3]

Chinese agents and merchants at The Rocks assigned steamships and assisted their countrymen to book their tickets of passage back home or to other destinations in the Australian colonies. During the 1870s, the Rocks became a Chinese quarter whose residents were occupied with meeting a growing demand for landing services, Chinese cuisine and Chinese imports, including tea, clothes, silk fabric, traditional medicines and porcelain (Fitzgerald 1997:68). As Sydney's Chinese merchants built up their businesses in The Rocks through trading locally with their countrymen, they also contributed to the growth in import and export trade between Australia, Hong Kong and China (Yong 1977:262; Crawford 1877:17–18).

Sydney's Chinese merchants in The Rocks also drew on their connections with clan and native-place societies to establish their leadership positions. There were two factors enhancing links between Chinese merchants and native-place societies. First, the diversity of dialects associated with their different counties of origin meant that immigrants tended to patronise shops and businesses whose proprietors spoke their dialects (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:478). The business firms also opened public meeting halls for native-place associations.[4] It can thus be argued that place and kinship were mobilising forces in the formation of Chinese capital and business networks in Sydney, which runs counter to the argument of Chinese sociologist Fei Xiaotong that open commerce cannot develop easily

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3   See witness testimony of Wong A-Mun, Leung Kam-K'wan, Wong Un-ki and Wong Tin-k'iu, in Hong Kong Public Records Office, Colonial Office files, 1842–1951, CO 129/193, 13795; also Wang (1978:,99–102,115).

4   For example, the native-place association Bow On Tong was located in a Chinese firm, On Yik and Lee Co. and catered for people from the Zhongshan county (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:Q.442, 447,531).

in a society based on county and kinship networks (Fei 1957:82–83). In their early years in Sydney, Chinese merchants did indeed develop their businesses through native-place and clan relations.

Second, the commercial conditions softened competition among clan and county groups. As Crawford (1877:8) has observed, the liberal economic and political environment in Australia tended to defuse conflicts among Chinese immigrants because it provided free scope and concomitant rewards for an astute and industrious approach to business. Crawford (1877:11) further argued that rivalry among Sydney Chinese was transformed in the late 1870s by the commercial ambience of the urban environment itself. The liberal commercial and political atmosphere not only reduced county-based groups' competitiveness but also helped to transform patterns of social leadership. Clubs and societies based on clan and county networks became instruments of business mobilisation and networking in the 1880s.

The success of Koong Yee Tong illustrates the coherence produced among the Chinese community by the combination of commercial transactions and native-place formation. Koong Yee Tong was established in the 1860s but did not rise to prominence until 1875.[5] It was not just a native-place association but also a merchant club. Not all Chinese residents were obliged to join clubs specific to their clan or counties, and not all clubs welcomed fellow clansmen (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:Q.474, 5871). The Koong Yee Tong limited its membership to those who could afford to meet its substantial membership fees. One leading Koong Yee Tong member, Yuen Tah, claimed that new members paid a lump sum on entry that never fell below £1 (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:Q.4697), an entry fee that was considerably higher than that charged by Bow On Tong which charged only 5 shillings (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:Q.442). Although it was claimed that Koong Yee Tong had 600 members, the controlling power within the Tong lay with wealthy businessmen.

Between 1891 and 1892 the Chinese residents of Sydney began to redefine their native-place and clan associations as charity organisations (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:47, 117, 480). The most common benevolent activity undertaken by the native-place clubs was in arranging international transport to send elderly, dead, poor and sick Chinese back to China (New

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5   A leading member of Koong Yee Tong claimed that the society originated around 1860 (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:Q.2045), while another leading Chinese stated that Koong Yee Tong was founded in 1875 (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:Q.4138). It is possible that the society enlarged its scope in the 1870s.

South Wales Royal Commission 1892:480). Leaving aside purely benign motives, the importance of charitable work by the Chinese traders lay in the enhancement of their international transactions and contacts. Between 1891 and 1892, the Royal Commission investigated the accounts of Koong Yee Tong and found that the society held assets of about £2,000 (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:480).[6] The archives of Hong Kong's Tung Wah Hospital (東華醫院 Donghua Yiyuan) further support this claim, indicating the capacity of the Koong Yee Tong to undertake international charitable transportation.[7]

From 1875 Koong Yee Tong established contacts with the Tung Wah Hospital, which established a network of connections linking native villages in China and the overseas Chinese community through a series of associations (Sinn 2004:72). Charities such as the hospital provided useful avenues for Chinese merchants to mobilise their social resources and establish networks. In his research on the benevolent works and networks of the Tung Wah Hospital, Hokari Hiroyuki (1999:229–243) notes that *guanxi* (關係 particularistic relationships) determine the structure and function of Chinese social networks and argues that benevolent actions in Chinese society are aimed at extending and mobilising social resources and networks through the actions of leading individuals. Leading Sydney Chinese merchants, operating with charitable purport, certainly mobilised their social resources through clan and native-place relationships and their international connections to cement their positions of leadership.

Throughout the 1880s leadership of the Chinese trading and merchant community in The Rocks was established through clan and native-place connections. Chinese merchants in The Rocks area sought to enlarge their organisations in order to extend their influence. The success of Koong Yee Tong was a result not merely of clan and native-place connections but of the leadership role played by key Chinese merchants.

Some clubs that enjoyed close relations sought to extend them in formal ways, and, in this spirit, two organisations with ties to neigbouring counties in Guangdong, Dongguan and Zengcheng, established Loong Yee Tong (聯義堂 Lianyitang) (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:Q.5873). One of its members claimed that one of its objectives for collecting money was to 'put coffins on board ships passing to and from China' (New South

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6   One of the Tong's headmen stated that the Tong had credit in the bank of about £1,700 or £1,800 (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:Q.4696).

7   Tung Wah Museum, Hong Kong, Tung Wah Hospital Archives, no. 182.1, A87.v1 00163 (2/5), *Annual book of Tung Wah Hospital* 1887.

Wales Royal Commission 1892:Q.2104). The society also paid the expenses for solicitors and interpreters who were protecting its members in court cases (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:Q.3572 and p.480). Loong Yee Tong was for all practical purposes dissolved in 1888 because of a row over money (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:Q.2181). Its collapse points to the difficulties attendant on cooperation among different clan and native-place groups.

Although Chinese sources from the period are scarce, those that survive indicate that clan and native-place groups were generally in decline. In 1887, two Chinese commissioners, Wong Yung-Ho (王榮和 Wang Ronghe) and U Tsing (余璃 Yu Xi), visited Australia. They reported that there were 26 major Chinese merchants and over 4,000 Chinese dealers and labourers in metropolitan Sydney. However, no notable kinship or county-based leaders or associations attracted their attention.[8] In the same year, another Chinese scholar travelled to Australia and met with Chinese in Sydney. He reported that thousands of his countrymen resided in the city but made no mention of significant kinship or county-based leaders or organisations (Aozhou ji you 1962:511). The observations of these Chinese visitors suggest that native-place clubs and leaders no longer enjoyed a prominent public profile by the late 1880s.

Structural transformation and conflict in the Sydney Chinese community

Anti–Chinese sentiment and intercommunity conflict

Although the commercial and financial vitality of Sydney enhanced clan leadership, traditional leadership was not effective in leading and uniting the growing Chinese community in the late 1880s. The increase in the number of Chinese residents affected the public space and economic structure of Sydney. Although the number of Chinese was not very high in absolute terms, there were highly visible as a group because they tended to congregate in a few particular areas within the city (Fitzgerald 1997:28; Markus 1979:249).

Anti-Chinese sentiment in Australia grew in the late 1880s, reaching its height in incidents such as the arrival of the *Afghan*, carrying immigrants from Hong Kong, in Sydney in May 1888, which led to the immediate introduction of the Chinese Restriction and Regulation Act in New South Wales. Other colonies in Australia introduced similar legislation to restrict the arrival of Chinese immigrants in Australian ports. (Irving 1997:107–108).

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8   Their official report is published in Xue Fucheng's diary, entry for 25 June 1890 (Xue 1963b).

Markus argues that 'the peak of popular excitement over racial question in the urban communities was reached in 1888', because of the impact of California's experience, increasing feeling of fear and insecurity and tenets of social Darwinism (Markus 1979:249, 255–256). However, the public expression of ill will toward Chinese differed from comparable sentiments a decade earlier, when they were largely motivated by perceptions of competition with the European working class (Trainor 1994:86). In the 1880s and 1890s, the idea of excluding Chinese emerged from an exclusionary national vision, which precluded Chinese transforming themselves from immigrants to citizens, as such citizens would contradict an envisioned white-Australian national identity (Irving 1997:107, 114; Davison 1984:101).

In August 1891 the New South Wales Royal Commission was formed to investigate Chinese gambling and other alleged immoral activities. Five months later, when it reported on its proceedings, the Commission refuted the premise that the Chinese presented an intrinsically evil element in colonial society. It did find, however, that large-scale gambling activity was undertaken at Alexandria by gatherings of Chinese market gardeners, hawkers and other working-class persons (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:20 and Q.2296). A month after the Commission's findings were released there was a riot between two groups, one representing Chinese market gardeners and the other representing other commercial classes. The disturbance was not a random event, and it shook Chinese society and signalled a change in the Sydney Chinese community at the beginning of the 1890s.

The origins of this conflict over social leadership lay in rivalry between working-class and commercial Chinese residing in two distinct quarters of the city. From the late 1880s, increasing numbers of Chinese were occupied in the fruit and vegetable markets at Alexandria and Waterloo, just south of the city, where more than half of Sydney's Chinese lived, rather than in The Rocks (Wood 1994:22–24). A second Chinese centre grew to the southwest of the city at the Belmore Markets. Gradually, Chinese market gardeners began to present serious competition to European producers and by 1891 there were 3,841 Chinese market gardeners working in New South Wales, providing 75% of the colony's vegetables (Coghlan 1894:304). The director of agriculture for the colony, Henry CL Anderson, expressed his admiration of Chinese market gardeners as industrious and highly skilled gardeners (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:Q.13695).[9]

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9   Evidence published in the report of the Royal Commission makes frequent reference to the wages, conditions and superior output of Chinese market gardeners.

Sydney Chinese market gardens not only supplied local families in Sydney but also the city's hotels and consumers in rural New South Wales (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:Q.15513, 15539, 15542). The cost of vegetable seeds and fertilisers for Chinese gardens in Sydney were reported as being around £7,000 every year. In the same report the European proprietor of the *CAH,* James Alexander Philp, acknowledged the contribution of Chinese market gardeners to working-class families in New South Wales, estimating the value of the gardeners' annual production at £150,000 (Philp 1897).

While increasing numbers of Chinese were working for the fruit and vegetable markets, they were also establishing a different lifestyle in metropolitan Sydney. Most of the market gardeners came from the counties of Gaoming (高明 also known as Goming and Guoming) and Yaoming (要明 also known as Yiuming and Yewming) and they founded a county-based association called Hung Fook Tong, later known as the Gaoyao (高要 also known as Goyou and Goyao) society, probably in the 1860s (Fitzgerald 1997:95). From the mid-19th century, the Hung Fook Tong looked after the Gaoyao Chinese who ran market gardens and carried out business at Alexandria, Waterloo, Botany, Lane Cove, Willoughby, Cooks River, Rockdale and Hurstville (Rogowsky 2004:100). In 1891, Sun Sing Loong, a carpenter, stated that there were over 1,000 Chinese from Gaoyao living in the Sydney area (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:Q.14175).

The good soil and its proximity to the city markets were reasons for the concentration of Gaoyao Chinese in Alexandria and Waterloo. In 1891 the sub-Inspector of Police for Alexandria, Edmund Lawless, estimated that 375 Chinese lived in his district, of whom 150 were gardeners and 113 hawkers (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:Q.11515). About 100 Chinese are known to have lived in Alexandria's Retreat Street alone in 1891, where they shared accommodation, patronised local businesses for daily goods and furniture, and attended gambling and opium-smoking venues (Stephen 1997:9). The Report of the Royal Commission painted the lifestyle and living conditions of the Chinese in Retreat Street, which the Commission's investigators likened to 'an Arab town on the outskirts of an Egyptian city', as especially notorious (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:476). Their criticisms, however, were fuelled by a landlord of the area, William Charles Cooper (Stephen 1997:17). When Australian anti-Chinese agitation peaked in the late 1880s, the Chinese residents of Alexandria and Chinese market gardeners felt the impact of hostile racism rather more than other Chinese (Rogowsky 2004:97; Markus 1974:386).

One of the Royal Commissioners, prominent Sydney Chinese leader Quong Tart (梅光達 Mei Guangda, 1850–1903), influenced the inquiry in a way that was intended to distinguish himself from the lower-class Chinese (Rogowsky 2004:102). Quong Tart had come to Australia with his uncle when he was nine years old and had worked with a Scottish family who exposed him to Scottish ways of life and business, enabling him later to forge connections between the Chinese and European business communities. Quong Tart cultivated his relationship with the Manchu court and won the favour of the Emperor of China as a result, which brought him fame and status that greatly enhanced his leadership in the Sydney community. One of the two imperial commissioners who visited Australian in 1887, U Tsing, was the godfather of one of Quong Tart's daughters. Such aspirant behaviour was characteristic of Chinese merchants who sought to distance themselves from the working-class Chinese and also showed themselves willing to cooperate with restrictive immigration policies (Fitzgerald 1997:85). The Chinese commercial class in general sought to project an image of respectability in comparison with their uneducated compatriots who were labourers and of peasant background (Irving 1997:106–107). The notion of respectability suggests that Chinese and other Australians drew on a common symbolic repertoire of behaviours that extended into clothing, accoutrements and general comportment (Lydon 1999:105). It can be argued that by the beginning of the 1890s a significant gap had emerged between the Chinese agricultural and commercial classes. Sydney police officers close to Chinese residents alerted the Royal Commission to the Chinese commercial class's mistrust of working-class Chinese, expressing the view that the attitude of members of the Commission towards the ubiquitous gambling among the Chinese and towards the lower classes was prejudiced (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:Q.11276, 11278, 12064).

An aspect of the character and lifestyle of Retreat Street residents about which the Royal Commission investigators showed no concern was the Yiu Ming Temple (要明廟 Yaomingmiao) at the end of the street. The temple, a centre of the Chinese community in Sydney's south from the 1890s (Fitzgerald 1997:105), reflected the religious beliefs of the Gaoyao community and added to the distance between Gaoyao and the Chinese commercial classes. The Gaoyao Chinese in Sydney may have retained belief of their home villages because their lives relied on agriculture, which was ruled by the weather and the natural environment. The Gaoyao native-place association was not established to resemble the Koong Yee Tong in any way. First, the Hung Fook Tong existed on a far more modest financial basis than

the Koong Yee Tong, which, as already noted, required its members to pay an entry fee of at least £1. Secondly, the Hung Fook Tong's leadership was drawn from local storekeepers and working-class Chinese rather than from among wealthy merchants.

William Goldtown and the Royal Commission

As already noted, some of the tensions within Sydney Chinese society came to a head in street rioting in 1892, following the 1891 investigations of the Royal Commission. One of the key people behind the conflict was William Wong Goldtown (黃高堂 Huang Gaotang), a prominent member of the Gaoyao county community in Sydney at the beginning of the 1890s.[10]

Goldtown was educated at St. Paul's College in Hong Kong and worked as a translator and clerk to the Netherlands representative in Hong Kong. He moved to Sydney in 1887, apparently for health, and soon after his arrival was introduced to Quong Tart. With Quong's assistance, Goldtown established a business at 133 King Street in partnership with one Alfred Archey. He interpreted and translated for Quong Tart and for lawyers and other merchants of the city. His name is alongside those of Quong Tart and four other well-known Chinese merchants in petitions to the Conference on the Chinese Question in June of 1888 (New South Wales Legislative Assembly 1888). A year later, Goldtown established a business in Park Street as a tea merchant and general agent for his compatriots, but the business failed and he moved away from Sydney's commercial centre and from the company of its successful Chinese merchants to Alexandria and later Surry Hills. In that community he became a general agent and interpreter for Chinese market gardeners and opened a night school to teach English to his countrymen. He seems to have found it difficult to earn a living as an interpreter, reportedly earning only one guinea for a day's work, whereas another interpreter Pow Chee received five guineas for the same number of hours. In his testimony to the Royal Commission, Goldtown stated that he had to borrow money from people at No. 2 Coffee Palace Hotel in Lower George Street, and also had to account for his frequent visits to gambling houses when he was in Alexandria. He told the Royal Commission that he met and conversed with his fellow Chinese at such places in the course of his work as an interpreter. Many influential figures found this less than credible.

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10   The account given here of Goldtown's life and his role in Sydney's community is compiled from references to him and interviews with him in the Report of the Royal Commission on Alleged Chinese Gambling (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892).

Goldtown's friendships with Chinese of the agricultural class and gamblers had undermined his reputation, and merchants such as Quong Tart, Pow Chee and James Ung Quoy claimed that Goldtown had ceased to be a respectable and proper Chinese after he left inner-city Sydney for the market gardens. They believed that he had fallen under the influence of undesirable elements among his countrymen and had become a heavy gambler.

Goldtown, however, had joined the Anti-Chinese Gambling League early in 1891 and claimed he had done so with the aim of eliminating the gambling business. After he joined the League, its representatives, armed with copious details of Chinese gambling, lobbied Labor League members of parliament such as Thomas Martin Davis of the inner-city waterfront West Sydney electorate and other MPs to introduce a Bill into the Legislative Assembly to deal with Chinese gambling. On 30 July a 12-man deputation from the Anti-Chinese Gambling League met with Premier Henry Parkes and claimed that policemen were taking bribes in return for neglecting to enforce the law against Chinese gambling. When Parkes asked for their sources of information, the deputation members named Goldtown. Goldtown claimed that, after this meeting, three members of the Anti-Chinese Gambling League tried to compel him to write a statement about the bribery of policemen by Chinese gambling houses, telling him that if he wrote the statement they would influence Henry Parkes to make Goldtown a Consul to China. His refusal to do so angered the League members and their manner became threatening.

The involvement of Goldtown in the Anti-Chinese Gambling League shook both the European and Chinese communities. At the same time that the Royal Commission was appointed in August 1891 to investigate allegations of bribes to policemen, a meeting of Chinese was held at Sun Sam War, a known gambling house in Lower George Street, at which interpreter Pow Chee translated newspaper articles about Chinese gambling. Goldtown, who was present at that meeting, was invited to a second meeting to explain his activities with the League. Pow Chee told the Commission that Goldtown attended to clear his name and had indicated that his activities in the Anti-Chinese Gambling League were as a spy and informer. Pow Chee also pointed out that Chinese in the meeting suspected that Goldtown had become involved with the League solely for his own profit and was not acting in the public interest, and they accused him of this outright at the meeting. He became frightened of three men in particular, Robert Lee Kum, Cheang Show and Lin Man, who, according to his testimony, had threatened to take his life. Feeling hostility from all sides, Goldtown left Sydney soon after the

second meeting at Sum San War. Goldtown stayed away in northern New South Wales and in Brisbane from September to November. On his return to Sydney, he was immediately summoned to appear before the Royal Commissioners, whom he told that he was in fear of the European and the Chinese side, both of which seemed to question his motives and character. In the end, Goldtown could neither provide any information to decisively expose the Chinese gambling industry nor convince the doubters of his integrity. The other witnesses at the Royal Commission's hearings were divided in their views of him. Chinese merchants, in particular, cast doubt on his character and behaviour, because of his relationships with gambling houses and because he was prepared to consort with lower-class Chinese.

Notably absent, however, from the Report of the Royal Commission is the voice of the lower-class or the Gaoyao Chinese, and their views on Goldtown are not reported anywhere. The voice of these groups remained largely unheard until the riot that occurred in March 1892 after the Royal Commission had reported its findings. The violent clash between Chinese from two counties was not merely a product of *tong*[11] rivalry; rather it reflected the reaction of the Gaoyao people to the denigration of their lifestyle and values by other Chinese. Steps taken following the riot to resolve the conflict among Sydney's Chinese explicitly articulated an understanding that the process of shaping the Chinese community and Chinese-Australian identity must be one of socially constructed renegotiation between a European outlook and traditional Chinese customs and social practices.

The 1892 conflict

The increasing isolation of the Chinese from an evolving white-Australian identity, along with the growing gap between the Chinese elites and lower-classes, pushed Sydney Chinese society to the brink of disorder. The riot of March 1892 was triggered by a court case between two parties that represented two native-place associations, with inherent implications of class. The case was intended to settle a dispute that had arisen over a lottery prize. Goldtown assisted Ah Chew, a vegetable dealer from the Gaoyao county, in his bid to sue Gwoon Sing, a leader of the Dongguan county. Ah Chew claimed he had won £230 from Gwoon Sing at a *pak-a-pu* house but had not received payment. Gwoon Sing, on the other hand, had supposedly

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11   *Tong* normally refers to a type of Chinese social organisation. It has been used by Chinese immigrants to title various associations, such as secret societies, clan associations and kinship societies. Rivalry amongst Chinese secret societies was implied in the conflict of 1892.

demanded £20 from Ah Chew, who had in turn refused to pay and had received threats.

The case, or rather its extra-juridical ramifications, was rather more complicated than a dispute over a single lottery result. Jane Lydon (1999:126) observes that this case was related to the organisation of gambling, specifically the involvement of Loong Yee Tong and its attempts to punish informers. However, it became a symbolic conflict between the Dongguan and Gaoyao counties. On the first day of March, members of the two county groups congregated at the Water Police Court. The courtroom was packed with Chinese, while another 200 or more congregated outside, having been unable to gain admission. This unusual gathering and the associated tense circumstances had been foreseen by one of the solicitors, JW Abigail, and he had spoken of the problem to Edmund Fosbery, the Inspector-General of Police, two days previously. Abigail asked Fosbery to send a substantial force of police officers to avert any disturbance at the court, but he had refused this request, stating that the Chinese were harmless.[12] It would become clear that he had misread the immediate situation, due to a lack of any understanding of the tensions and problems among Chinese residents in and around Sydney.

Magistrate Benjamin Lee concluded and dismissed the case, and the interpreter duly informed the Chinese present of this result. Word of the outcome travelled quickly from the court to the crowd waiting outside in Phillip Street. Within seconds, between 200 and 300 Chinese from the two factions began first yelling and then fighting violently right outside the Water Police Court. They quickly armed themselves with iron bars, knives, knuckle-dusters, stones and long bamboo rods, and the situation became increasingly desperate. Four policemen initially tried to suppress the riot, but it was some time before a detachment of police arrived from the Lower George Street station and was able to clear the street quickly and without resistance. In the end, twelve of the rioters were arrested and a number of Chinese were injured.

The riot endangered the public reputation of the Sydney Chinese as an amicable and peaceable community within the colony. It specifically contradicted the findings of the Royal Commission, which, only a month before, had officially dismissed the notion that the Chinese were an evil element in colonial society prone to excessive gambling (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:29). Sydney newspapers enthusiastically interpreted the riot as a reflection of Chinese residents' bad faith and the dangers their race posed for colonial society. The *Sydney Morning Herald* (hereafter *SMH*) deemed

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12   *Evening News* (hereafter *EN*), 2 March 1892.

the riot a manifestation of a secret-society style among Chinese living in the colonies, a style that had now become a source of significant trouble to the community.[13] Another Sydney newspaper, the *Evening News* (hereafter *EN*), used the hyperbole 'Chinese Mafia' in referring to Chinese clubs.[14]

Sydney's newspapers' reporting of the incident further undermined the reputation of Chinese residents. The Chinese merchant leadership understood that the riot had the potential to arouse very damaging anti-Chinese sentiment and quickly mobilised to call for peace and cooperation within their community. In the days immediately after the rioting, they began to organise inter-club meetings aimed at negotiating understanding and toleration between the disparate groups and outlooks.

On 4 March two meetings were held by Chinese leaders and bilingual merchants to seek peace agreements intended to allay the colonies' ever-deepening mistrust of the Chinese. The first meeting, held in the afternoon at the Royal Standard Theatre in Castlereagh Street, was attended by county leaders, including William Loo Ching (who chaired the meeting), WL Lisson, Yee Sang Long, Way Kee, Sun Kum Tiy, Hing Chong and Yee War.[15] Loo Ching was a Kejia Chinese from the Dongguan county and was a government interpreter. Under his leadership, about 200 Chinese merchants, carpenters, gardeners and others gathered to form a society for the promotion of peace. Many of the merchants at the meeting spoke, appealing to their countrymen to unite and live harmoniously in this foreign country. At this meeting a committee was appointed to call upon the leaders of the different county groups.

The second meeting, in the evening of the same day, was convened by Quong Tart, who had been in talks with Inspector-General Fosbery since the riot, in which Fosbery had made it clear that the police were ready to meet any recurrence of the disturbance with a strong arm and that the Chinese must settle their differences peacefully and quickly or he would take forceful action. Quong Tart passed the Inspector-General's message on to two other well-known bilingual merchants, William Robert George Lee (李益徽 Li Yihui, also known as Lee Yikfai, 1844–1911) of On Yik and Lee, and Thomas Yee Hing (劉汝興 Liu Ruxing, also known as 劉元春 Liu Yuanchun, 1860–1921) of On Chong and Co. They met at Quong's office in King Street and immediately decided to organise a meeting of 20 leading

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13   *SMH*, 2 March 1892.
14   *EN*, 2 March 1892.
15   *The Daily Press* (Hong Kong), 1 April 1892; *EN*, 2 March 1892.

representatives of all classes at Lower George Street. At last, the Chinese merchants were working to bring the factions together.[16]

In the following days, Chinese county leaders and bilingual merchants gathered to resolve the remaining ill feeling between the two rioting county groups, in the name of Kai Fong (known as 'Ki Tong' in the report of the Royal Commission).[17] Kai Fong was an ad-hoc community organisation, led by native-place and clan headmen, formed to deal with pressing issues as they arose. The headmen in this case were Quong Tart (appointed president of Kai Fong), T Yee Hing, WRG Lee, Chow Kum, proprietor of Kwong Mow On (廣茂安 Guangmaoan), Yuen Tah, Quam Hing, Hip Long, proprietor of Sun Hing Jang (新興棧 Xinxingzhan), and proprietor of Quan Lee (均利 Junli). Importantly, Way Kee and other leaders of Chinese native-place clubs were not included on the list.

After two private meetings, on 7 March the headmen of the peace committee decided on several approaches to finally settle the dispute. They emphasised the importance of Kai Fong's role in keeping the Chinese peaceably disposed and law-abiding. They also pointed out that Kai Fong was important in that it projected a meaning of 'law-abiding', as practised from the point of view of Chinese custom. The committee considered Gwoon Sing's group, from Dongguan county, to have been in the wrong because it involved itself in public dispute. On the other hand, Ah Chew and his Gaoyao supporters had prosecuted his case in the English court without consulting the Chinese community, thus acting contrary to Chinese custom. When Quong Tart visited Waterloo on 8 March to present the committee's vision, he emphasised the reputation of the Chinese as a law-abiding race in European eyes. For the headmen of the peace committee, 'law-abiding' meant that Chinese should obey Chinese custom as well as acknowledge colonial jurisdiction.

The committee's pronouncements were futile. Neither the Gaoyao nor the Dongguan group was in favour of the Kai Fong report of 7 March and leaders on both sides took an intractably hostile position to the peace committee's decisions. The headmen of the respective groups stated that, although they were striving to keep the peace, there was increasing restlessness among their countrymen.[18] The Kai Fong committee had grave fears that its endeavours were proving futile, so the members visited the police to warn the police to

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16 See 'Peace Committee's official report' in *SMH*, 25 March 1892; *EN*, 7 March 1892.
17 *SMH*, 25 March 1892.
18 *SMH*, 25 March 1892.

be prepared for further disturbance.[19] Despite their avowal that law-abiding behaviour was inherent in true Chinese custom, Quong Tart and the other Kai Fong members found themselves in the paradoxical position of having to report precisely the opposite and act against their compatriots.

Because the Chinese merchants could not resolve the dispute, on 15 March the court ordered the apprehension of the leaders of the Gaoyao group, William Goldtown, and three other members known to have been involved in the disturbance. The court heard the case on the same day, before the news of Goldtown's arrest became widely known. Nevertheless, the police took stringent steps to prepare for trouble outside the courthouse. The Gaoyao people thus returned to the court to prove that they were law-abiding and of good character. They justified their actions on the day of the riot, saying that they had fought back in self-defence when the Dongguan Chinese had attacked them. Appearing on behalf of the Gaoyao Chinese, JW Abigail stated that Dongguan Chinese had two or three times that month organised attacks on market gardeners, who were almost all Gaoyao natives. Abigail further claimed that the root of the quarrel between the Dongguan and Gaoyao groups lay in Goldtown's efforts to suppress the gambling business, which had led to the inquiry of the Royal Commission. While Goldtown was acting as interpreter for Ah Chew, the Dongguan group had formed a secret society, selecting 300 of their members to harass Ah Chew's supporters and their properties. Abigail thus painted the Dongguan Chinese as lawless and vicious and blamed them for both Ah Chew's case and the riot.[20]

Abigail's statement further enraged the Dongguan people. The Dongguan county leader immediately organised a meeting at No. 2 Coffee Palace Hotel in Lower George Street the day after the court hearing. The conveners of this meeting were Yee Sang Loong, Way Kee, Chow Kum and Co., Sam War and Co., Hing Chong and Co., and William Loo Ching. About 100 Chinese attended the meeting, from which all members of the Gaoyao faction were excluded. William Loo Ching, Pow Chee, Mow Ping and Way Shong spoke as representatives for their counties of Dongguan, Zhongshan, Siyi and Zengcheng respectively. They denied the Gaoyao claims made in the Water Police Court.[21] Loo Ching and Pow Chee also criticised Kai Fong's judgements on the issue, especially Quong Tart's contribution, pronouncing the decisions of Quong Tart and the peace committee unfair and

19   *EN*, 9 March 1892.
20   *SMH*, 17 March 1892.
21   *SMH*, 17 March 1892.

injudicious.[22] The meeting officially rejected Kai Fong's authority and any notion of reconciliation with the Gaoyao Chinese.

On 24 March, back in the Water Police Court, the various persons accused of the March 1st affray, and others appearing as witnesses from both sides, testified and were cross-examined at length. Because of the degree of confusion on the day of the riot and the contradictory testimonies presented in court, the accused were eventually discharged.[23] Hostility continued unabated in the Chinese community and trouble was expected at the forth-coming Qing Ming (grave-sweeping) Festival on 5 April, when Chinese from the two factions would be travelling to the Rookwood cemetery and could expect to encounter each other on the way there and back. William Goldtown, as Gaoyao leader, announced that his people—more than 200 of them—would be taking an early train and would be travelling with police protection.[24] The Gaoyao Chinese boarded a special train to the cemetery in the early morning, thanks to arrangements made between the Chinese merchant leaders, including Quong Tart, and the police. Not until after the Gaoyao party had returned from the cemetery did the train carrying the Dongguan group arrive at Redfern station (Travers 2004:139–140). Quong Tart and Goldtown had, it seems, arrived at a rapprochement in order to relieve the tensions between their two worlds.

William Goldtown's activities and the issues he raised show that the influence of Chinese bilingual intellectuals was increasing, while the agricultural and working-class Chinese were at the same time gradually changing the structure of Chinese society in Sydney. Out of this dispute, notwithstanding its short-term difficulties, grew an increased acceptance by the Sydney Chinese of the jurisdiction of the courts to resolve their disputes. This was achieved by combining colonial legal custom and Chinese tradition. In colonial courts, for example, it was acceptable for Chinese to affirm their good faith by a ritual chicken-beheading, as was the custom in rural Southern China.[25] However, in Sydney non-Christian Chinese testifying in court opted to blow out a match as they took the oath to tell the truth as their way of showing that the oath was binding upon them. Sydney Chinese regarded this ritual as equivalent to beheading a chicken

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22 *SMH*, 18 March 1892.
23 *EN*, 25 March 1892.
24 *EN*, 1 April 1892.
25 *Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal,* 22 June 1861, p.2 and 4 June 1891, p.3; *The Queenslander*, 10 May 1873, p.10; *Gippsland Times*, 2 June 1874, p.4; *The Argus,* 8 May 1874, p.7.

as an invocation of divine justice.[26] Colonial courts were prepared to accept such non-Christian customs as legally binding as a Christian's oath on the Bible. Customary affirmations such as these were also seen as a declaration that those testifying also accepted and had faith in Australian justice. This innovative combination of traditional manners and colonial jurisdiction may be regarded as a triumph of negotiation between the Sydney Chinese and the culture of the Australian colonies.

The Chinese community in Australia was keen to demonstrate that they were law-abiding and worthy of respect within colonial society; yet the conflict between the different county groups, as played out in the courts and beyond, stands as evidence of just how differently European and Chinese interpreted the concepts of 'law-abiding' and 'respectable'. This difference was important, for the Sydney Chinese were very concerned to be seen as holding and living by moral values appropriate for participants in the life of urban Sydney. The bilingual Chinese had emerged as an important factor; if the gulf between Chinese and Australian manners and values was to be bridged, their role would prove crucial in shaping and relocating the Chinese position.

Significantly, bilingual Chinese received the support of native-place club functionaries in the project of transformation. The reshaping of the Chinese community was thus related to an alternative inter-county dynamic after 1892 and the leadership role of the bilingual elites was now key to mobilising the city's Chinese in the cause of the community. The Sydney Chinese began to focus on their social relationships with the colonials rather than the interpersonal relationships of their kin and native-place networks. The new leadership of the bilingual elites and their role in assisting their compatriots to renegotiate their place within colonial society became extremely important in shaping the future direction of the Chinese community in Sydney. The bilingual elites had some remarkable achievements after 1892, notably those of WRG Lee and Reverend John Young Wai (周容威 Zhou Rongwei, 1847–1930) who facilitated the breaking down of the barriers between the county groups in Sydney through economic, religious and social networks. The new patterns of Chinese society and leadership would come to be emblematic of the diversity, adaptability and potential inherent in Chinese identity in Australia.

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26   *CAH*, 1 July 1905, p.3. For a study of the divine justice of chicken-beheading, see Katz (2002).

Beyond kinship: Chinese bilingual leaders and their influence

WRG Lee and the establishment of the Lin Yik Tong

After the conflict between the county groups in early 1892, the death of a leading member of Koong Yee Tong, Way Kee, influenced further conciliation and the transformation of rival Sydney Chinese groups. Way Kee died on 15 August 1892. On 4 September his body was carried onto the steamship *Tainan* to be conveyed to China. Over 3,000 Chinese attended the funeral procession for his last journey on the streets of Sydney. City newspapers reported that Chinese from different districts joined the procession, including those who had been involved in the Water Police Court riot, and that all parties were united in harmony for the occasion.[27] The era of leadership exemplified by Way Kee was over and Sydney Chinese entered a new era.

A few months before Way Kee died, he joined with WRG Lee in founding the Lin Yik Tong (聯益堂 Lianyitang, hereafter LYT). Lee was born in 1844 in the Zhongshan county of Guangdong province[28] and came to Australia in 1861. He first lived in rural New South Wales, in towns such as Young and Gulgong. He was naturalised in 1875 and baptised in the Church of England.[29] In 1879, after a trip back to China to marry at the age of 34, he opened an export-import firm, On Yik and Lee Co. (安益利號 Anyilihao), in Lower George Street, Sydney.[30]

Lee embraced Western manners and became a Freemason, also encouraging his oldest son, William Yinson Lee (李源信 or 李元信 Li Yuanxin), to join Australian Masonic societies (Fitzgerald 2005:105). He established an excellent reputation among both Chinese and Europeans (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:Q.249, 1617, 6712), and was applauded by the Royal Commission as 'a very good English Chinese scholar and highly esteemed amongst the European and Chinese. He is a very intellectual man and well read' (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:479). Lee's embrace of Western manners and his networking within Australian society did much to expand his business, which by the beginning of the 20th century

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27 *Sydney Mail*, 17 September 1892.
28 *CAH*, 5 April, 1902, p.6.
29 National Archives of Australia (hereafter NAA), A1/15, 1916/31599, certificates of exemption of WRG Lee and letter from Lee to Collector of Customs, 7 August 1903; naturalisation certificate of WRG Lee, 1875, memorial no.75/08106 in McCormack (2008).
30 *CAH*, 8 February 1902, supplement; NAA, A1/15, 1916/31599, correspondence on establishment of On Yik and Lee Ltd.

was, according to his own evaluation, worth about £10,000.[31] His business success and enviable relationship with the Australian commercial elite were factors in the highly cooperative relations he had with Chinese leaders such as Way Kee.

Some months before he died, Way Kee collaborated with WRG Lee in the transportation of Chinese merchants from various districts to establish the LYT, in order to further the cause of institutions that united the counties. The LYT was established on 12 December 1891[32] as a commercial agency, initially dealing with the Gibbs, Bright shipping company. Chinese merchants had petitioned Gibbs, Bright for authority to issue tickets to Chinese wishing to return to China. The company's managers approached Lee to conduct this service, but Lee did not operate alone; he worked with other Chinese merchants such as Way Kee, and they established the LYT as a way of formalising and facilitating the cooperation required to do business.[33] The work of the LYT was organised among eight firms from different counties, including Dongguan, Zhongshan, Siyi, Zengcheng and Gaoyao.[34] Two representatives from each of the eight firms served a term of three months to manage its business and each representative was awarded £10 per year.[35] In line with the philanthrophic functions of the Tong, part of this sum went to charity.

Even though half of the LYT representatives were also members of Kai Fong, there is no evidence that it occupied a particularly important position or demonstrated any influence as a public voice of the Chinese community until Lee took the place of Way Kee as a community authority figure late in 1892, when be became the LYT's sole director.[36] Under his leadership the Tong's influence began to expand immediately, and it was under Lee's tutelage that the Chinese merchants began seriously to discuss how best to mobilise and integrate with Western networks and manners rather than follow kinship customs. Lee remained among the most significant Chinese leaders in Lower George Street and Sydney generally until 1902. Because of his personal relationships with Quong Tart, the Reverend Young Wai and Sun Johnson, a Chinese-Australian network developed within a Chinese community comprising people from disparate counties and classes.

31　Lee's success and good relationship with the Australian commercial elite are apparent in numerous recommendations for his son in 1903 (NAA, A1/15, 1916/31599).

32　*CAH*, 21 December 1901, p.5 and 5 April 1902, p.6.

33　*CAH*, 1 February 1902, pp.3–4, and 5 April 1902, p.6

34　*CAH*, 21 December 1901 p.5, and 5 April 1902, p.6.

35　*CAH*, 21 December 1901, p.5.

36　*CAH*, 5 April 1902, p.6.

The LYT management structure in place from 1892 to 1897, outlined above, which involved the proprietors of the eight firms from different factions and county groups, meant that, although Lee was the sole director, he could not make decisions on *tong* affairs without discussing them with the other managers. Then, in 1897, the eight firms united to function as a single Chinese agency to sell tickets for several steamship companies, eventually becoming the only Chinese immigration agent in Sydney by 1900.[37] By 1897 it had become the most significant Chinese society in Sydney, with between £600,000 and £800,000 in trading capital.[38]

The success of the LYT lay not just in its steamship agency, but also in its concern to represent the Chinese community. The fact that half of its representative managers were also involved in Kai Fong is an indication of the degree to which the public interest, especially the project to unite the county groups, underpinned the LYT's doings. It is important to note that those who managed the LYT were drawn not only from among the export-import traders in Lower George Street; some were storekeepers near Belmore market.[39] Kwong Mow On, in particular, represented the Gaoyao county in the LYT. These sorts of examples further indicate that the Tong's purpose was to establish an institution that would transcend particularistic differences.

In addition to the above goals, the purpose of the LYT was to build friendship and peace through the interdependence of the Chinese firms and the steamship companies. The Tong's regulations reflected the ideals of *tong*s generally, which were about creating a public space and a forum for collective negotiation.[40] Despite having no physical location in Sydney, the LYT increased its influence in following years. The use of the words 'Chinese Association' (華民公眾會 Huamingongzhonghui) in its subtitle and the content of its constitution further underlined the difference between the LYT firms and Chinese merchants working through old-style kinship and native-place associations.

The LYT stood as an example of the potential for cooperation between Chinese county groups and bilingual Chinese. Even though the Tong claimed that its composition was based on cooperation among different county groups, its operations were invariably directed by the Dongguan

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37   *CAH*, 21 December 1901, p.5; Yong 1977:82; *CAH*, 1 February 1902, p.3.
38   *The Bulletin*, 4 Sept 1897.
39   On Tik and Lee, Way Kee and Co., On Chong and Co., Sun Hing Jang and Kwong Hing Chong were located at Lower George Street; Quong Lee, Hop Lee and Kwong Mow On were located south of Sydney near Belmore Market (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:480; *CAH*, 5 April 1902, p.6).
40   *CAH*, 5 April 1902, p.6.

and Zhongshan county groups.[41] Neverthless, the cooperation among the different county groups reflects the efforts of the leaders of the Sydney Chinese community to expand and renegotiate their people's role in urban life. Lee's efforts in particular did much to induce in the LYT the dynamic needed to enhance and mobilise the Sydney Chinese to unite as a community in the years that followed.

The Chinese Presbyterian Church and the Reverend John Young Wai

In 1892, another bilingual Chinese person in Sydney, the Reverend John Young Wai, received the first donation from Chinese to establish the Chinese Presbyterian Church. In the Reverend Wai we find another type of Chinese bilingual intellectual who was significant in promoting networks between Sydney's Chinese agricultural and commercial classes.

John Young Wai was born in Zengcheng county of Guangdong province, China on 7 October 1849.[42] He came to Australia to work as a gold digger in Victoria in about 1867 (Cameron 1905:108). From 1872 he began training as a missionary, along with five other Chinese in Melbourne.[43] In 1875 he transferred to full-time training at the Presbyterian Church of Victoria's new Chinese Mission Seminary in Fitzroy, Melbourne, which closed before he had completed his training (Chan 1990). He was first sent to work with Chinese communities in the Victorian towns of Ballarat and Beechworh.[44]

While Young Wai was training as a missionary of the Presbyterian Church in Victoria, the New South Wales Presbyterian Church was looking for a cross-cultural and able worker to protect its reputation in an atmosphere of increasingly strident Australian nationalism and racism, having dismissed its previous Chinese missionary in Sydney, George Ah Len (Hutchinson 2001:211–212). In 1883, Young Wai was appointed to conduct services in Sydney for between 30 and 40 people, including some Europeans. From 1883 to 1886, he encouraged more Chinese to attend church, holding services in the schoolroom of Scots Church, in his house on Nithsdale Street, and in Goulburn Street at the premises of Goon Ping, a Chinese firm with close connections to the Koong Yee Tong (Hutchinson 2001:211–212).

In 1886, Young Wai went back to China and married Sarah Ti Man Wai, who had been educated at Berlin Women's Missionary Society for China

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41   *CAH*, 5 April 1902, p.6.
42   *TWT*, 28 June 1930, p.8.
43   *CRN*, 5 July 1930, p.5.
44   *The Sun*, 22 June 1930; *SMH,* 23 June 1930; *New South Wales Presbyterian*, 3 July 1930; *CT,* 5 July 1930.

in Hong Kong.[45] The Young Wais returned to Sydney in 1887 and became naturalised British subjects in Melbourne in the following year. Young Wai and his wife sought to involve Chinese newcomers from overseas and the other colonies in the church and were determined to extend their ministry to the Chinese lower classes, rather than just the superior classes. He gradually established his influence among the working-class Chinese in the south of the city, whom he found were unable to attend services before 8:30 pm during summer time because of their long working hours in the market gardens. His first response to this was to discontinue his services in Double Bay and to visit the gardeners where they worked.[46] Later he conducted evening services from 9:30 until 11 pm for the working-class Chinese worshippers. A European missionary acknowledged Young Wai's efforts, asking rhetorically, 'in our church who could get pupils to attend at such hours?'[47]

Mrs Young Wai regularly served as translator when the Women's Mission Association visited the Chinese women and she assisted many Chinese women in adapting to the new circumstances of their lives in Sydney, including women whose feet had been bound.[48] The Young Wais provided references and letters to enable Chinese immigrants to gain access to the Sydney hospitals,[49] and assisted them in other ways to assimilate into life in a foreign urban environment. Their work consolidated their reputation among a wide spectrum of Chinese.

Young Wai's church was becoming crowded. His congregation at Sunday evening services was regularly between 70 and 80, close to the capacity of the Goulburn Street mission, so in 1892 he began planning to build a church for his mostly working-class congregation[50] that would hold 200 worshippers and also provide accommodation for 250 Chinese.[51] On 27 August 1892 a musical festival was held at Centennial Hall to raise money for the new church.[52] The festival, at which Chinese sang hymns with Young Wai in their own language, was a twofold success, in that a significant amount was raised and the performances and festivities stood as a positive affirmation

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45 Presbyterian Church of Australia in NSW, Ferguson Library, Sydney (hereafter PCNSWA), Chinese Presbyterian Church scrapbook, 1883–1919.
46 *Woollahra Presbyterian Church Messenger*, January 1892, p.5.
47 *Ministering Women: in Mission Work*, January 1900, pp.8–9.
48 PCNSWA, Women's Missionary Association Annual Report,1899, pp.6–7.
49 *CAH*, 6 June 1903.
50 For example, at the end of 1892 the occupations of six Chinese baptised by Young Wai were hawker, polisher, gardener, carpenter and dealer (*Woollahra Presbyterian Church Messenger*, July 1892 and February 1893).
51 *Presbyterian Messenger*, July 1893.
52 *Woollahra Presbyterian Church Messenger*, September 1892.

Rev. John Young Wai and Chinese Presbyterian Church, c.1890s.
(Ferguson Memorial Library, Archives of Presbyterian Church of NSW.)

of the Chinese community in the public arena (Hutchinson 2001:213). Donations for building the church eventually totalled around £600, of which £342 came from the Chinese community. Young Wai's list of donors shows that the first Chinese donations came from firms in Waterloo and that the very first was from an important representative of the Gaoyao group, Tiy Loy and Co. A total of 479 Chinese individuals and firms contributed to the building of this public community space, and the list of contributors reflects no divisions based on clan, county or class. Young Wai had fostered such a community spirit among the Chinese that there were many non-Christians among the Chinese contributors.[53]

In February 1893 the Missions to the Heathen Committee accepted a tender from architects Slatyer and Cosh for the erection of the church in Foster Street in Surry Hills, and the foundation stone was laid by Lady Darley, the wife of the Lieutenant-Governor of New South Wales, a month later. On 27 May 1893, more than 700 people attended the opening of the church, half of them Chinese (Hutchinson 2001:213). On 24 October of 1893, Young Wai was ordained a minister in full standing of the Presbyterian Church in New South Wales.[54]

Over the following three decades, the Chinese Presbyterian Church and its founding minister, Young Wai, became a centre of Chinese diaspora identity and a hub for its associated networks. It is arguable that Young Wai's most important work was based on his connection with Chinese in the south of the city. A typical report of his weekly duties every Thursday and Friday has him visiting Chinese gardens, stores, workshops and houses in the suburbs of Waterloo, St. Peters, Newtown and Botany, as well as Alexandria in the west and locations on the North Shore. In 1894, a Chinese mission was established in Waterloo (Mar 1993:7), and Young Wai once again sought donors from Sydney's Chinese community to build a new church in Waterloo, which was opened in December 1897.[55]

Young Wai's influence: from market gardeners to fruit traders

The Chinese Presbyterian Church was not merely a religious centre for the Sydney Chinese, and Young Wai was not alone in his ministry, for his whole family became well known and influential in the community. They provided much support and comfort to the Sydney Chinese, especially those

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53 *Presbyterian Messenger,* 17 February 1894.
54 KMT Archives, Sydney, no.523-01-316, Reverend Young Wai's newsclipping book.
55 PCNSWA, Minutes of proceedings of the General Assembly, May 1898, p.78.

Rev. John Young Wai of the Chinese Presbyterian Church and his family, c.1890s.
(Ferguson Memorial Library, Archives of Presbyterian Church of NSW.)

struggling with the unaccustomed burdens of the immigrant. During the 1890s increasing numbers of Chinese market gardeners and fruit traders were baptised by Young Wai. Some of the younger members of his congregation established enterprises in Sydney, with his support, and subsequently went on to start up businesses in Hong Kong, Guangdong and Shanghai that thrived until the Second World War. Notable examples are the founding managers of the Sincere, Wing On, and Sun department stores in Hong Kong and Shanghai, who had close relations with Young Wai while they were starting their businesses in Sydney.

The story of one of these entrepreneurs, Ma Yingpiu (馬應彪 Ma Yingbiao 1868–1944), demonstrates Young Wai's influence on a young man, his family and his business. Ma would become the founder of Hong Kong's first department store, Sincere and Co. In his youth he came to Australia to dig for gold, but did not make his fortune on the goldfields, finding instead that there were other opportunities. He became a market gardener in Sydney and, because he was able to communicate well with Western buyers, he opened a small shop in Surry Hills and sold vegetables as an agent for other Chinese market gardeners (Tan 1999:55–58). During this period, Ma came under the influence of Young Wai, who encouraged him to embrace Christian values, such as philanthropy and egalitarianism (Tan 1999:12). Typically attentive to the needs of the whole person and not just to his spiritual guidance, Young Wai, on his return from his visit to Hong Kong in 1887, told Ma of a Chinese missionary and his marriageable daughter with whom he had had contact. If Ma were to go there, he too might return with a wife, so Ma married Huo Qingtang (霍慶棠) in Hong Kong. Huo's sisters also later married Chinese Australians (Tan 1999:182–183).

Ma's business partners in Sydney also benefited from Young Wai's good offices. In 1890, Ma Yingpiu, Ma Hoon-Bew (馬煥彪 Ma Huanbiao), Ma Wing-Chan (馬永燦 Ma Yongcan) and James Choy Hing (蔡興 Cai Xing, also known as 蔡英輝 Cai Yinghui) established a fruit shop, Wing Sang and Co (Liu 1975:172). Also involved in the shop's early management were George Bew (郭標 Guo Biao, also known as George Kwok Bew) and Mark Joe (also known as Ma Joe Young, 馬祖容 Ma Zurong). In 1894, as they built their business in Sydney, Young Wai baptised George Bew (then aged 26), James Choy Hing (aged 25) and Mark Joe (aged 32) in the Chinese Presbyterian Church, along with seven other Chinese.[56]

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56   *Presbyterian Messenger*, April 1894.
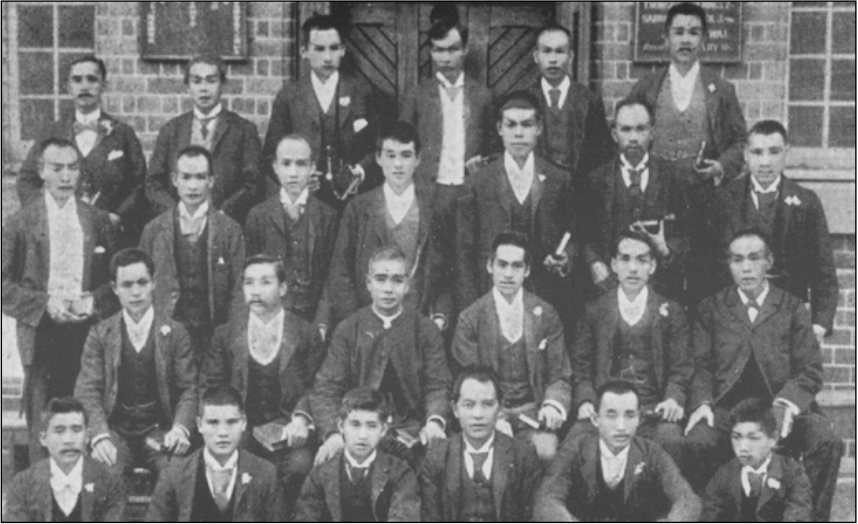
Rev. John Young Wai, elders and workers outside the Chinese Presbyterian Church in Foster Street, c.1890s. Rev. Young Wai sits in the second row, third from left. To his right is Paul Pow Chee. To his left is James Choy Hing. Directly behind Choy Hing is George Bew.
(*Centenary History of the Presbyterian Church in NSW*, 1905.)

A similar story of another young market gardener, James Gock Lock (郭樂 Guo Luo, also known as Guo Le and Kwok Lock), further illustrates Young Wai's role in the lives and work of many Chinese market gardeners. In his memoirs half a century later, Gock Lock expressed his appreciation for the charity and friendship he received from Young Wai and his wife (Gock 1949:5–6). Gock Lock was a cousin of George Bew and from a rural family in the Zhongshan county of Guangdong province. He emigrated first to Melbourne before moving to Sydney, where he worked as a market gardener. His Sydney colleagues and friends influenced him to approach the Chinese Presbyterian Church, where he began attending night classes to improve his English, so that he might become an independent salesman. He became a storekeeper for Wing On and Co. in 1898, along with a number of other shareholders from different counties and districts. At around this time, not long after the birth of their first child, Gock Lock's wife died, and the Young Wais took over the care of the boy, allowing Gock Lock to concentrate on developing his business (Gock 1949:5–6). In the early 20th century, he went on to establish a successful Wing On Group network around the Pacific, taking in not only Australia but also Fiji, Hong Kong, Shanghai and San Francisco.

The stories of Ma Yingpiu and Gock Lock are examples of how the Chinese Presbyterian Church under Young Wai's leadership created networks to bring Chinese market gardeners together, through the faith they shared at religious services, through the English classes, and through many other social events. The church's influence contributed very significantly to the transition of Gock Lock and numerous other Chinese market gardeners from an agricultural class to a business class in Sydney. Because almost all the Chinese who came to Sydney were from rural villages and without education, the church night school had an invaluable role in helping them not only to improve their English, but also to learn the culture and general knowledge they needed to thrive in a predominantly Western society.

Young Wai was one of many missionaries active among Chinese immigrants in Australia. The published reminiscences of Charles Cheng-Che Lee (李承基 Li Chengji), concerning his father, Charles Lee (李敏周 Li Minzhou, 1881–1936), reveal a similar story. Lee worked as a hawker in his early days in Australia, at Ayr in Queensland. According to his son's account, when Lee had the opportunity to make contact with a Church of England minister, the Reverend Alan Miller, the transformation of his social position began, because that meeting led to his learning English, to knowledge of Western culture, and to the Christian faith, upon which his later success as the founder of the Sun Sun Co. Ltd was based. As Young Wai's flock had cause to thank him for the pastoral care they received, so Lee regarded Miller as a father figure who gave him a sense of belonging and family when he was far from his family in China. Lee credited not just the success of his Sun Sun enterprise, but its very existence to Miller's ministry (Lee 1992:94–96; Lai 2000:5–6).

Organising English classes for Chinese immigrants was in fact a normal component of the work of many bilingual missionaries. For example, the Reverend George Soo Hoo Ten (司徒千 Situ Qian, 1848–1934) of the Chinese Church of England and the Reverend David Shing (鄺勝 Kuang Sheng) of the Western District Chinese Mission[57] held classes for Sydney Chinese from the late 1880s (Fitzgerald 1997:102–104).[58] Although Soo Hoo Ten was also keen to encourage Chinese market gardeners to attend his services, he did not go to the same lengths that Young Wai did to accommodate the late-shift workers (Fitzgerald 1997:104). Young Wai's continuous and extraordinary efforts were exceptional and led Chinese labourers to hold Young Wai in greater esteem than perhaps any other

57   *Woollahra Presbyterian Church Messenger*, July 1892.
58   *CAH*, 2 August 1895, p.6 and 31 January 1896, p.6.

missionary. The educational aspect of his ministry contributed much to this. After its opening in 1893, the night school at the Chinese Presbyterian Church became the largest teaching organisation for Chinese immigrants in Sydney in the late 19th century. English language night classes were held every Monday, Tuesday and Friday in 1893 and were attended by between 30 and 40 students.[59] In 1894, the night school staff was expanded and between 13 and 18 European volunteers taught in several sessions.[60] In 1895, another English language school was opened in Waterloo, before the church was built there in 1897.

Chinese Presbyterian Church and public participation

The success of the Chinese Presbyterian Church was enhanced by its involvement in secular aspects of urban life, education and commerce. Mark Hutchinson (2001:213) points out that the 'public element' had become a markedly significant aspect of the Chinese presence in the Church by 1892. While the younger Chinese attended the night school at the Church primarily for educational purposes, it was also creating a new public space for the immigrant Chinese to come together. The night-school classes also promoted and enhanced friendships among Chinese from different clans, county groups and socioeconomic strata, and created collegiality, friendship and better understanding between Chinese and European teachers.

In a series of articles published in the spring of 1896, an Irish teacher at the Chinese Presbyterian Church shared her experiences of her Chinese students and colleagues (Veracious Chronicler 1896). She wrote under the pseudonym 'Veracious Chronicler' and did not identify the church specifically.[61] She also disguised the names of Young Wai and his family, presumably to save them from embarrassment, as she was at times candid about aspects of Young Wai and his family, including their accents, their (to her) unmusical voices, and their ideas on ventilation and aspiration. Nevertheless, she wrote affectionately and had great respect for the family and their work, in which she recognised warm-hearted and generous motives similar to those she associated with her own Irish national character.

The Irish teacher's perspective provides an alternative view of Young Wai and the Chinese Presbyterian Church to the broadly inviolable

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59   *Presbyterian Messenger*, November 1893.
60   *Presbyterian Messenger*, March 1894.
61   Although the name of the church is not given, the writer reveals that her school was joined to a Chinese church. In 1896, the Chinese Presbyterian Church was the only Chinese church in urban Sydney.

image projected by the official reporters of the Church. Any doubt about the church school she is referring to is dismissed when her account of the operation of Church factions and descriptions of the missionary's family are matched with the official records of the Church. Thus, her experience and information related to the Church may be regarded as substantially based in fact. She recounts being encouraged by a missionary friend, Daisy Williams, to learn Chinese and teach English to Chinese students at classes held at a Chinese Church each Thursday evening at 7:30. Her motives for learning Chinese arose from her experiences as a patron of Chinese shops. In her account of her first Chinese class, conducted by Ah Sing, she notes that 12 European women and one European man were learning Chinese, almost all for the purpose of becoming missionaries (Veracious Chronicler 1896 September:126).[62] This class was attached to the Chinese Church, where 25 vegetable vendors were keen to improve their English (Veracious Chronicler 1896 September:127). She recorded the moment when she first met these Chinese students:

> As I looked along the rows of strangely-assorted students, some of them young and buoyant, some of them old and careworn, but all of them strangers in our country, bent on acquiring our language that they might earn a scanty livelihood, and earn it often under conditions that would make the bravest quail—well, I felt glad I could do something to allay the pain at my heart which the sight of those patient faces gave me, and rejoiced to know I might help to make life easier for them (Veracious Chronicler 1896 September:127).

At that time there were only four Europeans in the class who could teach English to Chinese in the evenings. After the opening class, the 25 Chinese students were separated into five classes, to be taught by their European teachers in the following months to read and speak English to a level that gave them command of simple sentences. At the end of the course, the students held a Chinese tea party for the teachers.

The Irish teacher actually became a friend to five of her students: Ah Yoo Sin (a hawker, nearly 60 years old); Paul Fee Lee (a market gardener); John Hung Sam (a hawker); James Hung Sam (a son of John Hung Sam); and Adam Cum On. She assisted them in legal and medical matters, and acted as a general referee when they needed one.

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62   The numbers match those given in a report by Young Wai (*Presbyterian Messenger*, March 1894).

The Irish teacher's articles reinforce the point made earlier—that the Church night school also provided a space for social congregation in leisure times. While the Church was educating increasing numbers of future bilingual Chinese, it was also creating a public space in which Chinese vegetable sellers could share their lives, experiences and work and expand their commercial network. Unlike the LYT, which held regular monthly meetings of leading members of the community, the Chinese Presbyterian Church provided a public space for Chinese to meet in their daily life, and this was, quite simply, good for business. As Gock Lock pointed out, an initial motive for him to join the Chinese Presbyterian Church was to learn English in order to improve his prospects in commerce. Commercial considerations such as these were, in fact, an aspect of the night school's purport; the Church saw the school as providing opportunities for:

> gathering Chinese merchants and others who might advance matters connected with finance, which was made to some of Europeans who may be engaged in business matters and who would be willing to give a little time to the discussion of these questions with Chinese.[63]

In other words, the Chinese Presbyterian Church provided a space for Chinese to build networks with other Chinese and Europeans in order to enhance commerce and the mobilisation of social resources. It also supports Denise Austin's statement that 'Christians played a crucial role within the Chinese community during the federation era and evidence suggests that both internal and external factors motivated a genuine desire for religious change' (Austin 2004:76).

The lessons of the Chinese Presbyterian Church and Christian values were infused into the business style of a number of Chinese-Australian enterprises. For example, the success of Wing Sang and Wing On and Co. in establishing business empires outside Australia was in part the result of religious practice, even though their businesses were also based on kinship and intermarriage (Lai 1984:247–248; Lien 2005:147). Ma Yingpiu conducted Sunday Christian services in his enterprise at Hong Kong and his treatment of Sunday as a day of rest for all of his employees was an important initiative in Hong Kong (Lien 2007:149–150). In some cases, followers of Young Wai were involved in establishing churches in their homeland once they had become wealthy merchants. For example, in 1905 proprietors of Wing On

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63   PCNSWA, Chinese Presbyterian Church scrapbook, 1883–1919, 4 April 1919.

and Wing Sang in Sydney donated funds to establish a church at Shiqi (石岐 also known as Shekki and Shakee) in the Zhongshan county, Guangdong province, which was sustained by profits from Sincere and Co. and Wing On and Co. until 1949 (Li 1992:66). These connections between Chinese-Australian entrepreneurs and the Church are evidence of the influence of the Chinese bilingual missionary through transnational networks extending through Sydney from 1892.

Thus, the transformation of religious practices among many Sydney Chinese demonstrates one of the ways in which the Chinese community was transformed at the beginning of the 20th century. The Chinese Presbyterian Church educated ever-growing numbers of Chinese to become bilingual, not, as it turned out, purely to improve the literacy rate of Sydney Chinese, but to provide a forum for Chinese to discover and mobilise their social resources. Religious belief lay at the heart of their coming-together, but a major aspect of that belief, as embodied in the lessons of Young Wai, was concern for public issues and a sense of public service. In his memoirs, the founder of Sincere and Co., Ma Yingpiu, stressed the influence that Young Wai had on him and on other young Chinese in political and public matters (Tan 1999:12, 182). In the following decades, it was apparent that many of those who had been in Young Wai's congregation were motivated by his ministry to become involved in public affairs and political life.

Conclusion

At the beginning of the 1890s, bilingual Chinese established new ways to mobilise Sydney Chinese to participate in Australian economic, legal and religious life. The year 1892 was an important one. First, the role and influence of bilingual Chinese in resolving conflict among different groups in that year enhanced their standing. William Goldtown and his associates accepted the idea of colonial jurisdiction over Chinese in order to redefine their position within Chinese and Australian societies. The death of Way Kee and the establishment of the LYT, as well as the Chinese Presbyterian Church, in 1892 marked the turning from earlier forms of association based on kinship and native-place to new forms of organisation involving cooperation among different groups and wider public service.

In general it may be said that it was wealth that enabled social mobility in Chinese society in the late 19th century. Wealth was also an important indicator of social leadership. Yet wealthy Chinese merchants needed to devise other forms of symbolic and social capital to sustain their leadership

at this time of transition. Initially, native-place and kinship networks and various temple ceremonies enhanced the power and authority of wealthy Chinese merchants as social leaders (Duara 1988:788; Chong 2004:162–165). The purchase of imperial rank could provide additional symbolic capital for the gentry-merchant class in Southeast Asia and, to a degree, in colonial Australia (Chong 2004:162). Quong Tart had recourse to imperial rank to enhance his standing among his countrymen, but others among Sydney's bilingual Chinese pointed the way to new forms of social leadership based on different attributes.

Sydney's status as a city gave added purchase to the claims of the new urban elite. In 1893, the naturalised Chinese leaders Yet Soo War Way Lee (葉繡華 Ye Xiuhua) of Adelaide and the Reverend James Chue (楊官彩 Yang Guancai) of Ballarat approached Sydney's bilingual Chinese leaders to engage in the struggle for the rights of Chinese residents throughout Australia. Way Lee wrote to Quong Tart requesting that Sydney Chinese merchants present a petition to the Governor of Hong Kong, to imperial authorities in Beijing, and to the British and Chinese Ambassadors in their respective capitals, complaining about the unfair restrictions imposed on Chinese travelling to and from Australia. Chinese religious leaders in Sydney, including Young Wai and Soo Hoo Ten, also met with Chue to plan organised resistance to a poll tax imposed on Chinese residents. In each of these collaborations they were fighting for the rights of naturalised Chinese as British subjects.[64] Their approaches reflect the importance of mobility to Chinese residents in Australia, as well as a growing awareness of the rights of subjects and citizens under British law. Most particularly, they reflect the importance of Sydney as a national site for Chinese community negotiations with white-Australian authorities through the agency of bilingual leaders.

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64   *SMH*, 27 February 1893.

SHAPING A MODERN CHINESE COMMUNITY, 1894–1901

The commercial and cosmopolitan environment of Sydney contributed to the development of the Sydney Chinese community's social leadership from the mid-1800s to the early 1890s. During the 1880s and beyond, the city's bilingual Chinese elites held a pre-eminent position in Chinese-Australian society. Just as their predecessors among the commercial elite and native-place leaders had exploited opportunities afforded them through rank, traditional class privilege and commercial success to enhance their leadership status, so too did the bilingual elites benefit from a variety of circumstances. Their leadership was consolidated through wealth, social networking, public ceremonies, newspaper circulation, and political activities. This chapter discusses the developing leadership of the Sydney Chinese community in the 1890s through the Chinese press, carnivals and the establishment of political organisations to support an imagined Chinese-Australian community. The shaping of this imagined community is related to the development of Chinese-language news periodicals and their capacity to mobilise the Chinese community through their local, national and international networks. Between 1894 and 1902, three such periodicals commenced publication in urban Sydney and Melbourne.

The *Chinese Australian Herald* was the first Chinese-language weekly newspaper in Australia. It was also the only Chinese-language newspaper to adopt the word 'Australian' in its English title before the Second World War. In 1898, another Chinese newspaper began in Sydney, the *Tung Wah News*, which was published twice weekly. In 1902, one of the *TWN* editors moved to Melbourne and set up the *Chinese Times*. The editors and journalists of these Chinese newspapers constituted another group of bilingual leaders. In the process of informing and provoking Chinese-Australian society into debate they helped to instil a sense of social coherence among Chinese Australians in the last decade of the 19th century and the first two decades of the 20th century.

The present chapter begins by discussing the development of Sydney's first Chinese-language newspaper, *CAH*, and then argues that two major Chinese ceremonial processions in 1897 illustrate the paper's power to shape new leadership and a new social imaginary, effectively reconfiguring the Chinese-Australian community to participate in the broader Australian community that was developing at that time. In the last two years of the 1890s the social leadership of the Sydney Chinese community was further enhanced by the establishment of a second Chinese newspaper and by the emergence of Sydney's first Chinese political organisations.

Australia's first Chinese newspaper: cooperation among journalists

Newspapers thrive in literate communities. Chinese-language newspapers thrive in Chinese-literate communities. As referred to in the census of 1891, no more than 1,400 of the Chinese resident in New South Wales could read and write English in 1890, a figure that represents about 9% of the Chinese population of the time. A far higher proportion could read Chinese. According to the 1891 census of New South Wales, 9,259 Chinese, representing 65% of the Chinese population, could read and write Chinese (Coghlan 1894:208). These figures compare favourably with Chinese communities in other countries. In Honolulu, for example, contemporary literacy estimates indicate 40% could read and write Chinese and only 2% in English.[1] The Sydney Chinese were, it seems, considerably more literate than those in some other cities in the Pacific area.

Despite their relatively high rates of literacy, the Sydney Chinese had no newspaper they could call their own—no local source of authoritative information about their community and the world. Chinese newspapers came from Hong Kong, but their arrival and distribution depended on steamships and local agents such as On Chong and Co.[2] Nothing had come of proposals in 1883 by Chinese merchants to establish bilingual newspapers in Sydney, Melbourne or Brisbane.[3] It was not until 1894 that the Chinese community in Australia got its first regular newspaper, in Sydney. It was a year of hope in the Australian colonies, as the financial crisis of 1890–1893 had passed and economic development had revived. Sydney Chinese traders

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1   *Lai Kee Bo* (麗記報 *Lijibao*) of Honolulu reported that the Chinese population in Honolulu in 1898 was 22,997, of whom 9,364 could read and write in Chinese and 527 in English (*TWN*, 8 October 1898, p.3).

2   *Xunhuanribao* (循環日報) (Hong Kong), February 1874.

3   *The Daily Press,* (孖剌西報 *Zilaxibao*) (Hong Kong), 20 September 1883.

began to gradually gain control of the fruit market. Wing Sang and Co., for example, started to trade with Queensland markets at this time,[4] and by 1895 Wing Sang and Co., Tiy Sang and Co., and Wing On Jang were competing effectively with European fruit traders, which contributed both to increasing wealth and to increasing anti-Chinese sentiment.[5]

Sydney's first Chinese-language newspaper was the product of a partnership between Europeans and Chinese bilingual elites. The *CAH* had first been proposed in 1892,[6] but the idea took some time to come to fruition. The first issue was published on the 1 September 1894 and it was published every Saturday thereafter, until 25 August 1923. It was intended for both a Chinese and European readership. In the first issue the editors announced four aims for the paper: to communicate to readers the events of the world, with the intention of engendering an informed community; to provide notice of market prices; to give moral guidance; and, to be understood by the broadest possible readership, which is why the newspaper was written in relatively colloquial Chinese, rather than in the formal literary style.[7]

The Founders of the Chinese Australian Herald

The initial development of the *CAH* was based on collaboration between European proprietors and Chinese bilingual editors, the chief figures of which were James Alexander Philp, George Arthur Down, Lee Caizhang (李彩章) and Sun Johnson,[8] with the Europeans forming the company that owned the paper, Down, Philp and Co. It is unclear exactly why the four came together to undertake such a venture, but they maintained a friendship and stable partnership, which were the roots of their publishing success in the late 1890s.

Only one of the proprietors had any newspaper experience. Down seemed a highly unlikely owner of a Chinese-language newspaper as he was an architect by profession and played a purely financial role in the *CAH*. Philp, on the other hand, had had a career in journalism. The Scottish-born author, printer and columnist had not been long in Australia, having arrived from New Zealand in 1889 and joined *The Bulletin* in Sydney (Fox 1919–1923: Vol III,805). He was also a member of the Dawn and Dusk Club, which included

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4   Testimony of George Bew to the Royal Commission on the Fruit Industry (1913:1117).

5   *Sunday Times*, 13 October 1895.

6   ACCG, Correspondence of 1923, file of Sun Johnson.

7   *CAH,* 1 September 1894, p.1, 8 July 1905, pp.2–3.

8   A photograph of the four was taken in the Nandiu Studio near their new office in 1895 (*CAH*, 16 August 1895, p.7).

CAH's proprietors with seamen, 1895. Sun Johnson is third from right in the back row. On either side of him are Philp and Down.
(*Chinese Australian Herald*, 16 August 1895.)

many of Sydney's avant-garde artists and intellectuals, such as Victor Daley, Fred Broomfield, Henry Lawson, George A. Taylor, Norman Lindsay, Nelson Illingworth, Bertram Stevens and Frank Mahony (Taylor 1918:11). It is significant for the development of the *CAH* that Philp was closely associated with the artists and journalists of Sydney, especially with those working for the *Daily Telegraph* and *The Bulletin*. His personal connection with those journals, which tended toward anti-Chinese commentary, may have contributed to the occasionally paradoxical nature of their relationship with the *CAH* in the late 1890s.[9]

9   The *Daily Telegraph* (hereafter *DT*) and *The Bulletin* evince an oddly shifting attitude toward Philp, Chinese Australians, and the *CAH*. For example, the *DT* was critical of Chinese involvement in the election of the Federation convention in 1897, yet it published a statement of Philp expressing appreciation for the *CAH*'s efforts on the issue of Federation in 1899 (*DT* 18 February 1897, 9 June 1899). While *The Bulletin* was perennially hostile to the Chinese in the colonies, the *CAH* fabricated fulsome praise from *The Bulletin* for the *CAH*: 'This is the first newspaper printed in Chinese type in Australia—it has a wider circulation than any other Australian paper without exception' (*CAH*, 2 October 1896, p.1). Similar fabricated praise was published in subsequent issues of *CAH*. In time, the *CAH* would express a belief that the relationship between Philp and *The Bulletin* had the potential to promote a better understanding in *The Bulletin* of the 'Chinese Question'(*CAH*, 20 August 1897, p.6).

The Chinese editors, Lee and Sun, were bilingual intellectuals. Sun Johnson described Lee as traditionally-minded, having being educated in China and retaining an interest in Chinese literature and mythology.[10] Lee died at the end of 1896, and in January 1897 the *CAH* called for a new editor,[11] but no-one was appointed to the position, so Sun became sole editor.[12] In the same year, Sun became a proprietor and joined the company, which changed its name to Down, Philp and Johnson.[13]

Unlike Lee, Sun's life experience combined both Chinese and Western cultures. He was born in either 1865 or 1868.[14] He was educated at Victoria College and other institutions in Hong Kong until he was 15 years old,[15] when his father sent him to London for a further six years of Western education, before he migrated to Australia, where he worked at the ABC Café in Sydney from 1890 to 1891 to make a living and to interact with Westerners.[16] During this period he wrote a book, an interpretive study of Chinese life in Australia, published in 1892 under the title *Chinese and English Self Educator* (Johnson 1892), which covered a variety of topics and aspects of the Chinese experience, and included translations of key English words for Chinese-speakers in Australia. Sun's decision to mix with both Western and Chinese communities gave him a rich cross-cultural experience, which prepared him for his role in subsequent years as a bilingual leader in the Chinese community.

After Sun became sole editor of the *CAH*, his bilingual ability led to a closer relationship with Philp and the pair worked together until 1900 to transform *CAH*'s printing technology, its editorial direction, and its position on Chinese involvement in colonial society. They also mixed socially. There is no evidence that Sun taught Philp Chinese, but it is safe to assume that, in the course of their long relationship of conversation, discussion and

10   *DT*, 6 October 1896. In 1895 Lee organised a Sydney Chinese poetry association and won a prize (*CAH*, 16 August 1895, p.4).

11   *CAH*, 29 January 1897, p.8.

12   *CAH*, 3 May 1902, p.5.

13   *CAH*, 7 October 1898, p.1.

14   In his Certificate of Exemption from the Dictation Test (CEDT) of 1907, Sun states that he was born in 1865 (NAA, Attorney-General's Dept, ST84/1, 1907/350). In 1923, in an application for a US visa he claimed to have been born in 1868 (ACCG, Correspondence of 1923, no.5220132). CF Yong (1977:17) accepts 1868 as his date of birth. The New South Wales Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages gives his age at his death in 1925 as 66 on Certificate no. 15779/1925.

15   On his education and career, see letter from Sun Johnson to GE Morrison, 19 December 1917 (State Library of New South Wales (hereafter NLNSW), MLMSS 312, George Ernest Morrison papers).

16   *Australian Star*, 3 July 1908.

Sun Johnson, c.1900s.
(*The Chinese and English Self Educator*,
2nd edn, Mitchell Library, Sydney.)

collaboration, Sun's bilingual abilities would have led to Philp acquiring a considerable understanding of his partner's native tongue, perhaps to the point of saying a few words himself. Sun's bilingualism certainly enabled him to expand the European side of his own personal vision and skills through his connection with Philp. In 1897, when the Dawn and Dusk Club planned to hold a fund-raising concert in the Sydney Town Hall, Philp asked Sun to sing (Taylor 1918:47–52). Sun's performance was well received, and from that night on his reputation among the other club members was assured.[17] The relationship between Philp and Sun was a fruitful one, and the editor of the *CAH* benefited, for it gave Sun an ever-increasing interest in Australian public events, which was reflected in the newspaper's broadening editorial scope.

By the end of 1896, according to Sun, the *CAH*'s regular readership had started to extend to the other Australian colonies and many of the Pacific islands.[18] By 1897, the *CAH* entered into an arrangement with the booksellers Gordon and Gotch in order to enlarge its commercial network and

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17 Taylor (1918:49) describes Sun as a 'genial, jovial obliging Chinese' and indicates that Sun was known to the club before taking part in this concert.
18 *DT*, 6 October 1896.

circulation.[19] Once Gordon and Gotch had taken on *CAH*'s distribution in Melbourne, Brisbane and London, it became a newspaper for the Chinese not only in New South Wales, but also in Victoria, Queensland and overseas, and its commercial and circulation potential was greatly enhanced. The expanding circulation base also drew increasing numbers of letters from readers, and material from their local newspapers was published in the *CAH*, including reports from rural New South Wales, Queensland and New Zealand.[20] In 1897, the *CAH* had a respectable circulation of 800 copies per issue, distributed through Chinese storekeepers around Australia and New Zealand.[21] By 1900 its circulation had expanded further to New Caledonia, Samoa, Fiji, Tahiti, Rarotonga, China, Java and the Philippines.[22]

The *CAH*'s publishing success lay in the financial support it received from Australian advertisers and Chinese storekeepers. Even though most of the readership of the *CAH* was Chinese, the major sponsors were Australian firms, because of Philp's entrepreneurial endeavours (Taylor 1918:28). Sun credits these Australian firms with providing a very substantial amount of advertising revenue to the *CAH*, although he also noted that the paper was often obliged to buy goods from their major Australian advertisers in exchange for annual advertising contracts.[23] A further dimension to *CAH*'s financial dealings was as a retail source of patent medicines, groceries and Chinese imports.[24] The network of Chinese storekeepers in the paper's local circulation and promotion also played a significant role in its success. As noted above, one of the core aims of the *CAH* was to report on the market price of fruits and vegetables, and this service was an important incentive for Chinese market gardeners, hawkers and fruit storekeepers to become a major part of the paper's readership in the 1890s.

It may then be argued that the first Sydney Chinese newspaper was based on the combined influences of bohemian fellowship, Chinese bilingualism,

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19   *CAH*, 26 January 1897, p.4. Although the *CAH* had a Melbourne agent (H Scott in Queen Street, from May 1895 to March 1896), the number of Chinese readers in Melbourne before 1896 is unclear (*CAH*, 10 May 1895, p.7, 20 March 1896, p.1).

20   Reports came from Cairns (*CAH*, 20 March, 12 June 1896) and from Townsville (*CAH*, 27 March 1896, p.6) in Queensland, from Junee (*CAH*, 8 May 1896, p.4), Narrandera (*CAH*, 22 May 1895, p.4), Wyalong (*CAH*, 28 August 1896, p.3) and Katoomba (*CAH*, 25 September 1896, p.2) in New South Wales, and from New Zealand (*CAH*, 13 November 1896, p.3).

21   State Records Authority of New South Wales (hereafter SRNSW), Colonial Secretary's correspondence, 5/6363, letter from *CAH*, 15 July 1897 (97/10712).

22   *CAH*, 27 January 1900.

23   SRNSW, Bankruptcy files 1888–1929, 23567, Sun Johnson, 3 September 1923.

24   *CAH*, 30 November 1894, p.7, 5 January, p.8, 18 January (calendar poster), 24 May 1895, p.1, 21 August 1896, p.6.

and the burgeoning class of Chinese vegetable and fruit gardeners and traders. The commercial climate of Sydney gave rise to the need and the opportunity for the paper's development. Bohemian fellowship strongly influenced the paper's push beyond the urban centre in its editorial outlook. A large and growing readership existed among the increasingly numerous Chinese market gardeners needed to feed Sydney's growing population. The collaborative partnership between Sun and Philp played a highly significant role in the life of Sydney's Chinese communities, by expanding their social vision to their Chinese-language readers and embedding their social imaginary in local urban life.

Transforming the Chinese Australian Herald

Aside from the social and commercial factors discussed above, a major aspect contributing to the *CAH*'s success and influence was its change in appearance over time. Toward the end of 1896 the paper adopted a new style of typesetting, with movable type replacing the hand-lettered stencils previously used. This amounted to a quiet revolution in that it symbolically transformed the image and design of print culture for the Sydney Chinese. Sun and Philp began the process of importing Australia's first Chinese-character typesetting machine from Hong Kong in 1895. Another year passed before the *CAH* could adopt the new technology, one delaying factor being the problem of finding a printing office.[25] By spring 1896 all was finally ready and the printing office was located at Sun's house at 28 Smith Street, Surry Hills.[26] The first issue of the *CAH* to be produced using the new technology appeared on 2 October and presented a new visual image to its readers.

The replacement of traditional brushed characters with movable type was more than a change in the appearance of the newspaper. It represented the *CAH*'s move into an era of technological and scientific advancement, and, in effect, took its readership along with it. This and many other innovations in the paper's early history were a direct reflection of the close cooperative partnership between Philp and Sun and their shared enthusiasm for scientific progress. To mark the occasion of the *CAH*'s first movable-type issue, Philp wrote an article for the *DT* in which he reported on the nature and significance of the new technology and interviewed Sun.[27] The *CAH* was on the way to becoming an icon of Sydney Chinese society.

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25   *DT*, 6 October 1896.
26   *TWT*, 13 October 1906, p.6; see also City of Sydney Archives, Town Clerk's Correspondence folders, 1902/1117, letter from *CAH* dated 16 March 1902.
27   *DT*, 6 October 1896.

Print culture has a well-known and significant role in the creation of 'imagined communities' (Anderson 1983:24–36). Reading the *CAH* allowed urban Chinese access to the broad social imaginary of colonial society without the requirement of direct personal involvement. Urban Chinese could use print culture, as exemplified by the *CAH*, as an avenue to envision their own actions and relationships within a broader social reality. Also, the paper's advanced printing technology and commercially sophisticated approach gave the *CAH* scope to influence and inform its readers about Chinese in other colonial societies, thus expanding the social imaginary of all Chinese Australians. In February 1897, for instance, it exploited the potential of its new typesetting capability by running a photograph of a well-known Melbourne Chinese merchant, Lowe Kong Meng (劉光明 Liu Guangming, 1831–1888), for the edification of its Sydney Chinese readers.[28] Embracing Melbourne Chinese in an increasingly inclusive print culture could only further enhance the Chinese-Australian community's sense of itself as an intercolonial network of social groups. Through the expansive editorial vision of the *CAH*, Chinese in Sydney and Melbourne, and elsewhere, could read the same news and derive a sense of community with other Chinese whom they could not know in daily life. No longer were Australia's Chinese confined to oral messages and private correspondence for a sense of personal connection with their distant compatriots.

The new method of typesetting was not the *CAH*'s first technological innovation, nor the first instance of its potential to enhance the social imaginary through its modernising ethos. In its 6 March 1896 issue a telegram-based news service was introduced, which by mid-1896 had become a regular column. With the adoption of movable type, more space became available to report international and local news and to expand the range of social and political commentary. Sun took advantage of this, gathering and quoting telegram-based stories from overseas and from other Sydney newspapers, in which he embedded a much broader view of international events.[29] Urban Chinese readers, for whom the international system had no tangible place in their personal lives, could with increasing confidence envision themselves as part of an intercolonial Australian network within a larger international or transnational framework.

Unlike the established English-language newspapers in Sydney, the *CAH* did not have a staff of journalists to gather and report the news. In

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28   *CAH*, 12 February 1897, p.3.
29   Sun's increasing reportage of overseas news instilled in his readers a sense of the international division of nation-states (*CAH,* 2 July 1897, p.3).

The front page of the first typeset issue of *Chinese Australian Herald*, 1896.

its early days, its reportage usually consisted of reproducing in translation stories from other newspapers in Sydney and China.[30]Although it did report some news about Chinese in Australia, most of the local sources were oral or personal, which meant that the young *CAH* was little more than a purveyor of news from other newspaper organisations at first. This role changed with the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1895, which forced the *CAH* to re-evaluate both its operational methods and its community role. Instead of passing on news as it had been printed in other newspapers without further validation, the *CAH* began to identify its sources, out of concern for significant factual errors in the reporting of the war in the Hong Kong source that it relied on. It also began to re-evaluate its influence on Chinese readers, following a murder on an island near New Zealand involving Chinese and Japanese men which appears to be attributable indirectly to an erroneous report on the war in the *CAH*.[31]

To broaden the scope of its newsgathering, the paper began to ask readers to pass on news from their respective colonial states on the understanding that contributors had to be able to validate their sources.[32] Most of them quoted local newspapers.[33] This process led *CAH* to encourage Chinese contributions of news stories that cited other Chinese as first-hand sources. It is thus possible that an indirect social relationship between readers was developing through the *CAH*—in other words, that the Chinese social imaginary was enriched by the advent of a personal dimension to the newspaper's publication of news. Every Saturday, Chinese readers could experience a tincture of face-to-face commonality through their newspaper that contributed to their imagined Chinese community across the continent.[34] The *CAH* was coming to be perceived in readers' minds as an alternative, albeit an abstract one, to the traditional networks of kinship and native-place.

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30   *CAH* (1 September 1894, p.1) cited as its major sources the *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Evening News* and *Australian Star*. It also reported news about China, Hong Kong and San Francisco from Hong Kong Chinese-language newspapers such as *Xunhuanibao* and *Weixinribao* (維新日報), which supported the Reform Movement in China, and reproduced news from the Shanghai paper *Wanguogongbao* (萬國公報).

31   *CAH*, 3 May 1895.

32   *CAH*, 15 March 1895, p.7.

33   For example, the newspaper published the particulars of court cases involving Chinese supplied by Chinese readers in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. (*CAH,* 22 March 1895, p.2, 8 March, p.7, 8 May, p.4, 31 July, p.3, 7 and 28 August, 1896, p.3).

34   For example, the *CAH* reported the news on various *tong*s that were defined by many social distinctions in China, including the Koong Yee Tong, the Hung Fook Tong and the Siyi Society of Sydney. Thus Chinese readers came to know other Chinese with whom they would not normally have any opportunity to interact.

A further contribution of print culture in the construction of the imagined community stems from its propagation of a modern secular understanding of time. This, too, was a factor in the process by which the Chinese Australians relocated their position in society. Benedict Anderson (1983:23–26) argues that social modernity is in part conditioned by a transformed apprehension of time based on 'clocked, calendrical time'. In his schema, the 'homogeneous, empty time' in which the newspaper or novel exists and is read impinges simultaneously in different people's minds. This is said to be the basis of modern community which, to be viable, must be imagined by diverse and disparate individuals simultaneously. In the late 1890s, the Sydney Chinese gradually assimilated clock-time into their daily lives. The investigations of the Royal Commission in 1891 show that the occupations of the Sydney Chinese were a factor in their apprehension of time. Chinese furniture-shop owners and carpenters, for example, calculated their working hours by clock-time (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892: Q.14052, 14198, 14407, 14473). It seems likely that the Chinese in occupations of this kind were influenced by the mode of European shops and tradesmen as their interactions in urban life increased. Sydney Chinese market gardeners, on the other hand, could give the Royal Commission only approximate times for their daily working hours rather than precise clock-time hours (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:Q.15384, 15492, 15799) and described their working day as extending from dawn to dusk, demonstrating a sense of time characteristic of the agricultural worker. Measurement of time by clock and calendar was promoted in a straightforward way by the *CAH* in its coverage of the New South Wales train timetables.[35] In this it was consistent with a developing facet of Australian urban society in general. The intrinsically clock-bound nature of timetables and their increasing permeation of city life was a significant influence on the ordinary person's everyday time regime as the 19th century drew to a close (Davison 1993:60–65). The influence of an already clock-conscious Australian working class helped consolidate this growing sense of 'clock-time' (Davison 1993:92–93).

Several decades earlier, colonial Australian workers had fought successfully for the introduction of the eight-hour working day and had been the first in the world to achieve this labour objective. The existence in their midst of a Chinese labour force that did not even fully acknowledge clock-based time regulation could only contribute to tensions. It was significant, therefore,

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35   *CAH*, 3 May 1895, p.2.

that the *CAH* put considerable emphasis on the idea of eight hours of work and eight hours of leisure each day—the premise of the original eight-hour-day campaign—and explicitly encouraged Chinese labourers to base their daily schedule on clock-measured time, taking an editorial stance that was intended as a counter to anti-Chinese labour sentiment. The *CAH* advocated that the Chinese follow the eight-hour day and that they treat Sunday as a day of rest, both as a sign of respect for the Sabbath and to signify that they were assimilating into colonial society and culture.[36]

Another tangible sign of the *CAH*'s role in shaping a modern apprehension of time amid the imagined Chinese community was its annual poster calendars. Beginning in 1895, the paper offered its readers a calendar as a Chinese New Year gift, at no cost to them other than the price of postage.[37] It was printed on a single sheet from a woodcut and combined Chinese brush pictures and commercial advertisements.[38] The calendar itself was divided into months, juxtaposing the lunar and Gregorian calendars as a demonstration to Chinese readers of how to translate one system of time measurement to the other.

The distribution of calendars would become a tradition of Chinese-Australian newspapers up to the Second World War. The *CAH* were not the originators of the idea. A similar advertising calendar poster (月份牌 *yuefenpai*) was first published by the *China Mail* in 1854 in Hong Kong (Laing 2004:80). The *CAH* calendar style reflected the adoption of Western advertising practices in Westernised Chinese cities such as Hong Kong and diffused elsewhere, including to Australia.[39] Three years after their appearance in Sydney, similar calendars appeared in Shanghai in 1898, as that city expanded to become an international trading centre (Laing 2004:28).

Aside from Western-style manifestations of commercialism, it may be argued that the way that time was presented in the *CAH* poster calendars influenced Chinese assimilation of Western concepts of time. The Chinese market gardeners and hawkers did not abandon their lunar calendar, but increasing numbers of them followed their traditional time system through the Anglo-Chinese posters, which juxtaposed their system and the Western system. The *CAH* took some care in the design of their lunar calendar to

36   *CAH*, 8 May 1896, p.2.
37   *CAH*, 10 May 1895, p.8.
38   *CAH*, 18 January 1895, supplement.
39   A poster calendar was circulated in Melbourne in 1894 (Public Record Office Victoria, VPRS 30 Unit 1005, case 32/1895, Regina vs Fun Chung and Ah Chee, Exhibit B).

ensure the utility of its basis as an agricultural calendar (農曆 *nongli*) ruled by the cyclical waxing and waning of the moon and the role of those phases in making decisions about agricultural life. Also represented were the 24 spans (*jieqi*) of the solar calendar to coordinate with the seasonal cycle,[40] which are also significant in agriculture. The names of each of the spans indicate events such as 'the beginning of spring', 'rain and water', 'the inception of winter', 'light snow', 'heavy snow', 'winter solstice', 'lesser cold' and 'greater cold'.

After publishing its Anglo-Chinese calendar poster in 1895 and 1896, in 1897 the *CAH* issued a small Western-style calendar, produced lithographically.[41] This calendar was divided into months, which were in turn divided into weekdays from Monday to Sunday. Missing were the lunar and solar cycles, along with the pictorial elements of the previous two years. The experiment was not continued and the *CAH* reverted to the Anglo-Chinese poster style the following year. One feature of the 1897 calendar that was repeated in the calendars for subsequent years was the marking out of Sunday, which may be seen as emblematic of the influence of the *CAH* in shaping the Chinese-Australian social imaginary.

The depiction of Sunday as a day of rest, and the organisation of time associated with it, was an example of how the *CAH* was shaping a sense of a public among its Chinese readers and encouraging them to share the customs of the colonies. The *CAH* was specifically advocating that its readers change their everyday routines and embrace the colonial norm.[42] By retaining Sunday as a dividing marker within both the Gregorian and lunar calendars in the reinstated poster-style Anglo-Chinese calendar of 1898,[43] it maintained the position it had taken in the Western-style calendar of 1897. Technology, once again, was a key factor in this action, as the new typesetting capability allowed the compositor to fit the characters for *libai* (Sunday) neatly into the calendar's compact space. In following this approach in calendars issued from 1897, the *CAH* exemplified the argument that the advent of print culture into the lives of its Chinese readers was not only a factor in the transformation of their daily routine, but also a significant factor influencing the relationship between them and colonial society.

As the Australian Chinese increasingly embraced the concept of Sunday as a holiday, so too did other public holidays become part of their growing

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40   *CAH*, 18 January 1895, supplement.
41   *CAH*, 5 February 1897, p.4.
42   *CAH*, 22 May, p.3, 11 December 1896, p.5; 3 October 1903, pp.2–3.
43   *CAH*, 21 January 1898, supplement.

sense of identity within the colonial social imaginary, and of the relationship between daily life and political life. As we shall see, this proved significant in 1897, when the Chinese immigrant community was invited to participate in the festivities for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. The *CAH* was to play a key role in mobilising its readership by explaining the symbolic nature and political importance of the occasion in terms relevant to their understanding of the world. In the process, the paper was able to convey a sense of the potential benefits of participation for the Chinese in terms of their position in Australian society.

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Charity Carnival, 1897

The Chinese and the Empire: the symbolic power of the benevolent Queen
As a *CAH*-centred print culture permeated urban Chinese life, it contributed to a sense of the public time and space occupied by the Chinese residents of urban Sydney. Two events crystallised the development of this sense—Chinese processions organised for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee Charity Carnival in 1897, one on 28 August and the other on 25 September. These celebrations also highlighted connections among local Chinese bilingual leaders, such as Quong Tart, Sun Johnson and WRG Lee. The *CAH* invoked the symbolic power of the occasion and drew on the community's social networks to generate enthusiasm for the carnival.

The first aspect to consider is how the *CAH* utilised a specific depiction of the British Queen as a means of constructing a sense of Chinese community. The symbolic power of the Queen was used to encourage the Chinese to attend the Diamond Jubilee Charity Carnival; this was accomplished by integrating notions of Queen Victoria with Chinese mythology. The *CAH* created an image of a benevolent Queen to encourage Chinese readers to embrace the monarchy, and suggested that they shared similar values with her. In this way they were invited to see Queen Victoria as belonging in a sense to their imagined community.

The Diamond Jubilee Carnival was not, in fact, the first attempt by the *CAH* to reshape the Chinese community's relationship to the British Empire and Australian colonial politics. Before involving itself in symbols of benign monarchy, the newspaper invited Sydney's Chinese to participate in the discourse on the federation of the Australian colonies. An instance of its activism on this issue was its use of the political virtues of Confucianism as the basis for its analysis of the Australasian Federal Convention. In February 1897 it published reports on the impending Convention to be held in

Adelaide, Sydney and Melbourne in 1897 and 1898.[44] On 26 February the newspaper asserted that benevolent policies were the product of widespread public awareness and education, a position consistent with Confucianism. The newspaper's approving attitude toward the colonial political system was also expressed in an article relating to the public debate in Sydney over a planned rail system.[45] The *CAH* enthusiastically imparted the principles of democracy and asserted that there was no autocracy in the colonies, and this, too, was in accord with the political values of Confucianism.

It is difficult to determine the degree of influence such discussion exerted on Chinese readers. It may have been difficult for the ordinary Chinese hawker to make a connection between the features of colonial politics and the ideas of Confucius. As Craig Calhoun (1991:96–97) points out, it is difficult for people to understand large organisations and systems without direct personal relationships in the modern world. Thus he asserts that the sphere of political symbolism has become the dynamic by which personal life and large systems are connected to enable individuals to imagine themselves as members of communities.[46] It is arguable that the *CAH*'s invoking of political and moral symbols such as that of the benevolent Queen was an example of this dynamic, in that it enhanced the public sense and participation of the Sydney Chinese in order to construct an imagined Chinese Community.

Two celebrations in 1897 gave Australia's urban Chinese a chance to develop an understanding of the new political symbolism. These were the Queen's Birthday and the Diamond Jubilee. The events by themselves were not enough to enable this understanding; the agency of the *CAH* was an essential component of the process of interpreting the political symbolism. After initiating discussion on the Federal Convention and the colonial political system, the *CAH* ran a series of reports on both of the forthcoming royal celebrations. In May, the newspaper began by informing its Chinese readership that the Queen's Birthday, 24 May, was a public holiday, and made a point of reminding them that hawkers should not work in the street on that

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44 The *CAH* reported on the process of electing the New South Wales delegates to the Federal Convention in an attempt to encourage naturalised Chinese to vote in March. It urged Chinese electors to vote for ten specific candidates on the grounds that they would promote a better understanding of the 'Chinese question' in the colonies (*CAH*, 26 February 1897, p.6).

45 *CAH*, 12 March 1897, p.4.

46 Calhoun (1991:108) emphasises that political symbols embed the sense of 'fellow feelings, common interest and shared identity' in members, thus an imagined community may be identified by indirect social relationships.

day.[47] Here, it argued, was a chance for the Chinese to demonstrate respect for colonial custom. In addition to this admonition, it drove home the significance of the two celebrations by depicting them as international events.[48]

Further to this latter point, and to reinforce its readers' sense of connection with the global aspect, the *CAH* represented and explained the glories of the British Empire as a result of the Queen's benign reign.[49] It claimed that Chinese immigrants also benefited from the Queen's benevolent politic and duly began a campaign encouraging Australian Chinese to look on her with favour. It reported, for instance, that members of the Chinese community in Rockhampton in Queensland had made the effort to buy golden and silver dragons from China to celebrate the Queen's Birthday.[50] The newspaper also recounted how Quong Tart, who was well known to its readers, had presented greetings on behalf of the Chinese community on the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.[51] By invoking these actions of other Chinese, the *CAH* appealed to its readers' sense of a shared Chinese identity and showed them that, by virtue of that identity, they were participating in a greater colonial and imperial public event and that they owed their place in the event to the fact that they, too, were subjects of the Queen's benevolent politics.

While directly encouraging enthusiasm for the Diamond Jubilee among its Chinese readership, the *CAH* also did its best to reinforce that enthusiasm indirectly by exploiting the unifying potential inherent in identifying the 'other'—in this case, the Irish. According to the *CAH*, the Irish were exhibiting a marked lack of enthusiasm for the event, which the newspaper suggested might exacerbate the already unstable relationship between the British Empire and Ireland.[52] In expressing this notion, the *CAH* hoped to persuade its Chinese readers to take the British Queen's side, with the aim of improving relations between the Chinese and the colonial political authorities.

In accordance with its avowed role as moral guide to its community of readers, the *CAH* laid considerable stress on Queen Victoria's image as a regal benefactor who cared deeply for the poor and the children of her empire.[53] A further facet of her virtue, as extolled by the newspaper, was

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47   *CAH*, 21 May 1897, p.5.
48   *CAH*, 21 May, p.5, 28 May, p.6, 4 June, p.3, 11 June, p.3, 18 June, p.4, 25 June, p.2, 2 July, p.3, 16 July 1897, p.6.
49   *CAH*, 4 June 1897, p.3.
50   *CAH,* 16 July 1897, p.6.
51   *CAH*, 2 July 1897, p.3.
52   *CAH*, 4 June, 1897, p.3.
53   *CAH*, 4 June, p.3, 18 June 1897, p.4.

her industrious and thrifty nature—values, it could be safely assumed, that were shared by her subjects, especially the Chinese immigrants. In this way, the gap between royalty and the 'lower' classes was notionally reduced.[54] The implied moral order underpinning political benevolence was elevated to become a motif of the construction of Chinese community. This was to be made explicit in the two festivals.

The *CAH* also enhanced the symbolic power of the benevolent Queen for its readers by utilising aspects of Chinese mythology and religious belief.[55] For example, in reporting on the Diamond Jubilee day of celebration, 22 June, it noted that the weather in Sydney had been beautiful for the event and suggested that this was due to the Queen's boundless power. It brushed off the fact that there had been a shower of rain at the end of the festivities.[56] Another example of the supposed mythological connection, and one that preceded the event itself, was the paper's urging its readers to take part in the Carnival on the grounds that, as it was for charity, they would accrue good karma and eventually be rewarded by the Chinese God.[57] In the process of thus imputing a metaphysical dimension to the symbolism of the benevolent Queen, the *CAH* addressed common concerns among the Chinese about the future, morality, and their own place in the world. The newspaper saw itself as helping them to develop a sense of imagined future for themselves and their next generation. Its ultimate aim was to enable the Chinese to feel comfortable with and to value the role of the British monarchy in order to make sense of it as a legitimate facet of Chinese identity.

Symbolic power was reflected in another way, too, by highlighting the ongoing negotiation between modern political concepts and national mythology. In the process of constructing an image of the beneficent Queen the *CAH* also invoked the symbolism of traditional Chinese imagery. The paper drew direct comparisons between the Australian colonies' official emblems, such as the kangaroo, emu and golden wattle, which were featuring in their Diamond Jubilee celebrations, and official Chinese emblems such as the dragon. The *CAH* editorialised in favour of the dragon over the colonial images, stating that the dragon, which also stood for Chinese morality, was a more powerful symbol.[58] The paper went so far as to adopt a dragon symbol for its masthead on its lunar–Gregorian calendar from 1898.

54   *CAH*, 25 June 1897, p.6.
55   *CAH*, 18 June, p.4, 25 June 1897, p.2.
56   *CAH*, 25 June 1897, p.6.
57   *CAH*, 30 July, p.3, 20 August 1897, p.2.
58   *CAH*, 11 June 1897, p.3.

It is likely that, before the first Carnival on 28 August, increasing reference to symbolic power helped to gradually embed in Chinese readers a social imaginary that combined a sense of large social systems with their personal daily lives. The integration of modern political celebration with traditional beliefs was presumably intended to motivate Chinese readers to imagine the community they formed in the colonies. Insofar as interpretations and symbolic power are created by social actors, however, it is important to understand how the social actors in this context worked with each other to mobilise the Chinese to act as a community in these two public events.

The Bendigo dragon comes to Sydney

The importance of symbolic power lies not just in creating linkages between personal experience and large social systems but also in the creation of new networks for social mobilisation. Networks of this kind extend beyond customary ties of native-place and kinship to embrace new institutional forms and styles of social identity.

Cooperation among bilingual Chinese leaders, including Quong Tart, WRG Lee and Sun Johnson, arose from the dealings of the Jubilee Charity Carnival Committee. In July 1897 the *CAH* reported that a member of the committee had visited Bendigo in Victoria to arrange the loan of that city's Golden Chinese Dragon, along with silk banners and costumes, for the Sydney Carnival, which was to take place on 28 August.[59] The idea of a Chinese contribution to the commemorations appealed strongly to Sun and Philp. According to a report in *The Bulletin*, Sydney's Chinese merchants and native-place societies were not initially involved in arranging the journey of the Bendigo dragon. Nevertheless, Philp and Sun went to some lengths to ensure that the job of getting the dragon to Sydney for the Carnival was seen as a task for the Chinese community.[60]

Although the Bendigo dragon had been appearing in that city's public celebrations since 1892, it is unlikely that many of the Sydney Chinese had heard about the dragon before it was introduced by the *CAH*.[61] The

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59   *CAH*, 23 July 1897, p.3.

60   *The Bulletin*, 4 September 1897.

61   This particular Chinese dragon first appeared in the Bendigo Easter Procession in 1892 (*Bendigo Independent*, 20 April 1892). The dragon was shared by Chinese in a number of colonies, which built up a Chinese-Australian network in the late 19th century. For the Chinese contributions to the Bendigo Easter Fair Committee, see Amanda Rasmussen (2004).

newspaper's description of the dragon combined aesthetics and nationalism; it made much of the dragon's strikingly beautiful characteristics, and described it as a glorious icon of the Chinese (華夏 Huaxia) people.[62] Such symbolic meaning, Sun and Philp knew, could potentially give impetus to an expanded definition of Chinese social authority and identity, a prospect that encouraged them to report with great enthusiasm on the arrangements for bringing the Bendigo dragon north to Sydney.

Getting the Bendigo dragon to Sydney was no small matter. The Committee for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Charity Carnival contacted CF Whitely, the Chinese-liaison officer of the shipping firm Gibbs, Bright and Co., to handle the transportation.[63] Many other associated details made it difficult for the European committee to stage the event in the carnival without the support of Chinese residents. For example, there were extra costs to be met, as the Bendigo Chinese were requesting £3,000 to guarantee the safety of their dragon and the other processional props,[64] and hundreds of Chinese volunteers were needed on the day to carry the dragon and the decking for other performances.[65] The Queen's Jubilee Committee approached Sun Johnson and Philp for help in obtaining support and social resources from the Chinese community.[66] To encourage Chinese merchants to participate in the carnival, the *CAH* promoted the event as a chance for extending business networks.[67] The *CAH* also presented the idea of charity work as socially creditable for merchants, whether Western or Chinese, and hence good for business.[68] The benefits of working for charity as a means of expanding one's economic and social networks thus became a motivating influence on the Chinese merchants. A Chinese Committee was established by the *CAH* and other leading Chinese, including members of the LYT and the Chinese Merchant Assistance and Benevolent Society.

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62 *CAH,* 23 July 1897, p.3.
63 *CAH,* 23 July 1897, p.3.
64 *The Bulletin*, 4 September 1897.
65 *CAH*, 30 July 1897, p.3.
66 See letter to the *CAH* from the European Committee (*CAH*, 30 July, 20 August 1897).
67 The Mayor of Sydney and Mr Law, MP for Balmain, had asked the Chinese community to arrange for the Chinese performance in the Jubilee Charity Carnival. It seems that the *CAH* tried to encourage Chinese merchants to join this carnival as a chance for them to connect with the colonial authorities and expand their networks (*CAH*, 20 August 1897, p.2; *The Bulletin*, 4 September 1897).
68 *CAH*, 6 August, p.6, 13 August 1897, p.2.

On the night of 4 August, the first meeting to discuss uniting the Chinese and European committees was held in Quong Tart's tearooms,[69] and it successfully persuaded the Chinese merchants, who could bring on board Sydney's Chinese, to work with the European committee. A number of wealthy Chinese and Europeans were involved in the talks, most of whom favoured a cooperative approach to the carnival. Among the Chinese present were leading members of the LYT, including WRG Lee and T Yee Hing, who were introduced to the Europeans by Quong Tart.[70] The group settled on a financial budget for the carnival.[71] The meeting was productive and notably congenial, and media reports of it on both sides of the language divide were optimistic. According to the Sydney *Evening News*, 'racial hatreds and class distinctions were forgotten, and the Chinese and his European fellow citizen discussed how best to alleviate the misery of the poor and distressed'. Sun Johnson, who had acted as an interpreter, proclaimed that 'charity recognized no nationality or creed'.[72] The *CAH* covered the meeting and reported in buoyant tones that at least one outcome would be better relations between the Chinese and Europeans in colonial society.[73]

Cooperation between the *CAH* and the LYT was crucial to the success of the festivities. As recounted in the previous chapter, the LYT had risen, under the tutelage of WRG Lee, to a position of great influence over Chinese immigration and hence the Chinese community generally. The LYT's influence was evident at a meeting it initiated on the night of 15 August, attended by more than 300 Chinese. Because of the size of the crowd it could not be held in a Chinese lodge or shop, as was the normal custom, so it was convened at a hall in Castlereagh Street. At the meeting the LYT effectively organised the details and settings for the carnival within a few hours, and a president and vice-president of a Chinese carnival committee were elected. The *CAH* also reported that it was finally decided to select more than 600 Chinese to participate in the celebration.[74] If there remained any doubts regarding the LYT's ability to mobilise the Chinese immigrant community, they were firmly dispelled by the time the meeting closed.

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69   *CAH*, 6 August 1897, p.7. Quong Tart and Philp, who both had Scottish
     backgrounds, were already friends (see Philp's poem to Quong Tart, indicating their
     friendship before the meeting, in Tart (2003:83)).
70   *EN*, 5 August 1897.
71   *The Bulletin*, 14 August 1897.
72   *EN*, 5 August 1897.
73   *CAH*, 6 August 1897, p.6.
74   *CAH*, 20 August 1897, p.2; *Bulletin*, 4 September 1897.

The large attendance at this meeting was also due to the efforts of the *CAH*, which had urged the Chinese committee to encourage ordinary members of the Chinese community to become involved in the carnival. The paper published a notice on 13 August, devoting a whole page, possibly put together by Sun Johnson, to explain the origin and nature of the Chinese procession in the Jubilee Charity Carnival, and the origins of the carnival itself, with the intention of persuading the Chinese to attend a second committee meeting. It conveyed approval of the Diamond Jubilee and what it stood for, emphasising the benefits for all peoples who lived in the British Empire, including Chinese immigrants, who enjoyed stable and peaceful social conditions under the benevolent reign of Queen Victoria. It noted that great numbers of wealthy and upper-class Chinese and Europeans had celebrated her Diamond Jubilee in June. The *CAH* maintained its position that the Chinese contribution, including the loan of the Bendigo dragon and other processional properties associated with Chinese imperial ritual, would present an image of the Chinese community as generous and willing to participate meaningfully in public life.

The *CAH* was doing more than simply recording the deliberations of the Chinese carnival committee and it made no effort to hide its role as a social actor, informing readers of the doings of the committee through a formal notification rather than conventional reportage. In notices, Sun described himself as an official of the committee, and pointed out that the *CAH* and the LYT were cooperating in its organisation. The *CAH* further noted the large numbers of Chinese in attendance at the second meeting, thus emphasising that the Chinese community's contribution was on a par with that of the European committee.[75]

The organisation of the Chinese contribution to the Queen's Jubilee Charity Carnival arose out of social networks formed by the *CAH* in collaboration with the LYT. They created a focal point for Chinese unified action. According to Clifford Geertz (1983:124), elites 'justify their existence and order their actions' with the forms of symbolic power by which they 'mark the centre as centre'. In this case, the elite actors, using both activism and narrative, invoked the forms of an even higher elite to 'mark the centre', and in so doing achieved a practical social connection between the centre and the periphery in the form of the two carnivals. This connection took the form of interaction between their fellow Chinese and other spectators where they shared, negotiated, and expanded the meaning of community.

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75   *CAH*, 20 August 1897, p.2.

Through the *CAH*'s use of symbolic power and its linked social networks, Sydney Chinese embraced the Jubilee Charity Carnival with enthusiasm. Behind Chinese participation in the first Carnival on 28 August 1897 lay a complex process combining print culture, traditional values, symbolic power, and modern commercial networks. When Sydney Chinese were invited to participate in the two carnivals they seized the opportunity to foster a new public image of and for themselves.

The transformation of the Chinese-Australian public profile

Insofar as the Diamond Jubilee Carnival transformed the public image of the Chinese, it did so in large part through the commentaries published in Sydney newspapers. After the first carnival, Sydney journalists reporting on the event lauded the Chinese contribution, identifying the Chinese procession as a highlight of the celebrations. The Bendigo dragon and the other lavish paraphernalia created an impressive image in the eyes of the Sydney public. The *EN* interpreted the visual splendour of the Chinese contribution as a local example of venerable Chinese traditions. Although the dragon and religious rituals were metaphors for the Chinese empire, the *EN* derived from their use an image of 'beneficent Chinese', and welcomed them as 'citizens' of colonial society,[76] whose involvement in the public sphere of the carnival demonstrated that they were bona fide subjects of colonial society.

The *SMH* also employed rhetoric explicitly approving of the transformed image of the Chinese.[77] Although the *SMH* acknowledged that the dragon was a symbol of the Chinese empire, its reportage focused on the modern, entertaining image projected by Sydney's Chinese, pointing out the value of the increasing interaction between the Chinese community and colonial society. The *SMH* also mentioned Chinese participation in the football matches, bicycle races and cricket at the carnival; even though the unpractised Chinese participants were not notably competitive in these events. The newspaper placed considerable store on the Chinese participants' full and highly visible enjoyment of the festivities and suggested that both their use of such costly materials and their participation in modern amusements and sports were an indication of urban Chinese interest in imitating European upper-class manners and customs. The *SMH* suggested that the Chinese performance had the potential to remedy a widespread colonial prejudice against the Chinese as parsimonious and avaricious.

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76 *EN*, 30 August 1897.
77 *SMH*, 28 August 1897.

The *Sydney Mail* republished the *SMH*'s reports and added impressive photographs of the procession,[78] including two large photos of the oriental dragon, the Chinese volunteers and the leading Chinese, some dressed in their best Western clothes and others in ornate national finery. The *Mail* approvingly depicted the combination of traditional oriental symbols and modern Western amusements as signifying a hybrid Chinese community. In publishing the photographs, the newspaper promulgated visible affirmation of the Chinese role in the carnival to a wide readership extending beyond Sydney to the entirety of colonial society.

While the Sydney public was surprised at the new Chinese image, the Chinese themselves were elated by the respectable public image of them projected in the English-language press, which was reported in the *CAH*. As we have seen, the *CAH* initially focused on the dragon display as a metaphor for Huaxia (the Chinese nation),[79] but ignored it in later commentary. After the first carnival, the *CAH* published a sketch of the Chinese procession, composed to place a Chinese actor in the centre, rather than the dragon or the regalia. The *CAH* further accounted for the honour bestowed on all colonial Chinese because of what they had done for charity. It emphasised the huge attendance at the procession by Europeans, and the favourable reports of the first carnival in other Sydney newspapers, as evidence that the good Chinese were welcomed by colonial society.[80] Thus the *CAH* had moved on from its original position of working to create a sense of Chinese nationality to one of creating an image of colonial Chinese as benignly disposed and therefore valuable to colonial society.

As the Sydney public's perception of the Chinese was undergoing a radical shift, the *CAH* was highlighting what it deemed a key moral value for both the Chinese and colonial society—charity. It may be argued that this value was peculiarly modern and urban, because charity became a means for creating a public image rather than merely extending the social networks of native-place and kinship.[81] Thus the first carnival embodied a narrative of urban Chinese who were overjoyed by the new public image that they were creating. They were encouraged to mount a second carnival shortly after the first.

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78 *Sydney Mail*, 4 September 1897.
79 *CAH*, 23 July 1897, p.3.
80 *CAH*, 3 September 1897, p.4.
81 Charity is a traditional method of mobilising social sources and social networks in Chinese society. (See the discussion of *guanxi* in Chapter 2.)
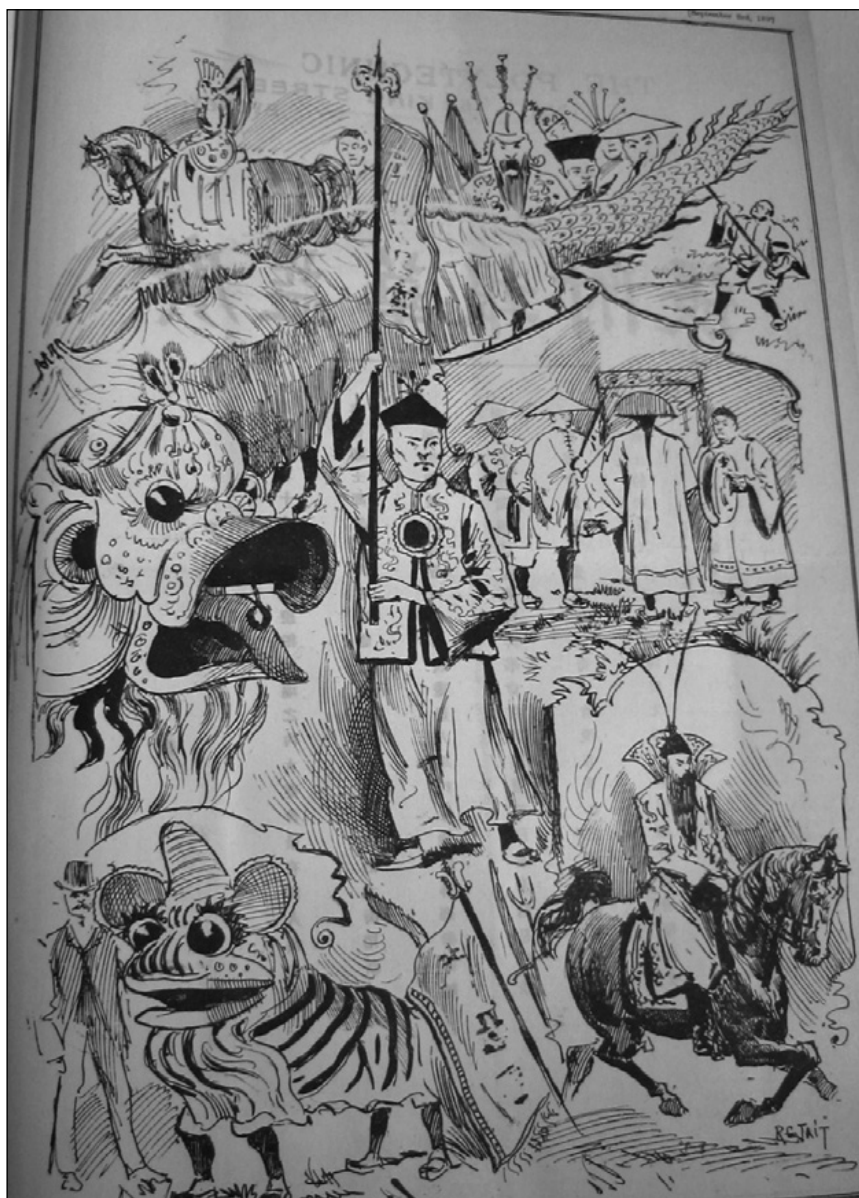
Sketches of the Diamond Jubilee Charity Carnival, 1897.
(*Chinese Australian Herald*, 3 September 1897.)

The second carnival

Because the Chinese procession in the Queen's Jubilee Charity Carnival was so successful, the *CAH*, in collaboration with the LYT, organised another carnival a month later along the same lines as the first. The charity to benefit from the second carnival was the Sydney Hospital. It was held at Moore Park on 25 September 1897 from noon to 5:15 pm, and doubled as a celebration of the Chinese Moon Festival.[82] Although it is difficult to make an exact calculation of the number of Chinese at the second carnival, it is likely attendance was higher than at the first because of the favourable reports generated by the first carnival in the *CAH* and Sydney's mainstream newspapers. The Chinese promoted the second carnival by advertising the event in Sydney's English-language newspapers.[83]

The second carnival was grander than the first. The Chinese procession marched through Sydney's city streets from Bent Street near Circular Quay up to the Sydney Railway Station,[84] and was the most important part of the carnival. Chinese missionaries, merchants, storekeepers, market gardeners and journalists attended, demonstrating the unity of the Chinese community. At the head of the procession walked community leaders, including John Young Wai, Soo Hoo Ten, WRG Lee, Quong Tart, On Lee, Sun Johnson, T Yee Hing, Lum Gee Yik, Sun Hing Chan, and Hap Lung. Dragons, lions, unicorns, and horses were represented in the procession, which was interpreted by Sun Johnson as equivalent to a regal procession in China 4,000 years ago.[85] After the march, all continued to Moore Park for a finale of powerful fireworks. The *CAH* reported with unabashed enthusiasm that the whole lavish event symbolised the prosperity and progress of the civilised world.[86]

The procession also held up the Chinese to spectacular effect for the journalists of the *DT*, *SMH*, *Sydney Mail* and *EN*,[87] but they were taken aback by the unfamiliarity of the symbols and legends in the procession, and, although all expressed approval and appreciation of the second carnival's success in their reports, they noted the procession's strangeness in their eyes.[88] This 'strangeness' heightened the *CAH*'s role as mediator between the Anglophone and Chinese-speaking communities. Responding to the

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82   *CAH*, 10 September 1897, p.6
83   *CAH*, 31 December 1897, p.3.
84   See advertisement for the second carnival (*SMH*, 25 September 1897).
85   *Sydney Mail*, 2 October 1897; *DT*, 27 September 1897.
86   *CAH*, 1 October 1897, p.3.
87   *DT*, 27 September 1897; *SMH*, 27 September 1897; *EN*, 25 September 1897.
88   *Sydney Mail*, 2 October 1897.

Sydney journalists' misinterpretations and confusion over the procession's meaning, Sun Johnson took the opportunity to interpret for them the symbolism associated with the dragon and regalia featured. He linked the display with Chinese legend and folklore, and stated that this procession imitated the ritual processions of six ancient kings of China.[89] More importantly, in the pages of his own newspaper, he also asserted that the dragon and regalia demonstrated the sophistication of the Chinese and of Chinese civilisation rather than merely the authority of monarchs.[90]

Sun Johnson's interpretations could be read as indicating that, despite the second carnival's stated purpose, charity may not have been the primary reason for running the event. By demonstrating something of the splendour of Chinese civilisation, the Chinese community had another opportunity to enhance its public image. Thus the symbolic power of the processions of the Chinese kings and national pride in this case supplanted the apparent virtue of charitable works in the shaping of the Chinese public image.

Questions remain as to precisely why Sun Johnson and the *CAH* shifted the interpretive emphasis from charity to the symbolic power of the regal procession. It may be argued that this transformation reflected the *CAH*'s narrative powers in regard to the imagined Chinese community. Geertz notes that governing elites use symbolic possessions to consolidate their social authority. In any realm of life, the symbolic possession can be used to present and enhance the charismatic figures of society (Geertz 1983:123–124). It is not beyond imagining that the leading members of the Chinese community, such as missionaries, merchants and journalists, were motivated to affirm their social authority not only through their day-to-day business and networking activities, but also, given the opportunity, through the empowering symbolism of the costumes and other attributes of the procession. It must be borne in mind, too, that Sydney's Chinese leaders were concerned with their leadership image, insofar as it could be translated into recognition by European Australian society. In this way, symbolic trappings of the kind displayed in the procession helped forge a sense of coherent linkages between the centre and periphery within the Chinese community by virtue of their appeal to Chinese national pride and historical legacy.

The record shows the *CAH* sought to use modern communication technology to mobilise the Sydney Chinese. While the *CAH* interpreted and negotiated the Chinese public image in terms of actions, stories and cere-

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89   *DT*, 27 September 1897; *Sydney Mail*, 2 October 1897.
90   *CAH*, 1 October 1897, p.3.

monies, it was also establishing its social authority and leadership status in the eyes of its Chinese readership. The narrative power at its disposal united and interpreted the Chinese in the name of community. Furthermore, the *CAH* also cultivated a highly effective place for itself as a technically sophisticated moral, social and organisational nexus linking Chinese daily life and large social systems such as the political structure of colonial society.

The growing sense of national pride and the expansion of groups involved in the second carnival also reflected, paradoxically, that the Chinese community was far from homogeneous. While the *CAH* and the LYT were working together to organise the two carnivals within a changing Chinese community, another Chinese group was beginning to take on a leadership role. This group consisted of Chinese importers, fruit traders and market gardeners, who established a second Chinese-language newspaper to enhance their social networking.

Cosmopolitan networks and political participation: *Tung Wah News*

Founders and political participation

While the Sydney Chinese bilingual elites were establishing their leadership through processes of negotiation between Chinese and Australian societies, other Sydney Chinese leaders began to pioneer a different route of community leadership. The *Tung Wah News* was founded in 1898 by a group of Chinese merchants who saw themselves and their new newspaper as a part of an international network. Their position on domestic reform in China differed from that of the *CAH*. In late 1899 the leading figures in the *TWN* organisation established the Chinese Empire Reform Association (保皇會 Baohuanghui, also known as 澳洲鳥修威省保救大清光緒皇帝會 Aozhou Niaoxiuweisheng baojiu daQing Guangxuhuangdi Hua), referred to hereafter as CERA.

Shares in *TWN* were sold from March 1898,[91] and the company formed on 10 June 1898 and registered on 21 June as a limited company at 166 George Street.[92] The building that housed the fledgling paper had been owned by Way Kee since 1892 (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:478) and was not far from the Dongguan native-place association at Quong Hing Chong and Co.[93] Unlike the *CAH*, the proprietors of *TWN*

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91   *CAH*, 12 April 1902, p.5.
92   *CAH*, 5 April 1902, p.4.
93   *CAH*, 2 January, 16 February 1901, p.3.

were all ethnic Chinese holding joint-stock options. Its start-up capital holdings totalled £1,000 divided into 5,000 shares of four shillings each. The largest shareholders were Thomas Yee Hing with 300 shares, Yum Tong (徐蔭堂 Xu Yintang) with 100 shares, Hing Chong (慶祥 Qingxiang) with 100 shares, Hap War (合和 Hehe) with 100 shares, David O'Young with 50 shares, Kwong Mow On with 50 shares, Wing Hing Tiy (永興泰 Yongxingtai) with 100 shares, and Lung Chow with 50 shares.[94] Apart from these larger traders, many small shareholders were market gardeners.[95]

The *TWN*'s management style reflected its diverse ownership and corporate structure. Each year the company elected six managers to oversee the running of the paper. They were required to attend meetings on the first day of every month. A number of rules and procedures were laid down regarding the shareholders, managers, editors, and those in charge of printing, to ensure that the *TWN* was run as efficiently as possible and in keeping with modern business practice.[96] The close involvement of Chinese businesses and business leaders in publishing the *TWN* was a sign of the growing participation of businessmen in public life and of social mobilisation that extended well beyond ties of kinship and native place.

The first issue of the *TWN* was published on 29 June 1898. The paper was printed every Wednesday and Saturday by Geo. Murray and Co. Ltd., and the inaugural publisher was Young Fong, who lived at 168 George Street.[97] The paper's financial support came principally from subscriptions and advertising placed by Australian and Chinese sponsors.[98] The *TWN* provided regular information regarding market prices in Sydney and Melbourne and carried many advertisements for rental accommodation for market gardeners.[99]

The make-up of its shareholders and financial sources reflected the *TWN*'s aims and commercial interests. Aside from local advertising and business information concerning the Chinese community, it also reported

94 SRNSW, Defunct Company packet for *TWN*, no. 3/5733 in 1723. See also *CAH*, 5 April 1902, p.4 and 12 April 1902, p.5. Yong (1977:117) claims that the £1000 capital was divided into 4,000 shares, but this appears to be an error.
95 *CAH*, 26 April 1902, p.3.
96 *CAH*, 12 April 1902, p.5.
97 *TWN*, 10 August 1898, p.4.
98 From 1898 to 1900, *TWN* earned around £240 per year from subscriptions and advertising, but in 1901 it was involved a court case which reduced its earnings to around £114 (*CAH*, 5 April 1902:4). Advertisements in the *TWN* and other newspapers are an important resource for understanding the development of Sydney Chinese firms and businesses and their location in the social network.
99 For example, *TWN*, 26 November 1898, p.4, 14 October 1899, p.3, 17 January 1900, p.3; see also Yeung (2005:219–222).

The front page of *Tung Wah News*, 1898.

more generally on Sydney and international events. Typical was its coverage of the opening of the Queen Victoria Building in Sydney, which carried a fine picture of the new building.[100] It showed an interest in the transference of Chinese immigrants and gold to Hong Kong and provided business information and news of Chinese communities in Hong Kong, Macao, Singapore and Honolulu by printing excerpts from various newspapers. For example, in the first issue of *TWN*, the Chinese Association of Honolulu was introduced,[101] and later the conditions of Chinese in Honolulu were reported, using the Chinese-language Honolulu newspaper, *Lai Kee Bo*, as the source.[102]

Bilingual journalists Wu Yuping (吳玉屏) and Thomas Chang Luke (鄭祿 Zheng Lu) encouraged Chinese merchants and market gardeners to concern themselves with political and public issues. Wu Yuping, a Honolulu Chinese, was editor of the *TWN* from 1898 to early 1900.[103] His connections with Hawaii meant that the *TWN* devoted significantly more space to news about

100   *TWN*, 30 July 1898, p.4.
101   *TWN*, 29 June 1898, p.2.
102   *TWN*, 8 October 1898, p.3.
103   *TWN*, 21 February 1900, p.2.

the mid-Pacific Chinese than about other overseas Chinese, at least until the paper shifted its support to the reformist faction.[104] Chang Luke conducted a school for Chinese in Melbourne in the early 1890s with support from the Brunswick Presbyterian Church. However, he moved to Sydney and specialised in translation. He brought to the paper a specific agenda regarding the politics of Chinese society.[105] In 1899, before the CERA was created, the *TWN* ran a series of essays pitched to inspire patriotism and a sense of public awareness among the Chinese.[106] It may be argued that the *TWN*'s editorial stance in general was intended to motivate the Chinese merchants and storekeepers to greater involvement in political reforms and discussions.

Such activism was consistent with the *TWN*'s fundamental ethos. The newspaper's founders were also interested in the Chinese reform movement, and their interest further influenced the establishment of the CERA. The involvement of Thomas Yee Hing, who played an important role in the development of the *TWN* and later the Association, was a significant factor. Because Yee Hing was the paper's biggest shareholder, according to the firm's regulations he was also a manager and could join the monthly meetings to discuss editorial and policy issues.[107]

Thomas Yee Hing was born in the Zengcheng county in the Guangdong province, China and, by his own account, arrived in Australia in 1875.[108] He eventually became the manager of one of Sydney's oldest and wealthiest Chinese firms, On Chong and Co. of George Street. On Chong owned a 'trading station' at the Gilbert Islands and several ships trading between Sydney, Townsville, Hong Kong, China, and Butaritari (Lydon 1999:86). In the 1890s On Cong and Co. was one of five largest trading companies on Butaritari, which is the most fertile of the Gilbert Islands (Willmott 2005:11). Yee Hing is described in the Royal Commission report as a straight, upright and honest man, who was at the fore in every worthy cause and social movement to that time (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:479). Indeed, it appears that he was unfailing in his attendance at every important public event of the Chinese community in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He was closely involved with Quong Tart and WRG Lee in resolving the conflicts of 1892, was a leading representative of On Chong

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104 *TWN*, 29 June, p.2, 23 July, p.3, 8 October 1898, p.3.
105 *North Melbourne Advertiser*, 10 Feb 1893; *TWN*, 19 August, p.2, 30 August 1899, p.3.
106 *TWN*, 3, 6, 17, 24, 27 May, 7 June, 10, 19, 30 August, 29 November, 2, 16, 23, 30 December 1899.
107 *CAH*, 5 April 1902, p.4.
108 NAA, Dept of External Affairs, A1, Correspondence files, 1914/926.

and Co. and of the Zengcheng county group in the LYT after 1892,[109] and had been an enthusiastic participant in the Chinese procession of 1897.[110]

T Yee Hing's close relationship with WRG Lee and his involvement in the LYT indicated that he embraced the practice of crossing native-place boundaries in shaping the Chinese community in Sydney. In his view, however, the needs underlying the process of community shaping had shifted, and his priority was now to relocate Chinese Australians in an international context. In 1898, while providing capital to support the *TWN*, he expounded on his project to unite all overseas Chinese regardless of their native place in an article under the name Liu Yuanchun. He wrote of the meaning of brotherhood in terms of international kinship rather than provincial identity.[111]

In late 1898, however, the concerns of the *TWN* came under the influence of reformists in China. After the Sino-Japanese War of 1895, many Chinese began advocating reform along Western lines in order to establish a powerful and independent China free of foreign occupation. This Westernisation movement was integrated in June of 1898, with systemic political, social and cultural reforms by Emperor Guangxu (光緒) and leading reformers such as Kang Youwei (康有為) and Liang Qichao (梁啟超). Because Kang and Liang highlighted the power of newspapers in shaping Chinese modernisation, several Chinese newspapers were published in the name of reform after 1896 (Liang 1896). For example, *Shiwubao* (時務報 *Chinese Progress*) was founded in Shanghai by Kang, and *Zhixinbao* (知新報 *China Reformer*, 1897–1901) in Macao by Liang and Kang's brother, Kang Guangren (康廣仁), both of which became the reform movement's official newspapers (Tang & Tang 2000:91–94). They provided new concepts and ideas of a Westernised China to Chinese society in China and overseas. In Southeast Asia prominent intellectuals were also involved in publishing Chinese-language newspapers that supported reforms in China (Wu 1997:62; Yen 1976:78).[112] While the *TWN* initially reported commercial news derived from these Chinese newspapers, the political discussions on their pages in time influenced the *TWN* to focus on the Chinese reforms as well.

The first issue of *TWN* happened to be published in the month that the young Emperor Guangxu announced a radical program of reform known as

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109   *CAH*, 5 April 1902, p.6.

110   *SMH*, 2 October 1897; *DT*, 27 September 1897.

111   *TWN*, 17 August 1898, p.4

112   Important Southeast Asian newspapers were *Binchen xinbao* (檳城新報) in Penang, *Tiannanxinbao* (天南新報) and *Rixinbao* (日新報) in Singapore.

the 'Hundred Days' Reform' (from 11 June to 21 September 1898). The new paper was optimistic about the reform movement in China at the beginning of the Hundred Days.[113] Like the *CAH* before it, the *TWN* embraced the concept of the power of the newspaper in promoting social reform and in early issues covered reform of education, feminism and the anti-opium movement.[114] It reprinted a number of significant statements and official reports of Chinese reformers involved in the Hundred Days that had been published elsewhere.[115] Its initial priorities, however, were not as closely focused on the political concerns of the Chinese reformers as on commercial issues and modern education.

Things began to change once the Hundred Days' Reform movement had collapsed in September 1898 and a number of the leading reformers had been exiled. The *TWN*'s position then shifted to one of unflagging support for the Chinese reformers. Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao sought support from foreign powers, including the British and Japanese imperial governments, in order to protect the Chinese Emperor, who had lost real authority in September (Tang & Tang 2000:99). In late 1898 Kang and Liang published *Qingyibao* (清議報 *China Discussion*, 1898–1901) in Yokohama, Japan, in part to build their influence with the support of overseas Chinese. The *TWN* immediately reported this news to Chinese Australians, noting its informants as friends in Yokohama.[116] The paper was clearly accessing links within a network of Chinese reformers between Yokohama and Sydney. The report is evidence of the *TWN*'s association with the pro-reform movement in late 1898, at the same time that the *CAH* was warning its readers that the activities of the Chinese reformers in exile were dangerous.[117]

The *TWN* became increasingly enthusiastic in its support of the Chinese reformists and, in March 1899, became an agent for *Qingyibao*.[118] After 1899, it is clear that the *TWN* employed its connection with *Qingyibao* specifically to evoke enthusiasm among Australian Chinese toward the

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113 *TWN*, 16 July 1898, p.3.

114 *TWN*, 16 July, p.3, 30 July, p.3, 3 August, p.2, 27 August, 3 September 1898, p.3.

115 The article 'Gongsi' (公司 Limited Company) (*TWN*, 29 June 1898, p.3) was originally published in *Shiwubao* in 1897; another article, 'Quanxuepia' (勸學篇 Exhortation to Learn) by Zhang Zhidong (張之洞) (*TWN*, 30 July 1898, p.3) was originally published in another reformers' journal, *Xiangxue* (湘學), on 20 May 1898; 'Xuxueshi jianzhi zouzhe' (徐學士薦指奏摺) (*TWN* 24 and 28 September 1898, p.3) was originally published in *Shiwubao* on 27 August 1898; 'Zouchen Zhongguo yinhang kaiban qingxing zhe' (奏陳中國銀行開辦情形摺) by Sheng Xuanhuai (盛宣懷) (*TWN*, 1 October 1898, p.3), was reprinted from *Shiwubao* of 20 May 1898.

116 *TWN*, 24 December 1898, p.2.

117 *CAH*, 23 December 1898, p.5.

118 *TWN*, 1 March 1899, p.4.

Chinese reformers. For example, it reprinted an article by Liang about Tan Sitong (唐嗣同) who was executed by the Qing dynasty after the Hundred Days' Reform had collapsed, in order to induce in its readers sympathy toward Chinese exiles.[119] On 22 March 1889, the *TWN* took the significant step of reprinting an article from *Qingyibao* to protect the reputation of Chinese reformers against the palace *coup d'etat* of 1898.[120] The *TWN*'s political agenda was explicit from this moment onward; it was at this point also that a network of Chinese-Australian monarchists and other Chinese associations and newspapers in Southeast Asia, Japan and North America was established.

At this time the *TWN* was undergoing structural and technological change. First, Yuk Ping became its publisher and. secondly, the paper's physical appearance changed as it adopted typographical characters. There is no direct evidence that other pro-reform Chinese newspapers in Yokohama, Macao and Singapore assisted the *TWN* in its transformation to the new look, but it was clearly similar to that of Chinese newspapers in Singapore, Honolulu, Japan, Hong Kong and Macao. Its editorial stance became more clearly different from that of the *CAH*, which was not nearly as pro-active in its support for the Chinese reformers.[121] Although the *CAH* was in favour of the reforms, it rarely republished articles, official reports or statements by reformers, preferring to produce its own statements of support.[122] Another difference between the two papers lay in their writing styles. While the *TWN* used a classical style of language, after the fashion of Chinese reformers' newspapers and scholars, the *CAH* professed a commitment to delivering information to the greatest possible number of Chinese by its use of vernacular.[123]

The *CAH* and the *TWN* differed in their stances on the position of the Emperor in building a new China.[124] The *TWN*'s role extended well beyond its editorial position, in that it became an active branch of the CERA. When Kang Youwei visited Canada in 1899 he set up the first branch of the Chinese

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119   *TWN*, 11, 15 and 18 March 1899, p.2.
120   *TWN*, 22 March 1899, p.2
121   *CAH*, 20 January, p.3, 27 January 1899, p.2.
122   *CAH*, 7 October, p.5, 14 October 1898, p.4. An exception was an article from *Reformer China* about a petition from Chinese in Shanghai to the British Consul General (*CAH*, 27 January 1899, p.4).
123   *CAH*, 16 September 1898, p.5.
124   The *CAH* ran few reports or articles canvassing the idea that the Chinese Emperor was the key to building a new China. In its issue of 26 May 1899, it actively introduced anti-monarchist concepts, while the *TWN* ran a series of articles enthusiastically endorsing the Emperor as the symbolic centre of their new China.

Empire Reform Association on Thousand-Island in Ontario, Canada, to seek support from Chinese abroad to secure the restoration of the young Emperor Guangxu. Kang then sent his followers to Japan, the United States, Hong Kong, Macao and Australia to establish branches (Kang 1972:2), a mission than signalled a division in overseas Chinese communities between constitutional monarchists and the republican supporters of Sun Yatsen (Feng 1954:42; Zheng 1985:23; Sleeman 1933:142–146).

While Kang's followers propagated the monarchist manifesto to Chinese Australians, Chinese republicans and revolutionaries were also sending followers to Australia in order to expand their networks. Chinese revolutionaries in Hong Kong had ties with Chinese revolutionary families in Malaya, Honolulu and Australia (Hsueh 1960:311; Fitzgerald 2005:89–110). In Australia during this period an organisation known as the Revolutionary and Independence Association of Australian Chinese arose, under the control of Stephen King within the ambit of the Yee Hing society (Sleeman 1933:140–141; Fitzgerald 2005:99). King, a Western-educated Chinese, had worked for the British Secret Service in India, New York and Australia. After leaving the Secret Service, he met the leader of the Yee Hing Society in New South Wales, Loong Hong Pong (Sleeman 1933:140). The networks and families of King and Loong established the Revolutionary and Independence Association of Australian Chinese in rural New South Wales (Fitzgerald 2007:84–89).

In August 1899, a leading Chinese republican in Yokohama, Yeung Ku Wan (楊衢雲 Yang Quyun), wrote to a Chinese Australian in Hong Kong, Tse Tsan Tai, to announce that his Gemingcujintuan (革命促進團 Promoting Revolution Society) was sending representatives to promote revolutionary and republican views to the Chinese in Australia, Honolulu, America, the Straits Settlements, Bangkok, Saigon and Canada, in the name of the Republican Party (中國合眾政府社會 Zhongguo Hezhong Zhengfu Shehui).[125] The *TWN* reported a further letter from the party in December 1899,[126] but the Yee Hing Society in urban Sydney showed little enthusiasm for political activism at this stage, having been weakened by a division in its leadership in the late 1890s, as Yan Kong (游廣 You Guang) and Luo On Ming (羅安明 Luo Anming) went their separate ways.[127] Luo and another Yee Hing leader, Moy Sing (梅東星 Mei Dongxing), joined the

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125 KMT Archives, Taipei, Chun-sheng Chen's translation of the notes of Tse Tsan Tai, dated 19 August 1899, no. 230/2379; also Tse (1924:15).

126 *TWN*, 30 December 1899, p.2.

127 *CAH*, 18 March 1905, p.5.

CERA in January 1900.[128] The Chinese revolutionaries had established a network in urban Sydney, which stayed in place until the Yee Hing Society was transformed into a modern institution in the first decade of the 20th century, as we will see in Chapter 4.

Chinese revolutionaries did not enjoy unrestricted access to their network, however. The passing of the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901 limited Chinese entry to Australia and significantly reduced opportunities for the establishment of revolutionary associations during the first decade of White Australia. Consequently, conflict between Chinese monarchists and revolutionaries was not pronounced in the early 1900s. The strong commercial imperatives of the Sydney Chinese merchants also ran counter to any tendency to promote any political ideology. The early development of the *TWN* did, however, influence the subsequent development of the CERA in order to enhance their international network and social mobilisation.

Political participation and social leadership: the Chinese Empire Reform Association

Before the 1890s, Chinese leadership practices in Australia were similar to those of 19th century Singapore and, therefore, based on the resources at the command of particular families, meaning that wealth was essential for diaspora mobilisation in Singapore and Australia (Yong 1972:45). Yet wealth alone did not ensure the authority of leaders, who achieved power and fame by translating their wealth into benevolent activities and leadership of native-place societies (Chong 2004:162–165).

By the late 19th century, however, bilingual Chinese in Sydney had joined forces to challenge this style of leadership through their connections with foreign shipping companies, the LYT, and European journalists. The success of the Chinese processions in the Queen's jubilee celebration in 1897 enhanced the prestige and leadership of a bilingual Chinese elite, which was a matter of some anxiety for other Chinese merchants who did not have the same opportunities to gain entry to the LYT or the bilingual elite. From the late 1890s more and more Chinese fruit traders had increased their wealth and the scope of their social networks. They sought an alternative social institution through which they could work with bilingual elites and secure their social positions. The needs of this group constituted a local factor behind the CERA's formation.

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128   The membership list is in Noel Butlin Archives Centre, Australian National University (hereafter NBAC), 111/5, CERA minutes 1899–1906.

Another local factor was the existence of the *TWN*, which Sydney Chinese merchants had established, as already noted, to expand their business opportunities and social networks and enhance their leadership status. While its rival, *CAH*, enjoyed the institutional support of the LYT, the *TWN* had little to fall back on other than the resources of its board and shareholders. The establishment of the CERA provided *TWN* with a supportive organisation with which it could be associated.

A key founder of both the *TWN* and the CERA was T Yee Hing, who had attempted to start a number of other societies before his involvement in establishing the CERA. In August 1898, writing again under the name Liu Yuanchun in the *TWN*, he proposed founding the Anti-opium Society of Australia.[129] Following the success of Western anti-alcohol societies, he maintained, the Chinese should be able to organise an anti-opium society. A year later he proposed organising a Chinese gardeners' association in Sydney,[130] noting that there were over 2,000 Chinese gardeners in and around Sydney who would be a powerful group if they came together. Yee Hing went so far as to draw up regulations for this association, but nothing came of his plan. A month later, he was moved to ask for support from Gibbs, Bright and Co. and the LYT to establish a Confucian Church for the scholarly education of the Chinese community in Sydney,[131] but he had no greater success with this plan, although from 12 August 1899 the *TWN* did provide dates according to the reputed Confucian calendar on its front page.

Yee Hing's ambition to generate a Confucian revival, and promote broader cultural nationalism, was realised after he began cooperating with bilingual Chinese. Before Kang Youwei wrote to Quong Tart in October 1899 and the LYT in January 1900,[132] bilingual Chinese had gathered to establish their first political society, the CERA. In fact, the support of the bilingual Chinese, including Quong Tart, was an important factor in the Association's growth and development. Although Quong Tart wanted to maintain a positive relationship with the Qing dynasty so that he could preserve his rank in the Chinese imperial bureaucracy, he was nonetheless sympathetic to the reformers (Tart 2003:34–37; Chiu 1992:53). Because his name is not recorded in the membership list and minutes of the CERA, CF Yong (1977:121) claims that Quong Tart played no role in setting up

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129   *TWN*, 30 August, 3 September 1898, p.3.
130   *TWN*, 19 July 1899, p.2.
131   *TWN*, 30 August 1899, p.3.
132   *TWN*, 11 October 1899, pp.2–3*; CAH*, 20 January 1900, pp.4–5.

Members of the New South Wales Branch of the Chinese Empire Reform Association: the Baohuanghui.

(Collection of Kong Chew Society, Melbourne. Courtesy of Museum of Chinese Australian History, Melbourne.)

the branch, but Quong Tart identified himself among its founders[133] and another leading member, Chun Sowe (陳壽 Chen Shou), corroborates this.[134] He established connections with Kang Youwei and Khoo Seok-wan (邱菽 園 Qiu Shuyuan), founder of *Thiennanshinpao* (天南新報 *Tiannanxinbao*), and enthusiastically supported the Chinese reform movement in Singapore and Southeast Asia (Yen 1976:43; Wu 1997:63). Quong Tart's connection with Khoo is confirmed in Khoo's private correspondence and records, as is his contribution to the Chinese reformists in 1900 (Chiu 1922:53). In correspondence with Kang about his visit to Australia, Liang also indicates that Quong Tart was a key contact between Chinese in Sydney (whom Liang calls 'Meidang' (梅黨 Quong Tart Faction)) and leading reformers in China (Ding 1972:143).

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133   *TWN*, 13 November 1901, p.3.
134   *TWN*, 23 November 1901, p.3.

The involvement of the LYT and its leader, WRG Lee, was a further factor behind the establishment of the CERA in 1900. When Yee Hing asked Gibbs, Bright and Co. to support his proposal to build a Confucian church in August 1899, the company's managers required the LYT's approval of the proposal before they would contribute.[135] This requirement points to the degree of influence that WRG Lee had in managing relations between the shipping company and the Chinese community. Lee's involvement with CERA was aided by his friendship with Quong Tart.

WRG Lee chaired the initial meetings even though he was not the largest contributor.[136] The leading members arranged for Lee and Yee Hing to be the only two with the authority to take care of the two seals of Association.[137] Lee's position in the Association indicates his influence as a leader, but over time it became a source of conflict with Yee Hing.

The first meeting of the Sydney CERA was held at the *TWN* premises on 14 January 1900, the same day as the opening of the Honolulu branch. The minutes list nine presidents: T Yee Hing, David O'Young, Good Ick (李官益 Li Guanyi), WRG Lee, John Hoe (冼俊豪 Xian Junhao, 1867–1933), Cheang Kee (趙湘基 Zhao Xiangji), Yen Tah (吳濟川 Wu Jichuan), Henry Fine Cheong (鄭蕃昌 Zheng Fanchang), and Chun Sowe. Also listed were 22 assistant presidents and 28 acting managers.[138] The list shows the broad make-up of the Association's leadership, with time and resources being contributed by Chinese leaders from several community sectors, including the LYT, native-place associations, the Yee Hing Society and fruit merchants.

The CERA membership grew to several hundred in just one month.[139] With over 3,000 shares at 4 shillings each,[140] the Association received over £600 in subscriptions, meeting the expectations of the leaders who had intended to enlarge the membership base by recruiting Chinese farmers and labourers outside urban Sydney. A team of speakers spread the word about the new Association to Chinese living in the Belmore market and Waterloo areas. In mid-April 1900, wealthy Chinese merchants from North George Street were welcomed into their assembly by Chinese merchants

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135 *TWN*, 30 August 1899, p.3.
136 See meeting records before June 1900, in NBAC, 111/5, CERA minutes 1899–1906, Lee was the third ranked contributor (*TWN*, 21 February 1900, supplement).
137 Meeting records, 3 January 1900 (lunar calendar), in NBAC, 111/5, CERA minutes 1899–1906.
138 List of CERA's leading members, in NBAC, 111/5, CERA minutes 1899–1906.
139 *TWN*, 7 February 1900, p.5.
140 *TWN*, 21 February 1900, supplement.

and storekeepers in the South.[141] CERA leaders also visited Newcastle and Bathurst seeking support from the Chinese of those areas.[142] In June of 1900, the Association contributed £1,000 to its headquarters in Macao,[143] and the following month a further £400 was sent at the request of Kang Youwei.[144] Liang Qichao, aware of the interest and influence of Chinese residents in Australia, identified Sydney as a hub for their transnational network and encouraged Kang to shift the overseas Association's central headquarters to Australia rather than Singapore or Honolulu (Ding 1972:111–112, 118).

A further incentive for Sydney Chinese to contribute to and become involved in a political society early in 1900 was an outbreak of plague among the Chinese of the city in March. In mid-April, Wexford Street and nearby inner-city areas were closed off and Chinese residents were evicted from their properties immediately.[145] Chinese merchants from other parts of the city gave assistance and comfort to Chinese residents affected by the closures. Politically, the outbreak did more than merely unite Sydney's Chinese; it was also undeniably helpful for the expansion of the CERA.

Because Chinese reformists in exile were keen to arouse nationalist feelings in the Chinese abroad, they interpreted anti-Chinese prejudice in Western societies as a result of a weak China.[146] CERA extended this argument after the Sydney plague outbreak. By 1900 the leading Chinese reformists and revolutionists had expanded their political network and in-fluence over much of the Pacific area, in the process stimulating political consciousness and national self-awareness among Chinese abroad (Wang 1985:75). Their success in building Chinese political networks in the Pacific was also attributable to their response to anti-Chinese restrictions. Chinese in Australia, North America and Singapore faced racism and restrictive regulations, which inclined Chinese there to regard Chinese nationalism approvingly. In the period after the plague outbreak, the *TWN* and the *CAH* strongly promoted Chinese nationalism among the Sydney Chinese through narratives of Chinese immigration and reports of countless instances of suf-fering caused by unfair policies of foreign governments toward the Chinese diaspora.[147] It seems, therefore, that by 1900 the propaganda activities of

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141 *TWN*, 14 April, 18 April 1900, p.3.
142 *TWN*, 7 April, p.3, 5 May 1900, p.3.
143 Minutes, 3 May 1900 (lunar calendar), in NBAC, 111/5, CERA Minutes 1899–1906.
144 Minutes, 7 June 1900 (lunar calendar), in NBAC, 111/5, CERA Minutes 1899–1906.
145 *CAH*, 21 April 1900, p.4.
146 *TWN*, 8 November 1899, supplement; *Kang Youwei yubaohuanghui*, 1982:244–247.
147 *TWN*, 21 April, p.2, 25 April, p.2, 19 May 1900, p.2; *CAH*, 9 June, p.2, 16 June, p.2, 11 August, p.2, 25 August 1900, p.4.

Chinese nationalists and a sense of insecurity regarding a putatively failing China had produced the necessary conditions for an emerging Chinese-Australian nationalism.

Chinese Empire Reform Association's crisis

The New South Wales CERA peaked in membership and influence in the early 1900s and then fell into decline. One reason for the decline was disagreement between CERA and bilingual Chinese such as Sun Johnson and the *CAH*. The *CAH*'s position was complex. It railed against anti-Chinese prejudice exhibited by the Sydney authorities in their response to the plague outbreak, but, at the same time, it had thrown its weight behind the Australian federation movement and was exhorting its readers to support it, because it endorsed the concept of Australian democracy and its style of public life.[148] Yet, despite Sun Johnson's strong appreciation and promotion of democracy, the *CAH* held back from any denunciation of the concept of loyalty to the Emperor, espoused by the CERA, until late May of 1900.[149] Finally, however, on 27 May, the paper ran a controversial essay attacking the fundamental purpose of CERA, which was to promote the authority of the Emperor rather than democracy and civil rights. It made explicit the divisions between the *TWN* and the *CAH*. After the essay's publication, the *TWN* immediately leapt to the CERA's defence, stating that its purpose was not to serve private interests.[150] The debate was short-lived and there was no further discussion between the *CAH* and the *TWN* over their respective political ideologies. The *CAH*'s position reflected the ambivalence of many Western-educated Chinese who admired Australian political systems and values yet also felt disempowered and disenfranchised in the process of building a new Australia. The attitude evinced by the *CAH* was one of disaffection from the potential of Chinese political structures and political culture to rise to the challenges of modern life.[151]

Neverthelesss, the diminution of the rights and status of Chinese Australians in the federation process moved the *CAH* to favour the idea of

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148   *CAH*, 25 August, p.2, 1 December 1900, p.5.
149   Sun did not join CERA. He reported its statements, but did not agree with the Confucian concept of loyalty to the emperor. While the CERA built its membership in March 1900, the *CAH* published its first endorsement of political democracy in China (*CAH*, 17 March 1900, p.2).
150   *TWN*, 6 June, 9 June, 13 June 1900, p.2.
151   *CAH*, 6 October 1900, p.5.

Directors of Lin Yik Tong, 1902.
(*The Life of Quong Tart*, 1911.)

Chinese political assembly.[152] At the same time, on the subject of a Westernised China, the *CAH* openly valued Western literature and education above the Chinese reformist movement's burgeoning Confucian revivalism.[153] The *CAH* was dissatisfied with traditional Chinese modes of social mobilisation on the grounds that they suppressed the mobilising potential of new generations.[154] It also stated that China's dilemma affected overseas Chinese, who suffered without the protection of a powerful mother-state. Although the *CAH* did not openly support revolution, by 1900 it was obvious that its position had shifted completely from pro-monarchy to pro-democracy (Chiu & Yeung 1999:17–18). The Australian political system and social values had become the paper's model for rethinking a new China.[155]

The New South Wales CERA declined partly because it lost the support of key figures such as Quong Tart, WRG Lee and Chang Luke. Quong Tart and Lee left the Association after March 1900, with Quong declaring that he was dissatisfied with other leading members of the Association.[156]

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152 *CAH*, 1 December 1900, p.3.
153 *CAH*, 5 May, 2 June 1900, p.2.
154 *CAH*, 6 October 1900, p.5.
155 *CAH*, 26 November 1900, p.2.
156 *TWN*, 13 November 1901, p.3.

Another president and one of the secretaries left soon after, so the CERA immediately forbade presidents to leave the Association.[157]

WRG Lee's enthusiasm for the political extension of Chinese culture and tradition had been equivocal all along. Although a leader of the LYT, he had not become involved in founding the *TWN* with the other Chinese merchants, and his firms regularly advertised in the *CAH* rather than the *TWN*. In joining CERA, his interest had been chiefly in the administration of the organisation rather than in its political purpose. He relied on maintaining different social contacts and different resources to enhance his social mobility. Lee's business depended on links with European storekeepers and steamships, and his involvement with the Masonic movement is further evidence of his determination to connect with European networks and manners (Fitzgerald 2007:95). The success of the two Chinese processions in 1897 had amplified his power and profile in Sydney public life, which no doubt led to his being offered a leadership position within the CERA. Yet, his status was seen as a threat by another leader with greater enthusiasm for the CERA and its agenda, T Yee Hing. Lee withdrew from CERA before the celebrations for the Chinese Emperor's birthday on 28 June 1900.[158] In June 1900, T Yee Hing announced his intention to resign from the LYT, in which WRG Lee held a dominant position, but other members persuaded him not to, and he remained a member of the LYT until July 1901.[159] In late 1901 and early 1902, a serious conflict between Lee and members of the CERA further distanced him from many other wealthy Chinese merchants.

In late May 1900, as the *CAH* was publishing the aforementioned controversial essay attacking the fundamental purpose of CERA, one of *TWN*'s editors, Chang Luke, resigned for unspecified reasons,[160] and he too did not attend the Chinese Emperor's birthday celebration at the end of June. He later moved to Melbourne, where he tended to support the revolutionary cause and started a pro-revolution newspaper in 1902 (Yong 1977:137). The departure of Lee and Chang Luke weakened CERA's influence. After July, its leadership meetings were held less frequently. These domestic factors contributed significantly to the local organisation's decline, which was further assisted by what one of its leaders diagnosed as weaknesses in the international branch structure (Ding 1972:107–109).

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157 *TWN*, 16 November 1901, p.3; Meeting records, 15 and 24 April 1900 (lunar calendar), in NBAC, 111/5, CERA minutes 1899–1906.
158 *TWN*, 21 July 1900, p.3.
159 *CAH*, 5 April 1902, p.6.
160 *TWN*, 9 June 1900, p.3.

Also significantly undermining CERA were the Boxer Rebellion and the failed Hankow Uprising. Many Sydney Chinese became disillusioned with the Chinese Empire because of the Boxer Rebellion, and their disillusionment led to a transformation of attitude among leading Chinese reformists who supported the young Chinese Emperor (Yen 1976:55). Both the Rebellion and the unjust treaties arising from it threatened relations between the Chinese abroad and the societies they lived in. From July to August 1900, Sydney Chinese made contributions to the Australian Army contingent assisting with the suppression of the Rebellion in China in order to distance themselves from the Boxers.[161] The LYT played an important role in collecting contributions, which further undermined the relationship between the LYT and the CERA and cooled relations between T Yee Hing and WRG Lee even more.[162]

The Reverend Yong Wai and David Shing held a 'Chinese Missions United partner meeting' on 10 August 1900 to bring the Sydney Chinese together, stating its purpose thus:

> In connection with the events and the suffering and danger of the Europeans and natives alike in China, it appears to be fitting that all the Chinese Missions in Australia should unite, and we heartily request the Ministers and Christian friends to join with us in making common supplication for our fellow men in that land, that the nation which God has so mercifully blessed may not perish.[163]

More than 300 Chinese attended the meeting, which was addressed by CERA leader T Yee Hing.[164] Also invited was the Reverend Cheok Hong Cheong (張卓雄 Zang Zhuxiong, 1851–1928) from Melbourne. The very act of calling the meeting was indicative of two things. First, Chinese-Australian leaders were concerned that the Boxer Rebellion would threaten the relationship between them and Australian society, so they took overt steps to distant themselves from the Chinese Boxers. Secondly, the meeting reveals something of the political concerns of Chinese missionaries in Australia and their influence over Chinese Christians. Chinese Christians from Young Wai's sphere of influence played an important part in bringing

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161 *CAH*, 1 September 1900, p.2.
162 *TWN*, 17 July 1901, p.3.
163 Poster, in PCNSWA, Chinese Presbyterian Church scrapbook, 1883–1919; *TWN*, 8 August 1900, p.3.
164 *TWN*, 15 August 1900, p.3.

Liang Qichao to Australia between October 1900 and April 1901. Although some of his followers had joined, Young Wai did not participate in the CERA and the Chinese Presbyterian Church gave no official assistance to the CERA as it declined in 1900. After Lee's and Luke's resignations, the CERA faced other difficulties, in particular the failure of the Hankow Uprising in August 1900, to which Sydney Chinese contributed,[165] and internal disputes among the leaders of the reform movement (Yen 1976:55; Huang 1972:96–97).

In September 1900, the *TWN* conducted a ceremony to celebrate the birthday of Confucius—a part of its plan to redefine its position in regard to the shaping of Chinese nationalism.[166] Leading members of the CERA had begun to realise that their influence was declining, which prompted the Association to concentrate on promoting the impending visit by Liang Qichao in the hope of reviving the flagging enthusiasm of its members. They had suffered disappointment earlier in the year as Kang Youwei's visit, planned for April 1900, had been cancelled when his visa application was refused (Yong 1977:120; Chiu 1992:53). Kang suggested then that Liang visit Australia in his stead, but CERA had initially declined the suggestion in March, although it later proceeded with arranging the visit and accepted Kang's help. Its support for the visit remained markedly half-hearted, nevertheless, mainly because Liang was not well known to Chinese Australians. The LYT donated only £100 toward the visit.[167] As it turned out, the visit to Australia by Liang Qichao from late 1900 to early 1901 gave CERA renewed impetus.

Reconstructiing political identity and social leadership: Liang Qichao's visit

Liang was in Australia from 25 October 1900 to 14 April 1901. Although only 28 years of age at the time, his influence had already reached a new generation of intellectuals through his published writings (Huang 1972:97). Philip Huang (1972:90) calculates that, between 1898 and 1902, Liang published an average of over 6,000 words every week. Nevertheless, he was largely unknown to Chinese Australians before his arrival and the *CAH* ran only one article reporting his visit, several weeks after his arrival.[168]

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165 Meeting record of 21 July 1900 (lunar calendar), in NBAC, 111/5, CERA minutes 1899–1906.

166 *TWN*, 5 September, p.2, 15 September, p.2, 26 September 1900, p.3.

167 Meeting records of 21 February, 5 April, 15 April, 15 July 1900 (lunar calendar), in NBAC, 111/5, CERA minutes 1899–1906.

168 *CAH*, 15 December 1900, p.2.

Liang arrived first at Fremantle, Western Australia and gave a speech at Perth's Chinese Presbyterian Church in order to establish a branch of the CERA in Western Australia (Liang 1985:612). He continued on to Adelaide, Melbourne, Ballarat and Bendigo, before travelling to New South Wales, the main focus of his tour.[169] Throughout his visit he was accompanied by a missionary of the Chinese Presbyterian Church, Paul Pow Chee (Liang 1985:613) and by a local leader at each stop (Ding 1972:144). Way Lee accompanied him while he was visiting Adelaide (Liang 1985:615–616). Chang Luke accompanied him around Melbourne and, as the Chinese Christian community had played such a big role in bringing him to Australia, the Reverend Cheok Hong Cheong made arrangements for his public speeches in Melbourne.[170] Pow Chee assisted with translating for European audiences in the New England tablelands of New South Wales (Liang 1985:262, 622).

A major item on Liang's agenda was fundraising. Because he had judged Australia as a potential centre of his association's transnational network, he expected to collect between £40,000 and £50,000 during his tour (Ding 1972:143). However, after raising only £300 in Western Australia (Ding 1972:143–144), he quickly learned that enthusiasm for CERA in Australia was not nearly as high as he had anticipated. In Melbourne his visit resulted in the establishment of a CERA branch, but it was chiefly through his native-place connections,[171] because most of the Chinese in Melbourne originated in the same homeland district as his own clan (Ding 1972:143). Even with that level of sympathy, he raised only £700 in Melbourne. The Chinese in Adelaide and Ballarat donated just over £10 pounds, although they spoke of donations in the order of £100.

Liang reached Sydney on 6 December 1900, where he was impressed with the dynamism and fundraising capacity of the Sydney Chinese. Benefiting from the extensive CERA network in Sydney, he was welcomed by local Chinese merchants (Ding 1972:143–144). Within three weeks of his arrival the Association had held five public meetings at which he spoke at the Freemason's Hall.[172] He was also invited to Sydney Town Hall on 12 and 14 January for the celebration of Australian Federation.[173] Enthusiastic about the opportunity to observe the Federation ceremonies, he willingly postponed

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169 *TWN*, 21 November, p.2, 24, 28 November, 1, 5, 12 December 1900, p.3.
170 Meeting record, 23 August 1900 (lunar calendar), in NBAC, 111/5, CERA minutes 1899–1906.
171 *TWN*, 15 December 1900, p.3.
172 *TWN*, 12, 19, 22 December 1900, p.3 and 2 January 1901, p.3.
173 *TWN*, 16 January 1901, p.3.

his proposed public appearances in the New England tablelands.[174] It is reasonable to suggest that, at the same time that he was contemplating a 'Young China',[175] he found the notion of the new Australia highly affecting. After the Federation celebrations, he set out on 15 January for the New England tablelands, visiting a number of towns there, including Glen Innes, Inverell, Emmaville and Tingha (Liang 1985:618–626),[176] and Tamworth where he established a branch of the Association.[177]

Liang returned to Sydney in early February. Concerned at the increasing costs of his travelling, he decided to stay in Sydney until his departure from Australia in May (Ding 1972:143–144). A further factor in his decision was that the trip was proving a disappointment regarding donations, even though the Sydney Chinese had given verbal agreement to donate £5,000 for CERA headquarters and the Penang branch over five or six separate meetings in the city (Ding 1972:143). Questions concerning the financial contributions of the Chinese Australians were also causing tensions between Khoo Seok-wan and Kang Youwei. In late 1900 Khoo had asked Liang to remit the collected Chinese-Australian funds to him to arrange appropriate disbursements (Ding 1972:143). Putting his faith in the long and positive relationship between Khoo and Kang, Liang transferred £1,000 to Khoo in Singapore by telegraph.[178] The money failed to reach Kang. Yen argues that the ensuing quarrel over the handling of 50,000 Singapore dollars of Chinese-Australian donations was one reason for the deterioration in the relationship between Kang and Khoo in 1901 (Yen 1976:56; Ding 1972: 143–144).

Despite its shortcomings, Liang's visit was by no means a failure. The first effect was that the Sydney Chinese came to appreciate his political ideas over those of Kang Youwei, to the extent that, after Liang's visit, the *TWN* began to reject Kang's reports and essays. During Liang's stay in Sydney he was introduced to the Chinese public through the pages of the *TWN*.[179] He regularly gave lectures to Chinese audiences at the *TWN* premises,[180] and provided the newspaper with many publications intended to shape the

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174 *TWN*, 2 January 1901, p.3.
175 In February 1901 Liang wrote an 'Essay on Young China', reflecting on transition from monarchism to nationalism (Liang 1936).
176 *TWN*, 19, 23 January 1901, p.3.
177 *TWN*, 6 February 1901, p.3.
178 Meeting records, 19 and 27 October 1900 (lunar calendar), in NBAC, 111/5, CERA minutes 1899–1906.
179 *TWN*, 29 December 1900, p.2, 17 April 1901, p.3.
180 *TWN*, 17 April 1901, p.3.

development of Chinese nationalism.[181] He completed a 20,000-word essay, 'Tracing the Source of China's Weakness' ('Zhangguo Jiruosuyuanlun, 中國 積弱溯源論'), which was a collection of his speeches and thoughts in Sydney. The *TWN* published the essay in full and circulated it widely in the Chinese-Australian community.[182] It was an important distillation of Liang's views and concerns regarding Chinese nationalism. He argued that a major reason for a weak China was that the Chinese were nationless (Liang 1936:14–42), and expressed his belief that the Chinese nation could become strong and powerful if the Chinese were to establish a democratic state, which was in accord with the trend of his thinking over the previous two or three years. His political ideals for constructing a new China had been infused with revolutionary sentiments since 1898, and remained so, even after the failure of the Hankow Uprising, of which he had been an organiser, until 1903 (Huang 1972:5; Chang 1964:94–95). He had intended that 'Tracing the Source of China's Weakness' be the introduction of a book, which Liang approached the *TWN* to publish in Sydney, but the project was too big for the *TWN*.

Liang's revolutionary influence on members of the CERA and the *TWN* was evident in other activities, especially in an expansion of the paper's activist publishing scope. In February he arranged for the *TWN* to become an agent for *Guominbao* (國民報) and *Kaizhilu* (開智錄), which were revolutionary periodicals published by Chinese students in Japan.[183] At the same time, the *TWN* reprinted a long essay, written by Chinese students in Japan, challenging the contention that Tang Caichang should be blamed for the failure of the Hankow Uprising.[184] The essay was an important exposition of revolutionary ideals for Sydney CERA members to take on board while Liang was present in their city.

The coincidence of Liang's visit and Australian Federation raised the level of political awareness and political participation among Chinese communities in Australia. After Liang's departure the *TWN* reprinted a significant essay from *Guominbao*'s inaugural issue, entitled 'On 20th-century China' ('Lun Ershishiji zhi Zhongguo, 論二十世紀之中國').[185] The essay looked with favour on the French Revolution and promoted an ethnically specific (anti-Manchu) revolution for a new China. In republishing the essay, the *TWN*

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181 *TWN*, 16 February 1901, p.3.
182 *TWN*, 17 April 1901, p.3. The essay was published again in Japan in May 1901.
183 *TWN*, 9 February 1901, p.3.
184 *TWN*, 9, 13, 16 and 27 February 1901, p.2.
185 *TWN*, 17 July, p.2, 20 July, p.3 and 24 July 1901, p.2.

was not promoting ethnic revolution in China. The paper's editorials made it clear that the *TWN* favoured gradual social transformation and political reform.

The implicit tension between groups maintaining opposing ideologies became more explicit in July of 1901, leading the rival *CAH* to publish an essay aimed at reducing the distance between the two sides.[186] The *CAH* was pursuing its own revolutionary agenda in 1901, not least by promoting in its special Chinese New Year issue the anti-Manchu stance of the republican revolutionaries.[187] The *CAH* further criticised the Manchu dynasty for failing to establish Consul-Generals abroad and for neglecting to protect overseas Chinese, and for acquiescing to anti-Chinese restrictions in foreign countries.[188]

At this time the revolutionary mood was intensifying not only in Sydney but also in Melbourne. Chang Luke, a *TWN* editor until mid-1900, established Melbourne's first Chinese newspaper in 1902. His paper was especially concerned with Chinese-Australian patriotism, which led him to adopt the title *Aiguobao* (The Patriot). The paper was supported and distributed by Melbourne Chinese firms such as Gee Cheong and Co. (怡昌 Yichang), Sun Chong On and Co. and Leong Lee and Co. At the same time it advertised in the *TWN* to attract additional Sydney shareholders.[189]

A further significant outcome of Liang's visit was the intensification of the struggle for social leadership between the LYT and the CERA. From one perspective this was a power struggle of an old and familiar kind. After Liang left Australia, Thomas Yee Hing strengthened his influence over the CERA and, in late May, was disposed to challenge the leadership of WRG Lee and the power of the LYT. Yee Hing and Lee then competed through their respective societies and networks for status and influence in the broader Chinese community.[190]

From another perspective, however, this contest marked the emergence of a new kind of civic association doing battle with the old. Before the 20th century, leadership and social mobilisation in Australia were based largely on wealth, mediated through established status in native-place associations, occupational societies, or temples, much as it was in Southeast Asia (Chong 2004:162). Lee's position was certainly strengthened by his association with

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186   *CAH*, 20 July 1901, p.3.
187   *CAH*, 23 February 1901, New Year supplement.
188   *CAH*, 6 April 1901, p.3.
189   *TWN*, 1 June 1901, p.3.
190   See meeting records of CERA, no. 111/5, Noel Butlin Archives, ANU.

the LYT, but he was, nevertheless, only one of several leaders of the Tong. The LYT alone could not ensure his standing once other forms of association learned to compete effectively.

WRG Lee established his leadership in the LYT through the influence commanded by his wealth, his native-place affiliations, and other markers of social status. At this time, an increasing number of Chinese fruit traders sought to enhance their standing through other status markers based on their business styles and their knowledge of the world. They supported the CERA and the *TWN*, and their support was an important factor in the relative decline of the LYT. The new Sydney Chinese elite exercised social leadership through newspapers, through non-particularistic social networks that crossed native-place boundaries, and through new forms of political participation that involved political parties. In 1901 and 1902 they challenged bilingual leaders like WRG Lee and Quong Tart and succeeded. Quong Tart died in 1903; Lee returned to China, leaving the LYT behind. A new Sydney Chinese merchant group came to occupy a leading position through modern associational forms. Two new models of Chinese social leadership were established over the following years, one built on business associations, and the other on particularistic ties of a novel kind—ethnic nationalism.

SYDNEY'S CHINESE URBAN ELITE AND LEADERSHIP TRANSFORMATION, 1901–1905

During the 1890s, the bilingual elite had dominated the leadership of the Sydney Chinese community. In the early 20th century, Australian Federation and the passage of the 1901 Immigration Restriction Act affected significantly the community and its patterns of leadership. The wealth and social standing of Sydney's Chinese fruit traders were growing. As they shaped their identity as a coherent group, they entered into cooperative relationships with Chinese Presbyterians and the CERA, challenging the social leadership of the bilingual elite. A new urban elite rose to prominence through innovative forms of association and the adventurous use of Chinese-language press.

This chapter discusses the transformation of the Sydney Chinese community after Federation, focusing on the role of the Chinese commercial elite in shaping a distinctively Australian institutional framework for that community. Although the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901 was intended to exclude further Chinese immigrants from contributing to the developing Australian nation, it galvanised resident Chinese to reshape their communities and to mobilise within the parameters of White Australia. The growing influence and identity of Sydney Chinese merchants produced a new leadership paradigm that involved political and ideological choices befitting their positions in their communities. New patterns of leadership and new kinds of social alliances yielded new patterns of mobilisation and new kinds of political ideology over the first decade of the 20th century. Each of the new patterns was closely informed by concurrent developments abroad, particularly in China, Hong Kong, and North America. What made them distinctively Australian was the translation of global developments into local and national idioms in White Australia.

The rising Sydney Chinese urban elite

The influence of Australian Federation

The roots of the transformation of the Sydney Chinese community from a pattern of guild and clan ties to modern social formations can be traced to the development of White Australia. Six British colonies were integrated to establish the Australian federal government in 1901. One of the first pieces of legislation passed by the new national government was the Immigration Restriction Act (Commonwealth of Australia 1903), which excluded Chinese immigrants by the imposition of a language test. Chinese already resident in Australia who planned to leave temporarily were obliged to apply for Certificates of Domicile and, from 1905, a Certificate of Exemption from Dictation Test (CEDT).

White Australia did not merely limit the entry of new Chinese immigrants. From the late 19th century the dominant mode of the Australian national identity was one that favoured preserving a homogeneous society of white Europeans. In 1881, for example, a member of the New South Wales parliament claimed that 'the Chinese are bred under the despotic government and inured to the oppression of mandarins and cannot enter in to British feeling' (quoted in Elder 2007:53). The exclusion of Chinese immigrants was represented in terms of disparate political and social systems in order to formulate Australia's own national values such as democracy and equality (Elder 2007:53; Kapferer 1988:190). Thus the negativity and prejudice shown toward Chinese immigrants, as the 'other' of White Australia, were embedded in the developing code of Australian national identity from the 1880s (Elder 2007:53–54). This Chinese role as the 'other' in the path to Federation and the development of national identity has been recognised by historians and journalists. Writing in Sydney in the 1960s, an editor of the *Chinese Times*, Yuan Zhongming (袁中明), reiterated Percy Campbell's argument that Chinese immigration from 1876 to 1888 contributed to the establishment of Australian identity and ultimately for federal legislation because anti-Chinese sentiment constituted a central force in the making of a federated Australia (Yuan 1965:204).

Chinese-Australian leaders in the late 19th and early 20th centuries did not accept the view that Chinese Australians were incapable of appreciating Australian values. John Fitzgerald (2007:22) disputes the White Australian assumption that there was a cultural clash between Australian and Chinese values, noting that the assumption was challenged by Chinese Australians during the colonial and White Australia periods. Whatever the merits of

the assumption, numerous utterances and actions by Chinese-Australian newspapers and social organisations around the time of Federation clearly indicate that Chinese Australians wished to demonstrate commitment to Australian values.

First, the Chinese-Australian newspapers were openly enthusiastic about the federation process. From 1897, the *CAH* introduced Australian history, geography, social customs and political systems in the course of discussion and exposition of the Australasian Federal Conventions of 1897/1898 and continued to do so throughout the federation process, right up to and beyond 1901.[1] The *CAH* further claimed that the planned federation would benefit Chinese social mobility in Australia.[2] At the same time, a Chinese leader in Adelaide, YSW Way Lee, optimistically expressed his belief that federation would give Chinese immigrants in the various colonies a chance to unite in order to put an end to the 1888 immigration restriction movement.[3] The *TWN*, too, proclaimed its view that federation, in unifying all territorial jurisdictions, would secure the rights of all Australians.[4] The general view expressed by Chinese-Australian leaders was that the establishment of a federated Australia would be an opportunity for coherence among Chinese-Australian communities across the continent. Federation had significant transformative potential for Chinese communities to overcome local differences and unite in a new Australia (Fitzgerald 2007:105–106).

Further evidence that Chinese-Australian leaders accepted and understood Australian values, in particular equality, is found in their motivation to fight for their rights just as the Immigration Restriction Act was promulgated and enforced. From the late 1880s Chinese-Australian leaders had in fact proclaimed the rights and proper treatment of Chinese immigrants in Australia specifically in terms of the national ideal of equality (Fitzgerald 2007:111–113). The *CAH*, as early as 1896, invoked national equality in support of fairness for the Chinese in Australia.[5], The Chinese-Australian press and community leaders were also critical of the racial inequality of Australian Federation; for example, the *CAH* and Way Lee remarked that the rights of Australian Aboriginals and the contributions of the Chinese

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1   *CAH*, 26 February, p.6, 5 March, pp.2–3, 5 November 1897, p.4, 26 May, pp.5–6, 8 July, p.4, 24 June, p.4, 1 August, p.3, 16 December 1899, p.6, 13 July, p.4, 20 July, p.5, 27 July, p.4, 3 August, p.5, 14 September; 2 and 9 November 1901, pp.2–3, 18 January 1902, pp.3–5.
2   *CAH*, 26 May 1899, p.2, 24 July 1899, p.4.
3   *CAH*, 14 November 1899, p.5.
4   *TWN*, 20 September 1899, p.2.
5   *CAH*, 3 January, p.3, 11 December 1896, p.5.

were being ignored.[6] But the aspirations of Chinese Australians were for more than mere rights; Chinese Australians also aspired to *cultural* equality within White Australia. To Chinese-Australian leaders, equality was a reconfigured ideal that juxtaposed Christianity and Confucianism. In 1879, the well-known Melbourne Chinese community leaders proclaimed the virtues of Confucianism in order to emphasise the depth of Chinese cultivation and scholarship while they addressed the 'Chinese Question' (Meng, Cheong & Mouy 1879). Way Lee of Adelaide also compared Confucianism with Christianity, and stated that an understanding between Chinese and Australian cultures had become important for cultural equality (Way Lee 1907:7).

The Chinese-Australian discussion of equality was not well received by White Australia (Fitzgerald 2007:125). After Federation the exclusion of Chinese immigrants increased Chinese Australians' sense of social isolation and racial hostility against them intensified. The pages of the Chinese-Australian newspapers of the day convey the increasing anxiety and feelings of isolation among Chinese immigrants. Two events in particular, the Boxer Rebellion in China and the plague outbreak in Sydney, provoked a significant shift in the attitude and tone of the Chinese papers from generally optimistic to increasingly anxious about the future of the Chinese in Australia. The *CAH* was critical of the Sydney authorities that quarantined and cleaned up Wexford Street in early 1900, because they feared the spread of contagion from the Chinese who lived there, and had invested nothing in improving conditions in the street. The paper judged their motives and actions as hostile towards the Chinese.[7] Of the 42 residences in Wexford Street, 31 were occupied by Chinese (Kelly 1981). The street had become a second Chinatown, and its reputation for Chinese gambling houses, opium dens and overcrowded houses had raised fears of a deleterious Chinese influence on Australian morals and lifestyle (Wood 1994:55).

A few months later, the *CAH* issued something of a warning to its readers in the course of its discussions on the Boxer Rebellion.[8] The paper's views appear to have undergone a radical change. In the late 1890s, it had waxed positive about the Chinese embrace of the Australian imagined community and had vigorously but optimistically defended the rights of Chinese Australians in the debate over 'Chinese competition' in *The Bulletin*.[9] By 1900,

6   *CAH*, 1 December, p.3, 8 December 1900, p.5.
7   *CAH*, 21 April 1900, p.4.
8   *CAH*, 1 September 1900, p.2.
9   *The Bulletin*, 17 October 1896.

however, it worried openly about both the present suffering and future prospects of Chinese Australians. Their exclusion from political participation in Federation raised fears of disempowerment among Chinese Australians, just as their political awareness was expanding, and in 1901 the Immigration Restriction Act was a significant impediment to Chinese revolutionaries wishing to develop political networks in Australia, as they were doing in Southeast Asia, as discussed in Chapter 5.

The Chinese community was shocked by the emergence of White Australia. It also strengthened the process of transformation within community networks and social leadership. Chinese Australians established associations to ensure and protect their status and position under White Australia, but these developments, together with increasing democratisation of the Chinese community, fostered a decline in the leadership of the bilingual Chinese. Between 1902 and 1904, a number of new Chinese organisations were established in Australia, including the New South Wales Chinese Merchants' Society (鳥修威華商會社 Niaoxiuwei Huashanghuishe) and Chinese Merchants' Defence Association (保商會 Baoshanghui, hereafter CMDA) in Sydney, and in Melbourne the *Chinese Times*, Chinese Christian Union, Chinese Employees' Union, and China Public Association (中國公會 Zhongguo Gonghui, later 新民啟智會 Xinminqizhihui, New Citizen Enlightenment Association, hereafter NCEA). The form and structure of the new organisations were an indication of the degree to which Chinese Australians in Sydney and Melbourne had begun to embrace Western ways. In particular, they manifested a reconfiguration of leadership from traditional guilds and kin groups to more inclusive and democratic forms of association. It is apparent, too, that the Sydney Chinese community's internal conflicts over the years from 1901 to 1903 had further motivated the transformation.

Chinese fruit traders, Chinese Presbyterians and the Chinese Empire Reform Association

Finding that they had been excluded from the process of federation, Chinese residents sought new solutions to their internal conflict over social leadership. At the beginning of the 20th century, Sydney's metropolitan area was home to about 4,000 Chinese, who constituted the largest Chinese community in Australia (Yong 1977:261). In the late 19th century a substantial Chinese fruit trader class had arisen within that community. By 1900, Sydney and Melbourne Chinese agents had control of the banana market (Rolls 1996:91), and Sydney traders, in particular, conducted a flourishing trade with banana suppliers in Queensland and Fiji.

The reason for the rise in fruit traders seems to have been the decline in the vegetable market in 1890 and 1891, which was noted at the time by Chinese market gardeners (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892: Q.15760,14142). The largest Chinese fruit firms in Sydney were Wing Sang and Co. (永生果欄 Yongshengguolan) established in 1890, Tiy Sang and Co. (泰生果欄 Taishengguolan) established in 1893, and Wing On and Co., established in 1898. From the late 1890s, these firms controlled the Australian banana market. George Bew, a proprietor of Wing Sang and Co., stated that his firm began to trade with Queensland banana suppliers in

Group portrait of founders of Wing Sang & Co. Ltd. Left to right: Mark Joe, George Bew, Ma Ying Piu, Choy Hing, c.1920s.
(City of Sydney Archives, SRC19038.)

1894. He paid a poll tax of £100 for a month-long visit to Queensland in 1899 to investigate the trade in bananas from Queensland to Sydney.[10] Because of his efforts, Wing Sang and Co. handled 7,000 bunches of bananas from northern Queensland a week in 1899 and gained entry to the Fiji trade the following year (Royal Commission on the Fruit Industry 1913:1116–1117). The chairman of the New South Wales Fruit Exchange, Thomas Jessep, confirmed that at the turn of the century control of the Queensland banana trade lay firmly in Chinese hands (Royal Commission on Customs and Excise 1906–1907:IV,849).

However, the Queensland banana growers could fully satisfy neither market nor merchant. Melbourne and Sydney Chinese fruit traders aspired to cultivate and exploit the banana industry in Fiji, where traders such as George Bew and Samuel Wong (黃來旺 Huang Laiwang, also known as Wong Wong-lai, 1874–1953)[11] saw greater potential than in Queensland (Royal Commission on the Fruit Industry 1913:500–501,1116–1117). In 1902, three Chinese firms amalgamated to establish Sang On Tiy and Co. to cultivate and ship bananas from Fiji to Sydney at a rate of at least 2,000 bunches per week (Yong 1977:50), adding dramatically to the wealth of the Sydney Chinese banana traders. George Bew proclaimed that his business was valued at £4,000 in 1903.[12] Another fruit firm, Tiy Sang and Co., had proposed in 1899 to transport 500 Chinese male labourers to Fiji to grow bananas, rice, peppers, tobacco and other produce (Ali 2002:39). Although this proposal was refused, Tiy Sang and Co. continued to acquire land in Fiji and had substantial holdings there by 1903 (Ali 2002:117).

As the Sydney Chinese merchants prepared for a new beginning, they were searching for a new paradigm to enhance their commercial dynamic and for alternative ways of expanding their enterprises. The traditionally constituted network of the LYT was controlled by the leaders of the county-based groups, which was unsatisfactory for the new group of Chinese traders. The chief leader of the LYT, WRG Lee, whose business, On Yik Lee, was worth £10,000 in 1903,[13] was wealthier than the rising Chinese fruit traders. He was not enthusiastic about the new business pattern of Chinese fruit traders, whose businesses were sustained by collective shares.

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10   NAA, Attorney-General's Dept, Correspondence files, SP42/1, C1901/652 1/2.
11   NAA, ASIO Central Office, Personal files, A6119/3616.
12   NAA, Dept of Immigration, New South Wales Branch, SP244/2, N1950/2/3885. Statutory declaration of George Bew, 1903.
13   NAA, Dept of External Affairs, Correspondence files, A1/15, 1916/31599, Statutory declaration of WRG Lee.

Their collective pattern of business further influenced the social network of Sydney Chinese fruit traders. They joined and enlarged the foundations of the CERA, and many merchants who were CERA supporters also belonged to the Chinese Presbyterian Church.[14] Membership of the CERA was open to the whole Chinese community, rather than just to those belonging to specific native-place or kinship groups. Consequently its membership grew and its subscription income outstripped that of the LYT.[15] The proprietors and managers of several important Chinese fruit firms were among the CERA's founders, including Wong Joy Yee, known as Wong Wing (黃在輿 Huang Zaiyu) of Tiy Sang, Gock Lock, Young Mee (曹容美 Cao Rongmei) and Leong Chong (梁創 Liang Chuang, 1867–1947) of Wing On, and George Bew, Mark Joe, James Choy Hing of Wing Sang and Co. The rising Sydney Chinese banana traders were looking beyond traditional guilds and clans in their search for new social institutions.

Indeed, the leaders of the CERA were endeavouring to organise an alternative society to unite the Chinese merchants who were dissatisfied with the LYT, and they saw much merit in the way reformists in Hong Kong and Japan organised the Chinese merchants to support their association.[16] The CERA's original intention was to effect a transformation in the form and nature of the LYT, but it achieved nothing more than conflict with the LYT. It duly shifted its attention to the possibilities inherent in forming an alliance with the new Chinese fruit traders in order to establish a new pattern of merchant society.

The conflict between the LYT and the CERA originated in the frosty relationship between WRG Lee and Thomas Yee Hing. Yee Hing was a representative of On Chong and Co. and the Zengcheng county group within LYT. His departure from both the LYT and from the CERA has already been noted in Chapter 3, but in 1900 and 1901, he and other CERA members tried to find a basis for cooperation with the LYT. They were unsuccessful in their efforts, and the relationship between the two societies deteriorated sharply in the middle of 1901. A bookkeeper at Lee's shop stated that a leading member of the CERA, Chun Sow, asked him for a series of contributions to the Association while Lee was away in rural New South Wales on business.[17] The requested contributions, amounting to £100, had

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14   *TWN*, 21 February 1900, supplement.
15   CERA took in £4,000 over two years compared with the LYT's average subscription income of about £130 a year (*DT*, 18 November 1901).
16   *TWN*, 7 June, p.3, 21 June, p.2, 30 August 1899, p.2.
17   *TWN*, 13 November 1901, p.3; *CAH*, 7 December 1901, p.6; *DT* 5 November 1901.

been promised by the LYT to Liang Qichao in April 1901.[18] It appears that after Yee Hing left the LYT in July 1901, Lee refused to make any further contributions toward such sponsorship.[19]

Conflict between the two societies, and between Yee Hing and WRG Lee in particular, became acute in late 1901. The trigger was differing opinions over the regulation of discounted tickets for sick and elderly Chinese to return to China. Because of increases in the number of discounted tickets, the LYT decided to restrict their issue, requiring anyone wishing to apply for them to seek sponsorship from two Chinese firms.[20] A meeting of the LYT was held to discuss this new regulation, and Yee Hing was among those who attended. He accused Lee of collaborating with other leading members for their private benefit. Yee Hing implied that Lee stood to gain personally from the new LYT regulation restricting discounted tickets, and this brought into question the LYT's charitable purport. He also criticised the structure of the LYT, proposing, with the support of his CERA colleague, David O'Young, an alternative method to elect its leaders that would apply principles of Western democracy.[21] Yee Hing's purpose in making this proposal was to erode the power of tradition in the LYT, which was controlled by native-place representatives.

It was no surprise to Yee Hing and his supporters that Lee and other leading members of the LYT utterly rejected the proposal. Another meeting was convened soon after by Yee Hing and the *TWN*. To this meeting were invited the Reverend Young Wai and representatives of 42 Chinese firms on the periphery of the LYT's leadership structure. Under Yee Hing's direction, these merchants resolved to request an increased number of discounted tickets for Chinese from the management of the steamship companies. Significantly, they also sought to transform LYT into an entirely new structure, in which all members would have the right to vote in the annual election of 12 administrative managers and two presidents to do business with the steamships. In their schema, the ordinary members would also have the right to supervise the LYT's finances and administration.[22]

The importance of this meeting to observers today is that it reveals a paradigm shift in the leadership of the Sydney Chinese. The involvement of the Reverend Young Wai is an indication of an alliance between the

18   *CAH*, 19 April, p.3, 7 June 1902, pp.5–6.
19   *DT*, 5 November 1901; *CAH*, 9 November 1901, p.2; *TWN*, 23 November 1901, p.3.
20   *TWN*, 13 July 1901, p.3.
21   *TWN*, 17 July 1901, p.3.
22   *TWN*, 24 July 1901, p.3.

Chinese Presbyterian merchants and the CERA. The person who effected the connection between the Church and the CERA was David O'Young, a manager of Hop War and Co. (合和號) at 435 Pitt Street near Belmore Market, who had been baptised by Young Wai in 1898.[23] The business activities of Hop War and Co. were diverse. It was a general store, a steamship agent, and a bank for Chinese, but it was also a centre for Western culture, specialising in accoutrements of European lifestyle and ideas. The shop sold Chinese–English dictionaries, clocks and Western clothing to the Sydney Chinese.[24] Hop War firm was also actively reformist, in that it advocated a Westernised China and had done so before the CERA was established in Sydney. Among its wares, for example, was the progressive journal *Wanguogongbao*,[25] first published in 1874 by Western missionaries in Shanghai to imbue a new generation of Chinese with notions of Westernised reform. The magazine resumed publication in 1889, this time issued by the Society for the Diffusion of Christian and General Knowledge among the Chinese (later the Christian Literature Society of China (廣學會 Guangxuehui)). Its already enthusiastic support for the reformists intensified from 1894 (Ma 1996:159–166). Hop War and Co.'s importation of the *Wanguogongbao* was an unequivocal manifestation of its sympathy for Chinese reform, which was further evident when the CERA was established in Sydney and O'Young unhesitatingly contributed the price of 200 shares to become the Association's second-ranked shareholder.[26]

O'Young's position in relation to reforms was complex. On the one hand, he was a leader of a native-place based organisation. His firm represented the On Shing Tong (安善堂 Anshantang), which was then connected with natives of the Dongguan county.[27] He had become leader of On Shing Tong after its previous leader, Way Key, died in 1892. On the other hand, O'Young was also an elder of the Chinese Presbyterian Church,[28] and had connections with the Chinese Presbyterian fruit merchants. In 1902 his daughter was baptised by Young Wai, alongside the daughter of George Bew, proprietor of Wing Sang and Co. O'Young's Presbyterian affiliations had business implications. In 1903 he formed a partnership with a proprietor

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23   *CAH*, 20 May 1898.
24   *TWN*, 29 June, 17 September 1898, p.1, 13 November 1901; *TWT*, 9 May 1903, supplement.
25   *CAH*, 26 June 1896, p.7.
26   *TWN*, 21 February 1901, supplement.
27   *TWT*, 7 November 1903, p.3.
28   NAA, Dept of Immigration, New South Wales Branch, SP42/1, C1916/7061, Certificate of eldership of O'Young.

of Wing On and Co., Philip Gock Chin (郭泉 Guo Chuan, 1876–1966), to open a new firm, Hop Lee and Co. (合利號 Helihao).[29] In the early years of the 20th century, David O'Young enlarged his business so that it ranked alongside firms such as Hop War, Wing On and Hop Lee.[30]

The strong relationship between O'Young and the Chinese Presbyterian traders demonstrates that the Chinese Presbyterian Church provided a network through which Sydney Chinese merchants could transcend loyalties of kin and native place. It also gives some indication as to both why and how O'Young influenced the Sydney Chinese fruit traders to promote the establishment of the CERA and later the formation of the New South Wales Chinese Merchants' Society.

In the period between the establishment of the CERA in 1900 and its conflict with the LYT in 1901, the Chinese Presbyterian Church and the Reverend Young Wai played an important role. Their influence went well beyond the teaching of English to lower-class Chinese hawkers and market gardeners in the late 19th century, as outlined in Chapter 2. By the early 1900s the rising Chinese Presbyterian merchants had given Young Wai's church in Surry Hills a new role as a gathering place for Chinese merchants, where they could enhance their social capital. Within that secular context, the religious connotations of its location within the church enhanced trust among the fruit traders as they competed commercially. Young Wai also encouraged his congregation to become involved in political activism and public affairs, as evidenced by the political participation of Chinese Presbyterians, such as David O'Young, James Choy Hing, Gock Lock, Ma Yingpiu (Tan 1999:12) and George Bew. The alliance among the Chinese fruit traders, the Chinese Presbyterians and the CERA created and sustained an alternative pattern of social leadership and networking in the early 20th century and played a significant part in the struggle for the leadership of the LYT in late 1901 and 1902.

Conflict between the Lin Yik Tong and the Chinese Empire Reform Association

The conflict between the LYT and the CERA arose directly from a poster circulated in late 1901 among the Sydney Chinese, apparently to inflame hatred toward WRG Lee. Lee assumed that this poster originated in the

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29   *TWT*, 7 March 1903, p.4.
30   NAA, Dept of Immigration, New South Wales Branch, SP42/1, C1916/7061, Statutory declaration of O'Young.

CERA, and his assumption increased existing tension between the LYT and the CERA. The quarrel between the two groups stemmed from a meeting held in the Coffee Palace, at 213 North George Street, on 26 October 1901,[31] which had been called to discuss a tariff proposed by the federal government. At that meeting, the CERA secretary, Chun Sow, assaulted Lee with a stick, and Lee pressed charges against Chun and numerous witnesses were called in the ensuing court case. The LYT and CERA accused each other of underestimating the value of dutiable goods, but no reliable evidence was presented for the Chinese merchants to be charged with customs fraud. The court warned that such action would be unlawful and ordered Chun to pay 40 shillings to Lee.[32]

While the court case was progressing, O'Young held another meeting, on 16 November at the shop of Wing On and Co., to help Warley Chan Harr raise capital to build a department store, Warley and Co. (和利有限公司 Heliyouxiangongsi), in Hong Kong.[33] This meeting succeeded in attracting 38 Chinese shareholders for the new company, while a further meeting on 30 November at the Wing On building, convened by Yee Hing, gathered still more shareholders.[34] Yong (1977:55) flags this as the first attempt by Chinese Australians to start a new style of business in Hong Kong. Leading Chinese merchants such as Quong Tart or Lee were not invited to either of these meetings.

Lee recognised that his influence and business were waning. The LYT was in a position to assemble significant numbers of fruit and general traders and did so with the support of the Chinese Presbyterian Church. After the conflict with CERA in late 1901, Sun Johnson of the *CAH* and Lee attempted to enhance Lee's leadership of the LYT by publishing an essay intended to bolster Lee's reputation,[35] while the *TWN* ran reports unfavourable to Lee. In early January 1902, the *TWN* attacked the *CAH*'s position by publishing a letter from a Chinese accusing Lee of exploiting his directorship and authority in the LYT for his personal gain. The letter claimed that the scheme for the LYT to act as a united agent for steamship companies originated with David O'Young rather than Lee.[36] The *CAH* took the rest of January to prepare a comprehensive response, and on 1 February published three

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31   *TWN*, 13 November 1901, p.3; *CAH*, 9 November 1901, p.2; *EN*, 7 November 1901.
32   *TWN*, 13, 16, 20, 23, 27 and 30 November, 4 December 1901; *CAH*, 9, 16, 23 and 30 November, 7 December, 1901. *EN*, 4 December 1901.
33   *TWN*, 23 November 1901, p.3.
34   *TWN*, 7 December 1901, p.3.
35   *CAH*, 21 December 1901, p.5.
36   *TWN*, 1 January 1902, p.3.

pages of witness testimonies from steamship company managers refuting the *TWN*'s errors.[37] The following week, in its special issue for Chinese New Year, it published a photograph and a short biography of Lee's family in order to promote his social leadership and reputation.[38] The *TWN* remained silent in the face of the *CAH*'s response.

With no sign of an apology or even a reply from the *TWN*, in April 1902 Lee took the paper to court, accusing it of unfair reportage designed to destroy his reputation. He stated that his business had suffered to the extent of £1,600 since the preceding July.[39] Lee was especially strongly criticised in a report by *TWN* journalist, J Jack Sang, who had reported the Yen Tah's claims that the LYT was run for the leaders' personal aggrandisement and material privilege rather than for public benefit. Lee complained that this report defamed him, but received no apology from the *TWN*. He further stated that the defamation had harmed his business substantially, and that he was suing the *TWN* for £2,000.[40] Two Chinese storekeepers, one from Newcastle and one from rural NSW, appeared as witnesses and gave evidence that the report in the *TWN* on 17 July 1901 had made them suspicious of Lee's character.[41] Their declining trust in him, they stated, caused them to take their business elsewhere. Lee's case was substantiated by the testimony of three Chinese interpreters. William Goldtown, Sun Johnson and HL Numm (陳耀源) provided the court with translations of the *TWN* report that gave strong credence to the claim of defamation. Lee received support-ive testimony from other witnesses, including Quong Tart, Sun Johnson (who gave general testimony as well as interpreting the *TWN* text), and a number of steamship company managers.[42] This case led to the bankruptcy of the *TWN* in the middle of 1902 and placed the reform alliance under strain.

TWN *bankruptcy and the decline of the reformist alliance*
Although Yee Hing defended the *TWN* on the basis that its report on Lee was essentially true, the court was convinced that Lee had been defamed, and that this had in turn led to a considerable loss of business and commercial good will. The *TWN* was ordered to pay Lee £700 in damages, plus costs

37 *CAH*, 1 February 1902, pp.2–4.
38 *CAH*, 8 February 1902, supplement.
39 *CAH*, 5 and 26 April 1902, p.5.
40 *CAH*, 5 April, p.5, 19 April, p.4, 7 June 1902, p.7; *CT*, 3 November 1902, p.3
41 *CAH*, 26 April 1902, pp.2–3.
42 *TWN*, 5 and 19 April 1902, p.5, and 3 May 1902, pp.4–5.

of £1,400.[43] On 21 June the paper declared bankruptcy and put its printing blocks up for auction,[44] which caused a crisis within the alliance between Chinese Presbyterian merchants and the CERA. However, a Chinese furniture manufacturer from Waterloo, John Hoe, took action to help the organisation retain control of its property after *TWN* published its last issue on 23 June. He claimed to hold a mortgage against the *TWN* for £300 in loans and that this gave him a legitimate claim over the printing blocks.[45] In this way he was able to save the paper's printing base with a view to its resurrection at a later date. On 16 August 1902, the newspaper began publication once more under the new title, *Tung Wah Times* (*TWT*),[46] but it was a much reduced newspaper of only four pages, published once a week instead of twice weekly.

Born in 1867, Hoe had immigrated to Australia in 1881, eventually settling in Waterloo in 1892,[47] where he had established a furniture factory employing more than 70 people, including Chinese and European carpenters.[48] He became a *TWN* shareholder in 1899 and a member of the Gaoyao Association,[49] which helped raise the Gaoyao's influence in the *TWN* and the CERA. He also cultivated a friendship with T Yee Hing.[50] Hoe's contribution to the newspaper enabled it to maintain its position into the late 1920s.[51] His new position of influence within the organisation meant he was also instrumental in the *TWN* taking on as one of its editors, Ng Ngok-low (also known as Ng Sowe Kwong 伍蕚樓 Wu Elouaka/Ung sowe quong 伍秀光 Wu Xiuguang), who was also from the Gaoyao county in Guangdong province. Ng had come to Sydney from Honolulu with the previous editor, Wu Yuping, in the 1890s, and became one of the *TWN*'s editors after Wu went back to China in 1901.[52] Ng remained an editor of *TWT* for almost 20 years.[53]

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43   *TWN*, 7 June, p.6, 14 June, p.5, 19 July 1902, p.5.
44   *CAH*, 23 June 1902, p.4.
45   *TWT*, 6 September, p 4; 1 November 1902, p.2.
46   *TWT*, 16 August 1902.
47   NAA, Attorney-General's Dept, Correspondence files, SP42/1, B1905/1863.
48   *TWT*, 4 July 1908, p.7; *SMH*, 2 July 1908.
49   NBAC, 111/5, CERA minutes 1899–1906; KMT Archives, Sydney, no.523-1-455 and 523-1-475, letter from Simpson Lee about the Hing Fook Tong.
50   When T Yee Hing's family returned from China, they lived in John Hoe's Waterloo house. See NAA, Dept of External Affairs, Correspondence files, A1 1914/926, 28080.
51   See report by HB Cody in NAA, Dept of External Affairs, Correspondence files, A433/1, 1945/2/3557.
52   *CT*, 5 November 1902. p.3.
53   NBAC, 111/3, Records of staff; NAA, Dept of External Affairs, Correspondence files, A1 1914/926.

Notwithstanding the *TWN*'s eventual reincarnation as the *TWT*, in the short term its courtroom defeat by WRG Lee substantially eroded its revolutionary influence on the Chinese community. In the first two or three years after Federation, according to the Chinese press, the suffering of the Chinese in White Australia was a result of the despotism of the Manchu government. In this regard, in a broad sense the *CAH* and the *TWN* both supported the cause of Chinese revolution, but the conflict between the LYT and the CERA fuelled debate on the particulars of revolutionary Chinese positions under White Australia and the imperial Manchu.

Sun Johnson's Western education influenced him to use the *CAH* to promote Western values and manners among his Chinese readers. After Philp joined *The Brisbane Courier in 1901,* Sun's partner was largely absent from managing the *CAH* (Fox 1919–1923:VIII,805). Thus from 1901 Sun was effectively the paper's sole proprietor and this was evident in the *CAH*'s increased support for Chinese revolutionaries and anti-Manchu positions. The Boxer Rebellion and White Australia policy were two key triggers for Sun's nationalism and his anti-Manchu feelings. He claimed the anti-foreign sentiments of the Boxers were the new federal government's incentive for passing the Immigration Restriction Act,[54] which Sun fought against with Quong Tart, WRG Lee and the LYT. In Sun's view, it was important to differentiate the Manchu dynasty from the Chinese nation in order to secure the position of the Chinese in Australia.[55]

The revolutionary motivation of some stemmed from more personal factors. Tong Chai-chih (唐才質 Tang Caizhi), an editor of the *TWN* and *TWT*, was driven in part by the fate of his two brothers. Tong joined the editorial staff of the *TWN* in late 1901 on the recommendation of Liang Qichao.[56] While studying in Tokyo, Tong had been a member of the Datong school (東京高等大同學校 Dongjing Gaodengdatongxuexiao), a union of Chinese students in Japan (Feng 1965:III,72–73), of which Liang Qichao was Master. Tong had been an editor of the *Guominbao* (國民報) in Tokyo, which aimed to instill revolutionary ideals in overseas Chinese (Feng 1965:III,96). After his brothers, Tong Chai-chong (唐才常 Tang Caichang) and Tang Caizhong (唐才中), were killed in the Hankow Uprising in 1900, he became a member of Sun Yatsen's Revive China Society (Feng 1965:III,97,99).

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54   *CAH*, 26 December 1903, p.2.
55   Evidence for this differentiation is apparent in *CAH* headlines from late 1902 (*CAH*, 8 November 1902, p.4; 10 January 1903, p 5, 26 December 1903, p.2).
56   *TWN*, 1 January 1902, p.3; *TWT*, 15 November 1902, p.3; see also Feng (1965:III,66).

The editor of *Tung Wah News* and *Tung Wah Times*, Tong Chai-chih.
(National Archive of Australia, SP42/1, C1909/2754.)

Portrait of Ng Ngok-low (aka Ng Sowe Kwong).
(*Tung Wah Times*, 23 Jan 1909.)
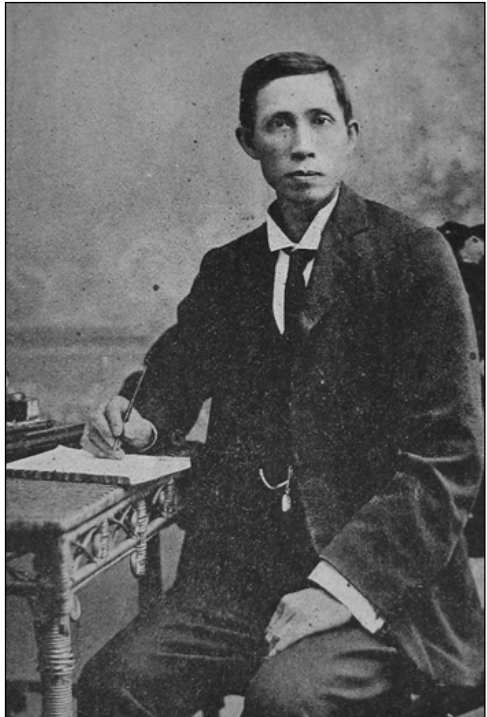
Tong arrived in Sydney in December of 1901, just before the Immigration Restriction Act came into effect (Yong 1977:124). In the first month at the *TWN*, he wrote several essays expounding on his anti-Manchu sentiments.[57] He noted that his experiences in Japan and Australia had enhanced his revolutionary enthusiasm for building a Westernised China.[58] One essay of note during this period was 'Speaking of Death', in which he encouraged Chinese to die for the revolution.[59] After the *TWN's* reincarnation as the *TWT*, Tong declared in the first issue that the *TWT*'s purpose was to increase revolutionary and anti-Manchu attitudes.[60] He further asserted that an anti-Manchu revolution was the only chance to build an independent China.[61]

Despite his continued activity with the *TWT*, the bankruptcy did not leave Tong unaffected and in 1902 he applied for a position with a Shanghai publishing house.[62] After September 1902 the number of articles and reports from his pen decreased, but CERA members, concerned that he might leave, took steps to entice him to stay. Although they succeeded in retaining him as an editor, the other editor, Ng Ngok-low, was not entirely happy, as he disagreed with some of Tong's more radical notions concerning the revolution.[63] Ng's influence increased after John Hoe's conflict with Lee and his efforts to save the *TWN*, after which he did manage to tone down Tong's expressions of radicalism.

Tong underwent a transformation of his own in 1903 and embraced moderate constitutionalism, as did his mentor Liang Qichao, whose political ideas shifted radically while he was traveling in the United States. On his return from Japan and Australia in 1901, Liang had advanced the notion of a 'New Citizen' (新民 *xinmin*) as the basis for a modernised China. His observations in the United States during 1903 allowed him to develop more fully a model of the 'New Citizen' that excluded revolution, on the grounds that revolution could not bring liberty and democracy to all Chinese if they lacked the necessary education for such social goods (Huang 1972:77–82).

In apparent agreement with Liang's new model, Tong had become skeptical of the aims and results of revolution after the suppression in mid-1903 of the Shanghai Patriotic Society (愛國學社 Aiguoxueshe), a scholarly association of radical reformists. Tong had been in contact with and openly

57   *TWN*, 15 January, p.2, 22 and 29 January 1902, p.3.
58   *TWN*, 7 February 1902, p.2.
59   *TWN*, 17 May 1902, p.2.
60   *CT*, 3 November 1902, p.3.
61   *TWT*, 30 August, 6 September 1902, p.2.
62   *CT*, 5 November 1902, p.3.
63   *CT*, 5 November 1902, p.3; *TWT*, 15 November 1902, p.3.

supportive of the Patriotic Society,[64] and was appalled by its suppression and the aftermath.[65] The suppression, according to Tong, failed to move the Chinese people to an awareness of the urgency of the need for revolution. He then came to repudiate his own revolutionary position,[66] and turned to constitutionalism and civil education for building a modern China.[67]

As Tong shifted his outlook, the *TWT* also shifted from radical revolution to moderate constitutionalism, generating much political debate with the *CAH* in the years that followed. The ideological divisions between the two papers reflected and were exacerbated by the continuing conflict between the LYT and the CERA. The conflict, particularly the form of its expression, signified a profound shift in the Chinese-Australian social leadership paradigm over the previous decade. In 1892 conflicts had been between native-place or kinship groups and had led to open brawling. Ten years later, the proper forum for disagreement was the print media, with rhetoric and reasoned debate the main strategies for the community's leaders. *Tong* wars had been replaced by a war of words. The substance of the quarrels had also changed. By 1902 claims and counter-claims regarding the public interest, democracy, respectability and increased political participation, had replaced the vexed questions of 1892 concerning the customs of the various *tong*s and the virtues of law and order. The alliance of Chinese fruit traders, Chinese Presbyterians and the CERA manifested an alternative pattern of Chinese urban elites, which helped transform the basis of community leadership.

Sydney's Chinese urban elite pursued an instrumentalist pattern of leadership based on a simple ethical principle: they wanted to create inclusive organisations that could be accessed equally by all individuals, irrespective of their background. The basic condition of community formation for Sydney's Chinese urban elite had changed—they were now free agents. Charles Taylor (2004:12–13) argues that the modern idealisation of social order renders the existence of such free individuals as a modern social ideal, in contrast to former times when virtue was deemed the chief social good. The transformed social leadership of Sydney's Chinese community in the early 20th century embodied this modern ideal. From late 1903 onward, that community's urban elite enthusiastically established a new pattern of social organisation that institutionalised their modern leadership style among Chinese Australians.

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64   *CT*, 25 February 1903, p.2.
65   *TWT*, 8 August 1903, p.3.
66   *TWT*, 29 August 1903, p.2.
67   *TWT*, 26 September 1903, p.2.

New profiles of the commercial elite: the Chinese Merchants' Society and the Chinese Merchants' Defence Association

Decline of the old models: the end of the Lin Yik Tong era

In late 1903 the LYT began to decline in power as the urban Chinese elite established a new pattern of social organisation. Until the middle of that year, WRG Lee continued to hold a leadership position in the Tong. Leading Tong member David O'Young returned to China in January 1903.[68] His departure is significant because it enhanced the relationship between the LYT and the Dongguan county. Although O'Young maintained good relations with members of the CERA and the Chinese Presbyterian Church, he had kept his position in the LYT as a representative of Dongguan county folk. At the end of 1902 the Koong Yee Tong, which, as already noted, had close a connection with the Dongguan community, had come under new leadership and changed its regulations.[69] Furthermore, after O'Young returned to China, several Hop War and Co. proprietors started a new firm, Lee Sang and Co. (利生號 Lishenghao), which replaced Hop War and Co. as representative of Dongguan natives in the LYT. The new leader of Koong Yee Tong and the proprietor of Lee Sang and Co., Ye Peisheng (葉配生), took O'Young's the position in the Tong.[70]

The *CAH* expressed its approval of the development of a cross-county business network in the Haymarket area, which differed from the network of Chinese Presbyterian fruit traders. It also reported on the opening of Lee Sang and Co. and on the activities of two other new Chinese firms, Hie Lee and Co. (泰利號 Tailihao) and Yee Sang Shing and Co. (裕生盛 Yushengsheng), in Campbell Street, that were further examples of cross-clan business networks, involving the Dongguan, Siyi, Zengcheng and Zhongshan county groups.

At this time, the *CAH* and the LYT were also seeking negotiations with the federal government about the Immigration Restriction Act. After it had been in December 1901, the Tong devoted its resources towards mobilising Chinese immigrants in all the Australian states and advocating for the rights of returning Chinese affected by the new restrictions of the Certificates of Domicile and the language test.[71] In late 1902 and early 1903 the Tong

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68 *TWT*, 10 January 1903, p.3.
69 *TWT*, 20 December 1902, supplement; *CAH*, 27 December 1902, p.5 and supplement.
70 *CAH*, 3 January, p.4, 10 January 1903, p.5.
71 *CAH*, 11 October, p.2, 8 November, pp.4–5, 27 December 1902, p.5, 21 February 1903, p.3.

decided, with Quong Tart and Sun Johnson, to ask representatives of the China Navigation and Co., Imperial Japanese Mail Steamship Co., and Burns, Philp and Co., to lobby Prime Minister Edmund Barton to cancel the deposit of £100, the equivalent of a poll tax, required under the Immigration Restriction Act from Chinese landing in Australia.[72] The LYT's attempts at negotiation were, however, unsuccessful.

Until August 1903 the LYT still was an important Chinese community organisation, but its influence declined thereafter, due to the loss of Quong Tart and WRG Lee. Quong Tart had not succeeded in establishing a stable social leadership position among the different groups in Sydney's Chinese community. On 19 August 1902, in the wake of his appearance as a witness for Lee in his suit against Chun Sow, Quong Tart was brutally attacked by a European with an iron bar at his tearoom in the Queen Victoria Building. It was claimed that Thomas Yee Hing had employed someone to attack Quong because of his unfavourable testimony against members of the CERA, but no specific evidence supported this claim. What is beyond dispute is that, by the middle of 1903, tensions within the Sydney Chinese community had escalated. Although Quong Tart survived the attack, his health was badly affected, and on 26 July 1903 he died, aged 53 (Tart 2001:96).

Quong Tart's funeral was held two days after his death. Two hundred Chinese followed the hearse from St James' Church in Croydon to the railway station and then travelled by train to Rookwood. From Rookwood station approximately 1500 people marched in procession to the grave site in Rookwood cemetery, where his burial service was conducted by the Reverends Joseph Best and George Soo Hoo Ten. A Masonic service attended by 50 Chinese and European Masons was held later (Tart 2001:96–97).[73] The English-language Sydney newspapers reported Quong Tart's funeral in some detail, dwelling on its impressive scale and extolling Quong as an exemplary citizen (Tart 2001:98). Chinese press coverage was less fulsome, with the exception of the *CAH*, which wrote up the funeral in a special report. The Chinese newspapers did not dwell on his virtues as a citizen, with the *TWT* and *CT* reporting on the event as if it were normal news and conferring no particular attention or commendation upon Quong.[74]

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72   *DT*, 20 December 1902, 3 January 1903, p.3; NAA, Dept of External Affairs, Correspondence files, A1, 1903/2900, Quong Tart to Edmund Barton, 8 January 1903.
73   *CAH*, 8 August 1903, p.4.
74   *CAH*, 8 August 1903, p.4; *TWT*, 1 August 1903, p.3; *CT*, 29 July 1903, p.4.

The untimely death of Quong Tart had very significant repercussions for the Chinese leadership, especially for WRG Lee and Sun Johnson. Immediately after the funeral, Lee began to make arrangements to return to China permanently and was farewelled barely three weeks later, on 17 August, at an event in Quong's tearooms.[75] Lee's departure further weakened Sun's network and hastened the LYT's decline. In October it announced its disbandment and the donation of its residual cash assets to benevolent organisations.[76] The LYT would subsequently be resurrected in a new form in 1905. The demise of the LYT extended the ramifications of Quong's death, in that it enabled the advent of a new social leadership paradigm in the Chinese community. After 1903, much of the Chinese urban elite's power and leadership came to be held by the newly formed Chinese Merchants' Society and Chinese Merchants' Defence Association.

Establishment of the Chinese Merchants' Society in 1903

The New South Wales Chinese Chamber of Commerce states that its predecessor, the New South Wales Chinese Merchants' Society, was initially planned in 1902.[77] It was not organised, however, until after the funeral of Quong Tart and WRG Lee's departure, in order to take over the LYT's role in selling steamship tickets, which it began to do in September 1903. The society was at first named Ziyoushe (自由社 Society for Freedom), but this was later changed to New South Wales Chinese Merchants' Society.[78] Its regulations gave the purpose of the new society as the promotion of economic mobilisation, and it was explicitly approving of the Western economic system and Western society.[79]

The society's records for 1903 and 1904 list 31 Chinese member firms, including the largest Chinese fruit firms. Eight Chinese firms acted as representatives of the Society: Tiy Loy and Co. Ltd; Gee Ick and Co.; SCS Dockson and Co. (新昌盛 Xinchangsheng); On Chong and Co.; War Hing and Co. (和興 Hexing); Hop War and Co.; Yuen Tiy and Co. (源泰 號 Yuantaihao); and Wing On and Co.[80] In terms of its structure of eight representatives and the set-up for selling steamship tickets the society was

75 *CAH*, 29 August 1903, p.5.
76 *TWT*, 31 October 1903, p.3.
77 NBAC, 111/2/1, Chinese Chamber of Commerce of New South Wales, Correspondence, 1913–1917.
78 NBAC, 111/4/1, Chinese Chamber of Commerce of New South Wales, Records of meetings, 1903–1904, income record dated 9 August (lunar calendar).
79 *TWT*, 14 November 1903, p.3.
80 *TWT*, 31 October 1903, p.3.

in some degree similar to the defunct LYT, but the Chinese Merchants' Society was controlled by T Yee Hing and other Chinese merchants who had decried fundamental aspects of the LYT. The native-place affiliations of the representatives, for instance, were not emphasised as an aspect of their function, and the representatives held their positions in a voluntary capacity. They met every three months to monitor and report on the society's progress. Each meeting was chaired and conducted in accordance with Western meeting procedures,[81] in line with the determination of the Chinese merchants, including T Yee Hing, to establish and run their business society as a Western democratic institution.

Another difference between the LYT and the Chinese Merchants' Society lay in the way that its member organisations identified themselves and their respective functions in the Chinese community. The LYT's purported social position, as reflected in its Chinese title, was as a representative of the Chinese community. Its role was in some ways similar to that of a guild, whose function was to negotiate between its members and the outside world. The Chinese Merchants' Society, on the other hand, was founded as an embodiment of capitalism and enterprise, following a developing trend among Chinese merchant groups to identify themselves in terms of their occupation. The new society placed emphasis on a spirit of capitalism and democracy and encapsulated the Sydney Chinese merchants' adoption of Australian values in their social and economic mobilisation.

In early 1904 the *TWT* republished a long article by Liang Qichao in which he strongly criticised native-place and kinship divisions and provincial identities as bases for community formation. In his judgment these divisions had failed to engender coherence in Chinese communities in America and elsewhere overseas.[82] In accordance with this view, the *TWT* and its associated Chinese merchant group had rejected the approach of the LYT. At this time also, the *TWT* and a number of Sydney Chinese merchants expressed their disapproval of the proposed establishment of native-place temples and societies such as the Sze Yup Kwan Ti Temple (四邑關帝廟 Siyi Guandi Miao) and the Yiu Ming Temple in Sydney, suggesting that the Sydney Chinese would do better to donate funds for basic education rather than for their native-place temple.[83]

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81 *TWT*, 14 November 1903, p.3.
82 *TWT*, 23 January, p.2, 6 and 13 February 1904, p.2.
83 *TWT*, 6 February, p.2, 13 February, pp.2–3, 30 April, supplement, 7 May, supplement, 16 July 1904, p.2.

The transformation of the Sydney Chinese merchants' group from guild to modern association further reflects the group's expanding social network. The Chinese Merchants' Society was supported not only by Chinese merchants, storekeepers, fruit traders and grocers in Sydney, but also by their counterparts in rural New South Wales. One Chinese businessman, in particular, Wong Chee (黃珠 Huang Zhu, 黃枝 Huang Zhi, also known as Wong Hoong Narm 黃煥南 Huang Huannan, 1856–1936), had come to Australia in the 1870s and made connections with Sydney Chinese merchants in the 1880s (Wang 2006:185). After making money in Sydney he moved to rural Glen Innes and in 1886 opened a small Chinese grocery shop, Kwong Sing War, to trade with Chinese miners and rural workers (Young 1990; Kwan 1938).

Wong Chee's experience in Sydney enabled him to establish a business network with large Chinese firms such as SCS Dockson and Co. in North Sydney.[84] He began a further partnership with Zhongshan Chinese in the northern tablelands of New South Wales. In 1894, through an introduction from Wong Kong Cheung, Wong Chee employed a member who was a fellow kinsman, Kwan Hong Kee (關康祺 Guan Kangqi, also known as Percy Puck Sing Young) (Kwan 1938). Kwan and his family moved to the New England area in order to expand the new partnership's business network (Young 1990). Wong Chee's success may have encouraged more Chinese to trade and work in the New England area when anti-Chinese sentiment was rising in the towns. For example, the proprietors of Wing On and Co. introduced their younger brothers Gock Yuenfai (郭源輝 Guo Yuanhui, also known as 郭浩 Guo Hao) and Gock Shun (郭順 Guo Shun, also known as 郭和輝 Guo Hehui) to Moree to open a Chinese grocery, Pingji Company (聘記), in the first decade of the 20th century (Gock 1960:4). Wong Chee also formed personal connections with certain Sydney Chinese families, marrying David O'Young's daughter from the Zengcheng community, even though he was from Zhongshan county,[85] and adopting a daughter of Liu Hee Lum, a Siyi Chinese, when Liu returned to China with his two oldest sons.

Aside from his personal relationships with Sydney Chinese, Wong Chee sought an institutional connection with the CERA, accompanying Liang on his tour of New England in January 1901 (Liang 1985:618–625). From 1907 Wong Chee organised the celebrations for the Chinese Emperor's birthday, an official event for members of the CERA, as a social excursion for his New

84   *CAH*, 7 October 1905, p.2.
85   NAA, Dept of Immigration, New South Wales Branch, SP42/1, C1916/706.

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England employees and partners. His friendship with another active CERA member, Chan Harr, led to them to work together in establishing department stores in Hong Kong and elsewhere in China (*Xianshi gongsi* 1924).

Sydney's Chinese commercial elite also expanded its connections with other overseas Chinese through the CERA's international networks. The Chinese Merchants' Society decided to respond to a plan of the Zhongguo Shangwugongsi (中國商務公司 Chinese Commercial Company), inspired by the Hong Kong CERA branch, to collect capital from overseas Chinese. In 1903 Liang Qichao visited Canada and America to expand the number of shareholders, along with Pow Chee, who had accompanied Liang on his 1900 Australian tour. While Liang was informing his North American audiences of the Zhongguo Shangwugongsi plan, T Yee Hing in Sydney was bringing together the Chinese merchants to collect capital for the same venture.[86] After collecting 53,530 yuan—about £6691—from the Sydney merchants, Yee Hing, John Hoe, Tong Chai-chih and Chan Harr visited the Melbourne Chinese on a similar mission.[87] In the end, the Sydney Chinese collected a further 85,250 yuan—about £10,656—from Melbourne and Western Australia to send to the Hong Kong headquarters for the venture.[88] In the following years, the Chinese Merchants' Society devoted itself to developing CERA's business enterprises. One in particular, the Chinese Commercial Company in Hong Kong, changed its name to War Yick and Co. (華益公司 Huayigongsi) and returning Sydney Chinese merchant David O'Young became one of the enterprise's managers in 1905.[89]

The success of this fundraising venture gives some indication of the power of the merchants belonging to the Chinese Merchants' Society and the CERA. It shows that the social mobilisation capacity of Sydney's Chinese merchants extended beyond New South Wales. In progressing from guild to modern alliance, the Sydney Chinese urban elite of fruit traders, Chinese Presbyterians and CERA members established highly effective patterns of networking. In July 1904, just ten months after the establishment of the Chinese Merchants' Society, the Sydney business elite was prompted by new social and political developments in Australia to form another organisation—the New South Wales Chinese Merchants' Defence Association.

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86   *TWT*, 27 June 1903, p.3.
87   *TWT*, 18 July 1903, p.3.
88   *TWT*, 1 August 1903, p.3.
89   *TWT*, 19 August 1905, p.3.

Establishment of the Chinese Merchants' Defence Association in 1904

The establishment of the CMDA was related to two events: the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War and the formation of the Sydney Anti-Chinese League. These two events impelled the Sydney Chinese to adopt the term 'Social Darwinism' (社會達爾文主義 Shehui Daerwenzhuyi) to highlight their endangered position as members of a transnational Chinese diaspora. The sudden outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War encouraged the Chinese merchants to advocate the militarisation of China.[90] Sydney Chinese merchants and members of the CERA petitioned the Manchu government to form an alliance with Japan,[91] and they collected donations for the relief of casualties of Japanese military activities.[92] Meanwhile, the *TWT* was highlighting the tragic situation of Chinese labourers in Africa and Australia in order to frame their claims to the Australian and Chinese governments for political protection.[93] The failure of Chinese diplomacy, however, made it clear to the merchants that it was pointless to expect the political protection of a powerful China to transform their positions in Australia. The founding of an anti-Chinese organisation in Sydney in May 1904 signalled to the Sydney Chinese merchants that they needed to organise another society to secure their rights and positions more directly.

In May of 1904, the Anti-Chinese and Asiatic League was formed through a union of the Liberal and Reform Association, the Shop Assistants' Union, the Sydney Labour Council, the United Furniture Traders' Association and the NSW Retail Grocers' Association. Together they formed a powerful alliance to defend trade union interests from 'Chinese competition'. They held a meeting at Queen's Hall to announce their goal of removing all Chinese and other Asiatic immigrants from Australia.[94] The Anti-Chinese and Asiatic League called for laws to be passed to prohibit the issuing of licences to Chinese hawkers and traders (Yong 1977:71–72). Their claims were by no means universally supported in Sydney. An article in the *SMH* by J Ansley Irvine, who argued that the motives of the Anti-Chinese and Asiatic League were contrary to the 'British Constitution and all sense of fair play and equality',[95] stands as an example of opposing views in the community. Anti-Chinese racism damaged the atmosphere of liberty and

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90   *TWT*, 27 February, p.2, 19 March 1904, p.2.
91   *TWT*, 9 April 1904, p.2.
92   *TWT*, 12 March 1904, p.2.
93   *TWT*, 23 January, p.3, 2 April, p.2, 30 April 1904, p.3.
94   *SMH*, 5 May 1904, p.8
95   *SMH*, 23 May 1904, p.8.

free commercialism in Sydney (Yeung 2004:231), and public debate on the issue occurred between May and September 1904.[96]

The growth of the anti-Chinese movement encouraged Chinese merchants to unite to secure their social and financial positions, particularly in the vicinity of the Belmore Markets where their businesses were concentrated and racist criticism was most intensely felt. At one point the secretary of the Anti-Chinese and Asiatic League, Selina Anderson, specifically noted that 'the formation of the anti-Chinese and Asiatic League was not at the instigation of the country merchants, but the residents of the Belmore electorate'.[97] The work of the League damaged the businesses of Chinese fruit traders and storekeepers based at the Belmore Market severely. George Bew claimed that value of his business, Wing Sang and Co., fell from £4,000 in 1903 to £1,000 in 1905.[98] Another manager of Wing Sang and Co. declared that his business was worth no more than £500 in 1905.[99] Concern over the declining value of their businesses prompted leading Chinese merchants to propose a new association expressly for the purpose of defending their rights.

There was not, however, universal solidarity within the Chinese community on the issue, and there were differences between the stance of the *TWT* and of the *CAH*. While the *TWT* insisted on the urgent need for some form of protection against the Anti-Chinese and Asiatic League and tried to provide some, the *CAH* did not agree that the situation was quite so pressing and showed less concern about the White Australia policy overall.[100] The anxieties of the Chinese merchants increased and in July 1904 Chan Harr, Samuel Wong, George Bew, Ping Nam, Henry Fine Chong, Ah Gok (陳贊華 Chan Zanhua) and Yu Mingli (余明禮) formed the Chinese Merchants' Defence Association.[101] The *TWT* reported that more than 300 people joined the Association at its inaugural meeting on 20 July. Chan Harr was elected president, and six storekeepers—two fruit traders, two grocers and two cabinet makers—were appointed committee members.[102] The CMDA's stated position made it clear that they believed they were becoming the

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96   *SMH*, 23 May, p.8, 30 May, p.10, 5 August, p.3, 19 August, p.3, 22 August, p.5, 2 September, p.11, 29 September 1904, p.5.

97   *SMH*, 22 August 1904, p.5.

98   NAA, Dept of Immigration, New South Wales Branch, SP244/2, N1950/2/3885. Statutory declarations of George Bew, 1903 and 1905.

99   NAA, Dept of Immigration, New South Wales Branch, SP244/2, N1950/2/4918, Statutory declaration of James Choy Hing, 1905.

100   *TWT*, 2 July 1904, supplement.

101   *TWT*, 16 July 1904, supplement.

102   *TWT*, 23 July 1904, supplement.

victims of the Anti-Chinese and Asiatic League, and they proclaimed their intention to work towards achieving a better atmosphere for stable commercial activity.[103] In August, the president of CMDA, Chan Harr, entered into debate with the Anti-Chinese and Asiatic League in the *SMH,* drawing attention to the British values of liberty, fair play and commercialism and making it clear that Chinese merchants and traders sought commercial peace and equity rather than antagonism with Europeans.[104]

On the other hand, the CMDA and the *TWT* introduced the notion of a trade war (商戰 *shangzhan*) in 1904 to Chinese merchants and traders to justify their struggle with white Australians.[105] The idea of a trade war was first raised in China to stimulate commerce, when the Manchu government introduced policies to encourage overseas Chinese to invest in Chinese industries. The Chinese reformists saw the concept of the trade war as a necessary manifestation of economic nationalism designed to protect themselves from imperialism and occupation (Ma 2001:80–83,169–179; Wang 1977:233–279; Zhuang 1989:243–293). In adopting the term in 1904, the Sydney Chinese merchant community altered its meaning to relocate their social position in Australia and used it to encourage Chinese merchants to struggle against white Australians for further commercial peace, business stability and ethnic equality. The CMDA used the term 'trade war' in association with another concept they adopted at the time—Social Darwinism. While Sydney Chinese merchants associated with the CMDA proclaimed that they were law-abiding and seeking commercial peace, they nevertheless employed notions of the trade war and Social Darwinism to encourage Chinese merchants and traders to fight for their rights and prospects in the face of the anti-Chinese movement.

The *TWT* also promoted progressive aspects of Confucianism. Its editor, Tong Chai-chih, introduced Confucian knowledge in order to enhance progressivism and promote the position of Chinese merchants, and with the Sydney CERA's support promoted a public celebration for Confucius' birthday in 1904, which attracted more than 60 Chinese merchants on 27 September.[106] A republican from the Australian Unitarian Church gave a speech comparing Christianity and Confucianism,[107] and Tong spoke too, promoting Confucianism on the grounds that Confucius was a humanist and

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103   *TWT*, 16 July 1904, supplement; *CAH*, 19 November 1904, p.5.
104   *SMH*, 22 August 1904.
105   *TWT*, 16 July 1904, supplement.
106   *TWT*, 15 October 1904, p.2.
107   *TWT*, 24 September 1904, supplement.

progressive rather than a god and drawing an analogy between Confucius, Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer.

The demands of the Anti-Chinese and Asiatic League generated little debate in the state or federal parliaments (Yong 1977:72), but the growth of anti-Chinese sentiment prompted changes in the social leadership of the Sydney Chinese community. The example of Chan Harr shows that the new community leadership was not reliant on traditional kinship or native-place loyalties alone. Chan Harr recalled his commercial experience as not only making him successful but as transforming his life.

After arriving in Sydney with his cabinet-maker father, as a fourteen year old in 1885, Chan stayed with an English family during his school years. Later, after working in a department store in Haymarket, he opened a store with friends at Ashfield:

> there I took a decisive step toward Westernisation. I used to ride round for my orders on a horse, and one day he behaved badly and threw me on the footpath. My cap came off, and my little pigtail came undone and flew out from my head. It was always getting in the way; so, very annoyed with it, I went home and cut it off… [T]en years at Ashfield gave me some money, and in 1895 I decided to come back to China. But I stayed for only two or three months. What a change it was from Australia! In those days I found everything obsolete, slow, old-fashioned; I could not bear it.[108]

Chan Harr decided to come back and open a store at Fremantle in Western Australia, rather than work on the goldfields as many others did. In 1900 during Liang's visit to Australia, Chan Harr moved to Sydney and joined the Western Confectionery Company.[109] When T Yee Hing visited Fiji for several months on business early in 1904, Chan Harr became a spokesman for the Chinese community. He had the support of the CERA and the Chinese Merchants' Society, and was also welcomed by Young Wai of the Chinese Presbyterian Church.

Chan Harr derived his extensive support partly from his personality and natural way with people. In a report on his involvement in the Chinese congregation of the Presbyterian Church, Young Wai describes him as young, bright and markedly happy; but the cheery character was driven to righteous anger, which made him an impressive advocate in the fight against the White Australia policy. In 1904, Chan gave a speech at the re-opening

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108   *The Queenslander*, 6 August 1936.
109   *TWT*, 15 October 1904, p.3.
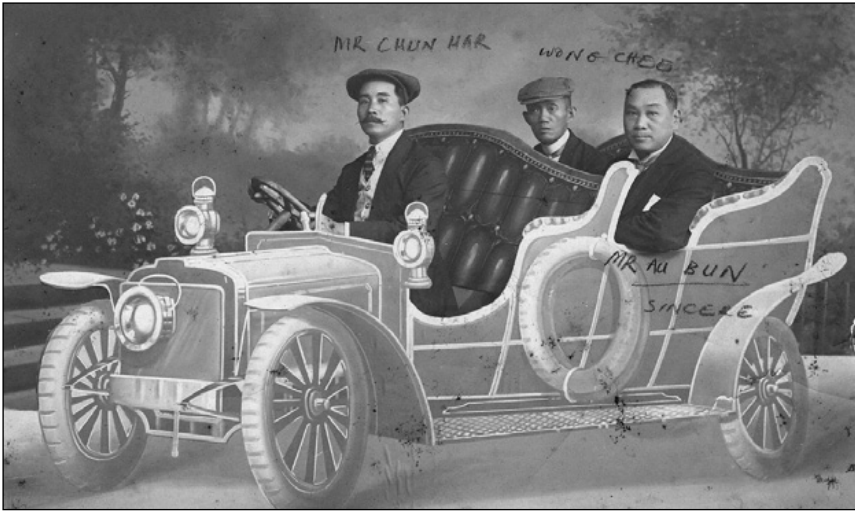
From left to right: Chun Harr, Wong Chee and Ah Bun.
(Private collection of Mrs. Marina Mar.)

of the night school of the Sydney Chinese Presbyterian Church, in which he proclaimed that 'we should be one people' within the Christian spirit. His words provided the foundation for a sense of universalism which the Sydney Chinese Presbyterian merchants could present to white Australia and use against the threat of Social Darwinism. Young Wai endorsed Chan Harr's idea saying 'we should be all one people' for consistency with Christian ideals (Young Wai 1904:8).

The success of Chan Harr's social leadership in gaining the broad support of several organisations was not dependent on his personal relationships and wealth alone. His manifestly positive attitude, combined with his bi-lingualism, emboldened Chinese merchants to negotiate with the wider Sydney public, and his words gave emphasis to the idea that equality of access to modern systems is not merely a principle for the conduct of commerce but also an ethical principle for political inclusion.

The significance of the new merchant bodies

The coming-together of Sydney Chinese merchants and their new-found capacity to take the debate to the Anti-Chinese League are further indications of their awareness of their social position and of the potency of their networks. Unlike the LYT model of consultation with Australian authorities through white Australian elites, the two new associations took

a more direct approach to protecting their rights. The Sydney Chinese Merchants' Society was one of the earliest chambers of commerce of overseas Chinese, following the founding of the Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce in 1900 (Cai 2005:199). The establishment of the Sydney group was intended to model the democratisation of merchants' organisations as an alternative to the traditional style and function of the guilds. The fact of its registration with Sydney authorities reflects the members' motivation to be a part of a legal, Western-style system and shows a similar readiness to learn from that system to that shown by Chinese merchants in Hong Kong in their engagement with the British colonial system (Wong 1991:26). Consistent with this trend of assertive autonomy, the establishment of the CMDA showed that Sydney's Chinese merchants were capable of mobilising to fight for their rights within the Australian economic and political system.

Compared with other Chinese chambers of commerce around the Pacific area, the Sydney Chinese Merchants' Society was remarkable for its self-awareness and mobilisation. Chen Laixing, in his analysis of the establishment of Chinese chambers of commerce in Singapore, Batavia, Manila, San Francisco and Kobe, has argued that these institutions were societies of merchants that were promoted by Chinese consuls-general in concert with existing communal societies such as native-place and kinship associations (Chen 2002:354). The Sydney group, however, was organised voluntarily and independently of any official such as a consul-general. In fact, the mode of establishment of both the Sydney Chinese Merchants' Society and the CMDA was similar to that of the Hong Kong Chinese Chamber of Commerce, which was influenced by close acquaintance with the British colonial system and Western practice.

In his study of Chinese entrepreneurs, Wong Siu-lun argues that Hong Kong and overseas entrepreneurship reflects a combination of personal trust and broader systemic trust, mutually reinforcing each other to establish congenial conditions for entrepreneurship. The traditional Chinese community was based on personal networks and *guanxi*, which provided the foundation for social mobilisation and leadership. Relationships and kinship socialisation were manifestations of personal trust, which is reliant on familiarity. The first immigrant associations and societies of overseas were legitimised by personal trust and native-place ties of this kind, sustained by an elaborate system of symbols, ritual oaths and bonds of kinship (McKeown 1999:320; Fitzgerald 2007:65), but Hong Kong and overseas Chinese also became acquainted with systemic trust through their extended exposure to Western styles of governance (Wong 1991:15, 26).

When social life becomes urbanised and complex, personal trust and relationships intersect with what German sociologist Niklas Luhmann (1988:94, 102) calls 'system trust'. System trust is sustained through calculation of economic and human resources. Wong Siu-lun, by suggesting that system trust and personal trust were mutually reinforcing in the case of the Hong Kong and overseas Chinese merchants, argues that those communities trusted in Western styles of conduct and formal systems of negotiation as a path to securing and sustaining their leadership. In the case of the Sydney societies, there is additional evidence of Chinese merchants striving for recognition in Australian society, despite the White Australia policy's rejection of the Chinese as part of Australian society.

Joseph Fewsmith's studies of the transition from Chinese guilds to modern merchant organisations in urban centres of China add to our understanding of the development of system trust among the Sydney Chinese merchant groups, resulting from the transformation of their general social imaginary. Fewsmith (1985:25–26) states that this transformation of merchant organisations in modern China is 'a part of a wider movement to mobilize society and formalize the participation of local elites'. He argues that this transformation is a manifestation of the relationship between state and society, public and private (Fewsmith 1985:30–32). The process of transformation from guild to modern association was shaped by notions of legitimation, which influenced the Sydney Chinese merchants in their reconfiguration of their social position and leadership. The CMDA was registered with the Sydney authorities on its foundation.[110]

The Chinese Merchants' Society was represented as a branch of the Chinese Commercial Company in Hong Kong.[111] The New South Wales Chinese Merchants' Society was also a predecessor of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, which was registered with the Chinese government in 1912.[112] Its willingness to engage in a registration process is an important signifier of the Chinese merchants' desire to formalise their participation in the state by institutional legitimation rather than through personal relationships and networks. It highlights the role of the Sydney Chinese merchants as brokers between state and society. The leadership of the Sydney Chinese merchants had become rooted in state sanction rather than

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110   CMDA regulations, in *TWT*, 16 July 1904, supplement.
111   *TWT*, 27 June 1903, p.3.
112   NBAC, 111/4/1 Chinese Chamber of Commerce of New South Wales, Records of meetings, 1903–1904, Regulations. The transition from Chinese Merchants' Society to Chinese Chamber of Commerce is explored in Chapter 7.

in personal relationships; the very notion of legitimation became a focus and source of authority and leadership for merchants as they established organisations intended to equalise access to commerce and democratic participation. In this sense, the Sydney Chinese merchants considered their social role and position to be different from that of other Chinese and sought increasing political engagement from the beginning of the 20th century.

Increasing profits and wealth enhanced the social status of successful Sydney Chinese fruit merchants. This group of traders was responsible for the transformation of the social leadership of the Chinese-Australian community. From the late 19th century the community began to remake its institutional foundations. The two carnivals of 1897 reflected the earlier clan and native-place mode of social leadership and traditional forms of symbolism associated with imperial status and national pride. The carnivals, which took place under the auspices of the LYT and the likes of Sun Johnson, consolidated the social leadership of their patrons under the pretext of charitable mobilisation. Although both the LYT and the later Sydney Chinese Merchants' Society were founded and led by wealthy Chinese merchants, the Chinese Merchants' Society and its associated organisations, such as the CERA and the CMDA, expanded their influence and networks among Chinese Australians from a different base. The LYT was founded on native-place and kinship principles. When the Sydney merchants led by Thomas Yee Hing rejected the LYT in 1902 they were pursuing a new vision for their group. By 1904 they had established spaces for regular meetings and routine networking, rather than persisting with mere oral undertakings and casually convened gatherings. They saw themselves as embracing a modern Australian way of life in place of traditional practices in their membership, organisation and representation.

Chapter 5

BECOMING INTERNATIONAL, 1905–1908

In 1905 an alliance of Sydney Chinese fruit traders, Chinese Presbyterians and CERA members strengthened and consolidated its leadership in Sydney's Chinese community. The first sign of its capacity for social mobilisation was the first Chinese Convention, held in Melbourne in August 1905. The catalyst for the Convention was the Factories and Shops Acts of 1904 and 1905, passed in the State of Victoria, which targeted Chinese cabinetmakers and laundrymen in a series of events that shocked the Melbourne Chinese community.[1] The Chinese Convention brought together Chinese-Australian leaders from different Australian states to discuss anti-opium measures, an anti-American boycott, and opposition to the White Australia policy. Sydney merchants were at the forefront, having already guided the Chinese community in its fight against the White Australia policy and in taking a stance against the opium trade and imperialism.

The first Chinese Convention

The eve of the first Chinese Convention and anti–American boycott
In mid-1905 the *TWT*, the CERA and the Chinese Merchants' Society moved into a new building at 158 George Street in Sydney. The three-storey building projected a modern, respectable profile of Chinese merchants. On the first floor was the *TWT* office; on the second floor was the CERA; and the third housed the offices of the Chinese Merchants' Society.[2] The *TWT* proclaimed that the building would also provide a comfortable public meeting venue for over 100 people.[3] The new building and its availability

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1 A proposed amendment to the Factories and Shops Act is in *The Argus* (23 November 1904, p.7); see also Cheok Hong Cheong's letter in *The Argus* (22 January 1904) and *CT* (11 March 1905, p.3).
2 *TWT*, 23 January 1909, p.13.
3 *TWT*, 15 July, 22 July, 29 July 1905, supplements.

for public use indicated not only the social unity and mobilisation of the merchants but also their active awareness of their new social status and power.

The Sydney Chinese merchants represented the growth of respectability and political consciousness of the Sydney Chinese community as a whole. The *TWT* and the merchant groups had long sought to enlighten the lower classes of Chinese in order to reform their lives, customs and habits. It encouraged all Chinese to improve their English, to regulate their working practices and to embrace the new ideas of gender equality. Three specific social reform issues pursued by the *TWT* were gambling, traditional worship and the use of opium, which it put considerable effort into eliminating among the lower-class Chinese. It later argued that habits associated with the Chinese community, gambling and opium-smoking in particular, were major reasons for the introduction of the Immigration Restriction Act in 1901.[4] The impetus for a league to oppose opium originated in the Melbourne NCEA. Following the lead of the Melbourne Chinese, Sydney's Chinese merchants launched, on 20 May 1905, the Anti-Opium League of New South Wales (Yong 1977:185–187).

The inaugural chairman of the New South Wales League was T Yee Hing, who pointed out that he had been advocating such a society since 1898.[5] At the League's first meeting he explained the advantages of prohibiting opium both for the public image of Chinese residents in Australia and for its economic benefits. Yee Hing drew on his business experience to argue that the profits from the trade in opium were not worth the disadvantages of its availability in the community. He argued that, if the Chinese merchants could successfully bar opium in Australia, other Chinese—that is, their customers—would have more money to buy produce and goods.[6] His line of reasoning showed that he intended to mobilise the merchants through their appreciation of financial advantage.

Yee Hing proposed several specific goals for the Anti-Opium League. The first was to promote a federal bill prohibiting the importation of opium into Australia, and in this he received significant support from John Young Wai and his followers in the Chinese Presbyterian Church. Immediately after the first meeting, the merchants began campaigning among the Chinese community for opium prohibition. They organised two

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4   *TWT*, 14 March 1908, p.7.
5   *TWN*, 30 August and 3 September 1898.
6   *TWT*, 27 May 1905, supplement.

speeches, one in Wexford Street, attended by 300 people, and the other in the Waterloo area.[7]

To obtain support, Yee Hing, Samuel Wong, Philip Lee Chun, Henry Fine Cheong, John Young Wai, John Hoe and James Choy Hing visited a Western association, which is referred to in the *TWT*'s reporting only as the 'Western Bo Leong society'.[8] Luo Yun also wrote to the Labor Party of New South Wales to solicit their cooperation on the issue. In addition, the Sydney Chinese invited the Reverend CH Cheong from Melbourne to give a speech promoting the proposed federal bill.[9] In 1906 the *TWT* began to publish folk literature, such as operatic songs, comical essays, poetry and short stories, intended to admonish the lower-class Chinese to eschew opium.[10] In the years that followed, the paper worked to enlist the cooperation of Chinese-Australian firms in the project, as their participation was seen as important to its success.

The Chinese community's image problem in Australian society was not solely related to opium. The *TWT* also strongly discouraged lower-class Chinese from engaging in traditional worship,[11] condemning in particular the rebuilding of the Yiu Ming Temple,[12] even though a major supporter of the temple was the *TWT*'s rescuer in 1902, John Hoe, who was also a prominent member of the CERA, and a representative of carpenters in the Chinese Merchants' Society.[13] Hoe had significant influence in South Sydney, where the Yiu Ming Temple was located. While anti-Chinese sentiment and associated discussion were increasing in the area, many welcomed the rebuilding of the temple as a much-needed centre for lower-class Chinese, which was completed in 1909.[14] The Melbourne *CT* eventually hightlighted the contrast between the stances of *TWT* and Hoe by pointing out, in very critical terms, the paradox that a leading member of the CERA had supported the establishment of a traditional temple while

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7   *TWT*, 27 May, 3 June 1905, supplements.

8   *TWT*, 3 June 1905, supplement. Yong (1977:186) suggests that it was a Masonic Society, but the *TWT* reported the presence of female members of this association, which rules out that possibility.

9   *TWT*, 10 June,17 June, 24 June, 8 July 1905, supplements.

10   For example, *TWT*, 31 March, p.5, 14 April, p.6, 1 September, p.5, 6 October 1906, p.6, 27 April, p.8, 12 October, p.7, 16 November, p.8, 21 December 1907, p.6, 11 January 1908, p.8.

11   *TWT*, 2 September 1905, p.2, 3 March 1906, p.6, 2 February, p.6, 20 April 1907, p.3.

12   *TWT*, 30 April 1904, supplement, 7 May 1905, supplement, 3 March 1906, p.6, 5 June 1909, p.2.

13   *TWT*, 6 August 1904, p.2.

14   *TWT*, 22 May 1909, p.7.

his own Association was striving to enlighten lower-class Chinese to put an end to their traditional worship.[15]

The social mobilisation achieved through the issues of opposing opium and traditional worship is evidence of the importance of support from leading merchants in the *TWT*'s promotion of social reform. However, the Chinese newspapers continued to have a pivotal role in political reform and social mobilisation. The anti-American boycott movement, for example, depended on newspapers to inform and support the transnational networking capacity of the Sydney Chinese.

The political consciousness of the Sydney Chinese community grew significantly in the early 20th century. In mid-1905, the *TWT* formed an alliance with the *CAH*, the LYT and the Yee Hing Society to develop the base of the anti-imperialism and anti-American boycott movements. In 1904 and 1905 the rise of the Anti-Chinese and Asiatic League and an increasingly intense anti-Chinese atmosphere reinforced a sense of diaspora and suffering among the Chinese in Australia. Chinese journalists of the *TWT* and the *CT,* in particular, were becoming anxious about the possibility of the Chinese being gradually eliminated in Australia.[16] Although Sun Johnson of the *CAH* was more optimistic about the Chinese position in Australia, he, too, began to worry about the potential consequences of racism, because, as the *CT* had noted, the Australian Aboriginal was being gradually eradicated from Australian society under the White Australia policy.[17] The Chinese journalists wrote not only of the unfairness of the policy towards Chinese immigrants but also of the emotional burden this placed upon them.[18] In 1904 the editor of the *CT* joined the NCEA, whose recent launch emphasised the emotional suffering and sense of isolation and dispossession experienced by Poles and Indians; consideration of their plight helped to raise the public consciousness of Chinese Australians.[19] In bringing to the foreground the emotional and civic price their readers were paying, the Chinese journalists also did much to shape an anti-imperialist alliance.

At the same time, increasing anti-Manchu nationalism was strengthened by the rise in anti-imperialism. One Chinese revolutionary in particular, Chen Tianhua (陳天華), not only attacked Western colonialism and imperialism in China but also racism toward overseas Chinese. In one of his

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15   *CT*, 25 September 1909, p.3.
16   *TWT*, 30 April 1904, supplement, 13 May 1905, p.2.
17   *CAH*, 21 January 1905, p.2.
18   *CAH*, 22 April, p.3, 29 April 1905, p.4; *CT*, 11 March, p.1, 18 March 1905, p.1.
19   *CAH*, 8 October 1904, p.3. (For further discussion of the NCEA see Chapter 6).

influential books *Menghuitou* (猛回頭 *Sudden Awakening*), published in 1903 in Japan, Chen passed highly critical judgment on the British colonists' near-elimination of the Aboriginals from Australia (Chen 1961:156–157). His work was circulated widely among Chinese revolutionaries in Southeast Asia in order to evoke Chinese nationalism (Yen 1976:107–110). A further spur to overseas Chinese to support the new political movements was the notion of *huaqiao* (華僑 overseas Chinese), a term coined specifically to mobilise Chinese diaspora communities to oppose the adversarial aspects of their Western host communities. At around the same time, another influential book promoting revolutionary membership, *Gemingjun* (革命軍 *Revolutionary Army*) by Zou Rong (鄒容), resulted in an upsurge of support for the revolutionary movement among lower-class homeland and overseas Chinese, including those in Melbourne.

Chinese spokesmen stressed the idea that their unfair position in Australia was a result of Western imperialism. This idea received a boost in mid-1905 from an incident that provoked Sun Johnson to a radical re-evaluation of his attitude toward the relationship between Chinese and Western society, thus causing the *CAH* to reverse its previous optimism and take a strongly critical position against Western imperialism.[20] The incident involved 23 Chinese stowaways on a vessel owned by the German steamship company Norddeutscher Lloyd, who were discovered after the ship had left Hong Kong for Sydney. Because one of them escaped arrest, the rest of the stowaways were taken to New Guinea to become slaves. They sent letters to leaders of the Yee Hing Society seeking a solution to their plight that would return them to Hong Kong.[21] As the *CAH* was taking up the cause in its pages, three of the Chinese died in New Guinea, and the Sydney Chinese community became fully engaged in the project to rescue those remaining.[22] The significance of the incident for the Sydney Chinese community was that it provided the first chance for a major cooperative venture between the Chinese Merchants' Society, the CMDA, the Yee Hing Society and the recently revived and reorganised LYT. The *TWT* commented on the cooperation shown by the social leadership of the Chinese merchants as they conducted difficult negotiations with a foreign community.[23]

Although Sun and the Chinese merchants put everything they could into the project, they faced an uncooperative and avaricious attitude in the

20   *CAH*, 5 November 1904, p.2, 21 January, p.2, 16 April 1905, pp.2–3.
21   *CAH*, 1 July 1905, p.5.
22   *CAH*, 12 August 1905, pp.2–3.
23   *TWT*, 5 August 1905, supplement.

steamship company. They had no more success with appeals to diplomatic officials, as their petition to the German Consul-General was in vain.[24] Eventually, the steamship captain demanded payment of £400 to resolve the situation, a sum that was well within the means of the wealthier Chinese merchants, notably Gilbert Yep Ting Quoy (葉同貴 Ye Tonggui) and Poy Chong (趙沛昌 Zhao Peichang).[25] Sun advised caution, as he had a deep distrust of the agent, Lohmann and Co., who had been engaged to represent the steamship company in the negotiations. He recommended that the two sides sign a binding legal agreement before any money changed hands.[26] The situation was finally resolved and the stowaways were returned to Hong Kong.

As noted above, this event had the significant consequence of prompting a reversal in Sun Johnson's view of the relationship between the Chinese and the West. His newspaper duly ran an article late in 1905 that spoke in very strong terms against Western imperialism and even criticised Western civilisation in general,[27] taking a very different stance from the *CAH*'s previous position. The incident of the German steamship had the further effect of persuading Sun and the *CAH* to support the anti-American boycott movement in Australia. As a latecomer to this cause, the *CAH* acknowledged the leadership of the Chinese merchants and the *TWT* for the contribution they had already made to the movement.[28] A significant aspect of their activism in supporting Shanghai merchants in the anti-American boycott was to be the way that the *TWT* and leading members of the Sydney CERA refurbished the meaning of the anti-American boycott movement to accommodate anti-imperialism and the fight for a better position for the Chinese in Australia.

Origins of the anti-American boycott movement and the TWT*'s growing influence*

On 10 June 1905 the *TWT* reported a news item from the *Eastern News* (上海時報 *Shanghaishibao*) in Shanghai concerning an anti-American boycott. The *TWT* encouraged Chinese Australians to support this movement, as the issue was related to the rights of Chinese Australians who felt victimised

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24   *CAH*, 12 August 1905, pp.2–3.
25   *CAH*, 16 September 1905, p.2.
26   *CAH*, 16 August 1905, pp.2–3.
27   *CAH*, 4 November 1905, p.2.
28   *CAH*, 18 November 1905, p.3.

as members of the Chinese diaspora.[29] In 1904, the Manchu government authorised its diplomatic representative in Washington, Liang Cheng (梁誠), to negotiate with the United States State Department for a fair treaty that would replace the Chinese Exclusion Act (US) of 1882. Liang understood that it would be difficult to negotiate such a treaty without the full support of his own country. He suggested that an effective approach to the negotiations might be to boycott American products in China (Zhang 1966:29–30; Wong 1999:141–142). In his analysis of the boycott's origins, Sin-Kiong Wong states that, because Liang had handed his draft to the Waiwupu (外務部 Diplomatic Department of the Manchu government) and the State Department simultaneously, without waiting for the Waiwupu's approval, the subsequent revised draft sent by the Waiwupu confused the State Department officials, who lost faith in Liang. The State Department then authorised their diplomat in China, William W Rockhill, to negotiate directly with officials in Peking. Having lost his authority, an angry Liang supported the boycott. Chinese Americans also expressed their distrust of the officials in Peking (Wong 1999:143).

Interpreting Rockhill's appointment as a sign of American determination to resist renegotiation of the treaty, the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce announced that, if the American government failed to negotiate for a fair treaty in the following two months, the boycott would begin. The ultimatum, which took the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce into direct negotiations with the Americans, came as a surprise to both the Manchu and American governments, but won enthusiastic support from Chinese merchants in Guangdong province, Southeast Asia and Australia (Zhang 1966:108–119, 134–144). This may be seen as a further manifestation of the merchants' new position of influence and the potency of their economic nationalism in a modernising Chinese society (Ma 1996:82; Li 1994:159).

The international scope of the anti-American boycott movement was also a result of the flourishing network of newspapers and periodicals produced in Chinese communities within and outside China (Zhang 1966:51, 240; Wong 2001:6). As the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce negotiated with the American government between 10 May and 20 July 1905, the press encouraged Chinese in China to support the movement (Zhang 1966:51–52). Sin-Kiong Wong (2001:152) discusses a letter from the *Eastern Times* to the *TWT*, which attributes leadership of the anti-American boycott to journalists and intellectuals of the CERA, rather than to members of the

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29   *TWT*, 10 June 1905, supplement.

Chamber of Commerce.[30] There is no doubt that newspapers were the key to sustaining the movement internationally and, among them, the *TWT* was demonstrating to its Chinese-Australian readership a way of enhancing their sense of nationalism and the patterns of social leadership through participation in the movement. The regular circulation in Sydney of the *Eastern Times*, a leading Shanghai newspaper in promoting the boycott, meant that Chinese-Australian merchants were familiar with the anti-imperialism of Chinese merchants in Shanghai since late 1904. In a significant move, the *TWT* republished a whole page of reports from the *Eastern Times* about an incident in December 1904 in which a Chinese labourer was killed by Russian sailors.[31] The upsurge of anti-Russian sentiment and deepening anti-imperialism in Shanghai provoked by the incident further strengthened the anti-American boycott movement (Li 1994:146–147). Reports in the *Eastern Times* became an important resource for the *TWT* in its objective to circulate news of the anti-American boycott. The influence of the *Eastern Times* on the *TWT* exemplifies the scope and nature of the communication network that created the foundations of the anti-American boycott movement in Australia.

The anti–American boycott in Australia

On 12 June 1905, after the *TWT* had republished a proclamation from the *Eastern Times* advocating the anti-American boycott, the Sydney Chinese merchants organised a meeting of support at the CERA building.[32] The *TWT* also concerned itself with the reactions of Chinese Empire Reform Associations in Japan, America and Canada toward the movement,[33] and it was because of this wider concern, Sin-Kiong Wong argues, that the anti-American boycott movement in Australia was largely generated and organised by members of the Australian CERA. He believes that the movement began in Australia when the *TWT* published an essay by Kang Youwei in support of the boycott (Wong 2001:144). However, by the time it ran Kang's essay, the *TWT* had already published news of the boycott from the *Eastern Times* and had advised Chinese Australians to support it.[34] The special meeting of Sydney Chinese merchants in support of the blockade

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30 The *Eastern Times* was a newspaper established by members of the CERA (Ma 1996:251–252).
31 *TWT*, 18 March 1905, p.2.
32 *TWT*, 17 June 1905, supplement.
33 *TWT*, 17 June, 1905, p.2.
34 *TWT*, 10 June 1905, p.2 and supplement.

had also preceded publication of Kang's essay.[35] Yet Sin-Kiong Wong claims that there was no strong involvement of Chinese-Australian merchants or any other political group in the boycott movement in Australia. Wong places great emphasis on the political power of the CERA in regard to the boycott, but misunderstands the role and influence of the organisation in Australia. The political influence of the CERA was limited without the support of the Sydney Chinese merchants. Although the Melbourne and Perth Chinese had established organisations under the English name of the Chinese Empire Reform Association,[36] they were not subordinate to the Sydney CERA. Statements by Sydney Chinese members who enthusiastically devoted themselves to the movement allude chiefly to their economic rights and benefits, rather than to political concerns, which reflects the fact that the CERA's membership was drawn from the class of Chinese storekeepers, fruit traders and general merchants. The social network and personal involvement of these merchants was essential in extending the scope of the movement in New South Wales. The Australian movement resembled the anti-American boycott movements in North America and Southeast Asia, where they were guided and driven in large part by the Chinese merchants. Like their international counterparts, the Chinese-Australian merchants played a vital part in this movement. Behind their fervour there also lay increasing anxiety about their economic future in the context of the White Australia policy.[37]

For the Sydney Chinese merchants trade was flourishing, and, because business was so good, the increasingly virulent anti-Chinese atmosphere added urgency to their search for ways to secure their position. They were especially anxious about the latest draft of the American Chinese Exclusion Act, which prohibited entry of Chinese merchants, businessmen and students to America (Zhang 1966:21–23). Although neither the Manchu nor Australian federal governments had similar pieces of legislation that prohibited entry of Chinese merchants or students to Australia, the Sydney Chinese merchants were very concerned about the influence that the American legislation might have on the Australian government (Wong 2001:148). Consequently, John Hoe and other merchants emphasised the urgent need for Chinese merchants to petition for the rights of merchants and

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35   *TWT*, 17 June 1905, supplement.
36   I do not use CERA for the Melbourne group, although they adopted the same English title after 1904. I prefer to translate the name of the Melbourne group as New Citizen Enlightenment Association to differentiate the two groups.
37   For example, the *CT* strongly advised Chinese merchants to do whatever they could to protect their business rights in China and Australia (*CT*, 1 April, p.1, 22 April 1905, p.1).

students as part of their activism in the anti-American boycott movement. In the same issue of the *TWT*, it was reported that the Australian government's Commercial Agent for the Orient, Sir Matthew Nathan, had presented to the Prime Minister a plan to permit Chinese merchants and students to visit Australia under the more favourable conditions already granted to the Japanese.[38] The Sydney merchants' anxiety stands as a further link in the relationship between the anti-American boycott and the struggle against anti-Chinese restriction measures in Australia. The *TWT* strongly urged its readers to sustain the movement on the grounds that the fate of all overseas Chinese was bound up with one another.[39] It also claimed that success in the anti-American boycott campaign had the potential to influence the situation of Chinese Australians for the better.[40] The power of the newspapers and the depth and intensity of their readership's anxiety led the Sydney Chinese commercial elite to join with their Melbourne counterparts to hold the first Chinese Convention.

First Chinese Convention, 1905

While the Sydney Chinese were concerned about the possible consequences of the anti-American boycott on Chinese Australians, the Melbourne Chinese were struggling against a Factories and Shops Amendment Act which had been passed in the Victorian Legislative Assembly but defeated in the Legislative Council in 1905. The Melbourne Chinese also supported the anti-American boycott. In late July, as the *TWT*, the CERA, and the Chinese Merchants' Society were moving into their new building in Sydney, negotiations between the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce and the American government had broken down. The organisers of the boycott movement quickly swung into action in China, Australia, America, Canada and Southeast Asia (Zhang 1966:91–144; Li 1994:155–157). In August, the Melbourne Chinese began by donating the proceeds of their collections to associations promoting the boycott in China, and the Sydney Chinese merchants organised a meeting and collected about £20 to support the boycott.[41] Six Sydney Chinese representatives, Thomas Yee Hing, Samuel Wong, John Hoe, Charles Yee Wing (also known as Peter Yee Wing and Y. Ham Ying, 余榮 Yu Rong), Chan Harr and John Young Wai, all visited

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38   *TWT*, 10 June 1905, supplement.
39   *TWT*, 10 July, supplement, 22 July 1905, p.2.
40   *TWT*, 10 July, supplement, 5 August 1905, p.2.
41   *TWT*, 12 August 1905, supplement.

Melbourne to meet with Melbourne Chinese and others to organise the first Chinese Convention.

On the eve of the Convention, Yee Hing, who was to chair its first day, and other Sydney Chinese merchants gave public speeches in Melbourne's Chinatown to a crowd, according to the *TWT*, of at least 500 people. In a significant move in its anti-American boycott campaign, the *TWT* reprinted Yee Hing's speech in its entirety. He spoke of the need for the collective mobilisation of the Chinese community in the context of the boycott movement, outlining both the goals and the best way of achieving them. Yee Hing first emphasised that the central aim of the collective mobilisation of the Chinese community was to bring about a relaxation of the Immigration Restriction Act in Australia. He spoke of the importance of Sir Matthew Nathan's proposal, as giving hope for better prospects for the Chinese merchants' position in Australia and increasing benefits for China and Australia. He believed that the anti-American atmosphere would influence the American government to relax its restrictive legislation, and that this could alter the Australian government's attitude and lead to improvements in the conditions for Chinese in Australia. For this reason, he asked Chinese Australians to support the anti-American boycott movement, proclaiming that the best way they could support it was by giving money to the cause. He urged the Chinese to prohibit opium and save money for donation to anti-American boycott associations in China.[42] His speech explicitly connected three issues which together became the agenda of the Convention's first day: opium prohibition; the anti-American boycott; and the collective struggle against the White Australia policy.

The first Chinese Convention was the result of the social mobilisation of the Chinese merchants as they sought a solution to the stress and suffering produced by the burgeoning anti-Chinese atmosphere. Chinese communities in six states appointed 17 representatives to the Convention: T Yee Hing, Samuel Wong, John Hoe, Yee Wing and John Young Wai for New South Wales; CH Cheong, Wong Shi-Geen (黃世彥 Huang Shiyan), Ho Nam (何南 He Nan also known as CA Honan), William Ah Ket (麥錫祥 Mai Xixiang) for Victoria; Gee Wah (朱和 Zhu He) and Feng Zihong (馮子鴻) for South Australia; James Ah Get (蘇吉 Su Ji) and Yu Xihua for Tasmania; Chan Harr and James Moy Ling for Western Australia; and Yang Gengwu (楊庚午) and Lin You (林有) for Queensland.[43] T Yee

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42   *TWT*, 2 September 1905, supplement.
43   *TWT*, 2 September, 9 September 1905, supplementa. Yong (1977:186) claims that there was no representative for Queensland at the Convention. In fact, Queensland

Hing was appointed Convention chairman, and the three main items on its agenda were closely connected to points he had made in his speech the night before: the preparation of a petition to the federal government asking for confirmation that Chinese merchants, students and officials would be free to visit Australia; promotion of a federal bill preventing the importation of opium; and, support for the anti-American boycott movement.

The representatives' endeavours bore fruit, in that they met officially with Prime Minister Alfred Deakin soon after the Convention.[44] Deakin proved amenable to their entreaties and made a number of undertakings. The three agenda items were partly confirmed by the federal government over the next few months. Through the efforts of Chinese merchants in Sydney and Melbourne the federal government was persuaded to pass legislation in late 1905 prohibiting the importation of opium except for medical purposes.[45] Deakin also conceded the representatives' point regarding Chinese merchants, students and officials visiting Australia, and confirmed that these groups would be permitted to enter the country in 1906 (Yong 1977:19).

The first Chinese Convention of 1905 and the subsequent meeting with the Prime Minister were significant indicators of the motivation of the Chinese-Australian community to seek legitimation within the parameters of the federal Constitution. Until the 1905 Chinese Convention, there had been no coherent collective action by the Chinese-Australian community to oppose the Immigration Restriction Act. From 1901 to 1904, the community had striven against the Act through the petitions of well-known spokesmen like Quong Tart and CH Cheong and through the advocacy of Australian clergymen and steamship merchants (Yong 1977:13–17). Within the Convention, the Chinese-Australian community took its first national collective action against the White Australia policy—action that was notable for the leadership of the Sydney Chinese commercial elite.

Although the representatives intended to build on the foundations laid by the Convention by repeating the event annually, there were no further conventions for some years. The importance of the Convention was that it clearly demonstrated the rising influence of the Sydney merchants in mobilising the Chinese community. The subsequent collection of donations for the anti-American boycott confirmed the ability and leadership of the Sydney Chinese merchants. The Convention brought together Chinese-

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and Western Australia appointed representatives from other states to represent them at the Convention.

44   *TWT*, 9 September 1905, supplement.
45   *TWT*, 28 October, p.6, 30 December 1905, p.5.

Australian elites and located them collectively in the international movement of the anti-American boycott.

After the Convention

Raising funds for the anti-American boycott

After the Convention, Sydney Chinese merchants continued to promote the anti-American boycott, but they did not embrace the prohibition of trade with American companies as other Chinese did in China and Southeast Asia (Wong 2001:9). The *CAH* had expressed doubt about the effectiveness of boycotting American products.[46] On the other hand, prominent Glen Innes merchant Wong Chee encouraged Chinese Australians to seize the opportunity to export Australian produce to China while the Chinese were refusing to buy American goods.[47]

T Yee Hing's speech on the eve of the Convention provided guidelines for Chinese Australians as to what supporting an anti-American boycott would mean, couching his message in terms of respectability and political consciousness in the Australian context. On the practical side, the Sydney merchants looked to the *TWT* as a means to mobilise their social networks. Immediately after the Convention, the paper made its own proclamation of support for the boycott and distributed donation booklets to solicit funds for the boycott from Chinese firms and societies in Australia.[48] It enthusiastically encouraged the Chinese to contribute to four organisations supporting the boycott—the *Eastern Times* in Shanghai, War Yick and Co. in Hong Kong, Kwong Thy Hospital in Canton, and the *TWT* in Sydney. The *TWT* urged large donors to send their donations directly to the organisations in China, and promoted its role as a collection house for small contributions.

The Sydney Chinese merchants organised several fundraising meetings at the *TWT*-CERA building. They also held public fundraising rallies in the Waterloo and Wexford Street areas of Sydney, and in Tumut and New-castle.[49] In October 1905 alone, the *TWT* received over £300 in donations from Sydney merchants and their employees.[50] The Melbourne Siyi Society was the first group outside Sydney to respond to the *TWT*'s campaign. It had republished the *TWT*'s September proclamation and distributed copies

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46   *CAH*, 8 July 1905, p.5.
47   *TWT*, 28 October, p.5, 11 November 1905, p.6.
48   *TWT*, 23 September 1905, supplement.
49   *TWT*, 30 September, supplement, 7 October 1905, p.6.
50   *TWT*, 14 October, p.5, 21 October 1905, p.5.

to every Chinese in metropolitan Melbourne,[51] collecting £114 within a few days for the Guangdong Anti-American Boycott Association.[52] To encourage further donations the *TWT* published lists of donors and correspondence from supporters of the movement, the first ones being the lists of donors from Melbourne and Tumut. The response of Chinese merchants in Townsville in Queensland demonstrates the effectiveness of the *TWT*'s proclamation and the enthusiasm of Chinese constituents. Through a meeting organised by one of the town's merchants and a door-to-door campaign canvassing Chinese market gardeners, the Chinese community raised more than £100 in a few weeks in an area where the entire Chinese population was no more than 400.[53]

By circulating its proclamation and publishing the lists of donors the *TWT* instilled confidence in Chinese Australians that their contributions from their savings amounted to an investment, as the boycott had the potential to benefit them all in the future. The success of the campaign among Chinese Australians is evidence of the social power of the *TWT*, which became the central agent of the movement throughout Australia. As the fundraising campaign continued, the paper continued to publish not only news from Shanghai and America but also collections of speeches and songs (Wong 2001:160).

According to Sin-Kiong Wong's calculations, the amount donated through the *TWT* from September 1905 to July 1906 totalled £2,441, from 5,730 Chinese Australians, 514 Chinese firms and 22 clan and native-place associations (Wong 2001:153), most of which was collected in the first six months of the campaign. It compares favourably with the amounts raised among the Chinese of San Francisco, who according to figures compiled by the United States Congress donated US$15,958.75 (£3,196) between 20 June and 17 August 1905 (Wong 2001:27–28).[54] The size of the Australian contribution reflected the enthusiasm and political awareness with which Chinese Australians supported the Shanghai Chinese merchant group and the American-Chinese community. Chinese Australians appreciated both the moral justice of the movement and its potential influence in enhancing their position and rights as residents of Australia.

The anti-American boycott was not only a focus of political awareness. It also signalled the rising influence and leadership of the Sydney Chinese

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51 *TWT*, 30 September 1905, supplement.
52 *TWT*, 7 October 1905, p.6.
53 *TWT,* 14 October, p.5, 28 October 1905, p.5.
54 *TWT*, 7 October 1905, p.5.

elite. Chinese merchants and elites resented and felt humiliated by the unfair Chinese-American treaty. For them, supporting the boycott was their personal attempt to protect the international honour of China (McKeown 1999:325), and their support had connected the Sydney Chinese elite with the rising Shanghai Chinese elite. The *TWT* sent about £500 to the Anti-American Boycott Association in Shanghai in late 1905,[55] whereas donors in Victoria and the other states tended contribute to the Guangdong equivalent. It was to the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce that the Sydney Chinese merchants sent telegrams of support concerning the boycott, while the Melbourne and Perth Chinese contacted the Waiwupu (Zhang 1966:144).

The Shanghai merchants were at the centre of a somewhat sensational aspect of the boycott campaign. In September 1905 the *TWT* reprinted a letter sent to the *Eastern Times* by the president of the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce, Zeng Shaoqing (曾少卿),[56] in which Zeng claimed that the American government intended to assassinate him. The publication of the letter created an upsurge of sympathy for Zeng and approval for his leadership (Zhang 1966:156–165). He received hundreds of supportive messages every day, and one Shanghai newspaper reported that Chinese Australians were praising him as a Chinese 'saint' (Zhang 1966:162). *TWT* editor, Tong Chai-chih, wrote to Zeng of the similarities between the positions of Chinese Australians and Chinese Americans.[57]

By late 1905, however, the anti-American boycott movement in China was ailing. The pressure of foreign opinion and the attitude of the Manchu government combined to reduce its potency (Zhang 1966:167–216), and its decline was further exacerbated by Shanghai society, where there was a dearth of sophisticated and resourced commercial organisations, inadequate modern education for its citizens, and a lack of modern communication media (Zhang 1966:240). The activism of Chinese Australians on behalf of the boycott campaign was, however, undiminished. In November 1905, the *TWT* claimed that the American President was considering a relaxation of the treaty and implored Chinese Australians to defend their rights in Australia, seeking from its readers information and sources detailing effects of the White Australia policy upon Chinese in Australia. The paper intended to petition the Manchu government with the information it collected about the adverse situation of the Chinese in Australia.[58]

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55   *TWT*, 21 October, p.5, 11 November 1905, p.5.
56   *TWT*, 23 September 1905, p.2.
57   *TWT*, 21 October 1905, p.2.
58   *TWT*, 11 November 1905, p.2.

The anti-American boycott movement in Australia demonstrated the developing social leadership of Sydney's Chinese merchants, through their social network and the power of the press. The flourishing state of their fruit, import and export businesses in the early years of Federation impelled them to seek a modern constitution that would enable them to relocate their position in Chinese and Australian societies. On the other hand, after the Convention of 1905, the Sydney merchants were perceived as separating from other Chinese groups along class lines. This class division was strengthened in debate over political ideology and possible options for the resolution of the Chinese exclusion problem.

The division between the Sydney Chinese merchants and other Chinese leaders

The debate following the Convention further demonstrated the emergence of a new division within the Chinese-Australian community, in particular, that between the Sydney Chinese merchants and the Melbourne Chinese leaders. The first substantial parting of the ways occurred over the death of Feng Xiawei (馮夏威), a Chinese American who committed suicide outside the American Consulate building in Shanghai in July 1905 in protest against the unfair Chinese-American treaty. Sydney and Melbourne Chinese leaders interpreted Feng's suicide very differently. Chinese revolutionaries in Hong Kong interpreted his suicide in terms of folk legend, as a means of strengthening revolutionary consciousness (Wong 2001:239), and the Melbourne Chinese revolutionaries of the *CT* and the NCEA embraced this interpretation.[59]

However, the anti-American boycott movement in the Chinese-Australian community was not a support network for Chinese revolutionaries, as it was in Singapore (Yen 1976:64–65). Although the Sydney Chinese acknowledged and memorialised the death of Feng,[60] they did not organise any ceremony for him along the lines of those conducted by the anti-American boycott associations in Guangdong, Hong Kong, Macao, Singapore and America (Wong 2001:228–240). While the boycott was being transformed in some quarters from a collective action of commercial societies into a revolutionary legend, the Sydney Chinese merchants remained silent on this interpretation,[61] because after 1903 the political ideology of the Sydney commercial elite and the *TWT* had shifted from revolutionism to moderate constitutionalism.

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59   *CT*, 18 November 1905, p.1, 6 January 1906, p.1.
60   *TWT*, 30 December 1905, p.2.
61   *TWT*, 6 January 1906, p.6.

The debate over a solution to the increasing threat of Chinese exclusion widened the gap between the Sydney and Melbourne groups. By 1904 Sydney Chinese merchants had mobilised to secure their position in Australia, but between 1904 and 1905 the Sydney and Melbourne Chinese leaders had taken different paths in their approaches to the problems of the Immigration Restriction Act. The Melbourne leaders approved of the proposed establishment of a Chinese Consul-General in Australia, believing that he would be able to use legal and diplomatic avenues in the fight against the White Australia policy. Early in 1905 the Melbourne Chinese had decided to petition the Manchu government for the establishment of a consular position, after a meeting of the Chinese National Alliance (中華公會 Zhonghua Gonghui) held on 8 March to discuss the Melbourne community's assault on the Factories and Shops Amendment Act of 1904, at which William Ah Ket proposed petitioning for a Chinese consul.[62]

Sun Johnson of the *CAH*, who had earlier accused the Manchu government of neglecting the welfare of overseas Chinese by not making such a diplomatic appointment,[63] approved of the idea of a Chinese Consul-General, especially as a highly-ranked ally in the fight against the White Australia policy. The *CAH* had also made a point of expressing its admiration for the Japanese Consul-General's activities in Australia in helping Japanese immigrants to negotiate with the federal government.[64] However, Tong of the *TWT* was strongly opposed to the Chinese Consul-General proposal. He was highly sceptical of the worth of such an appointment, and feared that any Consul appointed by the Manchu government would be hostile to reform-minded Chinese aboard. Tong's doubts were based on the unfavourable conduct of the Chinese Consul-General in America and South America. He expressed his concerns about the financial aspect of the proposal, as the salary and expenses of a Consul-General would have to be met by the Melbourne Chinese community and Tong doubted the ability of the Siyi Society and other Chinese leaders to stay within budget.[65] The Convention in August came to no conclusion on the subject of a Consul-General.

Taking a variant line on the issue of immigration restriction, Sydney's representatives at the Convention proposed that the federal government be lobbied to open the doors to five classes of Chinese—merchants, students, officials, visitors and missionaries. In early 1906 the leaders of the Chinese

62   *CT*, 11 March 1905, p.3.
63   *CAH*, 6 April 1901, p.3, 1 October 1904, p.4.
64   *CAH,* 22 August 1903, p.3.
65   *TWT*, 29 April 1905, supplement.

Merchants' Society followed up on this proposal, urging Chinese Australians to sign a petition to parliament to that effect.[66] The Sydney Chinese also tried to gain support from Sir Matthew Nathan and in the middle of 1906 the *TWT* reported on discussions with him about increasing trade between Australia and China, which could influence Australia to allow Chinese immigrants once more.[67] Tong and T Yee Hing also visited Nathan to ask for more support. Although there was ultimately no important result from this meeting, it did reaffirm the CERA members' belief that the business stratum was a viable locus for the promotion of their position in Australia.

The Sydney Chinese merchants' proposed petition for the relaxation of entry restrictions on the five classes of Chinese was not, on the whole, accepted by the Chinese-Australian community. The specific problem for many was that the proposal ignored the rights and interests of the labouring classes. Two leaders of Chinese communities in Sydney came out in the press with accusations against the Sydney Chinese merchants,[68] and the *CT* published two articles, one by a Melbourne Chinese and the other from Townsville, which expressed suspicions that Sydney Chinese merchants were acting in their own interest.[69] The *TWT* responded in mid 1906 with an article encouraging Chinese Australians to unite in the struggle against the Immigration Restriction Act,[70] which immediately drew a response arguing that the Sydney merchants' proposal was no more than a self-serving strategic move. The author of that response was Chern Lee (黃麗泉 Huang Liquan), from Narromine in central west New South Wales, who pressed the point that the proposal ignored the rights of Chinese labourers and further asserted that it would do little to improve the position of the Chinese in Australia.[71]

As time went on, other Chinese voiced accusations of a different kind. They blamed the Sydney merchants for breaking the 1905 Convention's anti-opium agreement. When it was found after July 1906 that many cases of opium were being sold illegally, Chinese in Queensland and Melbourne, in particular, believed that some of the Sydney merchants were the sellers, even while they were promoting the anti-opium movement.[72] The *TWT* argued that the continued prevalence of illegal opium was a result of the opium

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66   *TWT*, 6 January 1906, p.6.
67   *TWT*, 30 June, p.3, 7 July 1906, p.3.
68   *TWT*, 3 February, p.6, 21 July 1906, p.6.
69   *CT*, 10 March 1906, supplement.
70   *CT*, 14 July 1906, p.2.
71   *CT*, 21 July 1906, p.6.
72   *TWT*, 30 March, p.3, 20 July 1907, p.2; *CT*, 25 September 1909, p.2.

smokers' addiction rather than illegal trafficking per se, but this failed to convince the public that Sydney merchants were not selling opium for their own interests.

The Sydney Chinese as an international elite

The class division between the Sydney Chinese merchants and other Chinese groups widened after 1906, and the *TWT* became a vehicle for the Sydney merchants to extend their public influence. With the international network of the CERA to draw on, the Sydney merchants were able to establish new transnational business enterprises and to become, in effect, an international elite. In embracing the public sphere through engagement with the press, religious institutions and global business networks, they embraced a new lifestyle as well as new patterns of social mobilisation and a new ethos of public participation.

From banana traders to international elite: 1905 to 1907

As noted in Chapter 4, Sydney's Chinese banana traders achieved considerable success in the early years of the 20th century, and in 1905 and 1906 Australian and Chinese journalists were reporting their achievements (Wickham 1906:54–60).[73] The burgeoning commercial status of the banana trading business enterprises reflected more than the upward mobility of the Chinese fruit traders; it was also a result of the entrepreneurial spirit of Sydney Chinese. Their involvement in the banana industry in Fiji provided opportunities that allowed them to prosper when misfortune hit the trade in Queensland, as it did in 1906 when a cyclone and other disasters severely reduced its banana crop. They imported large shipments of Fijian bananas, which triggered a major fall in the price of Queensland bananas, which made conditions conducive to importing more Fijian bananas, thus allowing them to monopolise the banana trade by the end of 1906 (Royal Commission on the Fruit Industry 1913:32–34, 38; Yeung 2004:226–228).

Some of the major Sydney Chinese banana traders significantly increased their wealth by extending their enterprises to Hong Kong. The story of Ma Yingpiu who led the proprietors of one of the principal banana trading companies, Wing Sang and Co., to invest in the first department store in Hong Kong, Sincere and Co., in 1900, has been told in Chapter 2. A Sydney store, Anthony Hordern and Sons Ltd, served as his model for the Hong Kong

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73   *CAH*, 7 October 1905, p.2.

establishment. The Australian influence on Ma's business extended to the choice of the Hong Kong store's name. Ma was impressed by the trademark of Anthony Hordern and Sons, which depicted a tree symbolising a guarantee of good faith to customers. This emblem of sincerity influenced Ma to design his Hong Kong shop as an exemplar of fair dealing and chose a name to give expression to his design (Xianshi gongsi 1924; Tan 1999: 80–81). Sincere and Co. enlarged its capital holdings in 1907 through a significant investment by Chan Harr on his return to Hong Kong from Sydney.

Another of the Sydney Chinese banana trading companies, Tiy Sang and Co., established a department store in Hong Kong in 1906 that was also run along Australian lines. Following Sincere's lead, Zhenguang and Co. (真光公司) adopted a fixed price policy (Mai 1989:87). Another of the Sydney Wing On and Co. proprietors, Gock Lock, returned to Hong Kong to establish a department store, to which he gave the name of his Sydney fruit shop—Wing On and Co (Chan 1998:74).

Wing On and Co. went on to establish an export house, a native bank, a hotel, knitting factories, a fire and marine insurance company, a manufacturing company, a life assurance company and a savings bank (Chan 1998:89; *Xianggang yongangongsi* 1932:5–9). Sincere and Wing On also set up the first Chinese-Australian style department stores in Shanghai between 1914 and 1918. Even though they had returned to China and Hong Kong, the Sydney Chinese banana traders retained their firms in Sydney. Other Chinese Australians were major shareholders and supporters of the international businesses these large traders established.[74] When Sincere and Wing On cooperated to establish the Great China Aerated Water Factory Co. (大中華汽水有限公司 Dazhonghua Qishui Gongxian) in Singapore in 1928, Sydney Chinese traders became major shareholders in the factory.[75]

Their experience in the banana trade inspired and equipped the Sydney Chinese businessmen to join an international-level financial elite. Long after their return to China and Hong Kong, they looked back with nostalgia on their business roots in Sydney, as a photograph of the original Sydney proprietors of Wing Sang and Co., taken in China in the 1920s to commemorate

[74] For example, Wing On and Co. of Sydney held a third of the shares in Wing On Insurance Co. (Hong Kong Public Records Office, Wing On Insurance Company archives, no. 122-5-20). Wing Sang and Co. of Sydney was also a shareholder of Wing Sang Co. Ltd of Hong Kong (Gordon Marr private collection, financial records of Wing Sang Co. Ltd, 1931).

[75] Gordon Mar private collection, letter from Ma Wing-Chan (馬永燦) to Mar Sun Gee (馬辛己), 1928.

their origins in 1890s Sydney, attests.[76] George Bew, a proprietor of Wing Sang and Co., returned to Shanghai to manage the Wing On department store in 1917. His daughter recalls that her father retained certain habits from his banana trading days in Sydney, long after his success as a merchant in China during the 1920s and 1930s, and that he often reminisced with his partners and friends about his early life in Sydney, as they turned the pages of photo albums from that time (Chen 2001:4, 24).

Contemporary scholars have shown interest in the reasons behind the international success of the Sydney Chinese banana traders. Yong (1977:51–52) points to their capacity for cooperation and their fortuitous decision to exploit the Fiji market as the core reasons for their success. Yeung Wing-on further points out that they benefited from improved relations with Chinese farmers (Yeung 2004:228). Others argue that Chinese-Australian families succeeded in establishing multiple enterprises in China through the unique cultural capital they brought to their efforts, including family solidarity, clan networking, localism, technical education, management skills and commitment to merit-based principles of advancement (Chan 1998:88). Lai Chi-Kong and Lien Linglin make the particular point that the Sydney Chinese fruit traders derived considerable cultural capital from their place in international Christian networks (Lai 1984:247–248; Lien 2005:147). As noted in an earlier chapter, most of the proprietors of Wing Sang and Co. and Wing On and Co. were members of the Reverend Young Wai's congregation at the Chinese Presbyterian Church, and they valued his support in their early days in cosmopolitan Sydney. Religious faith also contributed to the social credentials of Sydney Chinese Christians in the eyes of non-Chinese Australian society.[77] Their networking within the Christian Church is an indicator of their willingness to embrace Western modes of association to sustain their social networks.

Chinese-Australian merchants' own accounts indicate that they regarded their success because they had won the trust and respect of Australian society. Indeed 'trust' had become an important moral principle and value upon

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76   See photograph on p.107.
77   This was a specific and non-trivial benefit. Under the White Australia policy, recommendations from Christian missionaries could be advantageous for Chinese Australians. The recommendations from Young Wai and Cheong in 1913 for two Chinese editors to enter Australia were evidence of this advantage. When George Bew was preparing to return to China in 1917, he requested and was given a certificate from the Chinese Presbyterian Church identifying him as an elder of the Church. It may be assumed that the Chinese Presbyterian Church and Young Wai routinely provided recommendations and certificates to members of the congregation to facilitate their movement to and from China, Hong Kong and Australia.

which the Ma and Gock families sought to construct their multiple enterprises. Unusual among his retail competitors in Hong Kong, Ma Yingpiu, put great emphasis on good will between traders and customers, which he had learned from his Australian experience. Gock Lock, too, stated that his success in founding the Wing On Group stemmed from his recognition of the value of trust (Gock Lock 1949:4–5). A focus on developing customer trust also enhanced Wing On's banking business, through which it went on to raise considerable capital in loans and investments from Sydney banks and the Chinese community to expand its businesses to Fiji, Hong Kong and China (Gock Lock 1949:5–6; Chan 1996:84). Queensland fruit trader Taam Sze Pui believed that it was his contribution to the country that earned him the respect of both the Chinese and Australian communities, and that winning the trust of Australian authorities enhanced his social standing (Shen 1999:48). William Ah Ket of Melbourne also cited the Chinese merchants' perceived trustworthiness as vital to their success in Australian society.[78]

The new associations of Sydney Chinese merchants were built on trust and promoted trust as a fundamental principle of business practice. From this perspective the establishment of the Chinese Merchants' Society and CMDA in 1904 had a significant bearing on the success of the Sydney Chinese banana traders, a fact not often acknowledged in studies of Sydney Chinese international business networks. The major banana traders were the principal members of the Chinese Merchants' Society and the CMDA.[79] The involvement of Sydney Chinese banana traders in building these modern associations highlights the degree to which Western systems and values became embedded in Sydney Chinese business and social networks.

Ideas of democratic participation and civic rights were a driving force behind the success of the Sydney Chinese merchant community. The establishment of political organisations, commercial associations and religious congregations provided incentives to the banana traders to cooperate and mobilise their resources in order to promote their position and status, and new opportunities to draw on their social networks in their business innovations. Belonging to these new associations was, therefore, an important factor in the expansion of Sydney Chinese merchants' enterprises and in their transformation from local and regional banana traders to an international business elite.

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78 *CT*, 10 August 1904, p.2.
79 NBAC, 111/4/1, Chinese Chamber of Commerce of New South Wales, Records of meetings, 1903–1904.

Joining the international elite: the Chinese Empire Reform Association and its transnational information network

The power of the *TWT* and the international network of the CERA were critical factors in the emergence of Sydney's internationally-oriented merchant elite. The *TWT* made concerted efforts to embed the importance of civil education and modern culture in its readers' minds. A market for new literature flourished in the Sydney Chinese community over the first decade of the 20th century, in which the *TWT* played an important role by introducing the stories and ideas of reformers in China. By 1904 the *TWT* was introducing a range of new publications and periodicals to its Chinese readership, often in its role as an agent for newspapers of branches of the CERA in Japan, Hong Kong and America.[80]

As already noted, the *TWT* was an agent for the *Eastern Times* established by members of the CERA in Shanghai 1904.[81] Liang Qichao exercised control of the paper, including its editorial position, from his base in Japan (Ma 1996:251–252). Chinese in Sydney read the *Eastern Times* editorials in the *TWT* soon after their publication in Shanghai.[82] Because of the direct and indirect circulation of the *Eastern Times* in Sydney, the political concerns of the Shanghai merchants came to influence Sydney Chinese (Wong 1999:132–133), which accounts for the Sydney merchants' involvement in the anti-American boycott movement in 1905 and 1906.

The *TWT* was also an agent for an important Chinese literary journal, *Xinxiaoshuo* (新小說 *New Fiction*),[83] published by Liang in Japan. This periodical was a product of Liang's affirmation, first voiced in 1902, of the social value of the novel. The *TWT* agreed that the novel and other new forms of literature had the power to reform society.[84] From 1905 onward, the *TWT* sold an increasing number of Chinese publications from Shanghai, reflecting a concomitant increase in readership. An advertisement listing the publications it marketed included books published in Shanghai by Guangzhi Shuju (廣智書局), an organ of the CERA which published the writings of Kang and Liang and other works on political science and world history, modern school textbooks, novels and translations (Ye 2002:946–950). The proprietor of Guangzhi Bookshop, Feng Jingru (馮鏡如), had studied with *TWT* editor, Tong Chai-chih, under Kang and Liang in Japan. A further

80   *TWT*, 13 August 1905, supplement.
81   *TWT*, 30 July, p.2, 6 August 1904, supplement.
82   *TWT*, 7 January 1905, p.2.
83   *TWT*, 25 August 1906, p.5.
84   *TWT*, 30 April 1904, supplement, 11 May 1907, p.2.

connection between the Sydney readers and the Shanghai publishing houses was that Sydney Chinese merchants held shares in the publishing houses.[85] Through these institutional, personal and business connections, it was possible for the *TWT* to introduce new publications and intellectual fashions to Sydney very soon after their release in Shanghai. From the beginning of 1905, the *TWT* also began to publish columns of folk literature, becoming the first Chinese-Australian newspaper to publish short stories and folk literature in its pages.[86] At the end of 1906, the paper added two pages to each issue to accommodate the demand for its literary content, necessitating an expansion in its printing staff.[87]

While the *TWT* was at the forefront of a developing literature market of Chinese Australians, the Sydney Chinese merchants were also establishing literature clubs, including the Sydney Chinese Literary Society (雪梨國文社會 Xueli Guowen Shehui).[88] The club held competitions in writing Chinese couplets and was supported in its ventures by the *TWT* and businesses such as Yuen Tiy and Co. and Tiy Loy and Co.[89] Another new literature club, dedicated to serving Sydney residents from Liangdu (良都) in Zhongshan county, was the Bowen Society (博文社 Erudite literature society), founded in 1906 in Campbell Street near Kwong War Cheong and Co.[90] Kwong War Cheong's manager, Philip Lee Chun (李春 Li Chun), served as president. Lee Chun migrated to Australia in 1875 and worked as a gardener in Wellington, New South Wales. In 1883 he was naturalised as a British subject under the name Ah Tchee,[91] but later changed his name to Philip Lee Chun and moved to Sydney.[92] The firm of P Lee Chun belonged to the Tongshan Tang (同善堂) native-place association whose members hailed from the Zhongshan county.[93] The Bowen Society, however, was unlike a traditional clan club in its purpose and activities. The placement of a picture of Confucius in the centre of their meeting-space symbolised their commitment to Chinese culture and literature.[94] The

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85   *TWT*, 21 February 1903, p.3, 14 July, p.3, 4 August, p.6, 15 September 1906, p.6.
86   *TWT*, 21 January 1905, supplement.
87   *TWT*, 1 December, p.6, 15 December, p.5, 22 December 1906, p.5.
88   *TWT*, 29 April 1905, supplement.
89   *TWT*, 25 February 1908, supplement.
90   *CAH*, 23 March 1907, p.2.
91   Certificate of Ah Tchee's naturalisation, Certificate no.221, memorial no. 83/03273 (McCormack 2008).
92   See his explanation of the variants of his name on official documents (NAA, Attorney-General's Dept, Correspondence files, SP42/1, 36/813, Lee Chun to Collector of Customs, 1 February 1915).
93   *TWT*, 20 June 1908, p.6.
94   *TWT*, 1 April 1906, p.5.

society's rooms were available for merchants and other members to gather for celebrations, such as birthdays, and for informal conversation during their leisure time.[95]

As Sydney's Chinese merchants took on their new role, lifestyle and leadership in the Chinese-Australian community, they championed modern education in Sydney and their homeland, and were a significant component of the readership of the *TWT* and the membership of the CERA. From 1905, Sydney Chinese began in earnest to provide support for the establishment of modern schools in their native counties.[96] Chinese from the Dongguan and Zhongshan counties donated over £400 during 1905 to sponsor a new primary school in their home counties.[97] In 1906 the Ma and Gock families, founders of the department stores in Hong Kong, also donated £412 and £439 respectively to establish primary schools in their native villages.[98] The proprietors of Wing Sang and Wing On had established the first Christian church in their home county, which from 1906 provided a school for local children which took the name of the Shanghai publisher, Guangzhi (廣智) (Li 1992:67). Meanwhile, the Sydney Chinese merchants floated the idea of establishing a Chinese school and appointed two members of the CERA to its board, T Yee Hing and Henry Fine Cheong, who both wanted a military school similar to schools run by the American CERA. In the end, however, the idea was shelved.[99]

In the first decade of the 20th century, Sydney's Chinese merchants were accruing wealth faster than other Chinese Australians. They stood out from other Chinese in their consumerist lifestyle in addition to their modern philanthropic commitment to education and social welfare. Starting in 1906, the attention of readers of the *TWT* was drawn to extensive leisure activities and countless advertisements for Western goods, such as dresses and expensive watches. They also received reports and photographs of new Western dramas and the actors who played in them.[100] At the centre of Daisy Bew's recollections of life in Sydney in the 1910s was her family's bourgeois lifestyle (Chen 2001:13–14). The *TWT* introduced its readers to Sydney's biggest department store, Anthony Hordern and Sons, the model adopted

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95 *CAH*, 13 April 1907, p.3.
96 *TWT*, 2 April 1904, supplement, 3 June, p.3, 17 June, supplement, 22 July, p.2, 5 August, p.3 and 9 December 1905, p.3.
97 *TWT*, 17 June, supplement, 22 July, p.2, 9 September 1905, supplement.
98 *TWT*, 17 February, p.5, 24 February, p.6, 14 April 1906, p.5, 22 June 1907, p.7.
99 *TWT*, 15 April 1905, supplement.
100 *TWT*, 13 January, p.3, 20 January, pp.2, 5, 6; 3 February, p.5, 10 February, p.6, 14 April 1906, p.3.

by the Sydney entrepreneurs for their department stores in Hong Kong and China.[101] The Sydney Chinese embraced modern photography and used it to capture special events, such as excursions on the Emperor's birthday, celebrations of their community leaders' birthdays, and collective gatherings of various kinds.[102] A Chinese photographic establishment named Commonwealth Studio began advertising in the *TWT* early in 1906,[103] and met the growing demand from Sydney Chinese for commemorative photographs and identity photographs for public documentation.[104] In these and many other ways, the Sydney Chinese merchants' lifestyle came to resemble that of the Australian bourgeoisie.

In introducing its readers to Shanghai and international Chinese journals, literature and information, the *TWT* inspired and facilitated Sydney's Chinese merchants to connect with a wider international milieu. Their connection was further advanced by the alliance between the Sydney banana traders and the CERA which added impetus to the establishment of an international investment and political network. Flush with the profits from the expansion of the banana trade, the Sydney merchants looked for further investment prospects. They began investing in the timber industry in Hong Kong and Macao in 1904.[105] The CERA was keen to invest in industry and banks in China, Hong Kong and elsewhere (Kang Youwei 1982), so Sydney's Chinese merchants invested widely, including in China's railways, in the Mexican-Chinese Bank, and in modern schools, newspapers and bookshops in China. For example, from February to August 1906, Sydney Chinese invested about 300,000 yuan (£51,724) in the Canton–Hankou railway.[106] The merchants were motivated to invest in these overseas businesses not only by profit but also by a spirit of public welfare, as attested by the support given by the Sincere and Wing On department stores in Hong Kong to the creation of a voluntary Western-style midwifery organisation in Guangdong province.[107]

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101   *TWT*, 3 August 1907, p.2.
102   *TWT*, 1 September, p.5, 23 February, p.2, 24 August 1906, pp.6–7, 23 February, p.2, 13 April 1907, p.3.
103   *TWT*, 6 February 1906, p.6.
104   For example, George Bew used the services of Commonwealth Studio for photographs of his family as he prepared to return to China with his family in 1917. (NAA, Dept of Immigration, New South Wales Branch, SP244/2, N1950/2/3885; also photos in Chen (2001:11)).
105   *TWT*, 16 July 1904, supplement.
106   *TWT*, 30 June, p.6, 14 July, p.3, 21 July, p.5, 28 July, p.6, 4 August, p.2, 11 August 1906, p.5.
107   *TWT*, 10 October 1908, p.7.

The nature and scope of these investments demonstrate two concerns of the Sydney Chinese. One was their desire to promote the modernisation of their homeland, and the other was their commitment to the international CERA, cemented through links between the editors of the *TWT* and editors of other reformist newspapers in Singapore, the Philippines and America after Kang Youwei's visit to Southeast Asia in 1904 and 1905.[108] Connecting with other branches of the CERA gave the Sydney merchants opportunities and social resources to forge business relationships. From 1906 onwards, the *TWT* circulated in North America and Mexico through the wider CERA network,[109] attracting advertising revenue from across the Pacific in California.[110] The CERA network in Southeast Asia was expanding, with concomitant increase in the *TWT*'s circulation in the region. Its extended circulation enhanced its social purposes too, as evidenced by the fact that the wife of Glen Innes merchant Wong Chee placed an advertisement in its pages in her attempt to locate her brother, who had emigrated to Singapore 28 years earlier.

There were other avenues of connection between the Sydney reformists and their Southeast Asian counterparts. Reformist leader Xu Qin (徐勤), who had settled in Southeast Asia and developed reading clubs and newspapers to expand the influence of the CERA in the region, initiated contact with the Sydney CERA leaders.[111] In 1904 Ou Qujia (歐渠甲, also known as 歐雲樵 Ou Yunqiao), an editor of CERA newspapers in San Francisco, moved to Singapore to edit a new publication, *Nanyang zonghuibao* (南洋總匯報 *The Union Times*) and kept the *TWT* informed of the CERA's development in Southeast Asia.[112] In June 1906, a new branch was founded in Java. As the network of reformists in the Philippines, Singapore and Java grew, so too did the network of connections linking them with the Sydney Chinese. From late 1906, the *TWT* made space available for correspondence from Southeast Asia.[113] As the information network expanded, the international vision and networking capacity of the *TWT* was enhanced.

The CERA became more than an association pursuing a political agenda, and its members were encouraged to view it as an international club with the facilities to entertain and provide hospitality for them during their

108 *TWT*, 4 March 1906, supplement.
109 *TWT*, 23 June 1906, p.3 and 14 July 1906, p.6.
110 *TWT*, 22 September 1906, p.6.
111 *TWT*, 3 February, p.6, 17 February, p.3, 28 July, p.3, 22 May 1906, p.2.
112 *TWT*, 14 February 1903, p.3, 8 September, p.2, 3 November 1906, p.2.
113 *TWT*, 27 October, p.2, 1 December 1906, p.2, 20 July, p.2, 31 August 1907, p.3 and 28 December 1907, p.2.

travels abroad. In 1906, leading Sydney CERA members Chan Harr and James Choy Hing returned to Hong Kong via the Philippines, where Philippines CERA members made them feel welcome.[114] James Choy Hing cited these facilities as offering significant benefits for CERA members. In 1907 he returned from Hong Kong, Shanghai, Japan and Taiwan, full of enthusiasm for the networking opportunities, hospitality, and general assistance afforded him by CERA members at each port of call. The CERA's international network and modern organisational style attracted Sydney's Chinese merchants, who joined the association in increasing numbers in 1906.[115] After 1907, leading Sydney members Chan Harr and O'Ben had important roles in the Chinese Empire Reform Association of Hong Kong as well as their Sydney positions,[116] strengthening the links between the CERA and the Sydney Chinese merchants, as they consolidated the Sydney merchants' place in the business world of Hong Kong. Choy Hing even described members of the international CERA network as the 'gentry', implying that they were members of a modern international elite with the status of the old imperial elite of the Chinese empire.[117]

The Sydney Chinese merchants' international network was significantly extended when the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce opened a connection with them in 1908. In the previous year, as already noted, leading Sydney merchants had returned to invest in business in Hong Kong and China.[118] Encouraged by news of their investments, a representative of the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce (徐經明 Xu Jingming) was reported to have planned a visit to Sydney in 1908 to raise capital for the construction of a Chinese bank.[119] The Sydney CERA's most intensive contacts, however, were with Guangdong and Hong Kong. In 1908 Ma Yingpiu, Mark Joe, James Choy Hing, George Bew and Choy Chang (蔡昌 Cai Chang) established the Li Man Hing Kwok Weaving and Manufacturing Co. Ltd. (利民興國織造有限公司) in Hong Kong.[120] Leaders among the Sydney Chinese community were shortly thereafter appointed as governors of the Tung Wah Hospital in Hong Kong. Chan Harr and O'Ben were managers not only of Sincere and Co. but also of War Yick and Co., which was owned by the CERA in Hong Kong. T Yee Hing stood as a candidate for a local council in Guangdong

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114   *TWT*, 19 May 1906, p.6.
115   *TWT*, 25 August, p.3, 22 September 1906, p.3.
116   *TWT,* 11 December 1909, p.6.
117   *TWT,* 30 November 1907, p.7.
118   *TWT*, 24 March 1906, p.6, 29 February 1908, p.7.
119   *TWT,* 8 January 1908, p.2.
120   *TWT*, 24 October 1908, p.8.

province.[121] These are but a few examples of the growing number of Chinese Australians making names for themselves after 1905 in Hong Kong and Guangdong province, who had forged personal and business relationships in Australia and Fiji in the early 1900s that lasted long after they moved to Hong Kong and China.

The flourishing of the Sydney Chinese Empire Reform Association

The alliance between the Sydney Chinese merchants and the CERA not only transformed banana traders into international traders but also boosted the Sydney Association. In 1907 the banana traders' success approached its peak and, although some of them moved their centres of business to Hong Kong and China, they retained their business interests in Sydney. The growth of their enterprises and the manifold commercial connections of their networks enhanced their local authority. The *TWT* was at the same time affirming its role, especially in the process of promoting and developing civil society, through its progressive ideas and social vision.[122] From 1906 to 1909, the paper was more than just a source of information on transnational investment and the international CERA network. It was also promoting a modern urban lifestyle, the idea of diaspora, and the economic and cultural nationalism of the Sydney Chinese. The *TWT* was actively engaged with political ideology and communicated this to its readers. Membership of the Sydney CERA was increasing. The social leadership of the Sydney Chinese merchants was not seriously challenged by any other group in Australia until the creation of the office of Chinese Consul-General in 1908 and subsequently the emergence of new editors of the *CT* in Melbourne.

On the eve of the 1907 Chinese New Year, the Sydney members of the CERA, along with all other branches, accepted a new Chinese name for the Association, which changed from Baohuanghui to Xianzhenghui (憲政會 Constitutional Society), to emphasise its constitutional character.[123] Public discussion on the merits of a constitutional system had been stimulated by the Russo-Japanese War of 1905. In 1906, five representatives of CERA visited countries with constitutional monarchies, and, with other leading officials, advocated the establishment of the first constitution and parliament. They also proposed that the government rescind the exile of Chinese reformists and enhance the political status of the Han (Li 1960:21–39). The move

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121 *TWT*, 11 December 1909, p.6.
122 *TWT*, 16 March, p.2, 26 October 1907, p.2.
123 *TWT*, 2 February 1907, p.2.
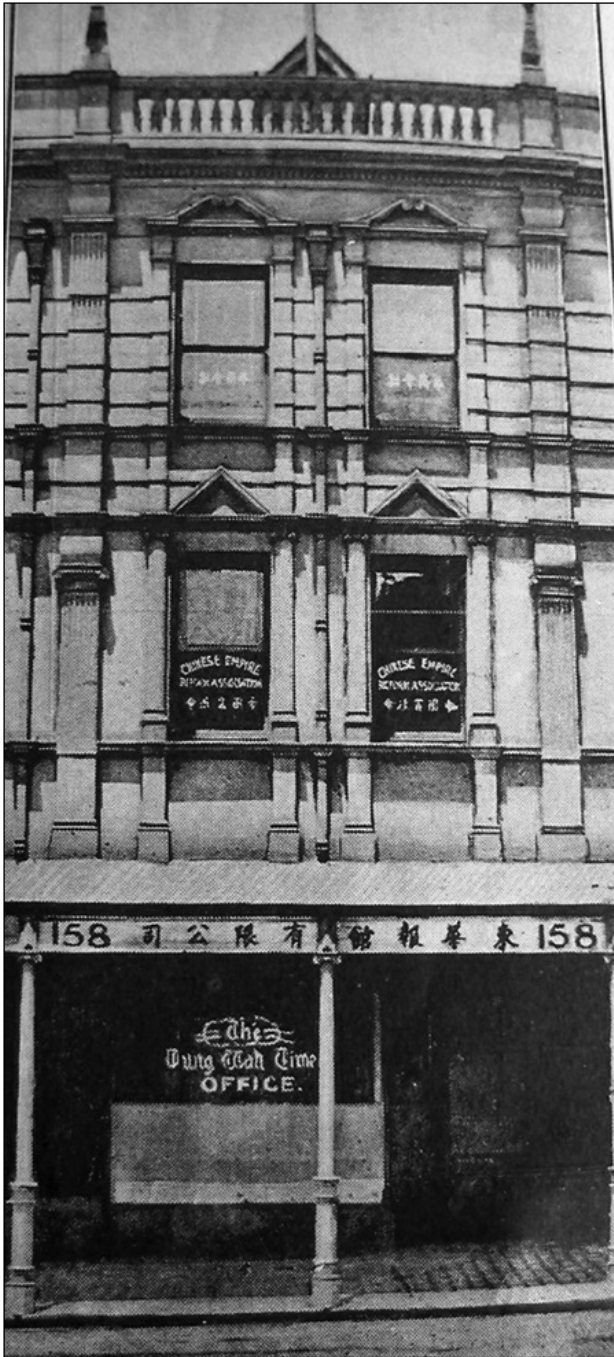
Tung Wah Times / NSW Chinese Empire Reform Association building.
(*Tung Wah Times*, 23 Jan 1909.)

toward the creation of a constitutional government thus transformed the legal status of the reformists, and the CERA leaders were keen to develop a positive relationship with the Manchu government in the hope of ending their exile. On the other hand, the shift affirmed their radical separation from Chinese republican revolutionaries.[124]

The Sydney CERA members organised a celebration and meeting in the early morning of Chinese New Year, at which Henry Fine Cheong credited the efforts of Kang Youwei in the move towards a constitutional China.[125] The Sydney members also enthusiastically expressed support for the construction of a CERA Headquarters in Guangdong province, the Association's first building in China and, within a month, had donated over £240 for its construction.[126] Thus, the Sydney CERA's political position of unequivocal support for constitutionalism was made clear. It also supported the Political Information Society (政聞社 Zhengwenshe), organised by Liang in Japan. After the Manchu government announced that it was preparing for constitutionalism, Liang moved this organisation to Shanghai. He asked Chinese in China and overseas to support a CERA petition for the first Chinese Parliament to be established immediately (Li 1960:40–46). The Sydney CERA solicited the support for the petition from all Chinese Australians and not just its own members,[127] but the plan achieved little because the Manchu government did not trust the CERA's motives (Li 1960:42–47).

The improved relationship between the Manchu government and the Chinese reformists had a number of effects, including the end of the exile of Tong Chai-chih, who returned to China in 1908.[128] In 1906, contact had been established between the Sydney CERA and Beijing when a Manchu representative, Hwang Hon-cheng (黃厚成 Huang Houcheng), visited Australia on a mission to investigate the circumstances of Chinese Australians. Since the editor of the Singapore *Union Times* had written to Thomas Yee Hing and Tong Chai-chih to introduce Hwang before he arrived in Sydney,[129] the Sydney CERA were prepared for his visit and entertained Hwang in style. In return, Hwang later presented an example of his calligraphy to the *TWT* as a gift—the newspaper's title in his own hand—which adorned the front page of every issue of the *TWT* from early 1907.[130]

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124 *TWT*, 2 March 1907, p.2.
125 *TWT*, 23 February 1907, pp.2, 6.
126 *TWT*, 19 January 1907, p.6.
127 *TWT*, 28 March, p.7, 16 May 1908, p.7.
128 *TWT*, 29 August 1908, p.7.
129 *TWT*, 27 October 1906, p.6.
130 *TWT*, 12 January 1907, p.1.

Picnic celebration marking the birthday of the Emperor Guangxu, 1907.
(*Tung Wah Times*, 24 August 1907.)

A model of social mobilisation: outdoor picnic and celebration

In August 1907 a major celebration for the birthday of the Emperor Guangxu was held at Clifton Gardens in North Sydney, attended by 1,200 people—a larger number than had ever turned out for such an occasion before.[131] The event came at a time of considerable accomplishment for the Sydney Chinese merchants. Their social and business networking with leading merchants in Hong Kong, the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce, and branches of the CERA had enhanced their position and status significantly. They were also moved to publicly emphasise their contribution to Australia.[132] The *TWT* dwelt on the positive outlook of the Sydney Chinese merchants and discussed the history, geographical environment and pattern of Australia's development, highlighting the absurdity of the dreams of white Australians to keep the country white.[133] It also worked to connect Chinese Australians with other Chinese suffering discrimination in other countries.

The celebration of the Chinese Emperor's and Confucius's birthdays by Sydney Chinese merchants reflected how this elite adopted elements of Australian urban lifestyle, such as the outdoor picnic, to advance their position in the wider society. At the turn of the century the outdoor picnic had

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131   *TWT*, 10 August 1907, p.7.
132   *TWT*, 5 January 1907, p.2.
133   *TWT*, 9 June 1906, p.2.

become a part of Australian urban lifestyle, especially among the middle class. Families demonstrated their affluence and independence by heading off to have a meal outdoors, particularly at the beach (White 2004:101–110). At this time the picnic had also become established as a routine component of Sydney Chinese merchant and middle-class life, serving both to unite the participants and present a positive image to the Australian mainstream—an important factor in a time of rising anti-Chinese feelings (Kuo 2010:193–198).

In the arrangement and performance of public picnics, Chinese participants showed up in their Western clothes to enjoy urban leisure and life. The picnic was not, of course, merely an ethnic public-relations exercise. Chinese who attended the picnics did so for the pleasure and gratification of sharing their leisure time with friends and family, and in so doing consolidated a process that had been gaining momentum for some years: traditional kinship and clan ties, long the central source of social and familial cohesion among Chinese, were giving way to the Western model of what has since been dubbed the 'nuclear family' (Kuo 2010:198–205).

Traditional holidays such as the Chinese New Year, Qing Ming and Guan Di's birthday had long been part of the Chinese Australian calendar and these continued to be celebrated. By publicly celebrating both new and traditional festivals, the Chinese of Sydney sought to introduce a wide array of Chinese national (or ethnic) symbols to the city's non-Chinese residents.

The promotion of new Chinese public holidays added a secular component to Chinese civic rituals in place of the purely religious celebrations. In 1904, when Sydney Chinese temples such as the Sze Yup Temple and the Yiu Ming Temple were in the throes of organising major ceremonies with traditional Chinese clan clubs, the *Tung Wah Times* editorialised in strong terms against these events, warning its Chinese readers that religious rituals, especially those involving public spectacles such as 'dragon and lion dancing', would exacerbate ignorant prejudice among Australians against the supposedly 'uncivilised' Chinese in their midst.[134]

Within the narratives of the *Tung Wah Times*, the Emperor and Confucius fostered a secular symbol for the community. The promotion of public holidays, civic commemorations and regulated working hours, via the Chinese-language press, located Chinese readers within a modern grid of social, cultural and political allegiances, in a local, national and imperial matrix.

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134   *Tung Wah Times*, 6 February 1904, p.3; 7 May 1904, supplement.

A crucial aspect of this break with traditional attitudes was exemplified in the increasing involvement of women and children in public activities. This is not to say that Australia's urban Chinese went so far as to abandon traditional ties, but their centrality in the lives and values of many was radically reduced.

A case of social mobilisation: donations for the Chinese Navy, 1908

The work of the Sydney Chinese merchants and the *TWT* in the anti-American boycott campaign established a model of social mobilisation for raising donations. The merchants made connections with other Chinese Australians through their business networks, and the *TWT* exploited its circulation network, especially prosperous Chinese-Australian firms, to promote the cause for which it sought contributions. Through these avenues of community confidence and trust, a significant amount of money was raised.

Between 1906 and 1908, the *TWT* and the Sydney merchants conducted further fundraising campaigns, especially for victims of natural disasters such as the San Francisco earthquake, the Hong Kong typhoon, the famine in the Zhejiang province, and floods in parts of Guangdong province. The main organisations involved in fundraising were leading CMDA firm Wing Sang, leading CERA player On Cheong and the *TWT*. For the fundraising campaigns the Sydney merchants organised another Relief Society, with Wing Sang as its main representative. Chinese Australians donated money to the Sydney organisation they trusted, and Wing Sang transmitted the funds to the overseas recipients. In this way, £180 was raised for disaster relief in San Francisco, £400 for Hong Kong, and £160 for the Zhejiang province.[135] Because the Chinese-Australian community was relatively niggardly in its support for the Zhejiang province, the CERA donated a further £200 and asked for assistance from the Sydney authorities.[136] The *TWT* reported that in response to this request, the Sydney Town Hall collected £500 for famine relief in Zhejiang province, which is an indication of the social power of the Chinese merchants of the CERA in Sydney public life beyond the Chinese community.[137] Independent of the CERA fundraising efforts, the *CAH*, with the help of the Lin Yik Tong, also solicited donations from the Western managers of steamship companies for Zhejiang province. The *TWT* not only claimed that the

135   *TWT*, 9 February 1907, p.7.
136   *TWT*, 30 March, p.3, 20 April, p.6, 4 May 1907, p.7; *SMH*, 2 July 1908.
137   *TWT*, 8 June 1907, p.7.

CAH had copied the fundraising approach of *TWT* and the CERA, but also accused the *CAH* of behaving unethically by keeping 10% of the donations for its own purposes.[138]

In 1908 the Sydney CERA took up another collection, this time for the establishment of a Chinese Navy in association with a concurrent anti-Japanese boycott campaign. A collection to fund a Chinese Navy had been proposed by Kang Youwei in late 1906;[139] his proposal had attracted little attention from Chinese Australians until an incident involving a Japanese steamship occurred. In February 1908, the Japanese steamship *Erchenwan* (二辰丸) was found to be transporting weapons for Chinese revolutionaries to Macao and was detained by a Manchu naval force. The Japanese Consul-General issued a formal protest over the detention, and diplomatic negotiations resulted in an apology from the Manchu government and an indemnity for the Japanese government, which enraged many in China and led to an anti-Japanese boycott movement in Shanghai, Guangdong and Hong Kong.

The Sydney Chinese Merchants' Society supported the boycott after receiving requests from the *Xianggang shangbao* (香港商報 *Hong Kong Commercial Daily*) and the Wah On Exporters & Importers Association (華安商會 Hua'an Shanghui) of Hong Kong.[140] The CMDA held a meeting to encourage the Sydney Chinese to support the boycott at which it was decided to regulate participation in the boycott movement. It enthusiastically encouraged the Chinese to avoid Japanese goods and shipping companies and asked them to sign an agreement for the duration of the boycott movement that included a £50 penalty for any signatory breaking the boycott regulations. The *TWT* reported that over 300 people were at the meeting and that there were no objections to either the boycott or the idea of its regulation.[141]

However, the proclamation of an anti-Japanese boycott movement by the Sydney Chinese did not have the unanimous approval of the Chinese-Australian community. Opposing opinions circulated which led the *TWT* to emphasise the importance of patriotism over personal beliefs, and to report support for the anti-Japanese boycott movement in Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and Fiji.[142] Their reports overstated the support, however,

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138　*TWT*, 4 May 1907, p.7.
139　*TWT*, 29 September 1906, p.2.
140　*TWT*, 23 March, p.7, 4 April 1908, p.2.
141　*TWT*, 4 April, pp.2,7; 11 April 1908, p.7.
142　*TWT*, 11 April, p.7, 18 April, p.7, 25 April, p.2, 2 May, p.7, 9 May 1908, p.3.

as many Chinese Australians did not fall into line on the issue and Chinese firms in Cairns, Brisbane and Thursday Island continued to sell Japanese products.[143] In Melbourne, the *CT* explained that it could not refuse to publish advertisements for a Japanese steamship company with which it had a one-year contract.[144] On the other hand, a Chinese living in Uralla, Pang Zijun (龐子峻), wrote to the *TWT* in favour of the naval fundraising campaign.[145] He argued that the Manchu government had given in during the negotiations with Japan over the *Erchenwan* simply because it had no substantial naval force with which to protect China—an analysis accepted by Lin Yik Tong without hesitation.[146]

At the Sydney CERA's first fundraising meeting for the Chinese Navy Fund in June 1908, 36 Sydney Chinese donated a total of £500.[147] By the end of June local merchants had raised almost £1,000.[148] Despite the fact that Chinese Australians were at the same time involved in collecting donations for the relief of Guangdong flood victims, the amount raised for the navy exceeded the £800 raised for the purely charitable cause of disaster relief.[149] The Sydney Chinese merchants' level of engagement with the navy campaign reflected their increasing enthusiasm for a modernised and militarised China. James Choy Hing exemplified the merchants' view on this issue when he stated that, on his visit to Japan and Taiwan two years before, Western passengers aboard the steamship had shown him scant respect until the moment they saw Chinese gunboats near Shanghai harbour. This experience left Choy Hing a strong supporter of a modernised and militarised China. He was further influenced by his journeys within Japan, because the Japanese—even Japanese women—showed a high level of enthusiasm toward their own reform movement.[150] As it turned out, although Japan had long stood as a model in the eyes of Chinese reformists, it was an adversarial moment—the *Erchenwan* incident—that spurred Chinese Australians to pursue the Japanese model for China.

The CMDA organised a navy-support meeting at Queen's Hall in Sydney on 19 July[151] that was very well attended and was addressed by more than

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143   *TWT*, 23 May p.7, 30 May, p.2, 13 June, p.6, 22 August 1908, p.7.
144   *TWT*, 18 April 1908, p.2.
145   *TWT*, 2 May 1908, p.3.
146   *TWT*, 16 May pp.2, 7; 30 May 1908, p.2.
147   *TWT*, 6 June 1908, p.7.
148   *TWT*, 27 June 1908, p.6.
149   *TWT*, 19 September 1908, p.7.
150   *TWT*, 1 August 1908, p.6.
151   *TWT*, 11 July 1908, p.7.

ten speakers, including some women.[152] Ping Nam of On Cheong and Co. chaired the meeting, attended also by a Chinese special commissioner on a mission in Salmon, Lin Jun Chao. Mrs Gock Quay and the wife of Joe Sing encouraged Chinese women to support the Chinese Navy campaign, and Choy Hing, in particular, voiced his appreciation of the women's involvement. The women did not only donate money; some gave their jewelry. On that night nearly £1,200 was collected.[153] On Cheong and Co. donated £300, despite having contributed some weeks previously. Tiy Sang and Co. donated £200, Wing Sang and Co. £157, and Goon Lee Shing and Co. £100. Chinese antiquaries also contributed more than £400.[154] The meeting collected further donations from merchants who had already contributed. Together the two meetings raised more than £2,000 for the navy appeal.

Sydney Chinese merchants did not hand the money collected over to any particular institution. At the 19 July meeting it was decided to organise a Chinese Navy Association, and on 25 July it was announced that all moneys donated for the Chinese Navy were to be held in trust by five Chinese firms—On Chong and Co., Sun Suey Wah and Co. (新遂和 Xinsuihe), Kwong War Chong and Co., John Hoe, and Lee Sang and Co—until they could be passed to the first Chinese Parliament once it was finally convened. The Chinese Navy Association implored the Manchu government to waste no time in establishing the first parliament,[155] and Ping Nam and Henry Fine Cheong petitioned the Governor of Guangdong province to explain the purpose of the Chinese Navy Association. The Governor, surprised by their approach, asked the first Chinese Consul-General to investigate Ping Nam and Fine Cheong.[156]

There is no evidence that the Sydney Chinese merchants did transmit the money held in trust once the first Chinese parliament was established in 1913. Thus the pro-Navy movement was distinguished from the anti-American boycott movement of 1905 in several ways. First, it is likely that the donation was never forwarded to those for whom it was intended. Secondly, the Sydney merchants did not campaign on behalf of the Navy in Waterloo and Wexford Street, where the lower-class Chinese lived, as they had in the earlier campaign, and there was less door-to-door collection

152 *TWT*, 25 July 1908, p.2.
153 *SMH*, 20 July 1908.
154 *TWT*, 25 July p.7, 1 August, pp.6–7, 8 August 1908, p.6.
155 *TWT*, 25 July 1908, supplement.
156 ACCG, Chinese correspondence,10 February (lunar calendar) 1909.

activity. Third, it appears Sydney Chinese merchants undertook the collection campaign to demonstrate their capacity to set their own terms in dealing with authorities in China. In this sense the campaign was designed for the conspicuous display of the growing strength of the Sydney Chinese merchants' community in their wider international setting.

Joseph Esherick and Mary Rankin argue that Chinese local elites reinforced or maintained their positions through the use of resources such as:

> material (land, commercial wealth, military power); social (networks of influence, kin groups, associations); personal (technical expertise, leadership abilities, religious or magical powers); or symbolic (status, honor, particular lifestyles, and all the cultural exchanges that inform Pierre Bourdieu's fruitful concept of 'symbolic capital') (Esherick & Rankin 1990:11).

This analysis could well apply to the Sydney Chinese merchants, whose power and social mobilisation was derived from their wealth, business networks and 'symbolic capital', which provided their respectability and status. The fundraising campaigns for the anti-American boycott, numerous charitable causes, and the Chinese Navy stand as important evidence of the way the Sydney merchants reinforced their leadership through ostentatiously large donations, business networking, and the wide circulation of a newspaper that often carried their voice. The donation lists published in the press demonstrated the relative wealth and power of particular Chinese merchants in the city. Their particular opinions were circulated via newspapers and public speeches. The experience of extensive fundraising campaigns and transnational transmission of money demonstrated the growing power and mutual trust among Sydney Chinese merchants.

The declining influence of the Sydney Chinese merchants after 1908

The international network of CERA was an important factor in the development of the local leadership and standing of Sydney's Chinese merchant elite at the beginning of the 20th century. Within a few years, however, their position was less certain. A major factor in the reduction of the Sydney merchants' power was the increasing anti-Chinese atmosphere generated by the White Australia policy, which caused more amd more merchants to return to China. They had been disappointed by the White Australia policy that prohibited their participation in political elections,[157] and they felt

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157   *TWT*, 7 September 1907, p.2.

their disappointment increasingly as anti-Chinese sentiment turned directly towards them.[158]

In February 1908, the *Evening News* ran an article attacking the monopolisation of the banana trade and other fruit markets by Chinese traders.[159] The usually upbeat *TWT* expressed concern about the future of Chinese merchants in Australia and New Zealand,[160] and George Bew stepped in to defend the rights of the Chinese fruit traders in terms that reflected a measure of pessimism about the future of the Chinese fruit trade because of the increasing stress of living and working under the White Australia policy. Bew, with other leading merchants TJ Law, Tong Chai-chih, C. Lean Fore (陳聯科 Chen Lianke), John Hoe and Chen Bing (陳炳), then engaged in heated debate with the general public in the local Sydney newspapers.[161]

White Australia had, as already noted, shaped the group identity and institutional alliances of Sydney Chinese merchants. As the Sydney merchants waged their struggle against the White Australia policy and its effects, their capacity for social mobilisation was initially extended to embrace the broader Chinese community. When a number of Sydney Chinese merchants organised the CMDA in 1904 to do battle with the Anti-Chinese and Asiatic League, other elements of the Chinese community brought their networks into an alliance with the merchants' efforts. But after the first Chinese Convention in 1905 the merchants found that their petitions on Chinese immigration to Australia were not always welcomed by other groups in the Chinese community, as will be discussed in Chapter 6. As the influence of the CERA began to decline internationally in 1907 and 1908, the Sydney merchants' leadership of the national Chinese community came under challenge.

In 1907, the Melbourne and Perth branches of the CERA adopted an independent line and ceased to conform to the directives of the Sydney branch.[162] When a new branch was founded in Adelaide that year, the Sydney merchants failed to extend their influence into that group.[163] Their voice was increasingly disregarded by Chinese reformers and merchants elsewhere. To add to their problems, from 1902 to 1908 an alternative pattern of leadership and networking, involving a loose alliance of secret

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158 *TWT*, 22 February, p.7, 29 February, p.7, 14 March, p.7, 11 April 1908, p.7.
159 *EN*, 22 February 1908.
160 *TWT*, 29 February 1908, p.2.
161 *TWT*, 7 March, p.7, 11 April, p.6, 13 June, p.7, 20 June, p.7, 4 July 1908, p.7. *SMH*, 6 June 1908.
162 *TWT*, 4 May 1907, p.2.
163 *TWT*, 23 February, p.7, 16 March 1907, p.7.

society lodges, native-place associations and an expanding Republican revolutionary network, was developing rapidly in Sydney and Melbourne to challenge the dominance of the Sydney merchant elite. Faced with these growing revolutionary networks, on the one hand, and the establishment of the position of Chinese Consul-General in 1908 to represent the Chinese imperial government, on the other, it was only a matter of time before the leadership of the Sydney Chinese merchants could be discounted in the politics of the Chinese-Australian community.

IN THE SHADOW OF THE CHINESE URBAN ELITE

During the first decade of the 20th century, the Sydney Chinese commercial elite developed its leadership status through its expanding wealth, networking and the strength of its social associations. From 1904 to 1908, they established a Chinese-Australian style of transnational enterprise and political participation. Feng (1953:119, 1954:134) claims that two factors inhibited the mobilisation of Chinese revolutionaries in early 20th century Australia. The first was the powerful influence of the Sydney CERA, which reached a peak during the visit of Liang Qichao at the end of 1900. The editor of *TWT*, the voice of the Sydney CERA, was also an influential figure in his own right. Tong Chai-chih was of a revolutionary disposition and, along with his older brothers in China, was more inclined to value the support of the secret societies than were other members of the CERA (Feng 1954:73). By 1903 Tong had nevertheless played an instrumental role in transforming the political position of the Chinese commercial elite from revolution to constitutionalism. Although a number of Chinese merchants sympathised with the revolutionary party, the revolutionaries did not establish significant networks or activist groups among merchants at this time.

The second reason a revolutionary network did not become established in Australia was the effect of the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901 in limiting the number of Chinese revolutionaries entering Australia. It was much easier for revolutionary fugitives to gain entry to British colonies in Southeast Asia where Chinese immigration was encouraged by the colonial governments in the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States in the early 20th century. Once there they could hide among other immigrants and earn a living while they engaged in revolutionary activities (Yen 1976:41). Australia, which allowed only a few immigrants with family or workplace connections to enter the country, did not offer such opportunities.

Despite these inhibiting factors, four events in 1908 in Australia indicated a strengthening of a revolutionary alliance in the face of increasing uncertainty in the leadership of Sydney Chinese merchants. The first was the decision of the Yee Hing Society in Sydney to call their hall a Chinese Masonic lodge, which confirmed their ties with Australian Freemasonry and distinguished the Sydney Yee Hing Society from other lodges which were associated with sacred temples. The second event was the decision of Melbourne's New Citizen Enlightenment Association to remove 'New Citizen' from its name in order to distance itself from the Sydney CERA and its political ideology. Following that decision, the Enlightenment Association appointed two new Chinese editors to the *CT* in order to promote revolutionary ideas in Melbourne. The fourth event, several months later, was the arrival of the first Chinese Consul-General in Australia. In his position as Consul-General he had considerable potential to challenge the power of Sydney's CERA merchants, and to influence and control Chinese communities across Australia.

The four events mark the change in patterns of leadership from styles based on kinship and native-place networks to new foundations based on ethnic and diaspora identity from 1908 on. The change had begun before 1908, as already noted, when new social alliances and patterns of leadership had begun to emerged in Sydney and Melbourne of their own account. The events of 1908 brought these developments to a head and fostered new alliances between revolutionary forces in Sydney and Melbourne.

From Yee Hing Society to Chinese Masonic Lodge

An alternative pattern of leadership: CAH, *temple and Yee Hing Society*
Yong and Fitzgerald both discuss the transformation of the Sydney Yee Hing Society as the result of connections made between the Chinese Yee Hing Society and Australian Freemasonry. Yong (1977:160) believes that James A Chuey had an established friendship with Australian Freemasons, but there is little evidence to support this claim.[1] However, John Fitzgerald discusses the transformation of the Yee Hing Society in the first decade of the 20th century from a rural network to an urban organisation under the

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1   Yong draws on a *CAH* report (8 August 1917, p.3) to establish a connection between JA Chuey and Australian Freemasonry in Junee. He may have misread the name of the association as it had been translated into Chinese by *CAH*. Normally, *CAH* translated Australian Freemasonry as 'Yongrenhui' (雍仁會). The report, however, refers to 'Rendehui' (仁德會).

leadership of Moy Sing and James A Chuey. The transformation successfully established the Yee Hing Society in Sydney as an urban institution in the early 20th century (Fitzgerald 2007:96, 99, 107). The transformation of Sydney Yee Hing Society also indicated an alternative pattern of leaderhip combining the power of newspaper, religion and brotherhood.

Before the 20th century, it had been difficult for the Sydney Yee Hing Society to broaden its leadership base in urban Sydney. The Society had not modernised its economic base, as secret societies of the British Straits Settlements in urban settlements had done (Mak 1985:Chapters 4 and 6). The Sydney Yee Hing Society still relied on gambling for its income and, in the first decade of the 20th century, extended its reliance on lotteries to secure its finances.[2] The Society's involvement in gambling and illegal activities undermined its social position and reputation in the city. A leading member of the Sydney Yee Hing Society, Chow Kum (周錦 Zhou Jin), owned one of the largest cabinet-making factories, which was deemed an eyesore by Sydney authorities and connected to a lottery bank and fan-tan house (New South Wales Royal Commission 1892:481).[3]

Although the investigations of the Royal Commission on Alleged Chinese Gambling in 1891 and 1892 failed to confirm the gambling and illegal activities of the Sydney Yee Hing Society, the process of the investigation had some impact on the structure of the Society. There is evidence to suggest that the Society underwent a leadership change and structural transformation in March 1892,[4] when the Sydney Society broke into two factions, with Yan Kong and L On Ming taking over leadership after Moy Sing stepped down.[5] It appears that the Sydney Yee Hing society went through a number of difficult years in the 1890s. According to Yeung Ku Wan, then president of the Revive China Society (興中會 Xingzhonguui) in Hong Kong and a Master Mason of the Hong Kong Lodge, the Revive China Society planned to extend its influence through networks of Chinese Masons in Southeast Asia, South Africa, Northern Europe and Australia (Chang 1987:51–52). As already noted in Chapter 3, he sent representatives of the Gemingcujintuan to promote revolutionary and republican views among Chinese in Australia in 1899, but found it difficult to develop any capacity or influence there. He was murdered in Hong Kong before his planned visit to Australia in 1900 (Fitzgerald 2007:87).

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2   *TWT*, 24 March 1906, p.5.
3   Chow's leadership was demonstrated in an incident in 1905 (*CAH*, 1 July 1905, p.5).
4   *TWT*, 30 April 1904, supplement.
5   *CAH*, 26 April 1913, p.5.

On the other hand, the rising leadership of James Ah Chuey (黃柱 Huang Zhu, also known as 黃柱穩 Huang Zhuwen and 黃勝世 Huang Shengshi) had been involved in developing the Yee Hing Society in the southern rural town of Junee, where he was a wool broker.[6] He had migrated to Australia in about 1878 and had got into the wool trade in 1887.[7] He organised consignments of wool to a Sydney firm for over 20 years on behalf of thousands of woolgrowers in southern New South Wales.[8] When Chuey moved to Sydney in 1917,[9] he had a social network that extended throughout the southern mountains and the Riverina from Junee and Tumut to Cootamundra, Wagga Wagga, Wyalong and Barmedman.[10] His marriage to an adopted daughter of James Chung-Gon (鍾潮孔 Zhong Chaokong), of Tasmania, who was from the same county in Siyi as Chuey, deepened his links with other migrants who had come from the Siyi district to Tasmania and Melbourne and to southern New South Wales. One of Chuey's sisters-in-law married Zeng Lun (曾倫), who worked for his uncle in Tumut, who was in turn the business partner of Dang Ah Chee (曾麟趾 Zeng Linzhi, also known as Dang Leng Chee), an important businessman and community leader in Tumut.[11] Chuey and his wife organised the wedding of Zeng and Chung-Gon's daughter at Junee. Chuey owned the premises of the Yee Hing Society at Tumut in partnership with Willie Shai-Hee (Fong 1998:21).

Chuey was not well known amongst the Sydney Chinese until his involvement in establishing the Sze Yup Kwan Ti Temple in 1903. This temple was initially founded in November 1898 by a group of Siyi merchants, including the proprietors of Sun Hing Jang, Quan Lee and Co., Sun Kwong Hing and Co., and Quong Tart.[12] The main deity of the temple in Glebe, Guan Di, was also that of the See Yup Temple in Melbourne. Significantly, this was the first Guan Di temple in urban Sydney. Conflict arose between the Sze Yup Kwan Ti Temple and the *TWT* in 1903.[13] While the Sydney Chinese commercial elite criticised the establishment of the Sze Yup Kwan

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6   *CAH*, 2 April 1904, p.4.

7   See letter from Chuey to Morrison, 6 August 1912 (SLNSW, MLMSS 312, George Ernest Morrison papers).

8   *SMH*, 1 March 1912.

9   *CAH*, 15 December 1917, p.4.

10   Chuey to Morrison, 6 August 1912 (SLNSW, MLMSS 312, George Ernest Morrison papers).

11   *CAH*, 4 November 1903, p.3. For more on Dang Ah Chee's network, see Bagnall (2006:141–142, 201, 255).

12   *TWN*, 19 November 1898, p.4; *CAH*, 6 February, p.5, 14 November 1904, p.2.

13   *TWT*, 6 February, p.3, 13 February 1904, pp.2–3. The *TWT* claimed that some people tried to prevent its further publication after it had published criticism of the Temple.

Ti Temple because it encouraged superstitious beliefs, the *CAH* and the Yee Hing Society enthusiastically supported its establishment.[14] This debate brought the *CAH* and Yee Hing Society closer together.

Chuey was appointed president of Sze Yup Kwan Ti Temple in 1903,[15] and was the only president whose social network was based outside urban Sydney. Within a few months of his taking office the rebuilding of the Sze Yup Kwan Ti Temple was completed at a cost of £1,377.[16] The names of hundreds of donors indicate a social network that extended across New South Wales and to Tasmania, New Zealand and Fiji.[17] The value of Chuey's network in raising funds for the temple is particularly apparent in the names of the donors' towns. The Sze Yup Kwan Ti Temple presented him with a golden medal for his contribution to the Temple.[18] A rural newspaper commended that Ah Cheuy took up the high position the late Quong Tart held in respect to the Chinese community.[19]Although Chuey had in no sense been a leader of the Sydney Yee Hing Society in the first few years of the 20th century, his contributions to the Society led later generations of Yee Hing members to commemorate his role from 1898 through to the 1930s (Aozhou zhigong 2004:26).

On 27 January 1904, between 3,000 and 4,000 people attended the opening of the Temple in Glebe. Representatives of different kin and native-place associations also displayed their appreciation in their contributions to the opening. In preparing for the opening, Chuey asked the Sydney City Council to increase public transport to Glebe Point on the day and negotiated with Sydney police for firecrackers to be allowed at the opening.[20]

The building of Sze Yup Kwan Ti temple in 1904 was also a chance to connect Sydney and rural Yee Hing. Moy Sing and Ah Chuey supported the establishment of Sze Yup Kwan Ti Temple, which is an indication that leaders of the Sydney Yee Hing Society still believed that mutual aid, patriarchal structures and reverence for a higher being were essential components of community solidarity. This solidarity appears to have been powerful enough to reconfigure the Sydney Yee Hing Society into a respectable and urban association in Australian society, in spite of the strong opposition to the building of the Temple promulgated by the *TWT* and noted in Chapter 4.

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14   *CAH*, 6 February 1904, p.5.
15   *CAH*, 12 September 1903, p.4.
16   *CAH*, 6 February 1904, p.5.
17   *CAH*, 20 February 1904, pp.8–10.
18   *CAH*, 2 April 1904, p.4.
19   *Wagga Wagga Advertiser*, 6 Feb 1904.
20   *CAH*, 6 February 1904, p.5.

黄　柱

JAMES CHUEY,
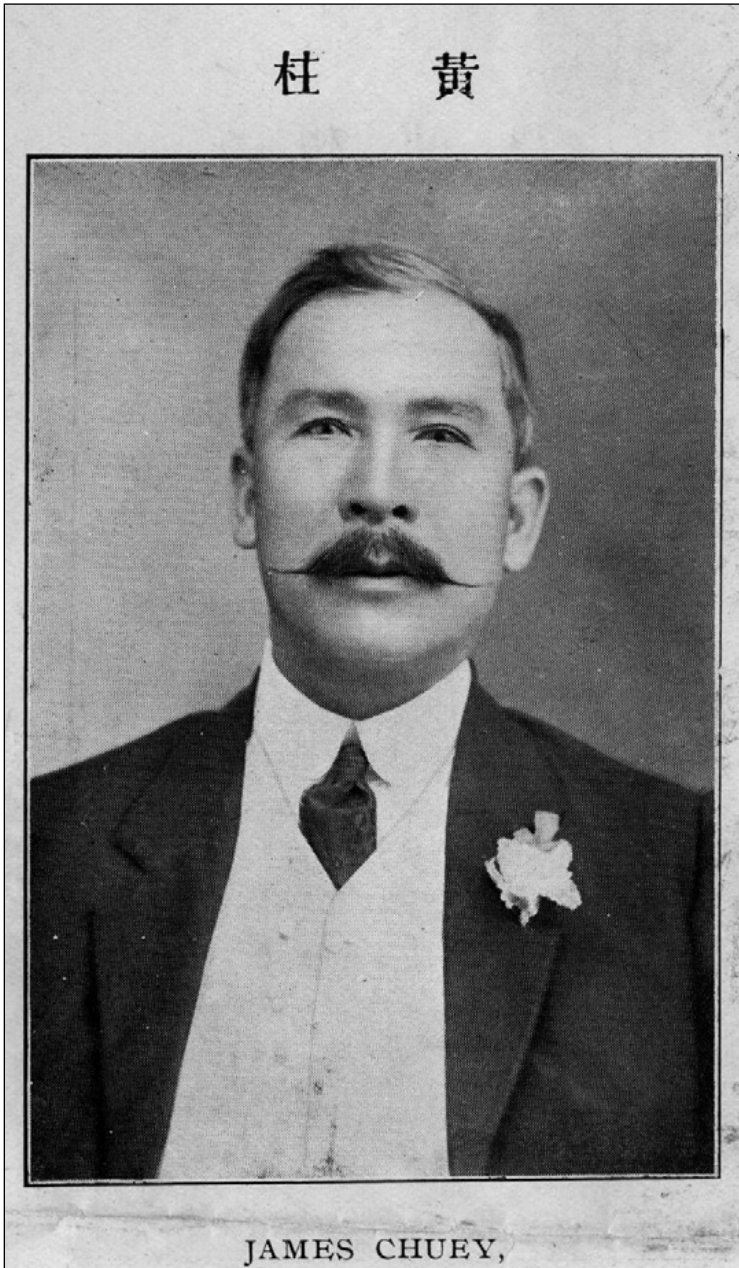
Portrait of James Ah Chuey.
(Archives of Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia, 523-01-0397.)

In this sense the conflict between the supporters of the Sze Yup Kwan Ti Temple and opponents in the *TWT* was not just a contest over leadership but a battle of values and social imagination. Indeed, the development of other Chinese associations such as the Chinese Merchants' Society, the CMDA and the Chinese Presbyterian Church challenged some of the principles of the patriarchal structure of the Temple and the Yee Hing Society. The Sydney Chinese commercial elite assumed that the foundation of a society should be based on freedom, individualism, mobility and wealth. The legitimation of the merchant associations was instrumental in the creation of their social leadership. They acted as brokers between the Chinese community and Australian society and were convinced that they should lead the Chinese community because they were better equipped to lead their communities into the modern world. The *CAH* and the Yee Hing Society provided an alternative model of leadership based on clan and religious identities, which enhanced mutual aid and brotherhood as a foundation for solidarity in a way that was no less modern. The building of Sze Yup Kwan Ti Temple in 1904 brought *CAH* and the Yee Hing Society closer. Sun, proprietor and editor of the *CAH*, entered the Lodge Southern Cross no.91 on 14 August 1892 as a Freemason (Fitzgerald 2007:31,fn.49). In some ways he was more sympathetic to Freemasonry than to the Yee Hing Society. In 1902, for example, he criticised the Yee Hing Society for drawing its members from the lower and unrespectable classes, arguing that it gave the Society a less respectable membership profile than European Freemasonry.[21] The conflict between the LYT and the Sydney CERA from 1903 influenced Sun to seek an alliance with the Yee Hing Society.

In 1904 an unfavourable report on the Yee Hing Society by Victorian Detective David George O'Donnell, in Melbourne, was published in the Sydney press. O'Donnell claimed that the Yee Hing Society had 7,000 members who placed themselves outside Australian law and had no respect for order.[22] The publication of the report intensified anti-Chinese sentiment in Sydney, which was further fuelled by the work of the Anti-Chinese and Asiatic League. While Sydney Chinese merchants organised to protect their rights in the face of the hostile criticism, the Yee Hing Society sought to transform its public image. With the help of Sun Johnson, it organised a Grand Chinese Carnival from 21 December 1904 to 3 January 1905. Together with Anglo-Australian charities, the Society aimed to collect donations for

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21   *CAH*, 23 August 1902, p.2.
22   *SMH*, 31 August 1904.

those affected by the Russo-Japanese War in China.[23] In his involvement, Sun Johnson used his connections with Australian Freemasonry in the defence of the Chinese Yee Hing Society.

The carnival did not dramatically enhance the Yee Hing Society's reputation in Sydney. When it began marketing a new kind of gambling ticket in 1906,[24] this led to further conflict related to gambling, in 1907.[25] The former Grand Master of the Yee Hing Society, Moy Sing, then returned to Sydney to negotiate a settlement of the conflict.[26] The Sydney Chinese merchants found that they wielded very little influence in the Yee Hing secret society lodges, which still held sway over the lower-class Chinese residents in Australia. The editor of the *TWT* expressed concern about the potential for a Sydney *tong* war, such as the one that had arisen in the Chinese communities in San Francisco and Singapore.[27]

Transforming to Chinese Freemasons

Despite the *TWT*'s fears, there was no *tong* war in 1907, and in 1908 Moy Sing resumed control of the Society. Before 1908 James Ah Chuey's contribution enabled the Sydney Yee Hing Society to rent an independent space for public congregation on the second floor of the Rili stables (日利馬房) on Castlereagh Street.[28] After the conflict related to gambling in 1907 Ah Chuey helped to build a new headquarters of the Chinese Masonic Lodge in 1908, which indicated that the Society now saw itself as a modern and respectable association. In the same year, it contributed to the building of a new hall at 2–4 Blackburn Street in Sydney, which was both a private residence for Moy Sing and a public meeting hall for the Yee Hing. Ah Chuey worked with Sun to transform the Society into a Western Masonic-style organisation.

Later the name 'Chinese Masonic Lodge' was lodged with the Sydney City Council.[29] On the opening day the Lodge was opened to Australian journalists. The report from *SMH* describes the 'hall of Oriental gorgeousness'.[30] Ah Chuey also answered questions with his fluent English. He stated

23   *CAH*, 24 December 1904, supplement.
24   *TWT*, 23 March, p.5, 14 April 1906, p.5.
25   *TWT*, 2 February, p.7, 9 February, p.7, 16 March, p.6, 14 September 1907, p.2.
26   *TWT*, 4 May 1907, p.7.
27   *TWT*, 14 September 1907, p.2.
28   *CAH*, 25 April 1905, p.5; *TWT*, 14 April 1906, p.5.
29   *CAH*, 18 July, p.4, 18 July, p.4, 15 August 1908, p.5. Also see City of Sydney Archives, Resumption claim packet CN0860b, Sydney city surveyor to Town Clerk, 23 March 1911. However, it officially changed to 'Chinese Masonic Society' after 1911.
30   *SMH*, 16 April 1908.

that there were 3,000 Chinese Freemasons in New South Wales and 10,000 throughout Australasia:

> Their principles are virtually identical with those of European free-masonry. This body of Freemasons was established in China 235 years ago, and now they number many millions. Their primary object is benevolent and charitable matters. The whole of these Chinese Freemasons are in favor of a progressive policy, with which is identified the open door… [31]

A few months later, on 5 August, the Society invited invited the managers of Gibbs, Bright and Co. and Nippon Yusen Kaisha (Japan Mail Steamship), a solicitor from Junee, a missionary, and a number of journalists from Sydney's newspapers, to the Grafton Gardens. Sun Johnson, chairman of the opening celebration of the Masonic Lodge, addressed the gathering, emphasising the need for the Chinese Yee Hing members to assimilate into Australian society. He urged them to learn English as a way of promoting better understanding between the Society and its Anglo-Australian friends. He highlighted the importance of brotherhood which sustained not only the Yee Hing Society but also, more broadly, the fraternities of Australian Freemasonry. In his view, the traditional values of brotherhood and mutual aid, of the Yee Hing Society, facilitated connections with Australian Freemasonry. Sun was invited to dinner at the Chinese Masonic Lodge that day, at which he translated messages of congratulation from other Australians to Yee Hing members.[32]

This was also the first outdoor celebration for the Chinese Masonic Lodge. It copied other Chinese associations to include programs of dancing with music, catering and speeches that welcomed not only male members but also women and children.[33] This is worthy of note because the Chinese Masonic Lodge was formerly the leading Chinese secret society that emphasised the concept of brotherhood among male members (Kuo 2010:196). The *CAH* reported on this public gathering in language that was unusually appreciative—in fact, it was the first time that the *Chinese Australian Herald* had used appreciative language in reference to the activity of public social dancing.[34] Not only *CAH* but also the *SMH*'s report gave credit to this *new* Chinese society.

31   *SMH*, 15 April 1908.
32   *CAH*, 15 August 1908, p.5.
33   *SMH*, 6 Aug 1908.
34   *CAH*, 15 Aug 1908, p.5.

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH. FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1912.

ALTAR TO JOSS AT THE NEW CHINESE MASONIC-HALL.

大義彰明

錦繡山河

真教正視高尚大豪傑大英雄

義重倫常是金鑑表率忠臣志士
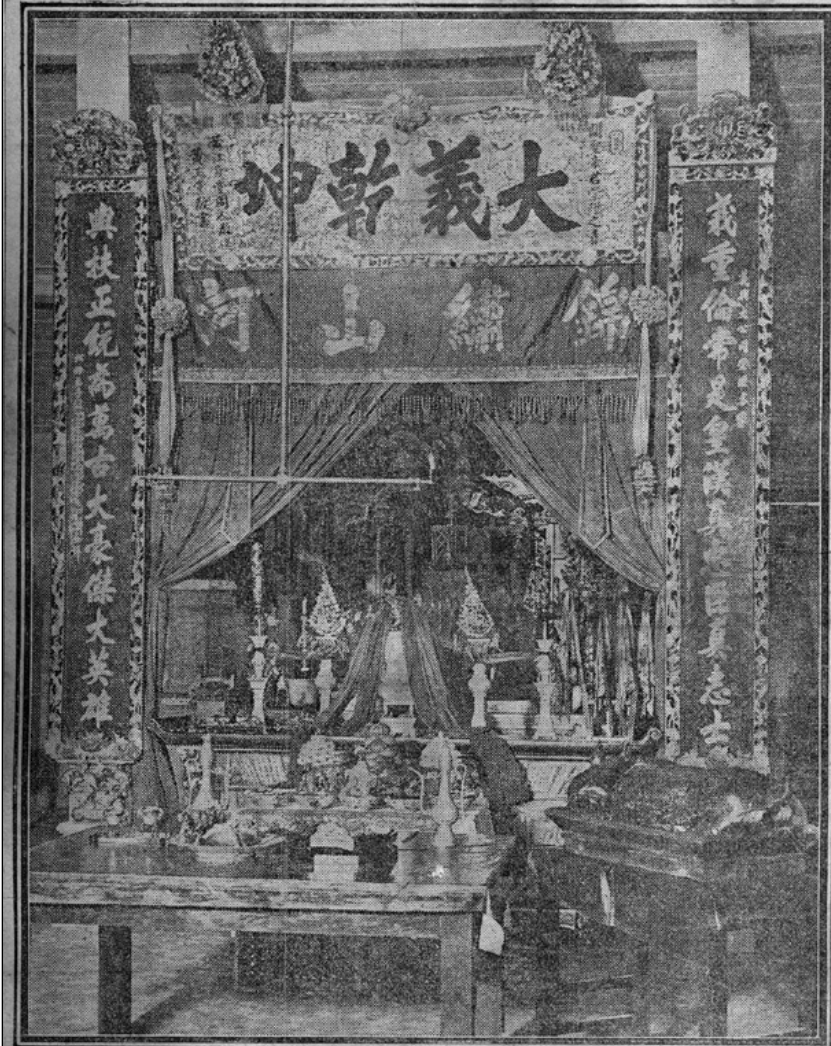
During the week the Joss has been about the most important feature of the opening festivities. Every visitor kneels to pay his compliments to Joss, and a fresh sucking-pig is placed on the altar as each guest makes his obeisance. Other articles of food piled on the altar are roast-poultry, pastry, and sweetbreads.

Sydney Chinese Masonic Hall.

(*Daily Telegraph*, 2 February 1912. Archives of Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia, 523-01-0316.)

Sun Johnson was influenced by the respect shown by Western commercial elites and authorities to Chuey and subsequently sought a relationship with the Yee Hing Society which formed the basis of the alliance between the *CAH* and Yee Hing Society in the following years. He also highlighted the similarities between the Chinese Masonic Lodge and Freemasonry in the *CAH* and referred to Australian Freemasonry as an 'Australian Yee Hing Society'.[35] The alliance between Sun Johnson and the Yee Hing Society exemplifies how native-place identity and religious ties were both involved in the leadership of the Chinese community.

Melbourne Chinese leadership—from clan identity to cultural nationalism

From 1903 to 1908, the Melbourne Chinese community established a distinctive pattern of leadership by relocating clan identity and brotherhood in a framework of urbanism and modernity. Strong clan identity and brotherhood sentiment intersected with ethnic identity and nationalism in the pages of Melbourne's new Chinese newspaper, the *Chinese Times*. From 1908, the Melbourne Chinese community began to show sympathy towards the Chinese revolution, in opposition to the constitutionalist beliefs of the CERA.

Development of the Chinese Times *and the New Citizen Enlightenment Association*

Eight years after the first Chinese-language newspaper was published in Sydney, the first issue of the *Chinese Times* appeared on 5 February 1902, with the Chinese title was *Aiguobao*. It was published every Wednesday with eight pages per issue. Thomas Chang Luke, formerly an editor of the *TWN*, was the proprietor and editor of the *CT* for the first three years, having initiated arrangements for its publication soon after Liang Qichao's visit to Australia.[36] He was also influenced by his Kejia teacher in Sydney, Liao Wenxiu (廖文秀), who encouraged him to embrace cultural nationalism through the teachings of Confucius.[37] Lack of support from Sydney community leaders during his editorship of the *TWN* also encouraged Chang to establish the *CT* in Melbourne.[38]

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35   *CAH*, 25 April 1908, p.5.
36   *CT*, 9 July 1902,p.3, 18 January 1905, p.2.
37   *CT*, 27 August, p.3, 19 November 1902, p.2.
38   *CT*, 18 January 1905, p.2.

Chang drew support for *CT* from leaders of native-place associations in Melbourne. One local businessman in particular, Wong Shi-Geen, contributed significant funds for publishing the newspaper.[39] Wong's firm, Gee Cheong, also served as a base for the Kong Chew society (Couchman 1999). Wong's leadership extended beyond the Kong Chew group into the Siyi, Sanyi, Zengcheng, Dongguan and Zhongshan communities in Melbourne. In 1901, he was appointed as a representative of the Chinese community on the Citizens Demonstration Committee in charge of organising the celebrations for the opening of the first Federal Parliament in Melbourne and the visit of the Duke and Duchess of York (Wong Shi-Geen 2005). In 1902, he chaired the organisation in charge of the Chinese procession at the Bendigo/Melbourne Easter carnival and the ceremony welcoming the arrival of Chinese Consul-General from Singapore.[40]

Wong's network helped Chang Luke establish a firm base in Melbourne's Chinese community for his newspaper, which was published out of Wong's business at 242 Little Bourke Street for the first few months until it moved to 189 Russell Street.[41] It also held meetings at the building of the Bo Leong Society,[42] which was founded by Chinese merchants in Melbourne in 1897. Yong (1977:159) has noted that the Bo Leong Society was a rival organisation to the Yee Hing Society and was set up to safeguard Siyi members from secret societies. However, the establishment of the Bo Leong Society also encouraged association and networking between the groups.[43]

Although the Melbourne Chinese community welcomed Chang and the *CT*, they did not enthusiastically embrace all of his political positions, including his sympathy for Chinese revolutionaries and their anti-Manchu notions of racial revolution. Early in his editorship, Chang attempted to instil a strong sense of local pride amongst Melbourne Chinese in order to attract a greater readership in Melbourne. He also wrote of native-place and kinship ties as the foundations of Chinese national identity[44] and published articles comparing religious belief in Guan Di with Christianity.[45] The revolutionary tendencies of the *CT* became more pronounced after the newspaper moved from Wong's firm to its new premises. It frequently republished reports from the *Zhongguoribao* (中國日報) and *Zhongguoxinbao* (中國新報), two of the

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39   *CT*, 5 March 1902, p.7.
40   *CT*, 26 February, pp.6–7, 16 April 1902, p.3.
41   *CT*, 12 March, p.8, 16 April 1902, p.4.
42   *CT*, 5 March 1902, p.2.
43   *TWN*, 6 September 1899, p.3.
44   *CT*, 26 March 1902, p.2.
45   *CT*, 12 March, pp.2,5; 2 April 1902, p.4.

earliest official periodicals of the Chinese revolutionary faction associated with Sun Yatsen in Hong Kong. The *CT* also reported on the activities of Chinese revolutionaries in Japan, Hong Kong and elsewhere.[46] In early 1903, the *CT* enthusiastically reported the news that leading members of the Chinese Independence Party of Australia, such as James See and his son Tse Tsan Tai, had begun preparing a rebellion on Chinese New Year's Eve in Guangdong.[47] At this stage the rebellion was still a secret in Hong Kong and in China; Chang did not reveal his sources for the story. Later that year, Chang published an essay contrasting the younger revolutionary generation favourably with older conservative reformists, aiming to cultivate revolutionary sentiment amongst Melbourne Chinese readers.[48]

In Sydney the *CAH* attacked the revolutionaries' plan and the secret society behind it, believing that civil war would cause unprecedented suffering in China.[49] Also in early 1903, the editor of *CAH*'s rival *TWT* followed Liang Qichao and openly embraced constitutionalism thereby causing a rift between the *CT* and the *TWT*,[50] leaving the *CT* the only Chinese newspaper in Australia to support the Chinese revolutionary party. Furthermore, the *CT* was the only revolutionary newspaper published in Southeast Asia and Oceania before the publication in 1904 and 1905 of Singapore's first revolutionary and anti-Manchu newspaper, the *Thoe Lam Jit Poh* (圖南日報 *Tunan Ribao*) (Feng 1953:74–75; Yong & McKenna 1990:15).

During the early years of the *CT*, Chang frequently complained about the difficulties of managing the newspaper and his revolutionary activities concurrently,[51] and developed a cooperative plan with the *TWT*, with the assistance of David O'Young, who had initially proposed Chang as an editor of *TWN*.[52] O'Young visited Melbourne in October 1902 to arrange collaboration between the two newspapers,[53] but it was undermined by the cool relationship between Chang and *TWT* editor Ng Ngok-low. Chang complained about Ng's manner and management style, and the two had different attitudes towards another *TWT* editor, Tong Cai-chih, whom Ng

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46   For example, Chang Luke reported on a ceremony held by Chinese revolutionaries in Japan to lament the day the Manchu conquered China (支那亡國兩百四十二年紀念會) (*CT*, 18 June 1902, p.2).

47   *CT*, 4 March, pp.3–4, 11 March, pp.2–3, 18 March, p.2, 25 March, p.2, 1 April 1903, p.2.

48   *CT*, 13 August 1902, p.2.

49   *CAH*, 7 March, p.5, 2 May 1903, p.5.

50   *CT*, 18 March 1903, p.3.

51   *CT*, 13 August 1902, p.4.

52   *CT*, 5 November 1902, p.3.

53   *CT*, 29 October 1902, p.4.

Members of Christian Chinese Union of Victoria, 1903. The editor of *Chinese Times*, Thomas Chang Luke is fifth from left in the back row.
(*Weekly Times*, 25 April 1903.)

suspected was not a loyal follower of Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao and the CERA. Chang outlined Ng's complaints in a letter to Joshua Foong Jin (周 瑞廷 Zhou Ruiting, also known as 周鳳振 Zhou Fengzhen), a merchant in Bendigo.[54] Ng argued that his suspicions of Tong's revolutionary aspirations should not undermine the relationship between the two newspapers,[55] but the proposed cooperation came to nothing.[56]

Instead the *CT* developed a revolutionary network through its own institutional innovations. A political society called the China Public Association was founded in May 1904 by six Melbourne Chinese, including Chang Luke, in the building that housed the *CT*.[57] The Young Chinese Patriotic Association (中國青年愛國會 Zhongguo Qingnian Aiguohui), another political society, was established in Melbourne at about the same time, also in association with the *CT*.[58] The catalyst for these Melbourne political societies was the circulation of a popular revolutionary pamphlet—*The Revolutionary Army* by Tsou Jung—and the *CT* between January and April 1904. The pamphlet used a lucid and colloquial style to expound revolutionary and

54   *CT*, 5 November 1902, p.3.
55   *TWT*, 5 November 1902, p.3.
56   *CT*, 18 March 1903, p.3.
57   *CT*, 11 May, p.2, 12 October 1904, p.2, 23 October 1909, p.10.
58   *CT*, 30 March 1904, p.3.

anti-Manchu sentiments in China and Southeast Asia (Yong 1977:58–59), and emphasised the suffering of overseas Chinese including the Chinese in Australia.[59]

Of the two new bodies the China Public Association became the more influential. Initially a reading club that received numerous revolutionary periodicals and books from Chang Luke,[60] it also held public lectures on patriotism, paying particular attention to the subjects of God and Confucianism and telling Chinese Australians that, because of their experience of Western knowledge and modernity, they had a duty to enlighten China.[61] It began with between 20 and 30 members, and the number increased throughout the year.[62] The Association regularly organised speeches in the streets of Chinatown or at the Bo Leong building on Saturday and Sunday nights, which attracted illiterate labourers as well as regular *CT* readers.[63] On 15 May 1904, an audience of more than 150 attended one of its speech events.[64] Meanwhile, the *CT* developed a populist style to attract more readers to its revolutionary cause. It published *Longzhouge* (龍舟歌 *Songs of Dargan boat*),[65] a revolutionary play in the style of Cantonese popular opera, and used this as a way of implanting a republican anti-Manchu sensibility in lower-class Chinese, just as Chinese revolutionaries were doing in China at the same time.

In October of 1904 the China Public Association changed its name to the New Citizen Enlightenment Association (hereafter NCEA). More than 500 people attended the first gathering of the renamed association and more than 1,200 attended the first public speeches of NCEA at Temperance Hall in Russell Street. At the centre of the association's insignia was a bell to signify the awakening of China, flanked by a dragon flag, representing China, on one side and a modern pocket-watch on the other, signalling the value the NCEA placed on keeping time and the march of progress. Beside the dragon and the pocket-watch were rocs, mythical birds of prey, with raised wings symbolising hope for China's future.[66] Despite the relative success of the NCEA, the *CT* soon fell on hard times, and Chang was forced to sell it in 1905. One of its editors, Wong Yue-kung (黃右公 Huang

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59   *CT*, 6 January 1904, p.2.
60   *CT*, 25 May 1904, p.3.
61   *CT*, 11 May 1904, p.2.
62   *CT*, 12 October 1904, p.2.
63   *CAH*, 4 May, p.4, 8 October 1904, p.3.
64   *CT*, 18 May 1904, supplement.
65   *CT*, 18 May 1904, p.2.
66   *CT*, 12 October 1904, p.2.

Front page of *Chinese Times*, 1905.

Yougong, also known as 黃樹屏 Huang Shuping),[67] later criticised internal division and a lack of motivation within the Melbourne Chinese community as major reasons for the paper's failure to develop into a viable vehicle for revolutionary agitation.[68] His assessment was correct in that Melbourne's Chinese leadership was afflicted with a high level of disorder in the first decade of the 20th century. In 1904 and 1905 the Melbourne Chinese community, like the Sydney community, struggled against increasing anti-Chinese sentiment among Australian political organisations. In Melbourne the passing of the Factories and Shops Act in the Victorian Parliament shocked the Melbourne Chinese community and caused conflict amongst Chinese societies in the community.

Voluntary societies were important leadership features of Melbourne's Chinese community. The See Yup Society (墨爾本四邑會館) and Kong Chew Society were two such societies operating from the mid-19th century into the early years of the 20th century. When Liang Qichao visited Melbourne in 1901 he claimed that the provincialism and native-place identity he observed among Melbourne Chinese would hinder their ability to embrace a national identity and reformist agenda (Ding 1972:143). Shortly thereafter, however, it seems that the central position of traditional patterns of leadership based on clan, kinship and secret brotherhood began to come under challenge, becoming much less dominant. One reason for the declining influence of the clan societies was their decreasing membership, accompanied by reduced issuing of shipping tickets at the turn of the 20th century, which had been a major source of income for clan societies.[69] It now shared the business of issuing steamship tickets, which had been an important source of income for the See Yup Society, with other new Chinese societies, such as the Chinese Christian Union, established in 1902. By using the Chinese Christian Union, Chinese church members avoided paying returning fees to their clan clubs.[70] As the See Yup Society's revenue declined, so too did its influence over Melbourne Chinese.

Another important reason was the ineffective role of clan societies in maintaining the inner harmony of the community. For example, in 1903 a strike was called by the Chinese Furniture Employees' Union (東家行 Xijiahang) to seek higher wages.[71] This was not the first time the Chinese workers striked

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67   ACCG, Chinese correspondence, Spring 1915, no.522–203.
68   *CT*, 19 January 1909, pp.9–10.
69   *CT*, 25 September 1909, p.2. Mei 2004:49.
70   *CT*, 4 January 1905, p.3, 21 January 1911, pp.7–8; *Weekly Times*, 25 April 1903, pp.12–15.
71   *Argus*, 20 Nov 1903, 9; *Chinese Times*, 7 October 1903, p.3.

for higher wages in Melbourne. In 1897 Chinese cabinetmakers organised a strike to claim higher wages under the Shops and Factories Act.[72] In the same year the Bo Leong Society was formed to present the combined leadership of clan societies and secret brotherhoods as a new agency for mediation. In 1903, when the Bo Leong Society attempted to mediate in the strike, it was notably unsuccessful.[73] The twelve-week strike also caused increased tensions amongst Chinese residents in Chinatown.[74] Eventually there was one meeting called for all merchants and workers held in the neutral ground of the Chinese Joss House, then located in Chinatown, to seek peace and an end to the strike. It did not work smoothly either, due to the Chinese leaders being without 'plenty power'.[75] The strike by Chinese woodworkers and polishers pointed to a growing occupation-based differentiation within the Chinese community and a measure of militancy over access to employment and commercial opportunities.[76]

The conflict among Melbourne Chinese was not the end. Violence erupted between members of the Bo Leong Society and the Yee Hing Society in October 1904 over the distribution of illegal gambling and opium profits.[77] The intervention of 30 police was needed to bring an end to their street fighting, but the fiery relationship between the Bo Leong and Yee Hing Societies continued to intensify. Not long before this conflict broke out, O'Donnell had presented his report on the illegal activities of Yee Hing Societies in Victoria and New South Wales, in which he observed that the associations in both states protected each other's illegal activities.[78]

The Melbourne violence had interstate repercussions, and Chinese business and community leaders in Sydney, including Chan Harr, Ping Nam, James Choy Hing, Moy Ping (梅炳 Mei Bing), Chan Shi (陳石 Chen Shi) and Philip Lee Chun, expressed concern that the conflict in Melbourne would fuel anti-Chinese sentiment around the country. The Sydney Chinese merchants attempted to negotiate peace between the two associations, but they were compelled to realise that, in comparison to their influence on the Sydney community, their influence over the Melbourne Chinese community was limited.[79]

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72   *Argus*, 6 May 1897, p.6.
73   *Chinese Times,* 7 October 1903, p.3; 21 October 1903, p.2.
74   *Argus*, 17 Nov 1903, p.6. 3 Dec 1903, p.7.
75   *Argus*, 3 Dec 1903, p.7.
76   The report of Chinese Consul-General in Australia, Liang Lan-hsun, *Shangwu guanbao,* Vol.5, 15 February 1909, p.26.
77   *CAH,* 8 October, p.2, 20 October 1904, p.3.
78   *CAH*, 17 September 1904, p.5; *SMH*, 31 August 1904.
79   *TWT*, 15 October 1904, supplement.

Threat of further attacks from the Yee Hing Society swayed the Bo Leong Society to seek protection from Melbourne's police.[80] Although the Bo Leong and the Yee Hing Societies made peace in court, another fight broke out in Little Bourke Street on 14 March 1905.[81] This time 120 Chinese from Geelong had attacked a gambling house in Melbourne's Chinatown, causing what the *TWT* described as the largest fight in Melbourne's Chinese community yet.[82]

From 1905, clan and native-place societies in Melbroune adopted more inclusive names such as Chinese Association (中華會館 Zhonghuahuiguan), in order to mobilise and act on behalf of a broader constituency of Chinese. At that time it was called upon to mediate in the conflict between native-place associations and the church on the issuing of steamship tickets.[83] At other times, such as when it was called on to represent the community in the public struggle against anti-Chinese racism and regulation, it used the name Chinese National Alliance (中華公會 Zhonghuagonghui, also known as Chung Hua Kung Hwei). Both the Chinese Association and Chinese National Alliance normally held meetings at the Kong Chew Society building and the Bo Leong building.[84]

The Chinese Association and Chinese National Alliance were not entirely successful in mediating conflict within Melbourne's Chinese community and this damaged its capacity to cooperate on important issues.[85] The failure of leadership demonstrated by these outbreaks of violence in the Melbourne Chinese community was related to the changing character of the community, as well as to specific charges bearing on gambling and opium. More and more Chinese furniture factories were being located in the metropolitan areas (Yong 1977:41). Workers employed at these factories, apparently dissatisfied with the ineffectiveness of the Siyi and Kong Chew Societies to represent them in the struggle against anti-Chinese legislation, set up a number of labour guilds to represent their interests more effectively. The 'Chinese Carpenters Union' was formed through the merger of two existing guilds—the Chinese Furniture Employers' Union and Chinese Furniture Employees' Union.

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80   *CAH*, 29 October 1904, p.3.
81   *CT*, 11 March 1905, p.3.
82   *TWT*, 11 March 1905, supplement.
83   *CT*, 4 January 1905, p.3.
84   *CT*, 11 March 1905, p.3,18 August 1906, p.4, 9 March 1907, p.7, 27 Feb, p.10, 3 March 1909, p.2; also the report of the first Chinese Consul-General for Australia (*Shangwu guanbao* 4 (5 July 1909):19).
85   *CT*, 11 March 1905, p.3.

A new alliance and revolutionary network

In 1905 a new alliance was forged by Chinese cabinetmakers, fruit traders, journalists and missionaries. Christian faith was the foundation of this alliance. NCEA was supported by members of Chinese Christian Union of Victoria and *Chinese Times*. Furthermore, the introduction of the legislation led to the formation of a union of Chinese carpenters and laundrymen between 1905 and 1907, which staged public meetings and raised the profile of the the leaders of the Chinese carpenters.[86] The secretary of the Chinese Furniture Employees' Union, Harry Louey Pang (雷鵬 Lei Peng, 1873–1937), claimed that his union had 600 members. By 1906 it had 900 members on the books (Nam 1906).
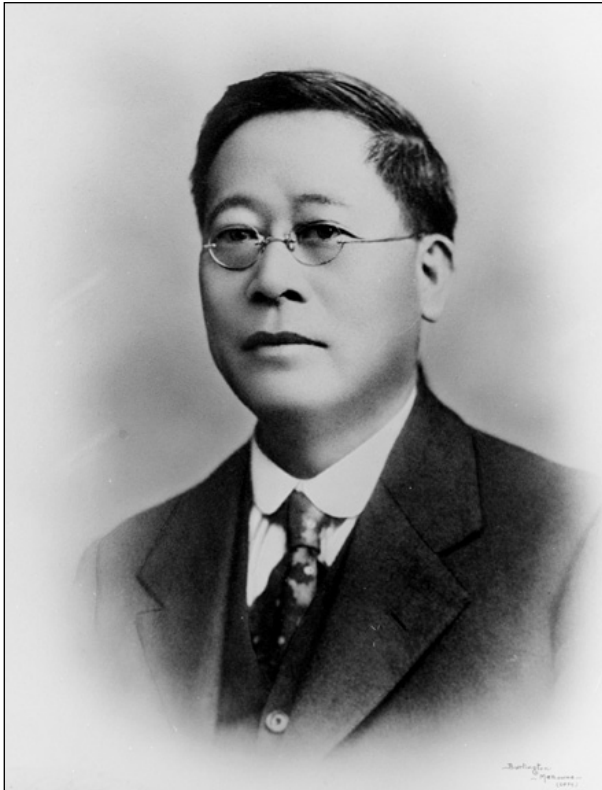
Portrait of Harry Louey Pang.
(Collection of Melbourne Kuo Min Tang Society.)

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86   *CT*, 27 May 1905, supplement, 24 August 1907, p.5.

Meanwhile the NCEA forged an alliance with the *CT*, enlarging its membership and enhancing its public profile. From 1905 to 1908, the NCEA and *CT* sought to mobilise lower-class Chinese through the use of folk literature that recast clan identities into a form of ethnic nationalism. These developments coincided with changes in the paper's ownership and editorship.[87] At the same time Charles Albert Honan (何南 He Nan) from the Zhongshan county was appointed president of NCEA from 1905 to 1906.[88] Folk literature was introduced through the paper from 1905, at a time when the *CT* and NCEA both encouraged Chinese ethnic nationalism by embracing a popular Cantonese folk style. The *CT* provided publications and books to the NCEA to encourage the reading club to support the revolutionary factions of Sun Yatsen, on the model of other reading clubs in Southeast Asia (Feng 1954:II,135–140).

The *CT* and NCEA regularly organised public speeches for the community to further their cause, from 8 pm to 10 pm every Sunday.[89] Low Hingchuck (劉希焯 Liu Xizhuo), a member of the NCEA who later became an assistant editor at the *CT*, later recalled the public speeches of the Association as an effective and important way to enhance nationalism and modern political ideology amongst illiterate lower-class Chinese (Chen 1935:163). Excursions and concerts were two further inducements to membership.[90] The NCEA enlarged its membership to between 500 and 600 members in 1905.

Christian network of Presbyterian Church also contributed to this political engagement. In 1904, Chang Luke translated and evaluated a speech of Mrs Anne Fraser Bon, with appreciation. *CT* published her speech and encouraged its readers to embrace her ideas of equality, democracy and freedom.[91] Mrs Bon was a longstanding philanthropist and Indigenous rights activist of Melbourne in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. She was a successful pastoralist, a devout Christian, and a compassionate and generous friend to those in need, especially the Aboriginals for whom she was, as well as a benefactor, an active advocate for 57 years, from 1879 until her death in 1936. She was also a trusted friend of the Chinese community, for whom she established a children's school in Melbourne (Harrison 2011). She supported the efforts of Thomas Chang Luke and others to improve

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87   Late in 1904, Chang Luke sold the *CT* to Ruan Jianzhai (阮健齋) because of financial difficulties (*CT*, 4 January 1905, p.3; *TWT*, 7 January 1905, supplement). Its Chinese title changed to *Jingdong xinbao* (警東新報, literally '*Arouse the East Newspaper*').

88   *CT*, 11 January 1905, p.3, 7 April, p.4, 19 May 1906, p.4.

89   *CT*, 3 March 1906, p.3.

90   *CT*, 18 January, p.4, 25 February 1905, supplement, 22 September 1906, p.3.

91   *CT*, 23 March 1904, supplement.

Presented To
WONG SHI CEEN, & CHARLES ALBERT HONAN, ESQUIRES.
On behalf of the
CHINESE EMPIRE REFORM ASSOCIATION.
With Christian regards & best wishes from their sincere friend. ANNE F. BON.
Melbourne, Dec. 2nd 104.

Portrait of Mrs Ann Fraser Bon.
(Collection of Kuo Min Tang of Melbourne. Restoration by Ms. Josephine Civitarese.)

the community's confidence. Her photo, presented in 1904 as a gift to the president of the NCEA, CA Honan, demonstrated her role in shaping Melbourne's Chinese political alliance.

From 1905 Melbourne Chinese expressed their differences with the Sydney Chinese commercial elite, protesting against the Sydney merchants' attempts to privilege merchants, students, officials and missionaries in gaining entry to Australia, because they saw them as ignoring the rights of Chinese labourers.[92] Even though the NCEA had by this time adopted CERA as its English name, its members claimed that the principles and aims of the Melbourne society were totally different from those of the Sydney CERA.[93] The *CT* began to write of the place of 'civil rights' in Western democracy as a major theme for Chinese enlightenment, and of political and economic rights as conducive to modern democracy and civilisation.[94]

The *CT* also shaped Chinese nationalism through its discussion of '*huaqiao*', a term deployed to explain the widespread suffering of the Chinese under the Manchu government in China and white supremacists abroad. Overseas Chinese, it argued, might be able to organise a separate State.[95] The paper regularly reported news of oppressed Chinese in Africa, Java and North America.[96] It explained the suffering of Chinese overseas with reference to the corruption of the Manchu government and to white racism, singling out the mistakes and weaknesses of the Manchu government as its major cause.[97] In contrast to Sydney Chinese merchants, whose attacks on the White Australia policy emphasised the importance of international networks and open commerce, Melbourne Chinese viewed their inferior position as a result of racial oppression in China and abroad. The *CT* considered democracy as a major aim of the struggle for racial equality, and stressed the importance of political self-awareness, thus noting a major difference separating the peasant-led Taiping Rebellion in the mid-19th century and the revolution of Sun Yatsen, which the *CT* supported early in the 20th century.[98] Among major elements of their political awareness were racial nationalism, patriotism, and democracy.[99]

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92   *CT*, 10 March 1906, supplement.
93   NBAC, 111/5, Chinese Empire Reform Association, Records of meetings,
       17 September and 2 October 1905.
94   *CT*, 25 February, p.1, 4 March, p.1, 18 March, p.1, 1 April 1905, p.1, and supplement.
95   *CT*, 24 March 1906, p.1.
96   *CT*, 10 March 1906, p.1.
97   *CT*, 18 March 1905, p.1.
98   *CT*, 8 June 1903, p.2.
99   *CT*, 9 February 1907, p.1.

Celebration for Chinese New Year, EA, 1907.
(*Chinese Times*, February 1907. Courtesy of State Library of Victoria.)

Although the *CT* expanded its reporting on Sun Yatsen's revolutionary movement and anti-Manchu sentiment, following its reorganisation in 1907, the newspaper faced a further financial crisis.[100] According to Low Hingchuck the NCEA provided financial support for the *CT* from this time, strengthening links between the paper and the Association (Chen 1935:136). The Association also underwent a change of title to differentiate itself further from CERA in Sydney. The phrase 'New Citizen' (*xinmin*) was abandoned because it had been coined by Liang Qichao and was widely associated with his followers in CERA,[101] leaving the new name 'Enlightenment Association' (hereafter EA). Following the precedent established by the *CT*, the Association adopted the term *huaqiao* in public meetings and further emphasised the division between Han and Manchu after 1907.[102] In celebrating Chinese New Year in 1907, for example, a leading member of EA used the word *huaqiao* to refer to Chinese abroad.[103] The EA and the *CT* also criticised the reform agenda and constitutionalism of the Manchu government and defended the Chinese revolutionary army.[104]

In 1907, the EA worked with the Chinese Furniture Employees' Union to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Victoria,[105] the two bodies

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100 *CT*, 4 March 1905, supplement, 11 March 1905, supplement.
101 *CT*, 5 January 1907, p.1.
102 *CT*, 26 January, p.2, 30 March, p.2, 27 April 1907, p.2.
103 *CT*, 23 February 1907, p.8.
104 *CT*, 3 August, p.2, 10 August, p.2, 17 August, p.2, 24 August 1907, p.2.
105 See the petition to the Speakers and Members of the Legislative Assembly, in the State Library of Victoria's copy of Nam (1906).

having become linked during a conflict that year. There was a meeting at the Kong Chew Society (calling itself the Chinese National Alliance for this purpose) to discuss the struggle against White Australia policies. In attendance were the Reverend Cheok Hong Cheong, William Ah Ket, Samuel Wong, Wong Shi-Geen, Ho Nam, Harry Louey Pang, secretary of See Yup Society, and representatives of the Guild of Chinese Carpenters. During the meeting, William Ah Ket and Samuel Wong drafted a petition to the Chinese Ambassador in Britain on the protection of rights of Chinese immigrants in Australia.[106] The meeting aroused further native-place and kinship rivalries, and two men from Zhongshan county attacked a group of Siyi men, causing widespread ill-feeling between the two communities. After an initial peace meeting between the two groups failed, a second meeting was called at the Bo Leong Society, with Wong Chockson (黃綽臣 Huang Chuochen) from rural Victoria presiding as mediator.[107] A settlement was negotiated,[108] and the men from the Zhongshan group apologised to the Siyi group and hosted a dinner for representatives from both sides. Both also signed an agreement of reconciliation, promising to keep the peace in the Chinese community.[109]

This conflict was a disappointment to leaders of the Chinese Furniture Employees' Union who had been working closely with the native-place societies in their battle against the White Australia policy. Thereafter, they worked more closely with the EA, and one of the Furniture Employees' Union's leaders, Louey Pang, became a key supporter of the EA and of Chinese revolutionary organisations in Melbourne.[110] Louey Pang was also a member of the Chinese Christian Union, as were Samuel Wong and PH Hong Nam (伍鴻南 Wu Hongnan), who became leading members of the EA, of which Hong Nam was elected President in 1908.[111]

New institutional connections developed as members of the EA, the *CT* editors, and members of Christian churches and employee unions forged a Chinese nationalist alliance in Melbourne. The EA employed two scholars from China, Lew Goot-chee (劉月池 Liu Yuechi, also known as 劉滌寰 Liu Dihuan) and Wong Yue-kung from Guangdong, to be the editors of *CT*. Lew was born in 1877 in Xinning (新寧縣, also known as Sunning and

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106   *CT*, 20 July 1907, p.2; typescript also included in the State Library of Victoria's copy of Nam (1906).
107   *CT*, 7 December 1907, p.7.
108   *TWT*, 16 November 1907, p.7.
109   *CT*, 16 November 1907, p.6.
110   *CT*, 17 October 1908, p.10.
111   *CT*, 23 September 1908.

Sunwing; 台山 Taishan, also known as Toisan) county in the Siyi district of Guangdong province.[112] Wong was from Kaiping (開平縣, also known as Hoiping and Hoyping) county, also in the Siyi district.[113] Both men were teachers before they came to Australia (Yong 1977:129). Lew asked permission to enter Australia as a journalist in late 1907, his bond paid by Lew Ang Way of 227 Little Bourke Street and Wong Shee Fan, treasurer of the *CT* from 1907, of Sun Goong Sing at 198 Little Bourke Street.[114] Lew Goot-chee arrived in Australia to edit the *CT* on 26 March 1908. His first impression of Australia was not a pleasant one, as he was called for an interview by the Collector of Customs and taken into a room at the Customs House with an Inspector and a Chinese interpreter, where he was then asked to give his handprints. He refused because he felt that this request implied he was a criminal.[115] The experience made him appreciate that his role as journalist was not only to develop a revolutionary network but also to work for the betterment of Chinese residents in Australia.

The alliance forged between the EA, *CT* and Chinese Furniture Employees' Union was strengthened by the establishment of the office of the Chinese Consul-General for Australia. Fortuitously, the brief tenures and poor performance of successive imperial Consuls-General created new opportunities for Chinese nationalists to promote anti-Manchu attitudes and sympathy for Chinese revolutionaries linked to Sun Yatsen's movement.

The office of Chinese Consul-General in Australia

Preliminary negotiations

The idea of hosting a Chinese Consul-General in Australia was first proposed by the Chinese Ambassador in Britain, Guo Songtao (郭嵩燾). Immediately after the successful conclusion of Guo's negotiations with the British Foreign Office to open the office of the Chinese Consul-General in Singapore, in 1877 (Tsai 2002:34–35), Guo turned to creating a similar office in Australia, noting the goal in his diary where he wrote that it could follow the Singapore model and that a local Chinese community leader

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112 United States National Archives and Records Administration. San Francisco Record Group 85, Compartment 3282, shelf A, box 815, ARC 296455, 13614/1-11.
113 KMT Archives, Sydney, Records of membership (Melbourne, Perth, Broome, NZ and Hamilton), 1916-1924, no.523-01-155.
114 NAA, Dept of External Affairs, Correspondence files, A1/15, 1914/10138, letters of 29 January and 25 March 1908; *CT*, 6 September 1913, p.4.
115 NAA, Dept of External Affairs, Correspondence files, A1/15, 1914/10138, letter of 6 June 1914.

would be appointed as Consul-General (Guo 1982:381–382, 440). In 1878 Guo met with the Governor of South Australia, Sir William Jervois, who alerted Guo to conflicts between Chinese and Europeans in Queensland, and they agreed that the appointment of a Chinese Consul-General for Australia was timely (Guo 1982:509–510; Guo 2002:110), but found that the new Foreign Secretary, Lord Salisbury, did not favour the proposal. Guo also learned that the size and public culture of Australia were different from that in Singapore, and did not in the end recommend the creation of a consulate in Australia to his superiors in the Manchu government.

The proposal was revived in the 1880s by the Viceroy of Liang Guang, Zhang Zhidong (張之洞), who considered establishing a network of Chinese consuls in Southeast Asia and Australia, with financial support from overseas Chinese. He appointed two imperial commissioners, Wong Yung-Ho and U Tsing to visit Australia on an extended tour abroad in 1887. They recommended to Zhang that a consulate for Australia be based in Sydney, but the proposal was rejected by the imperial Grand Council in 1888 for financial reasons, in spite of Wong's advice that Sydney Chinese would donate £1,000 each year for the establishment and support of a Consul-General (McPherson 1985:80–91).[116]

In 1895, British authorities notified the Chinese Ambassador that it favoured Quong Tart as Chinese Consul-General in Sydney, but received no reply from the Chinese imperial government (McPherson 1985:122). The Chinese government's procrastination on the establishment of a consular office in Australia enraged many Chinese Australians, who felt exposed to discrimination in the absence of official protection. In the late 1890s, the *CAH* criticised the Manchu government's lack of concern for setting up a consular position to protect Chinese Australians.[117]

Although the Sydney *TWN* initially favoured the establishment of a Chinese consulate, by the end of the 19th century its supporters among Sydney's Chinese commercial elite tempered their passion for the position, because they had swung their support to the exiled reform party of Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao and could, therefore, expect little sympathy or support from an imperial government representative in Australia.[118] In 1901, the Acting Chinese Consul-General for Singapore, Lo Tsungyao (羅忠堯 Luo Zhongyao), visited Australia to investigate the impact of Liang Qichao and the growing network of anti-government reformers and revolutionaries

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116   *CAH*, 1 August 1903, p.4.
117   *CAH*, 26 May 1899, p.4.
118   *TWN*, 17 September 1898, p.3.

in Australia.[119] The Sydney Chinese hid their CERA activities from Lo who reported to the Manchu government, through the Chinese Ambassador to Britain, that there was no sympathy for CERA or Chinese revolutionaries in Sydney.[120] They could reasonably expect that a Chinese official would more closely and effectively monitor their political activities.

While the *TWT* and the CERA were fearful of a Chinese Consul-General in Australia, other Chinese Australians were less suspicious. The *CAH,* for example, was critical of the Manchu government's tardiness in appointing a Consul-General.[121] Sun Johnson argued that a Chinese Consul-General would be able to work with the Japanese Consul-General in Australia in proposing modifications to White Australia policies.[122] In 1902, Chinese in Western Australian presented a petition to Lo Tsungyao for official protection.[123] They too believed that a Chinese Consul-General would be able to press the Federal government to show greater fairness toward Chinese residents. However, when Lo reported to the Chinese Ambassador in Britain on the Immigration Restriction Act, he raised doubts about whether Australia would approve of a Chinese Consul-General.[124]

In 1905 the issue of a Consul-General in Australia was revived by the Melbourne Chinese.[125] On 8 March 1905, the Chinese National Alliance in Melbourne held a meeting to discuss their possible response to the Factories and Shops Amendment Act of 1904, at which William Ah Ket proposed that they petition for the establishment of the position of a Chinese Consul-General.[126] A month later, Gerald Piggott, WH Calder and William Howat forwarded a petition bearing 350 Chinese signatures and seals to GE Morrison in China asking him to present it to the Manchu authorities.[127]

Tong Chai-chih of the Sydney *TWT* remained adamantly opposed to the revived Melbourne proposal on the same grounds raised earlier by CERA, although this time adding that the position would impose a substantial

119 AS:IMH, Diplomatic archives, 02-13-008-02, report from the Chinese Ambassador in Britain to Dept of Foreign Affairs of the Manchu Government; NAA, Dept of External Affairs, Correspondence files, A8, 1902/140/1, letter from Goverrnor-General of Australia to the Prime Minister, 14 March 1902; A1, 1910/3933, minute of Dept of External Affairs, 1904.
120 AS:IMH, Diplomatic archives, 02-13-008-02.
121 *CAH*, 6 April 1901, p.3, 1 October 1904, p.4.
122 *CAH*, 22 August 1903, p.3.
123 *CT*, 21 May 1902, supplement; *TWT* 31 May 1902, p.2.
124 AS:IMH, Diplomatic archives, 02-13-008-02.
125 *TWT*, 11 March 1905, supplement.
126 *CT*, 11 March 1905, p.3.
127 WH Calder to GE Morrison, 17 April 1905 (SLNSW, MLMSS 312, George Ernest Morrison papers, 312/192, item 1 and 2).

financial burden on the Chinese community of Melbourne, the federal capital, where the representative would inevitably be stationed. He doubted that the See Yup Society or other organisations in Melbourne could bear the burden unaided.[128] To allay any further doubts on the question and stress the risks of supporting such an official, the *TWT* reported on a number of scandals involving the Chinese Consul-General in Mexico. Because of the hostility of the Sydney contingent, the proposal was not on the agenda of the first national Chinese Convention in 1905.[129]

In China, meanwhile, GE Morrison forwarded the petition to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Wu Tingfang (伍廷芳), in Beijing, and received the reply three weeks later that 'the request of the petitioners will be granted'.[130] On 27 December 1905 the Manchu government approved the establishment of a Consul-General position for Australia and New Zealand.[131] In this case, however, the Chinese Ambassador in Britain turned away from the model adopted for the Chinese Consul-General in Singapore, advocating the appointment of one Consul-General in Melbourne and a Deputy Consul-General in each of the five other Australian states. Because this model would entail a large budget, the Chinese Ambassador suggested that the authorities in Beijing should carefully explore the capacity of Chinese communities in Australia to support so many officers before taking the next step.[132]

The next two years were critical in the implementation of the consular proposal. In 1906 Sydney Chinese urged their contacts in Melbourne to consider a proposal to appeal to the Australia government to permit five categories of people enter Australia from China.[133] In Melbourne, CH Cheong and W Ah Ket were appointed to draft a petition to this effect. Around the same time an urgent meeting of the Bo Leong Society, in the name of Chinese National Alliance, was called. The meeting chairman, Wong Shi-Geen, stated that he had learnt from Ah Ket and his European friends that there was no realistic possibility of easing or lifting the conditions laid down in the Immigration Restriction Act. Wong then noted that it was a matter of great urgency that a Chinese Consul-General be appointed to protect Chinese Australians and Ah Ket was commissioned to draft a

128 *TWT*, 29 April 1905, supplement.
129 *TWT*, 31 March, p.6, 7 April, p.5, 21 April, p.5, 28 April, p.5, 5 May, p.5, 12 May 1906, p.5.
130 Morrison to Wu Ting Fang, 26 May 1905, and Wu to Morrison, 21 June 1905 (SLNSW, MLMSS 312, George Ernest Morrison papers, 312/49).
131 AS:IMH, Diplomatic archives, 02-29-003-04 and 02-12-013-02.
132 AS:IMH, Diplomatic archives, 02-29-003-04.
133 *CT*, 30 June, p.1, 21 July 1906, p.3.

petition to the Chinese Ambassador in Britain.[134] Meanwhile, the NCEA and *CT* eagerly awaited the draft. The request from the Sydney Chinese for the Melbourne Chinese to petition the Australian government to ease immigration restrictions had been displaced by a petition to support the appointment of a Chinese consular representative.

By 1906 Sydney Chinese merchants had begun to change their position on the consular issue to the point of acceding to the Manchu government's proposal for a Chinese Consulate. Their views were confirmed by the visit to Australia in 1906 of Chinese government Commissioner, Hwang Honcheng. Hwang had been a reformer, after the style of Kang Youwei, in his Gongcheshangshu (公車上書) movement of 1895 (Tang 1982:333). As noted in Chapter 5, the editor of Singapore's *Union Times* had written to T Yee Hing and the *TWT* in Sydney before Hwang's arrival in Australia and informed them of his reformist background. The positive relationship between Hwang and the CERA reduced the anxiety of Sydney's Chinese merchants on the consular issue,[135] and Sydney leaders eventually promised to support the expenses of the consulate.[136]

After his visit, Hwang reported his findings to the Chinese Ambassador in Britain. At the same time, the Ambassador entered into negotiations with the British government to establish the Consul-General position. On 26 May 1907, he was advised that British authorities had agreed to establish a Chinese Consul-General in Australia. It was proposed that the office of the Consul-General would be located in Melbourne, with Deputy Consuls-General in Sydney, Brisbane and Fremantle.[137] Hwang informed Yee Hing and Tong of the *TWT* that an agreement had been reached regarding a Chinese Consul-General, who would be appointed and financed by the Manchu government. The Deputy Consuls-General were to be chosen and funded by local Chinese residents. Hwang then urged T Yee Hing to stop collecting funds to cover the expenses of the Consul-General.[138]

Following these negotiations, the Chinese Ambassador in Britain reported to the Manchu government in Beijing on the condition of Chinese Australians, explaining the reasons for the establishment of three Deputy Consuls-General. The best model for Australia, he reported, was that adopted in the United States. While he suggested that the Manchu government could

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134   *CT*, 18 August 1906, p.4; *TWT*, 1 September 1906, p.6.
135   *TWT*, 3 November 1906, pp.2, 6.
136   *TWT*, 18 May 1907, p.7.
137   AS:IMH, Diplomatic archives, 02-12-013-02, Chinese Ambassador in Britain, 7 June (lunar calendar), Guangxu 33 (1907); *TWT*, 20 February 1909, p.6.
138   *TWT*, 18 May 1907, p.7.

Portrait of Chinese Commissioner Hwang Hon-cheng, c.1906.
(City of Moorabbin Historical Society Collection.)

choose local Chinese-Australian leaders as the deputy Consuls-Generals, as in Singapore and Southeast Asia, he warned that the situation of Chinese in Australia differed from their situation in Singapore and Southeast Asia. He recommended that the three Deputy Consuls-General should be established after the Consul-General had settled in Australia and familiarised himself with the local scene.[139]

Before the Manchu government appointed the Consul-General, the *CT* and the EA broke their silence on the subject. They welcomed a Chinese Consul-General on the understanding that the incumbent would promote the cause of Chinese residents in Australia. They accepted the Chinese Consul-General in the context of legislative negotiations with the Australian Federal government, but proposed the establishment of a Melbourne Chinese Merchants' Society to monitor the performance of the new Consul-General.[140] The new editor of the *CT*, Lew Goot-chee, set out the attitude of Chinese revolutionaries in an article entitled 'The idea of *huaqiao* rights', published on the arrival of the Consul-General in Melbourne in 1909, indicating the Chinese revolutionary movement's support for a Manchu-appointed Consul-General specifically to protect the rights of Chinese Australians.[141] In years to come, however, the poor performance of Consuls-General on this account served only to strengthen the Chinese revolutionary movement.

The influence of the Imperial Chinese Consul-General after 1909

There was little opposition to the arrival of the first Chinese Consul-General in Australia in 1909. In the same year, Chinese Consuls-General were appointed to Canada and New Zealand (Li 1973:256).[142] The Manchu government announced the appointment of Liang Lan-hsun (梁蘭勳 Liang Lanxun) as the first Chinese Consul-General for Australia in May 1908.[143] Liang, a Guangdong native, was 39 years old at the time of his appointment. He was educated at Hong Kong and served for some time in the Public Works Department of the colony (Pao 1938:14), but had no experience in diplomacy.[144] After British authorities accepted the proposed appointment

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139   AS:IMH, Diplomatic archives, 02-12-013-02, Chinese Ambassador in Britain, 27 November, Guangxu 33 (1907).
140   *CT*, 21 and 28 March 1908, p.2.
141   *CT*, 27 March 1909, p.2.
142   *CT*, 27 March 1909, p.2.
143   AS:IMH, Diplomatic archives, 02-12-013-02, Chinese Ambassador in Britain, 7 September, Guangxu 34 (1908).
144   ACCG, Chinese correspondence, 5 October1909, no. 522-001-071.

in 28 July, the Manchu government issued an official certificate to Liang in October 1908,[145] before he set out on his journey to Australia on 2 November.

Before going to Australia Liang visited London to secure formal authorisation from the British Crown, where he was met by the first Chinese Consul-General for New Zealand, Hwang Yung-liang (黃榮良 Huang Rongliang), who planned to travel to Oceania with him. Hwang, however, left for New Zealand before Liang to curb the growing influence of Chinese revolutionaries and the CERA in Oceania.[146] Hwang visited Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney on his way to New Zealand, staying in Sydney longer than in the other two cities, for extended visits with Sydney Chinese merchants and officers of the CERA.[147]

Hwang, a graduate of New York's Columbia University, created a good impression in Sydney.[148] Before his appointment as Consul-General to New Zealand he had been a translator for the Chinese Ambassador to Britain (Guo 2002:112).[149] With his fluent English and Western manners he cut a fine figure among Sydney Chinese. He had cut his pigtail before his arrival, which the *TWT* suggested his Sydney hosts in Sydney should do too.[150] Hwang created expectations in Sydney that were not met by the new Consul-General to Australia. The *TWT* compared Hwang's sophisticated style with Liang Lan-hsun's casual manner on his arrival in Melbourne.[151]

The Consul-General was welcomed enthusiastically by Chinese communities in Sydney and Melbourne in March 1909.[152] The *TWT* and *CT* published editorials expressing their expectations that Liang would deliver better conditions for Chinese residents in Australia.[153] Both newspapers stressed that the role of a Consul-General was to protect the rights of Chinese Australians, but the official view of the Chinese Ambassador to Britain differed. He stated that while Chinese Consuls-General carried some responsibility for protecting Chinese overseas, they lacked authority to control Chinese communities in their host country (Xue 1963a:36,364).

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145   AS:IMH, Diplomatic archives, 02-12-013-02, Chinese Ambassador in Britain, 24 July and 7 September, Guangxu 34 (1908).
146   AS:IMH, Diplomatic archives, 02-12-013-02, Chinese Ambassador in Britain, 29 March, Xuantong 1 (1909).
147   *TWT*, 13 February 1909, p.7.
148   *TWT*, 10 June 1911, p.7.
149   *TWT*, 20 February 1909, p.7.
150   *TWT*, 22 May 1909, p.2.
151   *TWT*, 27 March 1909, p.7.
152   *TWT*, 20 March, p.7, 27 March, p.7, 10 April, p.7, 17 April 1909, p.7; *CT*, 10 April, p.7, *CAH*, 3 April, p.3 and supplement, 10 April 1909, p.5.
153   *TWT*, 10 April 1909, p.2; *CT*, 27 March 1909, p.2.

MR. LIANG LAN HSUN.

The first Chinese Consul-General in Australia, Mr. Liang Lan Hsun took up his duties in 1909 at Melbourne. He received part of his earlier education in Hongkong, serving for some time in the Public Works Department of the Colony.

The first Chinese Consul-General for Australia, Liang Lan-hsun, c.1909.
(*A Century of Sino–Australia Relations*, 1938.)

Successive Consuls-General faced this dilemma in negotiating with the Federal government, and the appointment of an imperial Chinese Consul-General in Australia did not achieve any relaxation of restrictions on Chinese immigrants (Yong 1977:22–28; Guo 2002:115), much to the disappointment of the Chinese community for years to come.

Three Chinese Consuls-General were appointed in the last years of the imperial and early years of the Republican government in China. Liang Lan-hsun served from May 1908 to November 1910, Tong Ying-tong (唐恩桐 Tang Entong) from November 1910 to May 1911, and Hwang Yung-liang from June 1911 until June 1913 in the Republican era (Qingji Zhongwai 1986:82). The first and second Consuls-General had no previous experience in the operation of consulates in British colonial jurisdictions or in other English-speaking communities. Unlike the Consul-General for Singapore, who was appointed by the local Chinese community, these three men were relatively unknown within the Chinese-Australian community before their arrival in Australia.

Liang Lan-hsun sought to understand and manage the Chinese community by establishing connections with local Chinese merchants and associations. He visited the capitals of each state to investigate the conditions under which Chinese residents lived and worked. In Sydney he was entertained by local merchants during his visit.[154] He gave a speech at a meeting in the Masonic Hall and attending a dinner the Sydney CERA held for him in their building.[155] Liang's journeys also took him to Brisbane, Adelaide and Fremantle.[156] Liang's travels strengthened his understanding of the Chinese-Australian community, including their numbers, the economic conditions under which they lived, and situation of local Chinese societies. He nominated three candidates for the honorary Deputy Consuls-General positions for approval by the Manchu government in July 1909: T Yee Hing in Sydney; Jim Yun (王占元 Wang Zhanyuan) in Brisbane; and J Louey (雷華 Lei Hua) in Fremantle (Qingji Zhongwai 1986:82).[157] He also proposed that a Deputy Consul-General be established in Adelaide.[158]

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154 *TWT*, 14 August 1909, p.7.
155 *TWT*, 19 June 1909, p.7
156 *TWT*, 26 June, p.7, 10 July, p.7, 27 July 1909, p.7
157 ACCG, Chinese correspondence, 13 June, Xuantong 1 (1909) and 14 April, Xuantong 1 (1909), no.522-018.
158 ACCG, Chinese correspondence, 26 September Xuantong 1 (1909) and 24 August 1909, no.552-002-038/039.

Liang filed reports with the imperial government noting his interest in the commercial influence of Chinese Australians,[159] and encouraged Chinese merchants in Melbourne and Adelaide to organise commercial societies.[160] In Melbourne his two secretaries and translator gave talks to the EA mounting a case for the establishment of a Chinese merchant society.[161] The close relationship formed between the Consul-General and the Chinese community early in his tenure did not last for long. Four months after his arrival in Australia, Liang returned to China to attend his father's funeral.[162] His choice of a Japanese steamship for his journey enraged the *TWT* and the CERA because it broke ranks with the anti-Japanese boycott movement they were promoting.[163] The CMDA sent a telegram to the Hong Kong Chinese Chamber of Commerce protesting that Liang was unsuited for the position of Consul-General on this account,[164] and the incident generally undermined support for the position of Consul-General in the Chinese-Australian community in 1909.

Liang returned to Australia later in 1909 and attempted unsuccessfully to reduce the impact of anti-Chinese legislation, writing letters of protest to the Premier and Governor of New South Wales against a bill to amend the Factories and Shops Act before the Legislative Council passed it.[165] He then wrote to the Chinese Ambassador in London urging him to persuade the British government to overturn the legislation.[166] When the New South Wales Factories and Shops (Amendment) Act was passed, Liang became aware of the futility of his position. He reported to the Manchu government his disappointment over negotiations with the Australian Federal government to relax the immigration restrictions of its legislation.[167]

Liang did have some success before he was relieved of his post. First, he negotiated with the Department of External Affairs to limit the collection of handprints for the CEDT. This was by no means a universal concession. The Australian authorities merely conceded that the handprinting requirement did not apply to Chinese of good repute.[168] Second, he negotiated the

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159   *Shangwu guanbao*, 5 (15 February 1909), 4 (5 July 1909).
160   *CT*, 15 May, p.3, 12 June, p.9, 31 July 1909, p.9; *TWT*, 22 May 1909, p.7.
161   *CT*, 22 May 1909, pp.2, 9–10.
162   ACCG, Chinese correspondence, 26 September Xuantong 1 (1909), no.522-001.
163   *TWT*, 14 August, p.7, 21 August 1909, p.7.
164   *TWT*, 4 September 1909, p.3.
165   ACCG, Chinese correspondence, 4, 8, 9, 17 December 1909, no.522-003.
166   ACCG, Chinese correspondence, 24 November 1909, no.522-003.
167   ACCG, Chinese correspondence, dated 4 March, Xuantong 2 (1910) no.522-003.
168   ACCG, Chinese correspondence, 29 July, Xuantong 2 (1910), no.552-011; *TWT*, 10 September 1910, p.2; *CT*, 27 November 1910, pp.8–9.

reduction of the fee for CEDT applications from £2 to £1.[169] Third, Liang issued the first Chinese passports to Chinese-Australian residents to assist them when travelling to China.[170] They were not national passports, as they were issued by the Guangdong Provincial Governor.[171] The application fee for each passport was five yuan, or three shillings.[172]

In 1910, the Manchu government directed Chinese Consuls-General to report on Chinese overseas as part of their duties, a directive the Chinese Consul-General in Singapore replied was difficult to follow. The Chinese Ambassador to Britain ordered all Chinese Consuls-Generals in British colonies to submit reports on local Chinese activities.[173] In Melbourne, Liang approached Chinese commercial societies to assist him in this task, but met with a less than enthusiastic response. Liang left Australia toward the end of 1910.

The second Chinese Consul-General, Tong Ying-tong, was appointed in June 1910.[174] The 48-year-old from Zhongshan county had served as Chinese Consul-General in Incheon, Korea, before assuming office in Melbourne.[175] After just two months he wrote to the Ministry of foreign affairs in China seeking to be excused from his duties on health grounds,[176] and he left four months later, having achieved little in his brief stay. He tried to follow the example of his New Zealand counterpart in establishing an umbrella Chinese community organisation in Melbourne, the Chinese Association (中華會館 Zhonghuahuiguan), but it did not last long. Local community societies and associations in the Melbourne Chinese community already belonged to a similar association, the Chinese Public Association (中華公會 Zhonghuagonghui) over which Tong exercised little influence.[177] Tong asked to resign his commission because of ill health, and left Australia in May 1911.[178] The

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169 ACCG, Chinese correspondence, from Chinese Ambassador to Britain, 26 September, Xuantong 2 (1910), no. 522-011; *TWT*, 5 November, p.6, 19 November 1910, p.2.

170 ACCG, Chinese correspondence, 15 February, Xuantong 1 (1909), no.522-026, from Chinese Ambassador to Britain, 27 April, Xuantong 2 (1910), no.522-011.

171 ACCG, Chinese correspondence, from Canton Governor, 29 Feb 1909, no.522-008.

172 ACCG, Chinese correspondence, 27 April 1910 and June 1911, no.522-011.

173 ACCG, Chinese correspondence, from Chinese Ambassador in Britain, 8 January 1910, no.522-008.

174 *TWT*, 20 August 1910, p.2; *CT*, 8 October 1910, p.8.

175 AS:IMH, Diplomatic archives, 02-12-014-03, Chinese Ambassador in Britain, 13 June, Xuantong 2 (1910); also résumé of Tong Ying-tong, in ACCG, no.522-018.

176 ACCG, Chinese correspondence, 22 December, Xuantong 2 (1911), no.522-013.

177 *TWT*, 11 March 1911, p.7, 20 May 1910, p.7.

178 ACCG, Chinese correspondence, 29 April 1911, no.522-032; *TWT*, 20 May 1911, p.7. The short stays of the first two imperial Consuls-General are also explained by their attaining higher positions in the Manchu bureaucracy (Yeung 2005:174).

Second Chinese Consul-General for
Australia, Tong Ying-tong, c.1911.
(*Tung Wah Times*, 4 Feb 1911.)

frequent replacement of the Chinese Consuls-General raised questions in the
Federal government about the viability of the position in Australia.[179]

The third and final imperial Chinese Consul-General was Hwang Yung-
liang, the Chinese Consul-General in New Zealand,[180] who, as already
noted, had made a good impression in Australia two years earlier. While
serving in New Zealand, Hwang collected £700 to build offices for the Chi-
nese Association of New Zealand,[181] which was a public space, an agency for
selling steamship tickets, a reading club, and an English language school.[182]
The Chinese Association notably held a commemoration in honour of
Confucius in 1910.[183] When Hong Nam, as president of Melbourne's EA,
visited New Zealand in 1909, he was the guest of the New Zealand Chinese
Consul-General,[184] thus establishing a relationship that helped Hwang when
he moved to Melbourne.

Before Hwang took office in Melbourne, a number of events interceded to
complicate his reception in Australia. In the first of these Thomas Jones Chia
(謝德怡 Xie Deyi), a secretary of the retired Consul-General, was caught up
in a corruption scandal. Chia was born in Singapore and educated at St.
Peter's College Cambridge before obtaining a degree in Nanjing in China.[185]

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179   AS:IMH, Diplomatic archives, 02-12-015-01, 10 June, Xuantong 3 (1911).
180   AS:IMH, Diplomatic archives, 02-12-015-01, 11 April, Xuantong 3 (1911).
181   *TWT*, 10 July 1909, p.2.
182   *CT*, 28 August 1909, p.7; *TWT*, 1 January 1910, p.6.
183   *TWT*, 15 October, p.7, 29 October 1910, p.8.
184   *CT*, 28 August 1909, pp.7–8.
185   *The Argus*, 12 March 1913, p.13; *The Age*, 25 April 1913, p.6.

When Tong returned to China, Chia continued as secretary at the consulate. Following his marriage to Eunice Camille Russell, in Melbourne, he fell into personal financial difficulties (Yeung 2005:167–170) and, in an attempt to extricate himself from them, he pretended that he was the acting Consul-General before Hwang's arrival from New Zealand. This led to conflict[186] and misunderstanding at the time that Hwang was assuming office.[187]

Secondly, criticism directed by Chinese revolutionaries towards Hwang and his Chinese Association in New Zealand adversely affected his reputation in some quarters in Australia. Louis Kitt (呂傑 Lu Jie, also known as Joseph Lou), a founder of the Chinese revolutionary movement in New Zealand, publicly questioned the purpose and direction of the Chinese Association Hwang had supported. Kitt, who had shifted from a monarchist position to a revolutionary one in about 1904,[188] had registered his membership with the Revolutionary Alliance in Hong Kong by mail under the sponsorship of Feng Ziyou in 1908 (Feng 1953:119). He later organised a revolutionary organisation in New Zealand with Liu Si (劉祀), which was initially registered as the Dulizizhihui (獨立自治會 Society for Independence and Self-government) but later changed its name to Tuanjiezizhihui (團結自治會 Society for Unity and Self-government).[189] Kitt stated that he became involved with the Revolutionary Alliance in order to liberate China and the Chinese and was renowned for riding a bicycle around New Zealand and lecturing about rebellion at every port of call.[190] Late in 1909, Kitt, responding to a letter in the *TWT* from a Chinese person in New Zealand who extolled Hwang's achievements as Consul-General and his Chinese Association in New Zealand,[191] wrote to the *CT* to warn that Hwang's reputation was overvalued. Kitt claimed that the Consul-General merely used the Chinese Association to earn commissions from the sale of steamship tickets.[192] The Chinese Association took issue with Kitt on this point,[193] and he was also attacked by a cousin of the author of the letter to the *TWT*.[194] Thus, by the time Hwang

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186 The Consul-General was shot by Thomas Chia – by then his former secretary – on 11 March 1913.

187 National Library of Australia, Hazel de Berg Collection, DeB 1098, William Liu interviewed by Hazel de Berg, 17 February 1978.

188 *TWT*, 23 January 1904, p.2.

189 *CT*, 26 February 1910, pp.9–10.

190 Interview with Kitt in Sydney after the 1911 revolution, in KMT Archives, Sydney, no.523-01-316, Reverend Young Wai's newsclipping book.

191 *TWT*, 23 October 1909, p.7.

192 *CT*, 27 November 1909, pp.9–10.

193 *TWT*, 1 January 1910, p.6; *CT*, 25 December 1909, pp.9–10.

194 *CT*, 29 January 1910, p.9.

arrived in Australia, readers of the Chinese-language press were already well acquainted with the controversies that had followed him around New Zealand, and the public criticism of his behaviour diminished the reputation of the new Chinese Consul-General.

Hwang encountered a further difficulty in communicating with Chinese-Australian communities because of language differences that affected him and his consular staff. Two of his secretaries were from Fujian province,[195] and another, Chan Ruiqing (陳瑞清), was from Jiangsu province;[196] none of them could speak Cantonese. Even Hwang needed interpreters when he gave speeches to Chinese Australians.[197] To add to Hwang's problems, he dismissed Chan Ruiqing a few months after Hwang's arrival over a conflict between Hwang and his cook. Hwang initially employed the Cantonese cook who had come to Australia with the second Chinese Consul-General, but the cook and his family had difficulty communicating with Hwang. The cook asked Chan to help him return to China, which he agreed to do, but this enraged Hwang who immediately dismissed Chan. In a report to the Manchu government, Chan wrote bitterly of Hwang's management style and manner.[198] These events were played out publicly in the revolutionary *CT*,[199] which reinforced growing public hostility toward the Manchu government in some Chinese circles in Australia.[200] Each of the three imperial Consuls-General disappointed the expectations of Chinese residents who had hoped for forceful representation from the imperial government to improve their situation in Australia. The relationship with the new office of Chinese Consul-General from 1909 increased political tension in the Chinese community. Practically, the reality of the visible presence of an agency of the Chinese government transformed the nature of the community's public narratives to governing and citizenship from the romantic posturing of folk epics and folk national history. The Chinese-Australian revolutionary movement was under the shadow of the Sydney Chinese urban elite in the first few years of the 20th century and, therefore, thwarted in its aims. However, the Immigration Restriction Act and other anti-Chinese legislation in White Australia indirectly gave encouragement to Chinese native-place and secret societies to cooperate with other Chinese groups to secure their positions

195   *CT*, 24 June 1911, p.3; *TWT*, 5 November 1910, p.7; *CAH*, 3 December 1910, p.4.
196   *CAH*, 31 December 1910, p.4.
197   *CT*, 17 June 1911, p.3.
198   AS:IMH, Diplomatic archives, 02-12-015-01, Reports of Hwang and Chan, 9 July, Xuantong 3 (1911).
199   *CT*, 22 July 1911, p.3.
200   *CT*, 17 November 1910, pp.2–3, 15 April 1911, p.2.

in urban Australia. Traditional patterns of leadership within these societies changed as notions of modernity, respectability, ethnicity and nationalism took hold among labourers and lower-class Chinese. The changes affected secret societies, native-place associations, newspapers and unions, which established alternative community networks and political alliances. Notions of brotherhood and mutualism were gradually modified into new forms of ethnic identity and nationalism among Chinese residents in Australia. An expanding network of reformed associations and new institutions then emerged to contest the dominance of the Sydney-based CERA and its commercial elite.

Chapter 7

NATIONAL SUBJECTS IN HISTORY AND REVOLUTIONARY MOBILISATION, 1909–1912

The anti-Chinese hostility associated with the White Australia policy dismayed the Chinese-Australian community in Sydney and Melbourne. In response to the formation of anti-Chinese leagues and discriminatory legislation the Chinese community established new associations and remade traditional social organisations to contest the policy. This institutional makeover became a mark and a measure of leadership in Chinese-Australian communities of the time. The first decade after the passing of the Immigration Restriction Act saw the rise of the Sydney CERA, the advent of the Melbourne NCEA, and the appointment of a Chinese Consul-General. In their responses to each of these developments Chinese residents demonstrated an increasing mastery of modern political rhetoric, a growing sense of their rights, and an expanding capacity for social mobilisation. In this context, Chinese-language newspapers and journalists played an important part in enhancing their constituents' political consciousness and ethnic nationalism.

This chapter argues that the enthusiastic participation in and emotional commitment of Chinese Australians toward China's political revolution in 1911 reflects the fact that political participation amounted to a renegotiation of the terms of their settlement in White Australia. Their increasing participation emphasised the importance of belonging to a larger Chinese community. Of particular note is that the transformation from clan and native-place based fellowships to political associations was shaped by the historical narratives that went along with them. From 1905 politics provided a compelling language for visualising the developing Chinese-Australian social networks and identities, with their wider dreams of dignity, peace and prosperity. Numerous stories of oppression under White Australian legislative restrictions and racism featured in the Chinese-language press and

tales of suffering and hardship became in time an essential part of Chinese-Australian identity. The subject of these stories was effectively extended to all Chinese abroad through publication of articles about the humiliations also suffered by the Chinese in Southeast Asia and the Americas. These were interwoven in turn with the Confucian revival movement, Chinese-language maintenance programs and an expanding network of overseas Chinese-language newspapers to institutionalise the idea of a Chinese diaspora that framed the experience of being Chinese-Australian in the Federation period. Thus, the self-interpretation and reinterpretation embodied in the concepts of '*huaqiao*', 'Confucian heritage', and 'revolution', point to historical sensitivity about the role of nations, the duties of political subjects, and the place of national belonging in nationalism.

Being *huaqiao*: anti-Chinese legislation, political participation and community

Heightened levels of political participation and consciousness among Chinese Australians in the first decades of the 20th century were partly a consequence of anti-Chinese restrictions in White Australia. Chinese adopted the term *huaqiao* as a self-reflexive label that both located them in an international Chinese diasporic network and offered a vantage point for pressing national claims in Australia. The notion of being *huaqiao* at the international level was an indirect consequence of White-Australian racism at the national level.

Before the New South Wales Chinese Restriction and Regulation Act of 1888 prevented Chinese from becoming naturalised, there were 971 naturalised Chinese in New South Wales (McCormack 2008). Chinese sought naturalisation not so much as a manifestation of loyalty toward the British Empire but for the sake of their business, property and mobility in the British colonies. Becoming British subjects was a necessity of life rather than a political desire to belong to a state. By the beginning of the 20th century this had changed. The federation of the Australian states was followed by the passing of restrictive federal immigration law and the rise of anti-Chinese sentiment, which compelled Chinese residents in Australia to recognise the power of governments and the value of political participation. Sydney's two Chinese newspapers embraced the concept of federation in Australia, urging their readers to become involved in the process. However, restrictions imposed on Chinese participation in building the newly federated nation-state left the newspapers disappointed as well. As it became apparent that

naturalised Chinese did not have the same rights as white British subjects, the *CAH* advocated equal rights for all British subjects, whether naturalised or native-born.[1] Through the early years of the 20th century, the Chinese-Australian press highlighted the suffering of Chinese away from their homeland as a result of increasing anti-Chinese prejudice[2] and the 1901 Immigration Restriction Act.

While Chinese Australians were experiencing the oppression of the White Australia policy, the *CAH* was highly critical of the Manchu government for its failure to provide official protection for Chinese Australians.[3] Even as the Chinese-Australian press attacked the weak and conservative Manchu government for ignoring overseas Chinese,[4] Chinese Australians were increasingly conscious of the value of being counted national subjects of China. This process was encouraged by the Manchu government's enactment, in the late 1890s, of a series of regulations designed to entice overseas Chinese to become involved in reforms and the development of industry in China (Li 1997:21–33). Thus, in the late 19th century and early 20th century, the idea of being a Chinese subject was driven home to overseas Chinese, and, in this context, the term *huaqiao* took on added significance. As Wang Gungwu has pointed out, after 1903 the term *huaqiao* referred specifically to political recognition of 'overseas Chinese' seeking official protection (Wang 1985:75). Thus the notion of being recognised as a Chinese subject was heightened by widespread adoption of the term.

For Chinese Australians, *huaqiao* was adopted as a term following the growth in hostility towards Chinese in 1904 and 1905. The anti-American boycott movement added further impetus for Chinese Australians to look to the international Chinese diaspora network for guidance and leadership, using the name of *huaqiao*. By 1905 the Chinese-language press began to use the word as an interpretation of Chinese Australians, and both the *CT* and the *TWT* began to call Chinese *huaqiao* in that year.[5] As Sydney and Melbourne embraced the anti-American boycott in 1905, the *TWT* published an article by a Melbourne Chinese promoting the boycott in the name of '*huaqiao*'.[6] Thereafter, the *TWT* increasingly and explicitly reported news of *huaqiao* in Australia, South Africa and Southeast Asia in a column

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1   *CAH*, 26 December 1903, p.2.
2   *CAH*, 9 June, pp.2–3, 16 June, p.2, 1 December 1900, p.3.
3   *CAH*, 31 August 1899, p.4.
4   *CAH*, 6 April 1901, p.3.
5   For example, *CT*, 18 March, p.3, 15 April, supplement, 27 May, p.1 and supplement, 23 September, p.3, 18 November 1905, p.1.
6   *TWT*, 5 August 1905, p.2.

entitled 'Colonial News'.[7] Both the CERA and the NCEA highlighted the suffering of Chinese around the world and used the word *huaqiao* for those who suffered. Chinese-language journalists introduced and reshaped the meaning of the Chinese diaspora through their commentaries on the international Chinese community and the stories they told of overseas Chinese suffering at the hands of colonial authorities and white settler societies. In this context, Confucius appeared in the narratives as a revered ancestor of China's glorious past. Australia's urban Chinese were relocating themselves within linear history to seek a transnational identity with other Chinese who had left their homeland for other destinations around the world—the scattered multitudes dubbed the *huaqiao* (Kuo 2011:175–180).

However, interpretations of *huaqiao* varied in the Chinese-Australian press, reflecting differences in social positions, visions of community, and, especially, political ideologies. The visit of Chinese government represent-ative Hwang Hon-cheng in 1906 and the later establishment of the office of Chinese Consul-General further enhanced the notion of *huaqiao* as a symbol to use in raising the political consciousness of Chinese Australians. The 1906 visit did much to dispel the suspicions of the Sydney leadership as to the purpose of a Chinese Consul-General. The *CT* and the NCEA also embraced the term *huaqiao* as invoking and shaping Chinese nationalism after Hwang's visit.[8] When it came to the question of the purpose of the Chinese Consul-General, however, the new editor of the *CT*, Lew Goot-chee, significantly placed emphasis upon the notion of the *rights* of the *huaqiao*.[9] By Lew's argument, which reflected the revolutionaries' view, the Chinese Consul-General's function was to uphold the rights of Chinese Australians on behalf of the Chinese empire, rather than to stand as an authority figure commanding loyalty to imperial China. In this context, *huaqiao* was used as an inclusive term for all Chinese Australians in their struggle against racist oppression and not simply for those who favoured the imperial system.

The differing interpretations of *huaqiao* in the various Chinese news-papers and groups reflect the fact that the political identity of Chinese Australians was influenced by social leadership and class division. Political participation by Chinese Australians after 1909 was in general for the cause of improved social status, and the adoption of *huaqiao* did not, therefore,

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7   For example, *TWT*, 13 January, p.2, 10 February, p.2, 29 December 1906, p.3,
     6 April, p.3, 27 April, p.2, 4 May, p.2, 11 May, p.7, 6 July, p.6, 3 August 1907, p.6.
8   *CT*, 10 November 1906.
9   *CT*, 23 March 1909, p.2.

signify identification with imperial China. This is confirmed by the attitudes of Chinese Australians toward imperial-Chinese nationality in 1909 when the Manchu government proclaimed the first Act of Chinese Nationality, which was promulgated to the first Chinese Consul-General.[10] Chinese Australians did not embrace the new law, in large part because the Manchu government had already begun a process to compile a register of all Chinese Australians.

The Melbourne Chinese National Alliance received an official notice from the Chinese Ambassador to Britain in late 1908, ordering them to register Chinese Australians,[11] but there is no evidence to suggest that it acted on this directive. Even the first Chinese Consul-General did not proceed with the registration after his arrival in 1909. Chinese Australians had good reason not to cooperate with such proposals. Early in 1909 the Victorian Trade Commissioner in the East, RB Levien, suggested that the Australian federal government register all Chinese Australians and require them to carry passports, as a measure against the smuggling of Chinese into Australia. This enraged Chinese leaders because, they said, it impugned the character of long-term Chinese residents, likening them to illegal entrants into the country.[12] Thus Melbourne and Sydney Chinese were disinclined to register for any purpose.[13] Faced with their recalcitrance, the Chinese Ambassador in London in 1910 instructed the Chinese Consul-General in Australia to implement the registration requirement in preparation for the introduction of the Chinese Constitution.[14] Given its overriding interest in the proposed imperial constitution, the *TWT* and CERA shifted their position and supported the registration proposal.[15] Nevertheless, no full or systematic registration of Chinese Australians was undertaken in the first decades of the 20th century.

In 1909, the Chinese Consul-General in Melbourne made available the first Chinese 'passport' (護照 *huzhao*) for Chinese residents. The document was authorised by the Guangdong provincial government rather than the imperial government in Beijing and resembled a local security certificate promising safe passage in Guangdong rather than a national passport.[16]

10　ACCG, Chinese correspondence, 18 April 1909, no.522-004.
11　*CT*, 28 Nov 1908, p.8; *TWT*, 12 December 1908, p.7.
12　*The Age*, 25 February 1909; *TWT*, 6 March 1909, p.2; *CT*, 27 February, p.9, 6 March 1909, p.10; *CAH*, 6 March, supplement, 13 March 1909, p.4.
13　*The Age*, 25 February 1909.
14　ACCG Chinese correspondence, 8 January 1910, no.522-008.
15　*TWT*, 6 August, 1910, p.7.
16　ACCG, Chinese correspondence, Chinese Ambassador in Britain to Consul-General, 15 February, Xuantong 1 (1909), no.522-008.

National passports did not become available to Chinese Australians until after the founding of the Republic in 1912, and were acquired to ensure entry and re-entry into Australia rather than into China. In the first half of 1912, the Chinese Consul-General negotiated with the Australian Department of External Affairs for a regulation that would admit Chinese students and merchants into Australia without restriction,[17] which went into effect on 1 September 1912. The new regulation also entitled the Chinese Consul-General, on behalf of his government, to prepare passports facilitating the arrival of Chinese students and merchants in Australia.[18] In November, the Consul-General received 1,000 passports from the Board of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China and notification of the regulations governing their issue.[19] However, in the first six months only 47 passports were issued by his office and, by the end of 1913, a total of only 193 Chinese had applied for them.[20] The low takeup rate of the Chinese passports is a further indication of a lack of enthusiasm of Chinese Australians for any proposal that they belonged to the Chinese nation. Several years later, in 1920, Chinese Australians were proclaiming that the reason for their refusal to register with the Consul-General was that they belonged in Australia, not China, and preferred to be regulated by the Australian legal system.[21]

In rejecting the idea of a register, whether proposed by Australian or Chinese authorities, Chinese Australians showed a refusal to accept the role of state bureaucracies in shaping their concept of individual national identity. For Chinese Australians, *huaqiao* did not in such cases signify identification with imperial China. Instead, Chinese Australians attempted to empower the leadership of their local institutions. While the Chinese Consul-General was negotiating with the Australian government to demand that the Chinese be required to hold passports, the power and public influence of local Chinese groups and institutions were enhanced. Chinese Australians who needed to apply for passports or submit requests to extend their stay in Australia tended first to contact their local merchant associations. This meant that the Chinese merchant associations in Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide and Perth became *de facto* representatives of the Chinese Consul-General. In his dealings with them, the Consul-General in turn

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17   ACCG, Melbourne, English/Chinese Correspondence, 25 March, 29 May, 2 July, 8 July, 2 August, 2 September, 21 November 1912, no.522-018 and no. 522-021

18   ACCG, English Correspondence, 2 September 1912, no.522-031; *TWT*, 30 November 1912, p.2.

19   ACCG, Chinese Correspondence, 16 and 18 November 1912, no. 522-021.

20   ACCG, Chinese Correspondence, 7 April 1913 and 6 May 1914, no.522-021.

21   *Shenbao*, 18 June 1920, p.2.

enhanced the power of the local leaders. In this context, therefore, Chinese-Australian institutions became agents and representatives through which Chinese Australians connected with the both the Chinese and Australian governments.

When traditional Chinese society transformed itself to relocate to urban centres such as Sydney and Melbourne, it enhanced its political purpose and acquired a new armoury of rhetoric to employ in the struggle for the rights of Chinese Australians. The various concerns relating to class divisions, patterns of leadership and social mobilisation collectively strengthened the political consciousness of Chinese Australians, in the process shaping a Chinese-Australian nationalism incorporating improved social status. Rising Chinese-Australian nationalism was enhanced by the Chinese newspapers. The narratives and rhetoric of the papers generated debate on the interpretations and meanings of being a Chinese person in Australia. They also showed that Chinese-Australian identity embraced a discussion taking in relocation within historical narratives in order to connect past and present, China and Australia, individual and society, the traditional and the modern.

Rising revolutionary sentiment, Chinese newspapers and historical narratives

From 1909 to 1912 it was essential for Chinese Australians to redefine their political consciousness. This was a result not of conflict within civil society, but of confrontation with racism. Increasing revolutionary sentiment and political debate during those years was also an outcome of the rhetoric of the Chinese newspapers and renegotiation with the associations. After 1909, emphasis on dignity, unity and patriotism became the basic platform in the debate on political ideology and national sovereignty that attempted to resolve the Chinese exclusion problem. The political language of different Chinese groups expressed two patterns of Chinese nationalist rhetoric in Australia. The conservative monarchists, later constitutionists, interpreted Confucian heritage and cosmopolitanism as justification for Social Darwinism and capitalist liberty. This pattern highlighted the heroics and glories of the Chinese civilisation to inspire the people. It promoted the idea that social status can be improved by economic development and wealth. On the other hand, republicans and revolutionaries made use of political slogans such as 'freedom', 'democracy' and 'dignity' to promote a sense of new citizens and racial nationalism. For both, Confucius was the ancestor of the Chinese ethnicity, civilisation and identity.

This section first discusses the rise of revolutionary sentiment in 1909 and 1910, which was enhanced by the *CT* and its revolutionary network. The decline of the Sydney CERA and conflict over interpretations of Confucianism provoked a measure of revolutionary mobilisation in Sydney.

The role of the Chinese Times *after 1909*

The influence of the *CT* in shaping revolutionary mobilisation in Melbourne increased after 1909. After the first Chinese Consul-General returned to China in October of 1909, Melbourne's revolutionaries enthusiastically enlarged their base by mobilising the Chinese lower class. Although the *CT* did not endorse the representative authority of the Consul-General and imperial China, it promoted the racial nationalism implied in Chinese belonging to an ideal China, using historical narratives and folk literature to do so. In the initial stages of organising the form of the revolution, the *CT* adopted the important role of mobilising the lower-class Chinese.

The most important task for the *CT* was to enlarge its readership and, thereby, the revolutionary network. From late 1909 the paper established connections with international periodicals and shifted to a populist, colloquial style in its determination to educate the lower classes. A new editor, Wong Yue-kung, wrote of the importance of the written word as a weapon in the quest for a basis of Chinese nationalism.[22] He led the *CT* into a new folk-oriented style, publishing more humorous or satirical articles to attract more readers and encourage more of them to learn the ideas of the Chinese revolutionaries and of what distinguished them from monarchists.[23] He began a series of articles in Cantonese, once again aimed at lower-class readers,[24] and in early 1910 organised a competition of 'lantern riddles' related to Chinese revolutionaries, for which the prizes were subscriptions to the *CT*.[25]

A significant further innovation was the serial publication of a long novel from 8 June 1909 to 16 December 1910.[26] The novel, by the pseudonymous author Jiangxiaerlang (江夏二郎), is a story of Chinese immigrants to Australia in the mid-19th century, which focuses on the difficulties they experienced in the Australia of that time, when they were beset by the

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22   *CT*, 30 October 1909, p.10.
23   *CT*, 25 September, pp.9–10, 18 December 1909, p.9.
24   *CT*, 25 September, p.10, 30 October, p.10, 25 December, p.11, 19 February 1910, p.10.
25   *CT*, 19 February, pp.9–10, 26 February 1910, p.9.
26   *CT*, 5 June, p.10, 29 January 1910, p.7.

long and taxing journey, the wild environment and the threat of attack by Aboriginals. The story emphasised the importance of brotherhood and clan congregation for successful settlement in Australia, and on this theme described the establishment of the Siyi Society in 1854.[27] In its later chapters, the novel shifted to the depiction of the sorrows and travail of Chinese immigrants who left their families in China, all the while criticising traditional values and manners such as the monopolised accession of sons and a marriage system that condoned polygamy. It even questioned the morality of the first Chinese Consul-General, as he had more than one wife.[28] This novel, the first about Chinese Australians to be published in a Chinese-language newspaper, combined current affairs, political ideology, and reflections on the value of kinship and brotherhood for Chinese immigrants. In its style and content it was consistent with the populist style the *CT* now affected and helped the paper enlarge its political base.

Together with the *CT*'s folk style, the novel highlights the way that history had become a reference point for Chinese-Australian nationalism in the early 20th century. The *TWT* also pointed out that history was an essential element of a sense of nation and of patriotism.[29] It defined two spurs to nationalism—one to extol the nation's heroes and the other to induce a sense of indignation in the masses by invoking the history of national suffering.[30] In the view of the Chinese-language newspapers, the relationship between history and nationalism lay in the narrative of a suffering Chinese diaspora.

The *CT* spread its message in other ways too. It introduced two significant new periodicals to Melbourne's Chinese. The first appeared in 1909 when it began importing *Xinning Magazine* (新寧雜誌), which was published by Taishan county leaders[31] and was the first *qiaokan* (僑刊 overseas Chinese magazine) published in China (Hsu 2004:124). The *CT* introduced the journal to encourage Melbourne Chinese to think about the Taishan reforms and to foster loyalty to the county. The paper also used the magazine as a source of modern ideas and accounts of revolutionary activities in Guangdong to show how particularistic local identities were converging with modern nationalism in China. In 1910 the *CT* appealed to Melbourne Chinese to support the raising of a revolutionary army in Guangdong province. China's political circumstances influenced both Chinese monarchists and constitutionalists

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27   *CT*, 27 November 1909, p.10.
28   *CT*, 28 November 1910, pp.2–3.
29   *TWT*, 11 September 1909, p.2.
30   *TWT*, 20 November 1909, p.2.
31   *CT*, 6 March 1909, p.5.

to have sympathy for the revolutionary approach (Chang 1969:112–113). In particular, the vice-president of the Guangdong provincial government employed Chinese revolutionaries who gradually enlarged their network and membership within the government's armed forces (Chang 1969:112–113; Zou 1965:778–779). Eventually they planned to raise a rebellion; however the plan was discovered and the leading revolutionaries were executed in 1910. Supporters of the revolution among Melbourne Chinese then came together to express their sympathy for those who had been killed and collected donations for families of the dead revolutionaries.[32]

From 1910 the Melbourne revolutionaries made contact with Chinese revolutionary journalists in America, Hong Kong and Southeast Asia in order to organise the first revolutionary organisation to support Sun Yatsen. The *CT* then began to import a new revolutionary newspaper entitled *The Young China* (少年中國晨報 *Shaonian Zhongguo chenbao*),[33] which was published by a branch of the Revolutionary Alliance founded in San Francisco in 1910, as reported to Melbourne Chinese at the time.[34] Although no branch of the Revolutionary Alliance was established in Melbourne, the connection between Chinese Nationalists in San Francisco and Melbourne was an important development. The *CT* editor, Goot-chee, later moved to San Francisco to become an editor of *The Young China* (Shaonian Zhongguo chenbao 1960:22–24, 114–116) and 'The Young China' was adopted as the name of a Melbourne revolutionary club in 1911.

While the *CT* was shifting to a populist style and making connections with the publishers of new Chinese periodicals, it was also reporting a rise in revolutionary views in the Melbourne Chinese community, with a resulting expansion of grassroots revolutionary support. One issue upon which both the *CT* and the EA focused was the cutting of pigtails, and they exhorted Melbourne's Chinese men to take this radical step.[35] The *CT* reported on pigtail-cutting in the Melbourne community, interpreting it as an indicator of increasing nationalist feeling. One such prominent instance was at a Little Bourke Street cabinet-making firm, Sun Hop Lee (新合益 Xinheyi or 新合利 Xinheli), which employed 21 workers. Before the rise of nationalism and anti-Manchu sentiment, eight of the employees had cut their pigtails as a public relations measure to counter the prejudice of white Australians. Now, however, ten more followed suit, this time in response to nationalist

32   *CT*, 2 April 1910, p.10.
33   *CT*, 29 October 1910, pp.9–10.
34   *CT*, 3 December 1910, pp.8–9.
35   *CT*, 19 June 1909, p.2.

influences, so when those workers surrendered their pigtails they were making an explicitly nationalist statement.[36] Another report in the *CT* told of a young Chinese-Australian man who was influenced by revolutionary publications, cut off his pigtail, and went about propagating notions of racial nationalism to his relatives.[37] A significant development in the campaign occurred early in 1910, when the first Chinese Consul-General removed his pigtail.[38]

The growth in revolutionary mood among Melbourne's Chinese may be credited in large part to the concerted efforts of the *CT* from 1909. The following year its influence extended to Sydney Chinese as the influence of the Sydney CERA declined and many more Chinese Australians came to support the revolution in China.

The declining influence of the New South Wales Chinese Empire Reform Association

The decline of the New South Wales CERA after 1909 undermined the influence of the Sydney Chinese merchants and the *TWT* on Sydney's Chinese community and marked the rise of revolutionary mobilisation on the part of Chinese-Australian nationalists. In 1908 the federal government refused entry to Kang Youwei, as it had when he applied to enter Australia in 1904. On that earlier occasion the New South Wales CERA wrote to the Minister for External Affairs supporting his entry, but the government had upheld its decision. On his visit to Australia in 1901 and 1902, Acting Chinese Consul-General to Singapore, Lo Tsungyao, had informed the federal government that Kang was a political exile, so his entry application was rejected on the grounds that he might stir up political unrest among Chinese residents in Australia. The Department of External Affairs refused his 1908 application on the grounds of moral turpitude and, once again, his potential for inciting adverse political agitation. The federal government was swayed by reports from Britain—the Colonial Office spoke against him, as, too, did the British Minister Plenipotentiary to Sweden.[39] While Kang's second rejection was a source of disappointment to his Chinese-Australian followers, the *CT* was highly critical of him and his followers, saying that the rejection was an indication of his unfavourable influence and was, by implication, a rebuff to the New South Wales CERA which strongly

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36   *CT*, 15 January 1910, p.8.
37   *CT*, 16 April 1910, p.9.
38   *CT*, 19 March 1910, p.8.
39   NAA, Dept of External Affairs, A1, Correspondence, 1910/3933.

endorsed Kang and staked its reputation on his international networks and support.[40]

The reputation and standing of the CERA suffered a further setback in 1909 when it was overtaken by the first of a series of financial scandals. The Association was persuaded by Kang to establish a transnational business, Jun Wah Sut Yip and Co. (振華公司 Zhenhuagongsi) in order to expand its financial associations through international investment in industries and banking enterprises in China, Hong Kong and elsewhere (Kang Youwei 1982:266–393). Most of the shareholders and managers of the company were CERA members, including Australians Chan Harr and O'Ben, who were executives of the Chinese Commercial Company in Hong Kong.[41] The fact that the CERA's political leaders had control of the Company, even though they had very little of the professional expertise needed to manage such an organisation, caused problems from the start and contributed to a decline in the fortunes of the Company and the CERA (Lin 1990:385–389).

Disorder and anomalies were also evident in the management of the New South Wales CERA. The *TWT* was an agent for share transactions and fundraising on behalf of the CERA, but the newspaper's manager, C Lean Fore, was found to have misappropriated money from a fund earmarked for Chinese Mexico Bank shares and from CERA membership fees. Faced with unsustainable debt as a result, he committed suicide.[42] Ng Ngok-low, one of the editors, was appointed as accountant and discovered that Lean Fore had taken the *TWT* to the brink of bankruptcy in 1909 (Kang Youwei 1982:447).[43]

A further scandal that eroded the reputation and influence of both the CERA and the *TWT* involved Jun Wah Sut Yip and Co. (Lin 1990:389). The founder of Jun Wah Sut Yip, Liu Shiji (劉士驥), was killed in May 1909 and, in the months following, Liu's friends and partners claimed that Kang Youwei and the CERA were responsible for his death. They claimed that they had employed killers to murder Liu because he refused to cooperate with the CERA (Lin 1990:390). The case was never solved and lingering suspicions over Kang's involvement harmed his reputation. The fate of Jun Wah Sut Yip and Co. was a matter of concern for the many Chinese Australians who held large numbers of shares in the company. Thomas Yee Hing

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40　*CT*, 17 June 1911, pp.2–3.
41　*TWT*, 11 December 1909, p.6.
42　*TWT*, 31 July 1909, p.7.
43　After Lean Fore's death, Tong Chai-chih became *TWT*'s manager and Ng Ngok-low its accountant (*TWT*, 7 August 1909, p.7).

was one of its promoters and had the role of raising capital for the company (Kang Youwei 1982).[44] His firm, On Chong and Co. of Sydney, was also an agent for Jun Wah Sut Yip shares[45] and the company had awarded one of the proprietors of On Chong and Co., Ping Nam, a gold medal for his efforts.[46] To reduce local Chinese anxiety and suspicion of the company, the *TWT* ran favourable reports on Yee Hing and glowing editorials on Jun Wah Sut Yip and Co.[47]

As far as the New South Wales CERA was concerned, however, the damage was done and its fortunes went from bad to worse. The Chinese Consul-General was instructed by the Department of Foreign Affairs of Imperial China to investigate the finances of Jun Wah Sut Yip and Co. while the case was proceeding.[48] Furthermore, after a visit to Hong Kong and China, Tong Chai-chin had little favourable to say about the CERA or Jun Wah Sut Yip and Co. (Kang Youwei 1982:445), which caused a further drop in CERA membership (Feng 1954:II,134).[49] One of the members who left around this time was George Bew of Wing Sang and Co., who transferred his sympathy to the revolutionary cause (Feng 1953:118). His departure indicates how harmful the scandals were to the confidence of members and to the crucial support it had enjoyed from leading Chinese merchants.

In an attempt to resolve the crisis, Tong visited Melbourne in August 1909 to seek the assistance of the Melbourne Chinese leaders. He was entertained by the prominent Melbourne merchant Wong Shi-Geen,[50] who gave Tong the financial support he asked for. The *CT*, however, did not welcome Tong's visit, and in this they echoed the disapproval of the growing numbers of Melbourne Chinese of a revolutionary disposition.[51] After Tong's return to Sydney he complained about the Melbourne Chinese who, he wrote, embraced native identity without patriotism or public consciousness.[52] Like much of the Melbourne community, the *CT* was outraged and described Tong's article as biased against Melbourne Chinese.[53] The *CT* also began

44   *TWT*, 11 December 1909, p.6.
45   *TWT*, 8 and 22 August, p.7, 24 October, p.8, 31 October, p.8, 14 November, p.8, 28 November, p.8, 5 December, p.8, 12 December, p.8, 19 December, p.8, 26 December 1908, p.8, 2 January, p.8, 9 January, p.8, 16 January, p.8, 6 March 1909, p.8.
46   *TWT*, 7 November 1908, p.7.
47   *TWT*, 11 July 1908, p.7.
48   ACCG, Chinese correspondence, 11 June 1909, no.522-008.
49   For one CERA member's proclamation of his withdrawal from membership, see *CT*, 15 October 1910, p.10.
50   *TWT*, 4 September 1909, p.7.
51   *CT*, 14 October 1911, supplement.
52   *TWT*, 11 September 1909, p.7.
53   *CT*, 14 October 1911, supplement.

a series of articles attacking the CERA over the Liu Shiji case,[54] and the Sydney CERA in turn tried to defend its reputation in a series of newspaper articles.[55]

The crisis afflicting the New South Wales CERA created opportunities for the Chinese-Australian revolutionary network. Rivalry and conflict were provoked in late 1909 and 1910 between constitutionalists and revolutionaries over Confucianism, Chinese schools and cultural nationalism, which provided fertile ground for revolutionary mobilisation in Australia's Chinese communities.

Confucianism, Chinese schools and conflict between the newspapers

From 1905, together with discourse of *huaqiao*, Confucian heritage had become a common theme used by the Chinese newspapers in quite different ways, to impart meanings—and canvass support for their different interpretations of Chinese community interests and group identities.[56] At this time, the suffering of the Chinese in White Australia was interpreted as a consequence of the despotism and incompetence of the imperial government—which, being a dynasty of Manchu ethnicity, conveniently merged with the rhetoric of the revolutionists and, in due course, that of the constitutionalists—which had prompted the diaspora in the first place. In retrospect, this focusing on Confucianism might have had the unintended consequence of holding back some Chinese Australians from their fight for equality within Australia, as the Chinese leadership and the Chinese press shifted their attention to encourage the community to orient itself toward identification with China and with a 'diasporic Chinese nation' rather than to imagine itself as part of an Anglo-British 'colonial imperial' society.

But Confucian heritage did not become a symbol for making Chinese Australia as a whole. A number of other factors came into play. First, it is important to note that there was a decline of numbers of Confucians in Australia in the first decade of the 20th century. Census records show the number of identified Confucians in New South Wales fell to 3,512 in 1911, from 10,202 in 1891, and the number of identified Confucians in Victoria fell to

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54   *CT*, 18 September, p.4, 25 September, p.3,9,10, 2 October, pp.2,9,10; 30 October, p.2, 6 November 1909, p.2.

55   *TWT*, 25 September, p.3, 16 October, p.6, 23 October, p.6, 30 October, p.6, 27 November, p.2, 2 December, p.8, 11 November 1909, p.2, 5 March, p.5, 12 March, p.2, 11 June, p.5, 2 September, p.2, 9 September 1910, p.7.

56   For further discussion on interpretations of Confucian heritage by these three Chinese presses, see Kuo 2013.

5,601 in 1911, from 9,377 in 1891 (Yong 1977:266). Chinese press reports also showed declining influence of Confucianism in social life. The discussions on family ethics and gender relationships indicate that Confucianist ideas such as *li* and propriety, rather than the concept of punishment by law, still constituted the ideal society for Chinese Australians (Kuo 2010:200–201). Confucianism exercised its strongest symbolic influence on Chinese culture through its emphasis on education, through which not only knowledge but the proper way of conduct and value of life was inculcated in the next generation. Therefore, in the process of the politicisation of Confucian heritage, establishing a Chinese school had become another major issue for the Chinese community in Australia in 1909 and 1910.

The *CT* and the *TWT* competed over the establishment of Chinese schools, Confucianism and their interpretations of the course of history. First, both the *CT* and *TWT* sought to establish Chinese schools. The Sydney Chinese had planned to establish a Chinese school in 1905,[57] and revisited the proposal in 1909. The *TWT* commented on the isolation of Australian-born Chinese from Chinese language and culture, which was a significant motive for the establishment of Chinese schools in 1909.[58] The crisis in the CERA provided further incentive, as Chinese schools were venues for developing partisan patriotism and, therefore, significant tools for the CERA's agenda of political mobilisation, in that they provided opportunities for the reformists to engage in political activities. It was on this basis that Kang and his students established modern Chinese schools in Singapore and Malaysia (Yen 1976:156). After Kang visited Java in 1903, he appointed his student, Lu Dunkui (陸敦騤, also known as 陸逸 Lu Yi), to establish a Zhonghua school (Chinese school) in Semarang, Java (Lin 1990:381). Lu later became the headmaster of the Yang Cheng School (養正學堂 Yangzheng Xuetang) in Singapore before he was appointed as teacher at the Sydney Chinese School (雪梨中華蒙養兩等小學堂 Xueli Zhonghua Mengyang Liangdeng Xiaoxuetang) in 1909. Sydney Chinese merchants Ping Nam, Leong Cheong, Lee Chun, John Hoe, Gilbert Yep Ting Quoy and Lean Fore also taught at the school, whose classrooms were in the building of the Dongguan and Zengcheng united native-place association.[59] Lu Dunkui's application to enter Australia did not go smoothly and the Sydney merchants had to

57   *TWT*, 17 June, supplement, 8 July, supplement, 22 July, supplement, 9 September 1905, supplement.
58   *TWT*, 13 March, p.2, 10 April, p.7, 15 May, p.7, 29 May 1909, p.7.
59   *TWT*, 17 July 1909, p.7.

Portrait of Lu Dunkui.
(*Tung Wah Times*, 4 February 1911.)

ask the Chinese Consul-General's secretary to negotiate with the federal government before it was approved.[60]

In Melbourne at the same time, the Chinese community was preparing to open a school for Chinese children. It was to be a night school, originally intended as a primary school, until it was found that there were too few Chinese students of primary ago, so the school concentrated on teaching Chinese language to students of all ages. The Melbourne Chinese night school opened on 1 November 1909, with 30 children. It was located on the third floor of the building that housed the *CT* and the EA, and *CT* editors Lew Goot-chee and Wong Yue-kung were its teachers. Classes were held from 6–8 pm from Monday to Friday, and from 2–4 pm every Saturday.[61]

In Sydney, meanwhile, the arrival of the Chinese teachers was delayed until January 1910.[62] The Sydney Chinese School opened as a day school on 16 February 1910, with more than 20 Chinese students.[63] The Chinese Merchants' Society donated £80 to the school and each student had to pay a fee of £3 when they registered.[64] Students ranged in age from 6 to 15

60   *TWT*, 25 September 1909, p.7.
61   *CT*, 23 October, pp.10–11, 6 November 1909, p.9
62   *TWT*, 8 January 1910, p.7.
63   *TWT*, 26 February 1910, p.7.
64   *TWT*, 18 December 1909, p.7.

Students of the Sydney Chinese School, 1911.
(*Tung Wah Times*, 4 February 1911.)

years old, with half of them from Dongguan and Zengcheng county families and the other half from Zhongshan, Gaoyao and Kaiping families. Several students were sons of staff members and a few were girls.[65] In his inaugural speech, Lu defined the aim of the school as educating its students in Chinese language and Confucianism.[66] In the following month he organised a night school for adults wishing to learn Chinese.[67]

Both the Melbourne and Sydney schools aimed to teach Chinese language and culture to Australia-born Chinese children, but the aims of the Sydney school did not end there. It was not simply a cover for the political activities of Chinese professional monarchists. The Sydney Chinese School's intention was to connect with institutions of higher education. In this it was similar to Chinese day schools in Southeast Asia, which taught traditional knowledge of Confucianism, having been set up in response to the Manchu government's establishment in 1907 of a modern school specifically so that overseas Chinese children could return to China and pursue further education there (Tsai 2002:110–111). The *TWT* reported in

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65   ACCG, Chinese correspondence, Reports from Sydney Chinese School, 6 December 1910 and 8 March 1911, NO. 522-20.
66   *TWT*, 26 February 1910, p.7.
67   *TWT*, 12 March 1910, p.7.

1907 that the Chinese Ambassador in London was encouraging Chinese-Australian children to take up the opportunities provided by this model,[68] and the Sydney Chinese School planned from the outset to register with the Manchu government through the Chinese Consul-General and to ensure that the school's syllabus qualified its students to enter Chinese high schools.[69]

The story of one student, David Quay (郭隸活 Guo Lihuo), illustrates the educational trajectory of these young Chinese students. David was a member of the Kwok family—a son of Paul Gock Quay (郭葵 Guo Kui) born in Sydney in 1904.[70] Paul Gock Quay became the manager of Wing On and Co. after his brothers Gock Lock and Gock Chin returned to Hong Kong. He was also a brother-in-law of Ma Yingpiu (Tan & Liu 1987:184). His wife, Ma Lumkew (also known as Alice Ah Sam), was a Christian born in Clermont, Queensland, in 1878.[71] Their sons and daughters were baptised in the Reverend John Young Wai's church.[72] She was also active in the Sydney CERA, giving a speech at the meeting convened in July 1908 for the Chinese Navy campaign.[73] David, aged six, was one of the youngest at the Sydney Chinese School in 1911. After his father, who had gone to Shanghai in 1915 to prepare for the opening of the Wing On department store, died in April 1917,[74] David moved with his family to Hong Kong, where he continued his studies at Lingnan Secondary School and then at Lingnan University (嶺南大學) in Guangdong province (Tan 1987:9). David Quay was typical of the students of the Chinese school in Sydney, who tended to be from merchants' families conscious of their future prospects in China. The establishment of the school was in itself the expression of an increasingly common intention of the Chinese commercial elite to return to their homeland; the school song encouraged the students to take pride in their Chinese origin and not to regard Australia as their permanent home.[75] The Sydney Chinese School offered educational opportunities to relatively

68   *TWT*, 13 April 1907, p.6.

69   ACCG, Chinese correspondence, Reports from Sydney Chinese School, 6 December 1910 and 8 March 1911, NO. 522-20.

70   New South Wales Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Birth certificate of David Quay, no. 29237/1904.

71   NAA, Attorney-General's Dept, Correspondence files, SP42/1, C1917/3903.

72   PCNSWA, Young Wai Collection, Chinese Presbyterian Church Session records in newspapers 1898–1939.

73   *TWT*, 25 July, p.2, 1 August 1908, p.7.

74   NAA, Attorney-General's Dept, Correspondence files, SP42/1, C1917/3903, Gockson to Collector of Customs.

75   *TWT*, 4 February 1911, p.14.

few children. The Chinese Consul-General's report for 1909 shows that there were 700 Chinese children in Sydney at that time, 500 of them born in Australia,[76] so the *per capita* rate of enrolment in the Chinese school was low. It catered for the offspring of the most prominent families in the Chinese community and it was this that lay at the heart of a conflict that arose between the school and the Chinese Presbyterian Church soon after the school's opening.

Despite the small number of students enrolled in the Sydney Chinese School its potential social impact caused Young Wai considerable anxiety. He feared that it would lead to a decline in the influence of the Chinese Presbyterian Church. He also had misgivings about David Quay's attendance at the Chinese school because it appeared to signify a divide in Gock Quay's allegiances. His firm, Wing On and Co. had long been a significant supporter of the Church and was now supporting the relatively exclusive private school at a time when Young Wai was seeking assistance with moving the Church in 1910. Young Wai was also concerned that the school's ethic of Chinese cultural revivalism was increasing the motivation for members of the commercial elite in his congregation to return to China.

He had concerns on religious grounds too. The Chinese Presbyterian Church was still essentially a missionary institution and its clergy took seriously the job of influencing and converting the children in their congregation, which they carried out by visiting their homes, teaching English and proselytising. They believed that Chinese-Australian Christian children would help to spread Christianity in China if they did return. In Young Wai's estimation, the Sydney Chinese School threatened to undermine this work because it taught its students to regard Confucius as their religious master. Indeed, as widely reported in Sydney's English-language newspapers, when the students entered their classroom, they were required to bow three times before a picture of Confucius, as they would to a deity. Young Wai railed against the practice of paying homage to Confucius and strongly criticised those who taught children to do so in his Sunday service on the 27 February 1910.[77] He advised Chinese parents not to send their children to the Sydney Chinese School.

Young Wai's incendiary sermon caused the Sydney CERA to hold a special meeting on 8 March 1910.[78] It was reported that between 200 and 300 Chinese attended. The meeting appointed five jurymen to consider the

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76   ACCG, Chinese correspondence, Report, 13 June Xuantong 1 (1909), no.522022.

77   *TWT*, 21 May 1910, pp.6–7.

78   *SMH*, 13 May 1910.

case and they voted, four to one, that Young Wai should apologise. However, the Convener of the Foreign Missions Committee of the Presbyterian Church challenged this judgement on the grounds that only one juryman was a Christian, rendering the process unfair for the 'defendant'.[79] After the meeting, two of Young Wai's followers, George Bew and James Choy Hing, were asked to negotiate with him, but Young Wai was obdurate, offering neither apology nor comment. The situation was further inflamed when the Sydney newspapers reported that the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales believed that the Chinese merchants had discussed retaliation against Young Wai at the meeting. The reports and interviews with Presbyterian Church figures enraged members of the CERA because they had implied that the Association had connections with Chinese secret societies.[80] Church representatives held talks with the merchants and clarified matters, averting further confrontation.[81]

Although there was no further overt conflict between the Chinese Presbyterian Church and the New South Wales CERA, the quarrel had undermined the relationship between Young Wai and the Sydney Chinese constitutionalists. It also highlighted degree to which Confucianism was now shaping cultural nationalism among Chinese Australians. Various political organisations among Australia's Chinese embraced Confucian revivalism in order to embed their views on social order, history, morality, and national identity into their political ideology. In shaping Chinese nationalism, Prasenjit Duara (1995:27–30) argues, the Chinese literati adapted Enlightenment history to create a Chinese nation through a combination of the glorification of their ancestral past, an emphasis on modernity and a forward-looking approach to the nation-state. The political symbolism of Confucius then became central to the rivalry between Chinese revolutionaries and monarchists.

For the New South Wales CERA, Confucius became an important symbol and resource to transform their political ideology, from one that identified them as protectors of imperial China to one befitting citizens of a modernised China. After 1907, when the CERA rejected its original Chinese name (Protectors of the Chinese Emperor) it began to emphasise the place of Confucius in its constitutionalist ideology. The interest in Confucianism extended beyond the CERA, with communities around Australia beginning to commemorate Confucius' birthday every year from

79   *DT*, 14 May 1910.
80   *TWT*, 21 May 1910, pp.6–7.
81   *TWT*, 28 May 1910, p.7.

1908.[82] In 1909, the stated purpose of one Chinese community excursion in northern New South Wales was changed from 'commemoration of the Emperor' to 'commemoration of Confucius'.[83] Around this time the Chongxin Society (崇新社) of Queensland also began to celebrate Confucius' birthday.[84] The CERA and *TWT*, however, characterised Confucius as more than an ancestral cultural figurehead or object of ceremonial remembrance; it extolled him as a moral leader with the power to unite the Chinese within an integrated national ethos.[85]

Confucius was a symbol of contested meaning. The Chinese revolutionaries claimed a stake in Confucius no less than the reformists, with the *CT* expressing the view that Confucianism embraced notions of civil rights and revolution. In late 1908, the *CT* ran an article supporting the idea of promoting Confucianism as the national religion of China, apparently with the aim of evoking patriotic sentiment rather than religious fervour.[86] In 1909, they helped arrange the first public commemoration of Confucius' birthday in Melbourne, which involved an excursion followed by a dinner at the Wing Loon Club (永聯會所 Yonglianhuisuo).[87] *CT* editor, Wong Yue-kung, gave a long speech in which he interpreted the celebration of Confucius with a revolutionary inflection and spoke of the importance of the two legends of Huang Di (黃帝 Emperor Huang or Yellow Emperor) and Confucius in the shaping of the Chinese nation. Indeed, Huang Di and Confucius had long been held to symbolise the Chinese racial and cultural nation in building Chinese nationalism (Wang 1999), but Wong interpreted the meaning and status of Confucius in a light that reflected his racial model of nationalism.[88] In the event, the Chinese-Australian revolutionary movement grew in number over this period. Ten days after commemorating Confucius' birthday, the EA organised a meeting in the Melbourne Masonic Hall to celebrated its fifth anniversary, which, according to the *CT*, was attended by more than 500 people.[89] In November 1909 the Melbourne Chinese night school was opened, but the revolutionary sympathisers managing the school did not require ritualised homage

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82   *TWT*, 26 September 1908, p.7, 16 October 1909, p.7, 10 September, p.6, 1 October, p.2, 8 October 1910, p.6.
83   *TWT*, 23 October 1909, p.7.
84   *TWT*, 30 October 1909, p.2.
85   *TWT*, 9 October 1909, p.2.
86   *CT*, 17 October 1908, p.2.
87   *CT*, 9 October 1909, pp.8–9.
88   *CT*, 16 October 1909, pp.2–3.
89   *CT*, 23 October 1909, p.10.

to Confucius in their classrooms or meetings. Confucius was located in revolutionary rhetoric rather than viewed on a ritual or religious level, which made it easier for the organisation to maintain close links with Chinese Christians. The disparate interpretations of Confucius had the potential to divide the Chinese community. Confucian revivalism was also rooted in the different perspectives on Chinese-Australian communities of each of the parties competing for their attention. The Sydney Chinese commercial elite was concerned with its international networking and its own future in China. Revolutionaries based in China were developing networks with Chinese-Australian groups in order to strengthen their influence abroad. That Chinese intellectuals interpreted their Confucian heritage as symbolic of their distinctiveness does not mean that the Chinese community as a whole sought the Confucianist revival movement. However, public narratives by the Chinese newspapers encouraged people to understand that large-scale systems such as society, state and nation served as a new social force for mobilisation and moderation of community politics. By the end of 1910, the two patterns of Chinese-Australian leadership that these objectives engendered had developed into two distinctive models of political participation.

Revolutionary mobilisation: building the Young China League
From 1910, the Sydney Chinese monarchists were wholeheartedly engaged in constitutionalist activism and the establishment of the new Chinese parliament. In that year the provincial councils of China united to organise three important petitions toward the founding of the parliament (Chang 1969:63–64). The New South Wales CERA appointed two representatives, Lu Naixiang and Ping Nam, to attend a central party meeting in China held to petition the imperial government to convene China's first parliament (Chang 1969:69 and Ch. 4,fn17). Lu Naixiang further petitioned the Manchu government in the name of Chinese Australians.[90] Some weeks later, in July, Tong Chai-chih and TJ Law visited the Chinese Consul-General to discuss issues relating to Chinese-Australian participation in the establishment of the first parliament. After this meeting, the New South Wales CERA supported the Chinese Consul-General's enquiries into the question of the right of Chinese Australians to vote for the Chinese parliament.[91]

90 *TWT*, 13 August 1910, p.2.
91 *TWT*, 6 August 1910, p.7.

The Melbourne Chinese revolutionaries, meanwhile, were working to strengthen the revolutionary and anti-Manchu sentiment in the local community. They also connected with the Siyi and Yee Hing Societies in New South Wales through their business and clan relationships, which was particularly apparent in the restaurant business. In October 1910, two new Chinese restaurants opened in Melbourne—the Pekin Café (北京酒舍 Beijingjiushe) at 191–193 Russell Street and the Canton Café (廣東酒樓 Guangdongjiulou) at 158–160 Swanston Street—both owned by people connected with the *CT* and the Yee Hing Society in Sydney and Melbourne.[92] The Canton Café was organised by Melbourne Chinese merchants collecting over £800 with which to establish the restaurant.[93] The managers were Wu Hsueh-ling (伍學琳 Wu Xuelin) and Chen Huawen (陳華文).[94] The front page of the Canton Café's menu of 1911 displayed the establishment's distinctive trademark—a finely rendered depiction of the Australian and Imperial Chinese national flags (Stone 2005:67). The name and style of the Canton Café were indicative of Melbourne Chinese identity, combining loyalty to China (notably Guangdong) and to an Australian way of life. The two names 'Canton' and 'Peking' (Beijing) show that the Chinese merchants were seeking more accessible names with which to identify themselves to their Chinese and Australian customers.

The people associated with the Peking Café reflected a connection between the CT and native-place and Yee Hing leaders in Southern New South Wales, Melbourne and Tasmania. The Peking Café was located next door to the CT's building and its proprietors were Wong Shee Fan (黃 樹藩 Huang Shufan) and Liu Xicheng (劉希成), who had supported the entry into Australia of *CT* editor, Lew Goot-chee. Other shareholders were Wu Hong-ling (伍鴻齡), Lim Kee (林泗 Lam Sam) and Chen Hua (陳華).[95] Wu Hong-ling, who owned other businesses in Melbourne, was from the Siyi county and had friends in the Yee Hing Society in New South Wales.[96] His network thus connected him with Siyi Chinese and the Yee Hing Society, making him a potentially valuable link between the Yee Hing Society and Melbourne merchants, and between the Siyi Chinese, the Sydney and Melbourne Yee Hing branches, and the founders of the *CT*.

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92 *CAH*, 19 October 1910, p.5, *CT*, 1 October, p.8, 15 October 1910, p.8.
93 *CT*, 15 October 1910, p.8.
94 *CT*, 31 December 1910, p.2.
95 *CAH*, 15 October 1910, p.5.
96 *CAH*, 15 August 1908, p.5, 12 November 1910, supplement.

Around this time Melbourne revolutionary supporters were mobilising support for Sun Yatsen and they managed to win the endorsement of the Melbourne and Sydney Yee Hing Society branches and Sydney Chinese Christians. Also, the EA was organising Sunday outdoor speeches to propagate nationalism, at which the speakers emphasised the centrality of Huang Di in the origin of the Han in order to maintain and focus their anti-Manchu feelings. The first was organised for 20 November 1910 in Little Bourke Street, at which Chen Zhongyu (陳仲輿), Liu Duru (劉度如) and Lei Jinghan (雷景漢) spoke. Much of the oratory was informal, with one speaker, the author of a Chinese novel then running in the *CT*, delivering her revolutionary message in the style of a Cantonese opera.[97] Another outdoor meeting was held to solicit donations from the audience to provide material assistance for revolutionaries in China.[98] By this time, the Melbourne revolutionaries had made connections with the Revolutionary Alliance (Tongmenghui) through the editor of Hong Kong's *China Daily*, Feng Ziyou (Feng 1953:119). The Melbourne Chinese also induced a number of revolutionary newspapers around the world to propagate Sun Yatsen's 'Three Principles of the People' (三民主義).[99]

The international network of revolutionary newspapers possibly inspired Melbourne revolutionary sympathisers to establish the Young China League in late 1910 (Chen 1935:2). This body, the first Chinese-Australian revolutionary league to support Sun Yatsen, was launched on 23 January 1911 at the Temperance Hall. Speakers, including Lew Goot-chee, Peng Gang (彭剛), the Reverend CH Cheong, Wong Yue-kung, Xie Enpo (謝恩坡) and Chen Zhongru,[100] addressed a crowd of between 200 and 300 at its first meeting.[101] The League proclaimed as its central aim the propagation of Sun Yatsen's 'Three Principles of the People',[102] and intended to unite members to infuse 'old China' with the vigour of youth.[103] A month later, the Chinese–English calendar poster issued by the *CT* for New Year was framed by revolutionary flags and the motto 'Long Live the Han' (漢族萬歲 Hanzu wansui).[104]

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97   *CT*, 12 November, p.9, 27 November 1910, p.7.
98   *CT*, 17 December 1910, p.7.
99   *CT*, 21 January 1911, p.11.
100 *CT*, 28 January 1911, pp.2, 7.
101 *The Argus*, 24 January 1911.
102 *CT*, 28 January 1911, p.6.
103 *The Argus*, 24 January 1911.
104 *CT*, 11 February 1911.
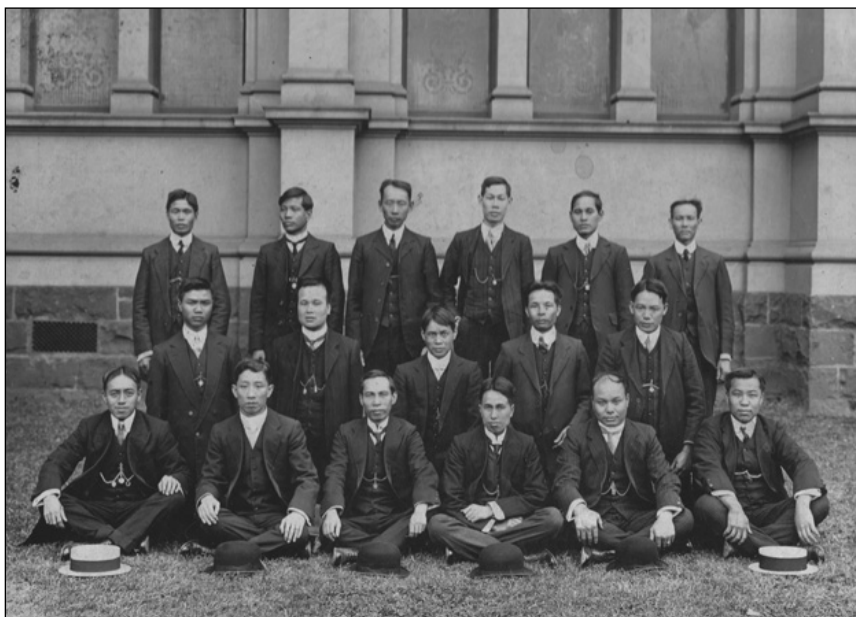
Lew Goot-chee, second from left in the front row, and members of Young China League, Melbourne, c.1911.
(Collection of Melbourne Kuo Min Tang Society.)
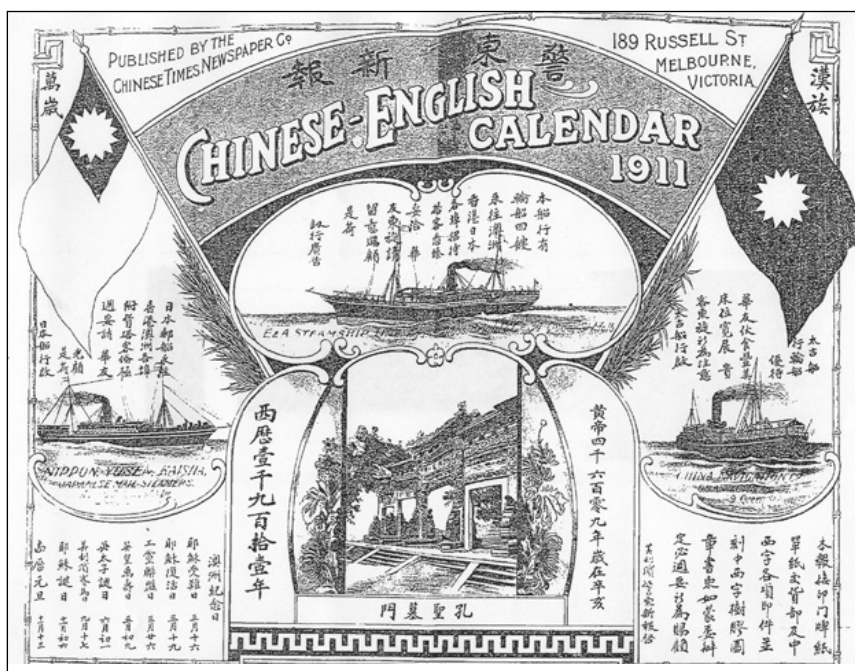
Top of poster calendar for *Chinese Times*, 1911.

Although the Immigration Restriction Act made it difficult for Chinese leaders of the revolutionary party to enter Australia, those who were seamen were an important information and networking resource and helped in the mobilisation of Chinese-Australian revolutionaries. Chinese revolutionary seamen visited many Southeast Asia and Pacific ports, building a global network. In order to build revolutionary motivation, the Young China League invited the crew member of a visiting steamship to speak to the Melbourne Chinese about the situation in China.[105] The Chinese Consul-General also reported in 1915 that a representative of the Chinese Revolutionary Party in Hong Kong had landed in Australia from Singapore, taking advantage of his position as an employee of a steamship company to promote and help develop the revolutionary network in Australia.[106] The Consul-General's observation gives an important indication of the pattern of revolutionary networking among Chinese Australians by 1910 and of the consulate's role in monitoring their activity. The Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia acknowledged the contribution of Chinese seamen in shaping their party in the 1920s, by which time 15 branches of the Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia were located on steamships (Chen 1935:37–38).

The Young China League, wanting to enlarge its base in Australia, sought an alliance between the Yee Hing Societies in Melbourne and Sydney. The Melbourne Yee Hing Society responded first. Melbourne revolutionaries saw advantage in gaining access to foreign connections through the Yee Hing Society, much as revolutionaries in Canada and the United States were doing. As the *CT* noted, the cooperation between the Revolutionary Alliance and the Hung League (Yee Hing) in North America influenced the Melbourne Yee Hing Society to unite with the Young China League.[107]

During this period, the Melbourne Yee Hing Society became increasingly concerned about investigations by the Chinese Consul-General and the Australian government. When the second Chinese Consul-General arrived in late 1910, he did not call upon the Melbourne Yee Hing Society. He had previously reported to the Manchu government on the undesirable reputation of the Society and the Manchu government authorised him to limit the Society's influence.[108] Victorian Trade Commissioner in the East, RB Levien, had also complained to the federal government that an illegal trade in assisted stowaways was being run by certain Chinese-

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105 *CT*, 16 September 1911, p.5.
106 ACCG, Chinese correspondence, Spring 1915, no.522-203.
107 *CT*, 14 October 1911, p.4.
108 *Shangwu guanbao*, vol. 4, no. 17, 1909, p.8.

Australian secret societies, and by the Yee Hing Society in particular. As already noted, his proposal for registration of all Chinese immigrants had been vehemently opposed by the Melbourne and Sydney Chinese.[109] Public anxiety was difficult to assuage, given the nature of cases such as that of the Chinese missionary Song San (宋三 also known as David Soong) in 1911. Song became involved in a case of unlawful immigration in Melbourne and committed suicide when the case came to court.[110] Although the Yee Hing connection in the case was unclear, the negative publicity and community anxiety arising from the case reflected poorly on the Melbourne Yee Hing Society because of its longstanding association with illegal immigration.

Some weeks before Song Sam's death, the Yee Hing Society organised an 80th birthday party for its leader, Lee Yuan Sam (李元三 Li Yuansan). Functions were held at the Pekin Café, the Hong Kong Restaurant and the Gee Cheong Tea Room to which leading members of the Young China League were invited.[111] At the League's next outdoor meeting, members of the Yee Hing Society were invited to present a history of the Hung League and its recent reforms. Among the speakers was the pilot of the *Taiyuan* steamship of the China Navigation Company, named Song Dongping (宋東平), who informed the audience of the political situation in China.[112] Shortly after that meeting, the Young China League and the Yee Hing Society announced that they would formally unite on 8 October 1911 at a ceremony in the Temperance Hall.[113] Two days later, insurrection broke out in China and the Young China League became the headquarters of supporters of the Chinese revolution throughout Australia.

Chinese Australians and the Republican Revolution

The Young China League, the Chinese Consul-General and the New South Wales Chinese Empire Reform Association

After the insurrection, the Young China League raised funds to help keep the revolutionary armies in China supplied. At first donations were meagre. For example, the Bo Leong Society in Ballarat celebrated the establishment of the Republic of China but raised only £18 for the Young China League. In Western Australia, two proprietors of the Geraldton Fruit Co. donated

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109 *CT*, 27 February, pp.8–9, 6 March, p.10, 27 March 1909, p.9; *TWT*, 6 March 1909, p.2.

110 *CT*, 25 November 1911, p.5.

111 *CT*, 2 September 1911, p.4.

112 *CT*, 16 September 1911, p.5.

113 *CT*, 7 October 1911, p.4.

£11. The *CT* did, however, report that more and more Chinese women were enthusiastically giving money and that donations increased once the Chinese republic government was founded.[114]

By April 1912, the Melbourne Young China League had collected around £3,100.[115] The first set of donations, amounting to £400, was from the Yee Hing Society and from merchants Huang Shujian and Wu Jixuan (吳濟旋) of Sun Goong Shing and Co., Pan Zhuozan (潘卓贊) of Leong Lee and Co. (兩利), Chen Xiangcang (陳象蒼) of Sun Nam Hie and Co. (新南泰), Chen Yingjun (陳英俊) of Sun War Loong and Co. (新華隆 Xinhualong), and Zhou Xiang (周享) of Kwong Yee Foong and Co. (廣裕豐). The £400 was remitted to Lee Hoy-Yuen (李海雲 Li Haiyun) through Hong Kong revolutionary newspapers, including the *Zhongguoribao*, to pass on to the Hong Kong branch of the Revolutionary Alliance. A second sum of £200, collected by the Yee Hing Society (£50) and the Young China League (£150), was also remitted via Lee Hoy-Yuen in Hong Kong.[116] The third round of contributions came from the Chinese Carpenters Union, which gave £500 to transfer to Chan Ying in Hong Kong. The fourth round raised £200, which was also transmitted to Chan Ying. Two further collections netted £400 and £500, and these sums were transferred to Chuck Wai Ting in Shanghai to transfer to the Revolutionary Alliance branch there. Two final collections raised £500 and £400 respectively, which were remitted to Chen Kongxiang (陳孔祥) of Sun Goong Shing and Co. in Hong Kong, to transfer to the Treasury Department of the Guangdong provincial government. Earlier collections for the revolutionary army had been sent through the Chinese-American revolutionary organisation built around *The Young China* in San Francisco before the Revolution of 1911.[117]

In between the insurrection and the formation of the new republican government, the Chinese Consul-General declared his neutrality, although he continued to fly the monarchist dragon flag on special days such as the birthday of the Emperor of Japan and celebrations for the Czar of Russia. Sydney and Melbourne revolutionary sympathisers put it to the Chinese Consul-General that this brought his neutrality into question and that he should do so no longer.[118] The Consul-General's secretary reiterated his master's neutral position, which remained the official position until the

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114 *CT*, 28 October 1911, p.6.
115 *CT*, 27 April 1912, pp.2–3.
116 *CT*, 28 October 1911, p.6, 27 April 1912, pp.2–3.
117 *The Young China*, 16 September 1911 (lunar calendar).
118 *CT*, 30 December 1911, p.5. *SMH*, 27 and 28 December 1911.

Consul-General received an authoritative telegram informing him of the establishment of the Chinese Republic.[119]

The CERA and the *TWT* warned that China would be worse off after the rebellion,[120] and the *TWT* reported instances of fraud in the fundraising campaign for the revolutionary army.[121] Tong Chai-chih was interviewed by a Sydney journalist and enumerated his anxieties about the new Republic of China, questioning Sun Yatsen's capabilities and political preparation in resolving the difficulties of building a republic and expressing doubts about Sun's followers, whom he regarded as insufficiently educated to measure up to their own promises of reform.[122] The CERA, however, was losing much of its core membership. Some prominent members, such as T Yee Hing, Ping Nam and Tong Chai-chih, continued to support the Association, which established the Constitutional Friend Society in Beijing to ensure fair representation in the National Assembly,[123] but many others were transferring their sympathies to the revolutionary movement. Some did so on the basis of first-hand knowledge, as did, Kwan Hong Kee, a CERA member from Glen Innes, who visited China in 1911 and, on his return to Australia, supported the revolutionaries.[124] The CERA became increasingly isolated in its opposition to the republic. The Yee Hing Society favoured the revolution, as did the Chinese Presbyterian Church. The support of Sydney Chinese leaders, such as the Reverence Young Wai and Yee Hing head, James Ah Chuey, was important because it strengthened support for the revolution of 1911 in Sydney and New South Wales.

The response of the Sydney Chinese

The alliance of Young Wai, James Ah Chuey and Sun Johnson
Major support for revolutionary mobilisation in Sydney came from the Chinese Presbyterian Church and the Yee Hing Society. Their leaders, the Reverend Young Wai and James Ah Chuey, had come to sympathise and identify with the revolutionaries long before the insurrection of 1911. In the case of the Church, Young Wai's influence had transformed its position completely to one of support for the Chinese nationalists and revolutionaries. By

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119   *DT*, 16 February 1912.
120   *TWT*, 21 October 1911, supplement.
121   *TWT*, 14 October 1911, p.2.
122   KMT Archives, Sydney, no. 523-01-316, Reverend Young Wai's newsclipping book, ca 19 October 1911; *TWT*, 28 October 1911, p.2.
123   *SMH*, 21 October 1911; *Sunday Times*, 22 October 1911.
124   *Sunday Times*, 22 October 1911.

1910 he was vocal in his disapproval of the Confucianism of the Chinese monarchists, which led to him sympathise with the revolutionaries, whose veneration of Confucius stopped short of worship. Young Wai's collection of newspaper clippings from Chinese- and English-language newspapers of the day follows the trajectory of the change in his political views.[125] As we have seen, many of Young Wai's followers had become prominent and highly successful identities in Sydney, Hong Kong and China, and many of them now followed his political lead. The position of O'Ben in Hong Kong, for example, was utterly transformed, from leading member of the CERA to an enthusiastic revolutionary (Tan 1958:365, 367). O'Ben also provided Young Wai with news of revolutionary developments from Hong Kong.[126]

Young Wai maintained a strong connection with Sun Johnson, the editor of the *CAH*, who was also a Christian.[127] Sun Johnson stated in one of Sydney's English-language newspapers that Chinese Christians were very enthusiastic about the revolution, and argued that the support of Chinese Christians and missionaries would prove an important factor in the success of the revolution and of the republican government to follow.[128] As Young Wai noted some years later, Christianity had made very significant inroads in the south of China; in Guangdong province 60% of the appointed officials were church members.[129] The connection between Young Wai and Sun Johnson was the basis of an alliance between Young Wai and the Sydney Yee Hing Society.

In 1911, the Chinese Masonic Lodge launched its new hall in Mary Street, near the Chinese Presbyterian Church and the building that housed *CAH* (Wood 1994:map 33). Another contributor was the Huang Jiang-xiatang (黃江夏堂 also known as Wong Kwong Ja Tong), which was a society for Chinese with the surname Huang (Wong in Cantonese). When the new hall opened, a horizontal wooden board bearing the name of that society was placed on top of the altar to mark the Society's contribution.[130] Ah Chuey may have had a connection with the Huang Jiangxiatang, as his

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125 KMT Archives, Sydney, C96, Reverend Young Wai's newsclipping book.
126 Manuscript communications from O'Ben are to be found in KMT Archives, Sydney, no.523-01-316, Reverend Young Wai's newsclipping book.
127 *CAH*, 10 December 1910, p.3; *The Sun*, 25 October 1911.
128 *The Sun*, 3 November 1911.
129 PCNSWA, Foreign Mission Committee Minute Book 1916–1919, letter from Young Wai to BNZ Chambers, 29 March 1917.
130 KMT Archives, Sydney, no.523-01-316, Reverend Young Wai's newsclipping book, *DT*, 2 February 1912.

Chinese surname was Huang. It is possible, therefore, that he and other leading members of the Yee Hing Society mobilised the Chinese through clan and kinship networks to support the new Chinese Masonic Lodge.

The alliance of Young Wai, Ah Chuey and Sun Johnson over time promoted revolutionary mobilisation in Sydney and connections with Melbourne's Young China League. The Sydney Chinese community enthusiastically embraced the new Republic once the insurrection was under way. The revolutionary flag flew in Chinatown. Sun Johnson told Sydney newspapers that most Chinese Australians sympathised with the rebels in China once the insurrection broke out, and mentioned that he had had a flag made in Sydney from a sketch of the new national flag of the Republic of China he had requested from Melbourne.[131] An interpreter for the Japanese government, CP Lee, arrived in Sydney, carrying a rebel flag, for a month-long visit to hold meetings on the subject of revolution. He declared his intention to pull the dragon flag down from the *TWT* building where it was flying to commemorate Confucius' birthday.[132] The revolutionary party flag, blue with one white star, was raised in the Sydney Chinese Masonic Lodge,[133] and within a week there were at least five similar flags flying over Sydney Chinese business houses.[134]

Establishment of the Sydney Young China League

The Sydney Young China League was organised after the 1911 revolution. One Sydney Chinese, King Hun Pang, attended a meeting in Melbourne to enlarge the League's network.[135] While the League had plans to establish branches in Adelaide and Perth, the process of establishing a branch in Sydney was also being discussed. Significantly, in late 1911, Melbourne members such as Wong Yue-kung, Zhang Liang (張亮) and Hong Hing (湯興 Tang Xing) contacted the Sydney Yee Hing Society to explore the prospect of establishing a Sydney branch of the League.[136] Ah Chuey called a meeting in early November at the Sydney Chinese Masonic Lodge, with Melbourne representatives of the Young China League attending, at which

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131 KMT Archives, Sydney, no.523-01-316, Reverend Young Wai's newsclipping book, 19 October 1911.

132 KMT Archives, Sydney, no.523-01-316, Reverend Young Wai's newsclipping book, *EN*, 21 October 1911.

133 *SMH*, 25 October 1911.

134 KMT Archives, Sydney, no.523-01-316, Reverend Young Wai's newsclipping book, *DT*, 3 November 1911.

135 *SMH*, 25 October 1911.

136 KMT Archives, Sydney, no.523-01-316, Reverend Young Wai's newsclipping book, *Sunday Times*, 12 November 1911.

the signatures of 100 persons petitioning for the establishment of a Sydney branch of the Young China League were collected.[137]

The Sydney Young China League was launched on 12 November 1911. Chin Yee Sam of Sun Hing Jang gave his reason for joining as his wish that all Chinese could enjoy the freedom enjoyed by Chinese Australians.[138] Sun Johnson, Moy Sing, Charley Hing (Melbourne), Jong Leong and Wong Shee Ting (Melbourne) also spoke at the meeting.[139] The establishment of the Sydney branch enlarged the League's base significantly. Another meeting was organised for the evening of 23 November at the Australian Masonic Hall to elect office-bearers and organise the campaign.[140] The circular advertising the meeting gave the names of 47 Chinese who supported the Sydney Young China League.

The meeting on 23 November was significant because of the involvement of the Reverend Young Wai. Although his name did not appear in the circular, that of his eldest son, Joshua Young Wai (周元吉 Zhou Yuanji), did. The Reverend Young Wai attended the meeting and stated that he was encouraging his congregation to join the League. He wished for 'people elected by the people to govern the people'. A number of his followers, notably George Bew and Philip Lee Chun, were guests at the meeting. Other participants included Wong Yau-Kung and Samuel Wong from Melbourne. James Ah Chuey was elected President of the new League and George Bew was elected treasurer.[141] This meeting stands as evidence of the social alliance between the Yee Hing Society and the Chinese Presbyterian Church. Eventually it became the organisational basis of the Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia.

Sydney Young China League's interpretation of the revolution

The revolutionary mobilisation of Sydney's Chinese involved a rethinking of the meaning of diaspora in relation to revolutionary republican sentiments and networks. On either side of the political divide, conservative CERA members and revolutionary supporters acknowledged the importance of their Australian experience for their appreciation of democracy. At the meeting of the Young China League on 23 November the Reverend Young

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137 KMT Archives, Sydney, no.523-01-316, Reverend Young Wai's newsclipping book.
138 KMT Archives, Sydney, no.523-01-316, Reverend Young Wai's newsclipping book, *The Sun*, 12 November 1911.
139 KMT Archives, Sydney, no.523-01-316, Reverend Young Wai's newsclipping book, *DT*, 13 November 1911.
140 *SMH*, 23 November 1911.
141 KMT Archives, Sydney, no.523-01-316, Reverend Young Wai's newsclipping book, *EN*, 24 November 1911.

本埠擬組織一少年中國會爰定於華歷十月初三晚即禮拜四晚七點

半鐘在卡士禮街近高路伴街西人義興會館首次集議仰各同志屆期

資臨爲盼

發起人

劉子康　陳堂　關榮　陳耀元　黃楊與　劉俊榮

李汝福　劉林澤　張述　阮操年　周申　蕭炳山

周元吉　楊南　唐惠元　黃爵　李文光　殿元偉

黃柱　伍振官　關田　林齊　李鬧與　高慶和

孫俊臣　高水　阮立　劉騰升　劉㞷　朧斗樞

高祺　黃維　張錦光　陳南　劉錫　吳釗泉

楊清　李永源　黃永春　陳捷　李劍生　伍榮利

吳振喬　張宇　郭標　李春

辛亥十月初一日　雪梨華僑傳單
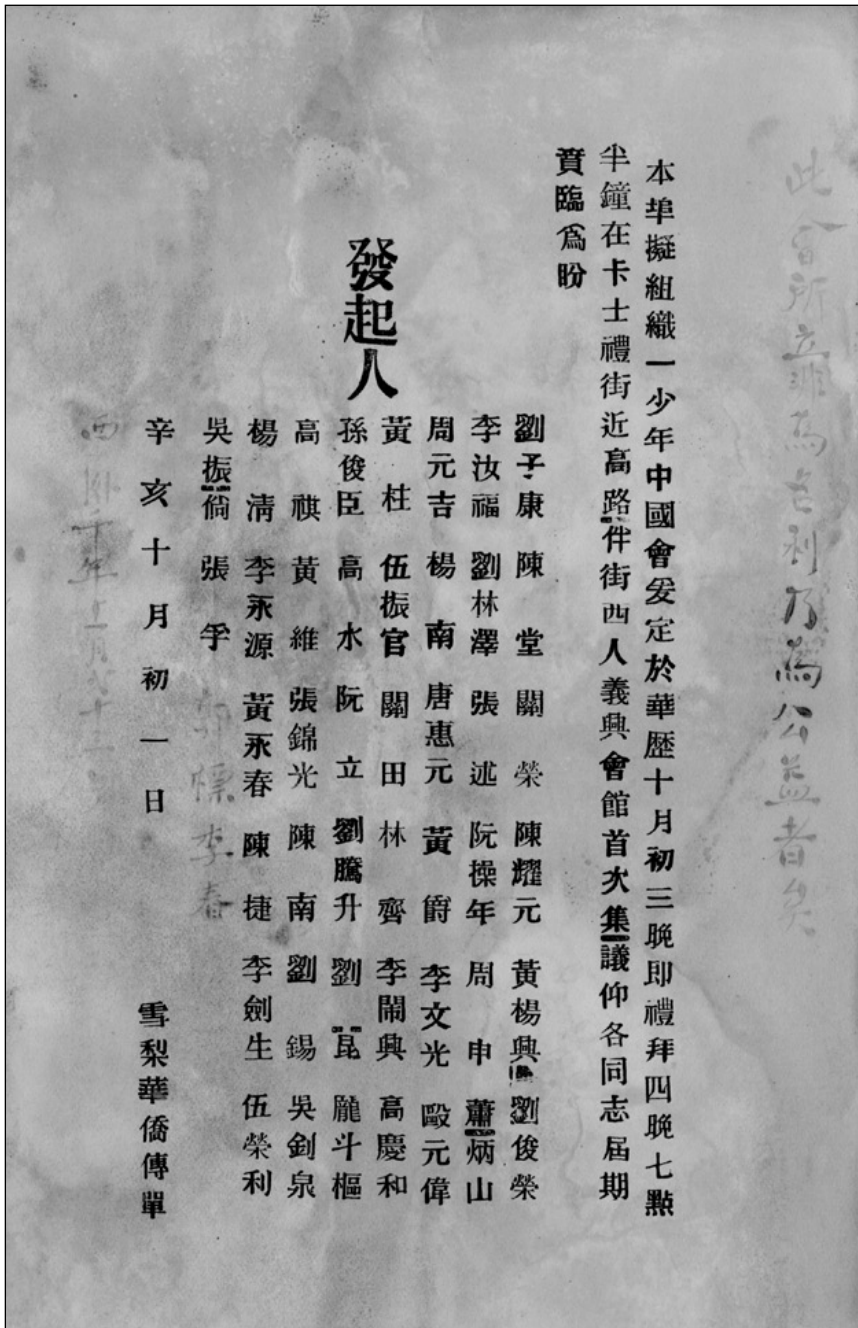
Circular of Sydney Young China League meeting, 1911.
(Collection of Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia, 523-01-0316.)

Wai spoke approvingly of Western nations and democracy, which he said were models for the League.[142] In the same month, CERA's Tong Chai-chih said that he was a student of the Australian nation and Australian political institutions, acquiring knowledge that he promised to contribute to building the new Constitution of China when he returned to join the Provincial Assembly of Hunan.[143] In fact, the Sydney Chinese did not fully accept anti-Manchu views or racial nationalism to the extent that the Melbourne Chinese nationalist leaders did. While Sydney Chinese worked for revolutionary mobilisation after the 1911 insurrection, they tended to emphasise Australian values in order to convince the Australian federal government to recognise the republican government of China.

Sydney journalists commented approvingly on the way that Chinese Australians celebrated the establishment of the Republic of China. One journalist characterised the Melbourne Chinese mode of celebration as the 'Australianising of local Chinese' and reported on a picnic excursion to Aspendale hosted by the United Chung-Wah Association, of which Samuel Wong was chairman, noting the enthusiastic response of the Chinese audience to a speech given by Wong and the cheering with which they greeted the new national flag.[144]

In a further effort by Sydney Chinese to convince Australians to support republican China, a luncheon was organised to celebrate its founding. A number of European businessmen and politicians were invited. James Ah Chuey, in his capacity as leader of the Chinese Masonic Society and of the Young China League, chaired the event and gave a toast to a 'United China'. He stated that the Chinese republican government was modelled on the Constitution of the United States, which was derived in large part from the democratic spirit of British institutions. He argued that the form and structure of new China were in harmony with the constitution and values of the Commonwealth of Australia and that there was, therefore, hope for a better relationship between the two countries:

> It shall be a matter of satisfaction to all of us who have lived in
> Australia and prospered under British flag to know that the form
> of new government in China has been based on the Constitution of

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142 KMT Archives, Sydney, no.523-01-316, Reverend Young Wai's newsclipping book,
     EN, 24 November 1911.
143 KMT Archives, Sydney, no.523-01-316, Reverend Young Wai's newsclipping book,
     DT, 25 November 1911.
144 KMT Archives, Sydney, no.523-01-316, Reverend Young Wai's newsclipping book,
     EN, 21 February 1912.

the United States, which was modeled on the democratic spirit of British institutions. In a great measure, therefore, the Constitution of New China will be on the lines of the Constitution of the Australian Commonwealth, which guarantees liberty to all, safety to life and property, and the fullest freedom to commerce and industry.[145]

Ah Chuey held another meeting a week later for Chinese and Europeans at the Chinese Masonic Lodge. He spoke of the benefits Australia stood to derive from the new Republic of China.[146] He asked the meeting to show its approval for GE Morrison, the Geelong native who was appointed in that year as a political adviser to the President of the Chinese Republic, and subsequently wrote to Morrison to express his personal support and that of the Sydney Chinese Masonic Society.[147]

After the revolution: social leadership of the Sydney Chinese Community

After the launch of the Sydney Young China League in 1911, the number of nationalists in Sydney and their influence grew substantially. They expanded their base further in the years that followed by linking up with a growing transnational network of Chinese revolutionary organisations. Nevertheless, the leadership of Sydney Chinese in shaping the Chinese nationalist network in Australasia was rooted in local reinterpretations and new alliances that embraced local experience and Australian values.

The Sydney Chinese leadership sought to mobilise Chinese Australians around the new ideals of a federated Australia and Republican China. The structure of the Yee Hing Society, for example, was transformed from a secret society to a public pro-revolutionary organisation. Sun Johnson interpreted the revolutionary insurrection as a result of the connection between the Yee Hing Society and Chinese revolutionary organisations and stated that leading members of the Sydney Chinese Masonic Society were engaged in combining Chinese and Western styles of working in their search for a progressive and powerful organisation.[148] In its transition to the Chinese Masonic Society, the Yee Hing Society's image as a secret

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145 *SMH*, 1 March 1912.
146 KMT Archives, Sydney, no.523-01-316, Reverend Young Wai's newsclipping book, *EN*, 8 March 1912.
147 SLNSW, MLMSS 312, George Ernest Morrison papers, 5 August 1912.
148 *CAH*, 27 January 1912, p.18.

society was refashioned to that of a modern urban club with democratic leanings. The subsequent founding of the Australian Chinese Association, under the auspices of Yinson Lee, the Australian-born eldest son of WRG of the former LYT,[149] George Bew, James Ah Chuey, HL Numm and Sun Johnson, brought together diverse Chinese societies such as the Chinese Masonic Society, Chinese freemasonry and the Chinese Presbyterians in an association modelled purposefully in the style of a Western club.[150]

Calls for the Yee Hing Society to remake itself were raised in other towns and cities. In mid-1912 open conflict broke out between the CERA and the Yee Hing Society in Atherton, Queensland.[151] When Atherton's Yee Hing leader, Chen Chunrong (陳春榮), failed to mediate the conflict, further trouble and possible violence threatened to break out between the Yee Hing Society and rival associations in the area,[152] causing another leading member, Li Zai (李在), to consult with the wider Yee Hing Society network.[153] He visited the Brisbane branch in the hope of seeking an alliance of the Society and Chinese revolutionary organisations on the model of the Sydney alliance.[154] A few weeks earlier, the *CT* had encouraged all branches of the Yee Hing Society to modernise.[155] Over the next few years, under the tutelage of the Sydney Chinese Masonic Society, all Australian Yee Hing Societies were reorganised. By 1918, the Sydney headquarters had integrated branches in Melbourne, Launceston, Tumut, Brisbane, Cairns, Atherton, Gordon Vale, Toowoomba, Mackay, Rockhampton and elsewhere into its domain (Yong 1977:165).

The work of the Sydney revolutionaries had an impact on the office of the Chinese Consul-General as well. The Reverend Young Wai decided to support the national fundraising campaign proposed by the Consul-General after the revolution. Up to this time, Sydney Chinese collected money for the revolutionary army, as did Melbourne's Chinese revolutionary supporters. They preferred to support the Guangdong provincial government, which was under the control of revolutionary forces linked to Chinese abroad. O'Ben was among several persons of note representing Sydney Chinese in delivering donations and joining in celebrations with the revolutionary leader Hu

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149 SLNSW, MLMSS 312, George Ernest Morrison papers, William Yinson Lee to Morrision, 20 November 1912.
150 *CAH*, 7 September 1912, supplement.
151 *TWT*, 9 March 1912, p.7; *CT*, 9 March, p.4, 16 March 1912, pp.10–11.
152 *CT*, 9 March 1912, p.4.
153 *CT*, 4 June 1912, p.4.
154 *CT*, 3 August 1912, p.10.
155 *CT*, 8 June 1912, p.2.

William Yinson Lee and his wife.
(National Archives Australia, ST84/1, 1909/23/31-40.)

Hanmin (胡漢民) in Canton (Tan 1958:365, 367). Peter Yee Wing of Sydney claimed that he was appointed by Hu Hanmin to return to Australia to raise donations for the revolutionary cause.[156] He returned to China before the 1911 insurrection, but returned to Sydney to do what Hu Hanmin had asked of him. His position within the revolutionary organisation was accepted by the other Sydney Chinese.[157]

After the insurrection, early in 1912, Sydney Chinese donated a sum of £4,691 to the Treasury Department of Guangdong provincial government in four separate remittances (Chen 1935:145). The Chinese Consul-General, however, proposed that contributions should be directed to relieving the foreign debt that the new Chinese government had inherited from the Manchu government and launched this appeal by donating half his salary to the collection. Large-scale support was not forthcoming until Young Wai decided to unite Sydney Chinese in support of the Consul-General's proposal. The Consul-General expressed his appreciation of Young Wai's support and his efforts to bring the disparate factions together.[158]

The Chinese Consul-General visited Sydney and Newcastle to promote his fundraising proposal.[159] In Sydney the community organised a meeting at the Freemasons Hall to welcome him and made the first significant donation of £5,000 to his appeal.[160] Yee Wing was appointed branch president of the Chinese-Australian national donation office. The substantial contribution from Sydney Chinese spurred Melbourne's Chinese community to match it and they provided £6,000 in the second national round of donations. The Chinese Cabinetmakers Union donated £600 in early July,[161] and the Siyi Society sold one of its properties in order to contribute £1,000.[162] The Chinese Consulate recorded and regularly published lists of donors in all three Chinese-language newspapers. By November 1912, a total of £23,400 had been remitted to China's Ministry of Finance through the Consul-General.[163] The Chinese government eventually awarded 455

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156 Academia Historica, Taipei, Archives, personal investigation report of Yee Wing.
157 *CT*, 23 March 1946, p.5; KMT Archives, Taipei, Report from Sydney KMT to KMT in China, no. 230/137.
158 ACCG, Chinese correspondence, 10 July 1912, no.522-34.
159 ACCG, Chinese correspondence, 1 August 1912, no.522-34.
160 *TWT*, 27 July 1912, p.7; *CT*, 27 July 1912, pp.4, 10. The largest contribution was from the Guild of Chinese Antiquarians.
161 *CT*, 6 July 1912, p.5.
162 *CT*, 20 July 1912, p.4.
163 *CAH*, 23 November, p.4, 25 December 1912, p.4; ACCG, Chinese correspondence, 16 January 1913, no. 522-34.

Chinese Australians with decorations from the Chinese government for their generosity.[164]

While the Chinese Consul-General was visiting Sydney to collect donations in 1912, he met a 21-year-old bilingual Chinese Australian named William Liu at Young Wai's church. William Liu was born in Australia and sent as a young child to China to further his education. In 1909 he returned to Sydney and through his mother's contact with Young Wai received help in finding work with Wing Sang and Co. When the opportunity arose, Young Wai introduced Liu to the Consul-General who immediately offered him a job as an English-speaking secretary in the consulate (Liu 1979:20), because he was dissatisfied with his current English-speaking secretary, Thomas Chia, who had been appointed from Fujian.[165] Liu's fluent English was to assist the Consul-General in his negotiations with the Australian federal government in 1912 to achieve a relaxation of anti-Chinese regulations. Liu's appointment to the consulate also enhanced the relationship between the Melbourne Chinese community and the Consul-General, because many of the Melbourne Chinese came from the same village as Liu's father. He was known to be a republican sympathiser and was reputed to have been the person who pulled down the Manchu flag at the consulate and raised the Chinese Republican flag.[166] Through his personal network in Sydney he was able to facilitate an alliance between Sydney and Melbourne Chinese-Australian nationalists.[167]

Meanwhile, the growth of revolutionary networks had a negative impact on the Sydney CERA, which changed its name in 1912 to the Nationalist Association (國民黨 Guomindang).[168] The *TWT* spoke up about the importance of constitutionalism under the leadership of the Nationalist Association. Between March and May of 1912, the *TWT* became suspicious of the authority of the Guangdong government, which was supported by Chinese revolutionary organisations.[169] The *TWT* reported, rather emphatically, on

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164 ACCG, Record of Chinese correspondence, undated, no.522-34.

165 ACCG, Chinese correspondence, 5 December 1912, no.522-18

166 National Library of Australia, Hazel de Berg Collection, DeB 1098.

167 William Liu was retained as secretary by the next Chinese Consul-General (acting), William Ah Ket. From 1914 to 1915, while George Bew was secretly organising the Chinese Nationalist League in Sydney to support another revolution in China, Ah Ket may have appointed Liu to investigate the advent of Chinese nationalists in Sydney. Ah Ket wished to exploit Liu's network and relationship with Wing Sang and Co., but Liu concealed the development of the Chinese Nationalist League from Ah Ket (ACCG, Chinese correspondence, 6 March 1914, no. 522-153).

168 *TWT*, 9 March 1912, p.2.

169 *TWT*, 11 May 1912, p.7.

the disorder in Guangdong under the rule of the revolutionaries.[170] Merchants associated with the Chinese Nationalist Association had long referred to the importance of Liang Qichao's visit, which had stimulated Chinese Australians' political awareness a decade earlier.[171] After the Republic of China was formed by Yuan Shikai, the *TWT* suggested cooperation between the revolutionaries and the constitutionalists. The *CAH* introduced the work and political activities of the Hong-Kong based Australian revolutionary Tse Tsan Tai to highlight the contribution of Chinese Australians in revolutionary mobilisation. Chinese-Australian revolutionary organisations, however, showed little interest in cooperating with the constitutionalists.[172]

The Sydney Chinese Nationalist Association's failure to be appointed to represent Chinese Australians at the first Convention of the Chinese Parliament in late 1912 and early 1913 was a matter of frustration for Association members. William Ah Ket was appointed by the Melbourne Chinese community and merchant societies to represent them in the assembly in Beijing. The Sydney Chinese Nationalist Association was not included because it had not registered its name with the Chinese government. As a result, the members immediately took steps to register their organisation with the Chinese government through the Chinese Consul-General, but they did so under a new name. From the end of 1912 the Sydney Chinese Nationalist Association was known and functioned as the New South Wales Chinese Chamber of Commerce.[173] Its certificate of registration, authorised by the Consul-General in 1913, states that the New South Wales Chinese Chamber of Commerce originated in 1902.[174]

At the beginning of 1913, a significant meeting took place in Sydney. Yee Wing and George Bew assembled people from different groups at the Sydney Chinese Masonic Lodge to confirm their acceptance of Sun Yatsen as their leader.[175] This meeting demonstrated links between disparate factions, in particular the Chinese Masonic Society, the Young China League and the Chinese Presbyterian Church, and led to the establishment of a Chinese nationalist newspaper and party in 1914 in support of Sun Yatsen and his 'Three Principles of the People'. In 1913 Young Wai and CH Cheong applied for the entry into Australia of two journalists, Chiu Kok-chun (趙國俊 Zhao

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170 *TWT*, 16 March, p.6, 22 June 1912, p.6.
171 *TWT*, 2 November 1912, p.2.
172 *CAH*, 18 January, p.4, 1 February, p.4, 22 February 1913, supplement.
173 *TWT*, 14 December 1912, p.8; ACCG, Chinese correspondence, 25 April 1913.
174 NBAC, 111/2/1, New South Wales Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Correspondence 1913–1917, Certificate.
175 *CAH*, 1 March 1913, p.4.
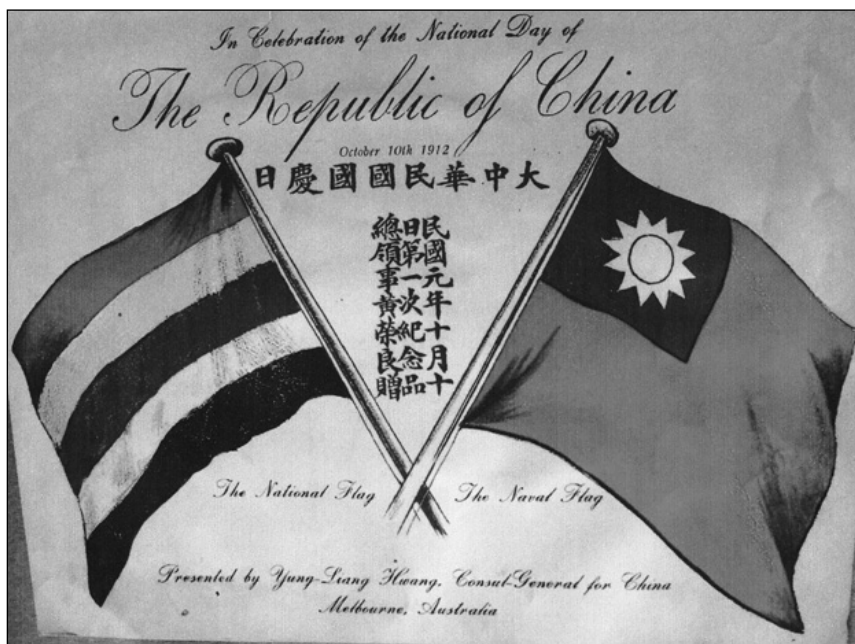
Republic Inauguration souvenir pamphlet issued by the Chinese Consul-General.
(National Library of Australia: Manuscript Collection, MS 4934.)
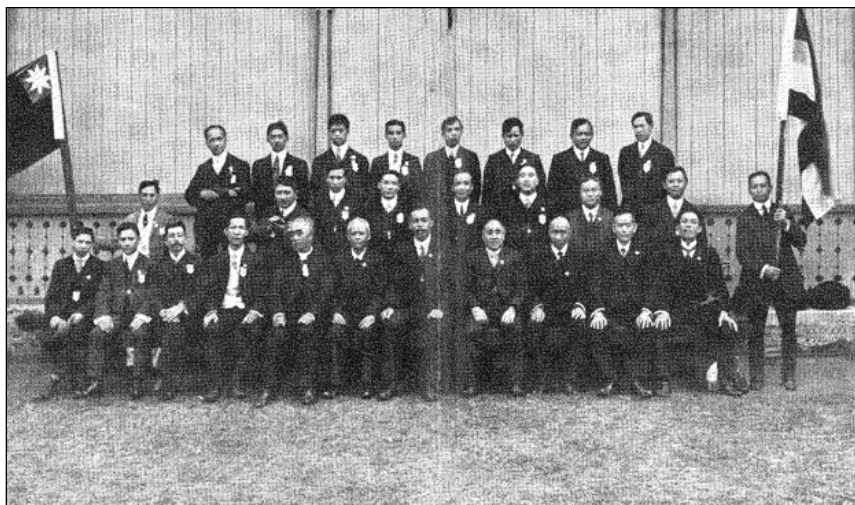
The Chinese community's celebrations of the second anniversary of the Chinese Republic.
In the front row, fifth from left, Rev. John Young Wai; sixth, Charles Yee Wing; seventh,
George Bew (Guo Biao).

(*Souvenir to commemorate the first anniversary of unity in the Chinese Republic*, Sydney, 1913.
Courtesy of National Library of Australia.)

Guojun) and Ng Hung-Pui (伍洪培 Wu Hongpei), to edit the new *Chinese Republic News*. They also planned to organise a new Chinese school, the Kong Wah School (光華學校 Guanghuaxuexiao), with the help of the two journalists.[176] The *Chinese Republic News* was destined to take over the role of the *CT*, which up to 1914 was the only official newspaper of the Chinese Nationalist Party in Oceania. The editor of the *CT*, Lew Goot-chee, was expelled from Australia around this time, partly because he angered the Chinese Consul-General with a taunt over a shooting incident involving the Consul-General in 1913.[177] The *CT* collapsed in 1914, and the centre of Chinese-Australian nationalism moved to Sydney.

Sydney republicans mobilised local Chinese communities to help sustain the new Republic of China and Sun Yatsen's revolutionary faction through the networks of the Chinese Presbyterian Church, the Chinese Masonic Society, and the national and international networks of Chinese revolutionary organisations. The Sydney republicans believed that their own position and that of other Chinese Australians could be substantially improved through mobilisation on behalf of the new Republic, because China now had the potential to become a state with values and institutions similar to those of Australia, the United States, and other Western countries. At the same time their work in mobilising support refashioned the way in which Chinese communities situated themselves in relation to broader Australian society. On the one hand, universal ideals of Christian brotherhood came to replace the dicta of Social Darwinism and Confucianism. On the other hand, Chinese-Australian contributions to the revolution were thought to vindicate their commitment to the values of democracy, patriotism and national sacrifice. Reflecting on the revolutionary history in the 1930s, Vivian Chow highlighted the Australian values of democracy and self-sacrifice in the birth of Chinese nationalism. He pointed as well to the lessons of the Chinese-Australian ancestors who had contributed to the making of modern Australia (Chow 1933b:463). Chow's reflection was but one of the many and varied interpretations that placed the Chinese-Australian story at the intersection of Australian, Chinese, and broader North American narratives of reform and revolution in China.

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176   NAA, Dept of External Affairs, A1, Correspondence, 1915/13159.
177   In the dispute mentioned in Chapter 6, the Consul-General was shot by his former secretary, Thomas Chia, on 11 March 1913.

MAKING CHINESE AUSTRALIA, 1892–1912

URBAN ELITES, NEWSPAPERS AND NATIONALISM

A distinctively Chinese-Australian community was made, chiefly in Sydney and Melbourne, between the end of the 1880s and the early 1910s as Chinese Australians became increasingly urbanised and Australian and Chinese nationalism emerged. The urban experiences of Chinese Australians reconfigured their daily lives, values, aspirations, and identities, much as they reconfigured those of other Australians during that period. The making of Chinese Australia was a social and historical process, overseen by an urban elite which mobilised Chinese communities in Australia through engagement in political movements, historical narratives and participation in community affairs.

Politics had an essential role in shaping Chinese-Australian diasporic identities through this period of social transition. An emerging sense of community was rooted in a developing political consciousness and in new political practices, which were embedded in wider processes of social transformation affecting the Chinese-Australian community. Elite politics focused attention on particular issues of community and nation. In this book, I have argued that the making of Chinese Australia from 1892 to 1912 (a period that coincides with the last decades of the Chinese empire) was rooted in a distinctive politics of community and nation under the leadership of new Chinese elites in major urban centres. A new style of Chinese community organisation, incorporating public associations, commercial chambers, social clubs, and political parties, expanded opportunities for political positioning and community participation, while Chinese-language newspapers introduced styles of rhetoric and narrative that fed the processes

of social mobilisation and identity transformation under way. The expanded opportunities gave urban elites greater scope for enhancing their roles in social transformation and political leadership. Chinese newspapers and journalists took on a much more important role in nourishing political consciousness and expanding levels of political participation in the name of the Chinese community.

The transformations outlined in this book show that Chinese-Australian identity in the White-Australian period was more than merely a refinement of native-place and kinship practices and inherited identities. The language of clan ties and native identities was preserved in the new nationalism, but the style of Chinese-Australian nationalism proclaimed in the local Chinese press was rooted in new historical narratives and modern models of political community. The making of Chinese Australia, insofar as it was related to the developments of Chinese-Australian nationalism, was more closely related to social leadership, social transformation, print culture and patterns of mobilisation than it was to native identities and ties of clan and kinship.

In this study I have focused on an urban elite of journalists, merchants, missionaries, Christians, Freemasons, union leaders, prominent secret society members and teachers who emerged in the 1890s to refashion the contours of the Chinese-Australian community. This new elite shaped public spaces and patterns of community conduct and leadership and introduced a variety of social networks that eventually relocated Chinese immigrants within urban Australian life. The elite was defined more by its public influence than by its wealth or by traditional status markers. It introduced a rules-based system of trust, which in the emerging urban centres came to replace the networks of personal trust that had underlain the status and influence of traditional elites in rural settlements. This system of trust gave added importance to political rhetoric, to social mobilisation, and to nationalist narratives in the early years of the 20th century.

The concerns of the new urban elite can be traced through the columns of Chinese-language newspapers, which played an important role in shaping Australian identities and diaspora nationalism, not least in extending public participation to lower-class Chinese and inviting them to join in an expanded social imaginary that invoked a distinctively modern sense of time, space, and the narrative unfolding of history. The narratives of Chinese-Australian newspapers were especially important in shaping Chinese-Australian identities through their focus on stories of suffering and sacrifice. These newspapers mobilised their readership around expanded information

networks in Sydney which extended throughout Australia and abroad. The flourishing of Chinese newspapers in the late 19th century and early 20th century can be explained in turn as a result of the ongoing social transformation of Chinese communities and expanding rates of political participation within the Chinese-Australian community.

As we have seen, when the first Chinese-language newspaper in Australia appeared in Sydney in 1894 it was welcomed by a community that was considerably more literate than others in the Pacific area. Sydney's fruit traders, hawkers, and storekeepers were keen to keep abreast of market prices, shipping movements and events impacting on markets around the world. When the *CAH* hit the streets of Sydney, it had a circulation of between 800 to 1,000 copies each issue through the 1890s. Other Chinese-language newspapers appeared over following years to satisfy an increasingly curious community of readers. Given their high levels of readership, perhaps the paramount role of Chinese-language newspapers in the making of Chinese Australia lay in the everyday connections they established between the poorer and the more prosperous members of the community around the politics of the new urban elite.

The new Chinese urban elite in Sydney

From the 1880s, Sydney emerged as the commercial hub for Australian trade and investment in the South Pacific. At the same time, Sydney became a social hub for Chinese immigrants moving from rural New South Wales and other parts of Australia to urban coastal settlements. These social and commercial developments led to significant changes within the Sydney Chinese community and more broadly to transformations in Chinese-Australian community organisations and identities within and beyond Sydney. A lively urban and commercial environment in Sydney enabled small merchants to expand their businesses into substantial enterprises and provided opportunities for hawkers and skilled labourers to make the transition to merchant status and for some to rise to international prominence as commercial entrepreneurs. Against this background, modern systems of trust transformed older forms of community organisation based on personal networks, creating space for Chinese storekeepers, grocers, fruit traders and importers to organise more inclusive business clubs and associations. By the late 19th century, Sydney had become the focal point of an emerging urban merchant elite organised around local clubs and associations and enjoying contacts with the European elite networks of that city.

The significance of the 1890s for leadership transformation

The commercial life of Sydney provided a new generation of Chinese immigrants with opportunities for wealth creation not known by their 19th century predecessors in Australia. Gold had, of course, enriched a few and wealth derived from mining was undoubtedly an initial factor underlying social mobility and elite leadership in Chinese communities in Australia and other British colonies in the mid-19th century (Yong 1972:38, Chong 2004:162). But wealth alone offered little guarantee of status in the absence of other status indicators and social networks. During the earliest phase of Chinese immigration to the Australian colonies, Chinese merchants established claims on leadership through ties of clan and kinship, more often than not involving competing networks based on native-place or family networks. The credit-ticket system that had brought Chinese to the colonies was overseen by clan and native-place networks, lending these networks the status and influence which wealthy merchants sought to acquire by association. Wealthy merchants based in Sydney continued through the 1880s and 1890s to fashion their social networks around ties of kin and native place. Way Kee, probably the most influential community leader in 19th century Sydney, cooperated in founding the Koong Yee Tong and in developing the Chinese quarter in The Rocks district in order to strengthen his native-place and clan networks. But the Koong Yee Tong was basically a club for merchants from Way Kee's home county of Dongguan. His wider prominence in Sydney enhanced the status of the Koong Yee Tong and Dongguan natives within the Sydney Chinese community.

At the same time, other Chinese-Australian leaders sought to enhance their leadership status through the purchase of imperial ranks, as was common practice among wealthy Chinese of the Straits Settlements who donated to Chinese imperial causes in the late imperial period with a view to improving their standing in traditional status hierarchies by receiving honours conferred by the imperial court in return for their donations. Some leaders in Australia, including Quong Tart, On Lee, and Way Lee, made substantial donations to the Chinese imperial court in return for honorific titles of imperial rank.[1] Among Chinese abroad, the symbolic power of official rank in the imperial bureaucratic system conferred not just honour in China but a measure of social capital in their local communities, which

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1   There is no record of the names or numbers of people in Australia afforded Mandarin rank. Further research may yield additional examples. A wealthy Chinese in Queensland, Gee Kee, was awarded official rank in return for donations (see private collection of Connie Fay).

helped confirm their leadership roles (Chong 2004:162). As Yen Ching-hwang has argued of Chinese merchants in Southeast Asia, the conferring of official titles on wealthy merchants enhanced their standing beyond the levels that wealth alone could confer (Yen 1972:66–67).

Other forces at work in Australia served to undermine these traditional status markers from the late 1890s, when native-place, kinship and imperial rank no longer sufficed to establish leadership of an increasingly modern urban Chinese community. From the 1890s, leadership positions among Chinese Australians were contested over a variety of different status markers associated with new forms of political mobilisation and public association. An example of the disruption of the power of traditional status holders was the conflict in the Sydney Chinese community in 1892, when native-place networks and leaders claiming imperial rank failed singularly in reducing conflict between groups of inner-city Chinese, chiefly because substantial numbers of working-class Chinese residents no longer identified primarily with clan or native-place ties. By this time the old revenue base of the wealthier clan and secret society networks, which had been founded on the immigration credit-ticket system, was declining because the number of immigrants was falling following the introduction of harsh immigration restrictions from the late 1880s. At the same time, an increasing number of market gardeners, hawkers, carpenters and banana traders found greater mobility and a more comfortable livelihood in the cities. Changing patterns of commercial activity led Chinese labourers and merchants to relocate the centre of Chinese community life from The Rocks to the Belmore Markets district, which attracted many gardeners, hawkers and market traders in the late 19th century (Wood 1994:22–24). These changing patterns of commercial, professional, and residential life created new spaces and opportunities for social mobility and, in time, for the emergence of a new merchant leadership stratum.

Clan competition softened in the atmosphere and rhythms of modern urban life. As Chinese came in greater numbers to Sydney to provide fresh fruit and vegetables for an expanding Australian urban population, urban Chinese acquired new social and cultural skills suited to the rhythms, customs and manners of Australian urban life. English fluency became essential for leaders occupying positions at the intersection of Chinese and Anglophone social life, and hawkers and gardeners needed to learn sufficient English to grow and market their produce. As Janice Wood (1994:64) has shown, Chinese residents of Sydney chose to relocate beyond the Chinese community enclaves of the inner city and to reside in increasing numbers in

European neighbourhoods. Clan and native pace based organisations lost traction in this transitional urban setting.

Bilingual leaders such as the Sydney tea merchant Quong Tart rose to special prominence from the mid to late 19th century, when they were often called upon to represent Chinese residents to the wider community of English speakers. Nevertheless, bilingualism alone was insufficient to ensure influence in the Chinese community. Quong Tart certainly earned the respect of colonial authorities, as evidenced by his appointment to the Royal Commission on Alleged Chinese Gambling and Immorality in 1892, but he failed to win the uniform respect of members of the Sydney Chinese community. He was widely criticised by other Sydney Chinese leaders during the proceedings of the Royal Commission and he failed to negotiate successfully in a conflict between skilled labourers and the Gaoyao native-place network in 1892.

To the extent that it did exercise community leadership, the influence of the colonial bilingual elite was rooted in alliance politics. The alliances formed among Quong Tart, WRG Lee and Sun Johnson indicates that the main task facing the Chinese leadership in the late 1890s was negotiation between Chinese and dominant Anglophone communities with a view to reducing conflict and competition among contending groups of Chinese in the inner-city area. The role of the LYT, under the leadership of WRG Lee, in mediating inter-clan competition offers further evidence of the importance of bilingual leadership into the late 1890s. The carnivals of 1897, conducted by the LYT, shed further light on the style of bilingual leadership exercised over the urban Chinese community in turn-of-the-century Sydney. Furthermore, the charitable works associated with the celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 showed that negotiating the gap between Chinese and Western customs and manners was considered a primary function of urban Chinese leadership to the end of the 19th century.

Dual 'Chinese' and 'Australian' life of urban Chinese

In the new century, however, urban Chinese sought new ways to negotiate between Chinese and Anglo-Australian life and manners, when a distinctive shift of emphasis in inter-community relations occurred, from bilingual translation across hard linguistic boundaries to cross-cultural interpretation, in the Chinese language, across softening cultural barriers. Christianity, for example, was increasingly related to equivalent Chinese customary beliefs and practices. In 1902, in Melbourne, the editor of the *CT* introduced the

god Guan Di and Jesus together in an effort to reinterpret the significance of charitable giving at Easter time. The editor proposed that Guan Di and Jesus occupied similar positions under one and the same God.[2] Christianity was no longer seen as exclusively British or Western. Thus, in Sydney, a prominent member of the Chinese Presbyterian Church, Chan Harr, highlighted the universal spirit underlying Christianity in explaining the appeal of Christianity to the Chinese community (Wai 1904:8). Increasingly widespread adoption of Christian ethics had the additional effect of introducing modern Western etiquette to urban Chinese residents of Sydney, Melbourne, and towns and cities throughout the country.

In fact from the mid-19th century Chinese community leaders had from time to time attempted to negotiate between Chinese and British customs, in the process placing greater emphasis on civil values and civic morality than on religious ritual. They helped to negotiate solutions to the difficult problem facing non-Christian Chinese in swearing an oath on the Bible in colonial courts of law, introducing the significant and innovative practice of blowing out a match in Australian courts.[3] The *CAH* judged the practice of blowing out a match to be the equivalent of beheading a chicken, which was said to have been widely practised in legal disputes in rural China and to have religious overtones in its invocation of divine justice to mediate social tensions. Australian courts had been inclined to accept the chicken-beheading ceremony, but Chinese interpreters and community leaders introduced the practice of blowing out a match in the Australian courts instead in an effort to secularise a long-standing religious ritual.

Once they had become more familiar with colonial legal practices, Chinese immigrants presented themselves as obedient and lawful residents. The fact that they turned to the courts to resolve the 1892 conflict in the Sydney Chinese community points to growing recognition of the jurisdiction of New South Wales law for maintaining social order within Chinese communities in urban Australia, although it could be argued that the meaning of 'obedient and lawful' did vary from time to time. Further, the recognition of the jurisdiction of law suggests that urban Chinese were coming to appreciate the importance of maintaining a reputation as an upstanding social group in securing their recognition as lawful residents of Australia.

At the same time, urban Chinese turned their understanding of British values and civic morality to advantage in securing recognition of their equal rights in the face of cultural difference. Sun Johnson's formal protest

2   *CT*, 2 April 1902, p.4.
3   *CAH*, 25 February 1898, p.4.

against Sydney police for seizing suspects by their pigtails during a gambling raid in 1897 offers a clear illustration of Chinese residents claiming equal rights before the law and seeking equal treatment and equal recognition in the colonial system. Whether or not the Chinese suspects were guilty of the gambling charges leveled against them, Sun argued, they should not be humiliated by the demeaning behaviour of police. By his actions Sun explicitly affirmed Chinese residents' understanding of their equal rights in the Australian legal system.[4] When the Governor of New South Wales moved to prohibit police from arresting Chinese by grabbing hold of their pigtails, Sun secured direct affirmation from the highest colonial authorities that Chinese residents were to be treated with the respect due to all subjects of the British Crown.[5] The attainment of self-respect was an important indicator of social transformation among immigrant communities in late 19th century and early 20th century Australia (Thompson 1968:462; Fitzgerald 2007:82). In this case, attaining self-respect did not entail assimilation of British customs and manners by the Chinese; it entailed recognition by the colonial authorities of Chinese difference—pigtails—and the authorities' extension of equal treatment towards them, despite cultural difference.

Community leaders such as Sun Johnson mediated cultural difference in a variety of ways in the late 19th century. Seeking equality of treatment from authorities despite evident cultural differences was one way. Others involved educating Chinese residents in the customs and habits of the dominant British population and comparing those customs and habits with Chinese customs with a view to establishing their cultural equivalence. Chinese were not isolated from the wider society; their attempts to learn English and to cope with cultural difference may have presented them with problems, but Anglophone citizens of Australia were also baffled by the languages and customs of the Chinese.

The scale of cross-cultural interpretation was greatly enlarged by the advent of a vibrant Chinese-language press culture in the 1890s. The *CAH* reported frequently and energetically on the cultural differences separating British and Chinese in Australia with the aim of encouraging Chinese readers to learn about wider Australian culture and manners.[6] It was reasonably impartial in its judgements, praising, for example, the strengths of the Western system of education for offering training in technical skills

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4   *CAH*, 30 July 1897, p.2.
5   *CAH*, 13 August 1897, p.6.
6   *CAH*, 27 November 1896, p.5, 9 April 1897, pp.4–5, 4 June, p.2, 3 September 1904, p.5, 18 March, p.2, 29 July 1905, pp.2–3.

in contrast to the classical studies and rote learning which, its editors believed, characterised education in China.[7] The editors were at the same time conscious of the risks to Chinese identity and customs if assimilation went too far. By the late 1890s, the *CAH* was exhibiting anxiety about the alienation of second-generation Chinese Australians from their cultural roots in China, with readers submitting letters on the theme. In 1898 for example a Queensland correspondent blamed increasing signs of childhood alienation on mothers of American or Irish descent whose Chinese-Australian children identified with their Irish or American side rather than with their Chinese fathers.[8] The *CAH* nevertheless went out of its way to defend the standing and reputation of the offspring of inter-ethnic marriages, who were said to suffer prejudice from both sides.[9]

Educating the next generation of Chinese Australians to maintain their Chinese language skills and sense of identity was a matter of particular concern to community leaders. Wealthy merchants could employ private tutors. Kwong Sue Duk employed the services of the editor of the *CT* who was brought from Melbourne to teach his children Chinese language and culture.[10] For most Chinese residents, however, private education was not a viable option. Chinese newspapers, including the *CT* and *TWT,* and community organisations became involved in establishing Chinese schools in the early 1900s. These wider efforts at community education confronted the problem of what it meant to be Chinese Australian in a community that was becoming deeply divided between Confucian revivalists and Christians and along other potential lines of fracture in the early 20th century.

Two models of urban elite leadership in the early 20th century

Negotiating and maintaining a dual 'Chinese' and 'Australian' vision of urban residential life offered challenges for Chinese community leaders. One claim to leadership was a capacity to sustain a balance between modern urban ethics and etiquette on the one hand and inherited Chinese customs and ethics on the other. Needless to say, similar challenges faced community leaders in China too, where the rapid growth of new commercial cities brought patriarchal ethics of the old empire into conflict with the industrial and commercial lifestyles of the modern city. In Australia,

7   *CAH*, 26 February 1897, p.6, 2 December 1898, p.4, 2 June 1900, p.2, 8 July 1905, pp.2–3.
8   *CAH*, 25 March 1898, p.2.
9   *CAH*, 24 June 1898, p.4.
10   *CAH,* 14 July 1906, p.5.

however, Chinese-community leaders faced an additional hurdle insofar as this global historical conflict was imbued with locally-inflected concerns about race and culture, in which 'Chinese' were placed on the side of inherited and unchanging customs and traditions, and 'Australians' were located on the side of enlightened and modern ethics and lifestyles. In the Australian case, however, Chinese urban leadership was grounded in new forms of social network, including Christian churches, reformed Masonic networks, business associations and political societies which had their roots in urban Australia.

The development of these new-style civic associations in the early 20th century offered further signs of urban modernity in their elaboration of impersonal systems of trust in place of earlier patterns of personal relations and social ties of kin and native-place. They also nurtured a new style of community leadership less beholden to wealth and traditional markers of social status than the elites of old. In some cases, the growth of Chinese newspapers and churches gave journalists and Christian pastors greater public influence through the formal social networks associated with newspapers and churches. In other cases, second-generation Chinese Australians, such as William Ah Ket, who were educated in elite colonial schools and universities, came to prominence on the basis of their familiarity with Australian society, law and culture. Urban leadership was then increasingly related to education, business and professional occupation, and with integration into community associations and Christian, educational, legal and social networks. This new style of civic leadership was concerned not with mediating inter-clan conflicts, as of old, but with facilitating network connections within and between sections of the community and between the community and broader Anglophone society.

Two models of elite leadership gained special prominence in this new environment, one associated with the Chinese commercial elite and Christian churches, and the other with the transformation of traditional secret societies and native-place and kinship networks. Many of Sydney's Chinese commercial elite were Christians. Under the influence of the able minister of the Chinese Presbyterian Church, the Reverend John Young Wai, they were encouraged to participate in wider social networks and to engage in secular issues well outside their particular fields of business through their work with the Church. The Chinese Presbyterian Church was also a site for religious worship, education, and social engagement for Chinese market gardeners, hawkers and merchants and Young Wai's educational initiatives provided English-language and cultural classes

that enabled their transition from agricultural occupations to positions in industry and commerce.

Their Christian faith and their experiences in the city had a number of flow-on effects for Sydney's Chinese-Christian merchants, including the extension of their social networks beyond ties of kin and native place and the elaboration of universal ethical values including justice and equality. The value of equality played an especially important role in shaping the identity of the Sydney Chinese commercial elite, who applied the principle to equality of access to their own community associations and organised several organisations to fight for equal rights in the broader community. The establishment of both the Chinese Merchants' Society and the CMDA in 1904 was the result of the social mobilisation efforts of Sydney's Chinese commercial elite.

Chan Harr's leadership and involvement in the CMDA offers a succinct illustration of the new style of leadership exercised by the commercial elite. Although not a native of Sydney, Chan Harr came to be known throughout the Sydney Chinese community by virtue of his work with merchants and the local branch of the CERA. On moving to Sydney, he was welcomed by Chinese Christians and, in particular, by members of the Chinese Presbyterian Church. His emphasis on universal values and his efforts to secure equal recognition highlight the role played by Chinese merchants and Christian networks in upholding the rights of Chinese Australians. At the same time, the leadership style shown by Chan Harr and his colleagues early in the 20th century indicates that ties of clan and native place—of personal relationships generally—were no longer essential for the effective exercise of community leadership.

In addition to developing its social status and leadership over this period, Sydney's Chinese commercial class came to appreciate, self-consciously, its own growing importance and to institutionalise itself under the law. Sydney merchants formalised their position by establishing the first Chinese-Australian merchant association in the country. In this regard they were similar to the Chinese commercial elites of Hong Kong who established commercial associations on their own behalf rather than await the arrival of political or government representatives to advocate the establishment of chambers of commerce, as happened in China. They mobilised their resources to counter the ill effects of White-Australian nationalism and fought to maintain their position in face of the crude Social Darwinism that prevailed at the time. In this context they came to extol and embrace modern models of good citizenship as a proper foundation for public life. In

so doing, however, they demonstrated the widening gap between their own elite assumptions and those of working-class elements among the Sydney Chinese community.

Reference to this widening gap returns us to the second model of elite leadership which developed within the Sydney Chinese community, in this case exercised through the transformation of traditional secret societies and native-place and kinship networks. While the Sydney Chinese commercial elite was establishing its own distinctive style of civic Christian leadership, leaders of secret society, native-place and kinship associations were reshaping their societies to meet the needs of urbanisation and White-Australian nationalism. Among their innovations, perhaps the most important were the introduction of flexible membership criteria, advocacy of increasing participation in urban life, and the development of an overarching Chinese ethnic identity.

Social leaders based outside the commercial elite cooperated with traditional societies in mobilising the Chinese working class. Sun Johnson, for example, played a leading role in the transformation of the Sydney Yee Hing Society into the city-based Chinese Masonic Society. Urban Chinese Masons such as Sun Johnson worked closely with rural leaders of the Yee Hing Society to relocate the brotherhood in the new urban setting. Crucial to this transformation was the reshaping of clan and native-place identities within a dominant model of Chinese ethnic identity, in the process enhancing the social foundations of trust and lending greater social coherence to the urban brotherhood of skilled and unskilled Chinese workers. The Sydney Yee Hing (Chinese Masonic) Lodge was built adjacent to the Belmore Markets where Chinese labourers congregated. Although avoiding clan-based social networks, the Yee Hing Society was not averse to appealing to the religious sentiments of its members, in effect refashioning religious and clan identities under the overarching rubric of Chinese ethnic identity. It played a pivotal role, for example, in building the Sze Yup Kwan Ti Temple in Glebe. The leadership of the Yee Hing thus reflected an alternative model of leadership through its work with native-place and clan organisations, religious societies, secret society newspapers, and Australian freemasonry.

This second pattern of leadership was especially prominent within the Melbourne Chinese community. The growth of anti-Chinese sentiment and the introduction of legal measures restricting Chinese work and business practices in 1904 and 1905 encouraged skilled Chinese labourers in Melbourne to unite in securing their social positions at the very time Sydney Chinese merchants were mobilising to secure their basic rights. In

Melbourne, Chinese Christian missionaries joined with solicitors, journalists and local union leaders to cooperate with native-place and secret society organisations to press for redress. Ethnic Chinese identity was the paramount point of reference for different sub-ethnic, clan and occupational identities among Melbourne Chinese in the early 20th century.

Social mobilisation and public awareness in the making of Chinese Australia

Although different social networks underlay the development of two distinctive models of urban leadership in the Chinese community at the time of Australian federation, each was rooted in the conditions of modern urban life. Urban elites mobilised their communities by appealing to a modern sense of civic morality and the public good. Civic virtue and ethnic identity became the stuff of popular rhetoric in the first decade of the 20th century. Chinese urban elites promoted a widespread sense of the public good through their civic organisations, public meetings and generous benefactions.

Civic morality, public space and donations
From the late 19th century, White-Australian elites maintained their hegemony over public life through public meetings and the restricted use of town halls (Fujikawa 1990:52–57). Leaders of Chinese communities then had recourse to dedicated public spaces. Between 1892 and 1912, three important sites were built by the Sydney Chinese community—the Chinese Presbyterian Church, the CERA building, and the Sydney Yee Hing (Chinese Masonic) Lodge. The Chinese Presbyterian Church and Yee Hing Lodge were located near the Belmore Markets. The building housing the CERA, the *TWT* and the Chinese Merchants' Society, was located in the north of the city. These dedicated Chinese buildings served as public spaces for local Chinese to congregate socially. As distinctively Chinese urban spaces they symbolised the new public profile that leaders of the community sought to convey, displacing to some extent the native-place and clan associations and local temples of an earlier era.

Changing patterns of community donations over this later period offer a compelling illustration of the changing character of the community, its social identity and its elite leadership. Earlier forms of donation emphasised charitable works and the reinforcement of social networks of clan and native place. From the beginning of the 20th century, however, donations tended to be directed toward shaping more equitable international relations,

promoting economic and social development on the Western model, and supporting disaster relief, reform parties and the new Republican government of China. Donations in support of the anti-American boycott of 1905 and 1906 mark a turning point in the history of community subscriptions to political causes, demonstrating the effectiveness of new business and social networks in transcending earlier distinctions between clan, native-place, and urban and rural communities. Newspapers played an important part in this development by circulating reports on Chinese-Australian donations and encouraging further support for the movement. Indeed, the anti-American boycott movement reflected a growing international network of newspaper commentary which strengthened the sense of a pan-Chinese ethnic community in Australia.

Chinese-language newspapers were important factors in shaping public awareness and a sense of community under the new style of elite urban leadership. Three newspapers were based in Sydney and Melbourne over this period, all of them founded by members of the Sydney urban elite and each of them helping to shape that elite during the first decade of 20th century. The newspapers helped to refashion the social imaginary of the Chinese community by acquainting its readers with the rhythms of urban life, by introducing aspects of Western ethics and social manners, and by invoking a modern sense of historical progress and the workings of the international state system. At the same time, this refashioning of the social imaginary created a distinctive role for the new urban elite and expanded the space for public participation, public trust, and compliance with the discipline of modern urban life.

Newspapers and the new common understanding: dual time and historical time

In Benedict Anderson's model of the 'imagined community', newspapers play a critical, if implicit, role in conveying a sense of secular time through the rhythm of their regular publication cycles and their cultivation of a more or less simultaneous readership. Chinese-language newspapers arguably played such a role in Australia. They played an even more explicit role in conveying a modern sense of time for Chinese-Australian communities.

In 1904 Thomas Chang Luke, editor of the *CT*, gave a speech at the Melbourne Temperance Hall in which he introduced the aims and symbols of the new association he was launching that day, the China Public Association. It was the first organisation of its kind in Australia to sympathise

with republican revolutionaries in China. One of the party's new symbols, to which he referred in his speech, was a personal timepiece—a watch—which was emblazoned on the official banner of the new society. In his speech Chang spoke at length about the virtue of being 'on time', measured by modern clocks, as one of the values cherished by the new association.[11] Journalists and revolutionaries were all expected to be on time.

From the late 1890s Australian Chinese-language newspapers had been carrying advertisements for clocks and watches. Advertisements for pocket watches sold by S Hoffnung and Co. first appeared in *TWN* in 1898. The *TWN* also advertised American Waltham watches regularly from 1898,[12] which sold in Australia for three to four guineas, which was equivalent to one month's earnings for a Chinese market gardener or carpenter (Davison 1995:66). Similar advertisements appeared regularly in the *CAH* and *CT*;[13] an advertisement for pocket watches had been placed in the New Year calendar issued by the *CAH* in 1898. Two important Chinese firms in The Rocks district of Sydney, On Chong and Co. and Hop War and Co., regularly advertised the sale and repair of pocket watches.[14]

As consumer items, pocket watches represented more than the march of modern secular time. As Graeme Davison has noted, watches came to symbolise male independence and mobility irrespective of class or social status in colonial and Federation Australia (Davison 1995:68–70). Imports of Waltham pocket watches increased dramatically in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when men were to be seen entering buildings or standing on street corners consulting their fob watches and petty crime increasingly involved the theft of watches. A *TWN* report told of a Sydney Chinese gardener whose watch was stolen from his house in August 1899; another report in the same *TWN* issue told of a Chinese man travelling to Belmore Markets by train when his pocket watch was snatched by a white Australian thief.[15]

It seems significant, in this light, that the first Chinese revolutionary society established in Australia should have chosen to include the image of a pocket watch in its official party livery. Why was keeping time considered a pre-eminent virtue for a modern public association? Why had time-keeping become an important reference point for radical political associations

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11   *CT*, 12 October 1904, p.2.
12   *TWN*, 13 July 1898, p.4 and other following issues.
13   *CAH*, 6 October 1900, p.4; *CT*, 9 March 1904, p.3, 25 November 1905, p.3.
14   *TWT*, 30 July 1904, p.3.
15   *TWN*, 16 August 1899, p.3.

within the Chinese-Australian community? Why would a journalist seek to emphasise the importance of keeping time?

Chang Luke's emphasis on clock time offered a measure of public recognition that the rhythms of urban life were markedly different from the rhythms of rural settlements for Chinese and other residents of Australia. By the close of the 19th century urban life in Australia's capital cities was moving to the rhythm of city time. The Australian labour movement's world-leading achievement of the eight-hour working day spelled out the importance of clock time for urban workers, including Chinese labourers, who became acquainted with clock time through their regular working habits. The Royal Commission of 1891 and 1892 reported that Chinese cabinet-makers in the inner city of Sydney had learned to measure their working day by clock time, while Chinese market gardeners still measured their daily schedules by the rising and setting of the sun.

Chinese-language newspapers played a part in the diffusion of these new rhythms of urban life. They provided information on tidal movements, shipping lists, and train timetables that drew on the Western calendar and the regular measurement of clock time.[16] In announcing public meetings in the city, they gave precise starting times. When the *CAH* cooperated with the LYT in organising public carnivals in 1897, for example, it announced a public preparatory meeting to which Chinese residents were invited. The notice published in the *CAH* particularly emphasised that the meeting was to start at 7pm sharp.[17] By the turn of the century virtually all of the public meetings and entertainments convened by Sydney Chinese in various public parks, the Masonic Lodge, churches and theatres were ruled by clock time. Chang Luke's lecture in the Temperance Hall in Melbourne, needless to say, was advertised as starting at a fixed hour.[18]

There were exceptions. The Sze Yup Kwan Ti Temple in Glebe continued to operate according to traditional time measurements. Its formal opening was announced in the Chinese-language press as taking place at a time measured on the rural lunar calendar.[19] The persistence of old ways alongside the new suggests that two types of time continued to regulate the Chinese community. In Sydney the Chinese-language newspapers found a market opportunity in this duality and published annual New Year calendars that

16   *CAH* 3 May 1895, p.2; *TWN*, 13 July 1898, p.4.
17   *CAH*, 20 August 1897, p.2, *CAH*, 27 August 1897, supplement.
18   See Chinese Opera Co. advertisement (*TWN*, 30 July 1898, p.4) and notices of meetings of the *TWN* and the CERA (*TWN*, 30 November 1898, p.4, 20 January 1900, p.3).
19   *TWN*, 30 November 1898, p.4.

displayed dates according to both the lunar and the solar calendars, paying particular attention to the recurrence of regulated rest days (Sundays) in the traditional lunar cycle. These calendars in turn became important vehicles for firms to advertise their wares, including, as already noted, companies selling and repairing pocket watches.

Public holidays and festivals also played a role in the regulation of urban life according to the Western calendar and clock time. Chinese journalists emphasised the importance of celebrating Australian public holidays for the promotion of civic virtue. The celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 and the celebration of Australian Federation in 1901 both demonstrated the symbolic power of public holidays and public commemorations in the making of 20th century Australia. In 1897 the *CAH* encouraged its readers to join other residents in celebrating the Queen's jubilee, on the understanding that those who took the day off would enjoy not only a day of rest but a sense of participation in a great public event in colonial society. The poster calendars published by the *TWN* also highlighted for Chinese readers colonial holidays such as Easter, the Queen's and Prince's birthdays, the official Bank Holiday, Labour Day, and Christmas, in addition to Chinese New Year.[20] The paper made a point of encouraging its readers to abide by approved schedules of working hours in Australia.[21] The promotion of public holidays, civic commemorations and regulated working hours through the Chinese-language press situated city time in a local, national and imperial matrix which placed readers in a modern grid of social, cultural and political allegiances.

To be sure, traditional Chinese holidays, such as Chinese New Year, Qing Ming, and the birth of Guan Di, continued to be celebrated in Australia. By the beginning of the 20th century, however, a number of new holidays involving the Chinese Emperor and Confucius, were being celebrated in China and were added to the Chinese Australian calendars as well.[22] By publicly celebrating these new and old festivals the Chinese of Sydney introduced a wide array of Chinese national symbols to the residents of the city. Within the Chinese community itself, the festivals fostered a modern urban sense of community and opened new spaces for leadership contestation among elites and competition for followers among competing social and political groupings.

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20   *TWN*, 18 February 1899, supplement.
21   *TWN*, 17 January 1900.
22   See records of See Yup Temple, Melbourne, in NBAC, 111/8, Records of Huiguau.

The invocation of Confucius as a national sage on the model of Western-style saint or national hero highlights the role of historical consciousness associated with the urban time promoted by Chinese newspapers and journalists in Sydney. Chinese-Australian editors emphasised the importance of history in shaping the new sense of time they wished to promote in their community. Thus the *CT* published an article on 'world time' that divided history into a progressive linear sequence of past, present and future.[23] The paper emphasised the importance of history in shaping Chinese citizenship and urged its readers to think about history as the progressive story of a national people rather than a chronicle of imperial rulers and dynastic cycles.[24] In 1909, *TWT* editor, Tong Chai-chih, argued that history needed to be understood as a story of 'national time' and that historical consciousness was an essential element in the making of nations and the nurturing of patriotism.[25]

In this way the Chinese press imagined and situated its readership at the interface of Australian and Chinese history. It contrasted the pride the Chinese nation should take in its glorious past with the suffering endured by Chinese Australians under the White Australia policy. This historical anomaly was attributed to the rising tide of what the editors called 'Social Darwinism'. At the same time Chinese-language newspapers introduced Australian history to their readers.[26] They published articles on British colonisers and pioneers, and on the rebellion of Irish convicts in 1804, and pointed out that many white Australians had convicts for ancestors.[27] Drawing on the pioneer narratives of white-Australian history, they highlighted Chinese contributions to the development of the country, pressing the point that little of this contribution was acknowledged by White Australians. From 1906, the *TWT* began publishing collections of stories recounting the suffering of Chinese Australians and it traced the history of Chinese migration to Australia.[28]

The *TWT* went further and approached historical consciousness as a subject in its own right. In 1909 its editors argued that history was as important as territory, property and people in national development because history cultivated the national spirit.[29] In another article they pointed out

23   *CT*, 2 July 1904, p.2.
24   *CT*, 30 March 1904, p.2.
25   *TWT*, 11 September 1909, p.2.
26   *CAH*, 16 December 1899, p.6.
27   *CAH*, 5 November 1897, p.4, 27 July 1901, p.4, 1 July 1905, p.2.
28   *TWT*, 8 December 1906, p.2, 5 January 1907, p.2.
29   *TWT*, 11 September 1909, p.2.

that historical awareness was an essential ingredient of nationalism and patriotism.[30] These articles were in all likelihood directed at the conservative forces governing the Chinese empire rather than against White-Australian racism. In 1913 the *CT* advocated the use of the Western calendar among Chinese communities in China and abroad, on the grounds that China needed to adopt progressive Western practices if it was to compete in the modern world. In this case the adoption of the Gregorian calendar and clock time were thought to represent a successful transition from a despotic empire to a progressive nation-state.[31]

Chang Luke's lecture on timeliness and time-keeping at the launch of the China Public Association in 1904 and the selection of a pocket watch to serve as the public symbol of the new revolutionary society were appropriate interventions in a broader discussion on time, history, community-formation and nation-building that captured the imagination of Chinese Australians in end of the 19th century. The Chinese-language press in Australia was at the forefront of community building and urban mobilisation on a model of secular time and progressive history that characterised the social imaginary of Chinese Australians at the beginning of the 20th century.

Geographical identity, print culture, and the emergence of the Chinese diaspora

The Chinese-language press played an equally important role in relation to distance, space and place. As already noted, articles touching on history and time helped Chinese immigrants to relocate themselves at the interface of local, national and transnational events. Publications on distance and geography played a similar role in situating Chinese immigrants in their new environment locally, nationally and globally. Awareness of this environment fed a growing perception of a transnational Chinese diaspora.

Before their arrival in Australia few immigrants from China had a clear idea of where Australia was or what it might have looked like. According to a novel on the Chinese immigrant experience in Australia, serialised in the *CT*, the first impression that immigrants had of Australia was its distance from China, measured by the time spent locked below decks on the long sea journey south, which took about 10 weeks in the 1850s and 1860s. The voyage of the novel's protagonist from Hong Kong to Australia took 76 days.[32] By the late 1890s the introduction of steamships had reduced the sea journey

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30   *TWT*, 20 November 1909, p.2.
31   *CT*, 8 February 1913, p.4.
32   *CT*, 15 August 1909, p.10.

to around one month. Improvements in transport technologies certainly enhanced the mobility of Chinese immigrants, but, equally importantly, reduced Sydney's imagined distance from Hong Kong as measured by the time taken to travel between the two ports.

The press supplemented the lived experience of travel through publication of shipping lists, maps and, eventually, photographs of interesting and remote places. The *CAH* introduced Australian and world geography to its readers through regular articles, and in the 1890s began importing books of maps for sale to readers.[33] Its new printing facilities were installed in 1897 and started to publish photographs of Australia and the world.[34] Improvements to public transport within Australia were another subject of commentary, prompting the *CAH* to report that transport and infrastructure developments in Australia would enable Chinese residents to mobilise and cooperate more readily across the continent. In this sense, the act of Australian federation encouraged Chinese communities to accentuate their similarities and overcome local and parochial differences. The *CAH* also reported enthusiastically on the introduction of the bicycle and the periodic extensions of tram, train and steamship services.[35] As these improvements in transport facilities expanded opportunities for local, national and global mobility, they reduced the distance separating individuals and communities around the world. The Chinese-language press celebrated this progressive reduction.

The press also gave Chinese residents a better understanding of the country they were living in—Australia. Before Federation, the *CAH* consistently referred to Australia by the name 'New Gold Mountain' (新金山 Xinjinshan).[36] On the eve of Federation, the paper began to call the continent 'Australia' (澳大利亞 Aodaliya, 澳洲 Aozhou).[37] In 1902 the *CAH* published a sketch that included images of Australian cities, rural scenes, the bush and native animals to introduce Australia to its readers.[38] It promoted local travel and tourism by reproducing attractive photographs first circulated by

33   *CAH*, 30 October 1896, p.2, 24 June 1898, p.6, 5 August 1898, p.5.
34   *CAH*, 29 January 1897, p.3, 27 January 1900, Chinese New Year issue, 28 January 1898, pp.2–4, 10 February 1899, Chinese New Year issue, 23 February 1901, Chinese New Year issue.
35   *CAH*, 5 February, p.6, 26 March, p.3, 2 April 1897, p.3, 28 January 1898, p.4, 27 January 1900.
36   For example, *CAH*, 9 October, p.3, 11 December 1896, p.5, 26 February, p.3, 5 November 1897, p.4, 25 March, p.2, 10 June 1898, p.3, 26 May 1899, p.2, 16 June 1900, p.2.
37   For example, *CAH,* 2 December 1899, p.2, 25 August 1900, p.2.
38   *CAH*, 8 February 1902.

the New South Wales Government Railway some years earlier to promote excursion tickets for the Christmas and New Year holidays.[39] The paper also published articles on the geography of the Australian colonies (later states) to Chinese readers. At the same time the newspapers began publishing telegrams from trouble spots in China and elsewhere abroad, expanding the information network linking Australia, China and the world.[40]

The press reinforced Sydney's pivotal role in the national and international information network. It reported on the comings and goings of leading merchants, reformers and public figures through the port of Sydney, setting out their local and national itineraries in some detail. In so doing it brought members of the new elite to public attention along with the names of their new political associations, and it located them in a world extending beyond Sydney to include regional and capital cities elsewhere and rural townships in between. Chinese reformer Liang Qichao and his international political organisation were little known in Australia at the time of his arrival in October 1900. By the time he left, six months later, Liang and his many local hosts were familiar names throughout Chinese Australia. His journey from Western Australia through Adelaide to Melbourne, Bendigo, Ballarat, and Sydney, and onward through the New England district of New South Wales, was covered in great detail in the *TWT* which took advantage of Liang's journey to introduce the local Chinese community leaders who met with him at every point and the civic associations that hosted him on his journey. In later years, Chinese visitors arriving in Sydney with a cause to promote, and local community leaders willing to promote them, learned to report on their arrival, recount their travels, and signal their departures in the press in similar detail.

At the same time, however, newspapers and their associated political associations contributed to a general anxiety about belonging to a place and a nation at a time of increasing racism and political nationalism. The newspapers evoked a sense of hardening national boundaries.[41] The development of global knowledge in terms of the international system and national boundaries was associated with a growing awareness of the situation of the Chinese diaspora in the face of anti-Chinese sentiment around the globe. Thus the *CAH* recounted the journey of a Chinese man who reported on the suffering of Chinese under American immigration restrictions and

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39   *CAH*, 23 February 1901, Chinese New Year issue; *The Bulletin*, 11 December 1897, p.8.
40   *CAH*, 9 April 1897, p.4.
41   *CAH*, 14 January 1898, p.3.

similar restrictions applying in British and French colonial territories.[42] The Chinese-Australian press warned of the possibility of Chinese becoming stateless exiles akin to the Jewish and Irish diasporas. Anxiety about belonging to a place and a nation encouraged Chinese Australians to clarify their position in relation to Australia and their Chinese homeland, at the same time expanding their awareness of their place in the Chinese diaspora under imperialism and racism.

The common print culture of Chinese-Australian newspapers fostered an imagined transnational Chinese community with links to similar Chinese-reading communities in Southeast Asia, North America and Japan. The *TWT* acted as Australian agent for Chinese newspapers from Japan, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Southeast Asia and the United States.[43] Its editorials drew on these connections by arguing for the easing of restrictions on Chinese immigrants to Australia in keeping with the editorials of its partner newspapers in San Francisco, Honolulu, Singapore, Thailand, Japan and the Philippines.[44] The *CT* was an agent for Chinese revolutionary newspapers in Guangdong, Hong Kong, French Indochina, Singapore and the United States.[45] Editors and journalists sought added impact by proclaiming their international connections with Chinese newspapers and associations around the globe. These trans-Pacific information networks supplied the institutional underpinning for a growing awareness of the place of the Chinese diaspora in the colonial world and white-settler societies on the Pacific Rim. In the Australian case, as already noted, they were the catalyst for widespread participation by Chinese Australians in the anti-American boycott of 1905, which was the first of many transnational causes to win Chinese-Australian support in the 20th century.

Chinese-Australian politics and the advent of political nationalism

By the end of the 19th century Chinese newspapers were actively fostering a sense of civic community through their advocacy of public causes, civic virtue, and cross-cultural understanding. Even then, these narratives of civic community were interwoven with more explicitly political causes. By the 1910s, these political causes had become a dominant strain in newspaper commentary, nourished by the association of newspapers with political

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42   *CAH*, 11 August 1900, p.2
43   *TWT*, 6 August 1904, supplement, 7 October 1905, p.6, 25 August 1906, p.5.
44   *TWT*, 23 August 1902, p.2.
45   *CT*, 11 December 1911, p.11.

parties dedicated to variants of Chinese nationalism which fed in turn into local community politics. Politics provided a compelling language for imagining Chinese-Australian social networks and identities, and for wider dreams of dignity, peace and prosperity. Political rhetoric and narratives thus contributed to the making of Chinese Australia.

Australian federation and the anti–American boycott

Australian debates preceding the federation of the Australian colonies and the focus of the new national government's legislation on limiting Asian entry into Australia gave rise to political nationalism among Chinese Australians in the early years of the 20th century. The urban elite became political nationalists through a process that was a complex one. On the one hand, public commentary surrounding federation was infused with ideas of democracy that fed into the transformation of Chinese-Australian associations into more avowedly egalitarian and democratic institutions. Chinese-Australian elites took lessons from Australian democracy and nationalism, particularly in relation to civil rights and the civic duty of political participation. On the other, Chinese Australians were explicitly excluded from exercising the rights and duties that white Australians assumed by right.

On the eve of Federation, the Chinese press expressed a positive attitude about the prospects of political participation in federated Australia. Responding to public commentary on unfair 'Chinese competition' in *The Bulletin* in 1896, the *CAH* came to the defence of Chinese immigrants by arguing that competition was a general principle in public life.[46] In 1897, the *CAH* encouraged its readers to support the candidacy of Cardinal Patrick Francis Moran in the election for the Federal Convention of 1897–1898, because he publicly attacked racism as hostile to the spirit of Christianity.[47] The paper's advocacy was in vain, however, as Chinese residents did not enjoy the same rights as British subjects in electing representatives to the Federal Convention.

The failure to accommodate Chinese aspirations for political participation in the federation process was a disappointment to the Chinese-Australian elite and strengthened feelings of social isolation. Their disappointment was apparent in the changing editorial stance of the *CAH*, which focused increasingly from 1898 on the suffering endured by Chinese residents in

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46   *The Bulletin*, 17 October 1896.
47   *CAH*, 26 February 1897, p.6; *The Bulletin*, 20 February 1897, p.6; Hearn (2004).

one case after another of unfair treatment. From around this time Chinese community leaders, civic associations and newspapers protested that they should not be considered outsiders in Australian society. Their sense of alienation grew further with the outbreak of the plague in Sydney in 1901, which was widely associated with Chinese districts in the city. A growing sense of social isolation was translated into effective action through an increasingly strident commitment to political causes.

The anti-American boycott of 1905 and 1906 offered a point of entry into international political causes which held prospects of resolution not available in the Australian political setting. Transnational diaspora politics thus offered an avenue for redress of local political grievances that were now seen as embedded in trans-Pacific racism. From this time, mobilising in the name of the Chinese *huaqiao* diaspora began to make sense as an alternative form of community politics in Australia.

Another point of interest in community politics was political reform in China itself. Agreement on the unifying imperatives of diaspora politics was not always matched by a united political leadership on the question of political reform in China. A number of competing voices vied for leadership of the Chinese-Australian community on the China question, dividing for the most part along the lines of republican revolutionaries and monarchical constitutionalists. Both sides appreciated and respected the strengths of Australian democracy. From 1903, however, a number of different clubs and societies arose to support one or another proposal for developing a democratic system in China.

Sydney's Chinese commercial elites on the whole favoured monarchical constitutionalism along with popular sovereignty and representative politics. They were no more concerned about the alien Manchus ruling China than they were about crude ethnic politics in Australia. An alternative pattern of leadership favouring ethnic politics (and opposition to the Manchus) was developed within the Sydney Yee Hing Society and among Melbourne native-place and clan associations. These groups supported revolutionary mobilisation against the Manchu Qing dynasty in China for the creation of a Chinese (Han) democratic republic. The arrival of a Chinese Consul-General in 1908 did little to bolster faith in the political authority of the Chinese imperial government, not least on account of the failure of successive representatives to negotiate successfully with the Australian federal government on behalf of Chinese residents. This further strengthened the republican cause. The founding of the Republic in 1912 put paid to the matter. Still, insofar as they were institutionalised in a variety of

clubs and associations linked to different social constituencies in Sydney and Melbourne, the political differences that separated these groups survived in one form or another for some decades into the 20th century.

Newspapers, political mobilisation, and Confucianism

The end of Chinese immigration in federation Australia limited further entry on the part of Chinese political leaders from North America and Southeast Asia. Local leaders arose in their place. Emerging alliances between particular newspapers and local political associations then shaped the social networks that sustained competing political narratives in local patterns of political allegiance and social mobilisation.

Newspapers came to reflect their different allegiances through a variety of preferred vernaculars and formats. The European proprietors and bilingual editors of the *CAH* adopted a vernacular style to appeal to less-educated Chinese readers and they guided the paper to focus on topics touching on the cultural differences between Chinese and Westerners, including different social customs and manners. The editors and journalists of the *TWN* and the *TWT* focused more explicitly on the political and civic agendas of the CERA. Their lead editor, Tong Chai-chih, worked to ensure that the papers conformed in their orthodox style and formal language to the official newspapers published by the Chinese Empire Reform Association in Japan, North America and Southeast Asia. In Melbourne, the *CT* adopted a different style again, opting for Cantonese colloquialisms and popular folk literature to promote its particular political agendas. A number of editors recruited from China by the paper's proprietors, including Lew Goot-chee and Wong Yue-kung, employed a folksy style to inspire patriotism among their readers and direct their nationalist aspirations towards the republican cause in China.

In addition to disseminating information the press played a significant role in social advocacy. Subscribers occasionally wrote to the *CAH* offering congratulations on its public advocacy.[48] In its editorials the *TWN* made much of the social role of newspapers and proved a strong advocate for freedom of speech and of the press, particularly in its early years.[49] The *TWT* made a particular point of the role newspapers could usefully play in advocating a modern way of life and promoting nationalism.[50] Its advocacy was not without effect. When a Chinese reading club was founded in Atherton, in

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48   *CAH*, 23 September 1898, p.3.
49   *TWN*, 16 July 1898, p.3, 16 August 1902, p.2.
50   *TWT*, 16 March 1907, p.2, 23 January 1909, p.13.

Queensland, in 1909, its chairman wrote to the newspaper thanking it for providing the inspiration for founding the club.[51]

The conflicts driving debates in the Chinese-language press concerned not only social manners and civic culture but also political ideology. The press certainly engaged in cultural activities of many kinds, including publishing excerpts from classical Chinese poetry and introducing recent works of Chinese literature from Shanghai and Japan. Chinese-Australian reading habits were nurtured by the creation of reading clubs and libraries, at the initiative of the local press, which also promoted Chinese-language schools and visiting opera troupes over the period. Nevertheless broader questions concerning the cultural identities of Chinese residents in White Australia were at issue in these cultural activities, some of which spilled over into debates with decidedly political inflexions.

The subject of Confucianism offers one window into the politicisation of debates on Chinese culture over this period. Different newspapers participated in the Confucian revival movement at the turn of the century but each brought different concerns and interpretations to the movement. In 1904, the *TWT* advocated the utility of Confucian teachings for integrating all Chinese into a common ethical community.[52] It also argued for a national moral community within China itself founded on Confucian principles.[53] For the editors of the *TWT* patriotism was an outcome of the promotion of public virtue, and public virtue properly reflected a Confucian national spirit through education and the teaching of national history.[54] The *CT* placed similar emphasis on Confucianism as a vehicle for enhancing public virtue and patriotism, focusing particularly on the potential of Confucianism to 'unite China'.[55] But it found in Confucianism a foundation for modern thinking and for independence of spirit, two virtues which the *CT* sought to promote among Chinese residents in Australia.[56] The *CT* also differed from the *TWT* on the question of whether Confucianism was a form of religious observance necessary for shaping nationhood in China,[57] and the *CT*'s interpretation of Confucianism drew explicit connections linking provincialism, nationalism and patriotism.[58]

51   *TWT*, 9 January 1909, p.7.
52   *TWT*, 15 October 1904, p.2.
53   *TWT*, 9 October 1909, p.2.
54   *TWT*, 24 July, p.2, 11 September, p.2, 20 November 1909, p.2, 12 August 1911, p.2.
55   *CT*, 3 September 1909, pp.2–3.
56   *CT*, 1 January, p.7, 27 March 1909, p.2.
57   *CT*, 17 Oct 1908, p.2.
58   *CT*, 26 March 1902, p.2.

Another window into the cultural politics of the period is found in the development of the idea of the Chinese diaspora in the Chinese-Australian press. Chinese-language journalists introduced and reshaped the meaning of Chinese diaspora through their comments on the international Chinese community and the stories they recounted of suffering at the hands of colonial authorities and white-settler societies. Numerous stories of suffering under White-Australian legislative restrictions and racism featured in the Chinese-language press, including the novel serialised in the *CT*, and these stories of suffering and hardship became in time an essential part of Chinese-Australian identity. The subject of these stories was effectively extended to all Chinese abroad through publication of articles on the humiliations suffered by Chinese in Southeast Asia and the Americas. These were interwoven in turn with the Confucian cultural revival movement, Chinese-language maintenance programs, and an expanding network of overseas Chinese-language newspapers to institutionalise the idea of a Chinese diaspora that framed the experience of being Chinese Australian in the early years of the 20th century.

This book began with two questions, one touching on the construction of Chinese-Australian identities and patterns of social leadership, the other bearing on the part played by Chinese-language newspapers in this process from the 1890s to the early 1910s. Late 19th and early 20th century newspapers provide a range of insights and a level of detail not easily conveyed in general histories of the period or captured in the explicitly political publications of societies and parties competing for the community's attention. The evidence drawn from these newspapers indicates that, although Chinese-Australian elites may have looked to China and elsewhere for inspiration, they were more than capable of social mobilisation within their own spheres of action. Their style of mobilisation was shaped by the avowedly modern urban environment in which they found themselves and extended to the creation of clubs, societies and churches, the establishment of successful businesses, and the foundation of information and education networks including schools and, indeed, newspapers themselves.

George Morrison (1895:222) described the Cantonese as the 'Catalans of China', by which he meant that they showed a spirit of adventure and enterprise not unlike the Catalans of his day. Australia's urbanising Chinese communities certainly brought a spirit of adventure and a boldness of vision to their Australian dreams. These dreams were nourished by their experience of democracy and rule of law in the Federation period but at the same time undermined by legislative restrictions and White Australian racism.

A number of solutions to this dilemma were debated in the Chinese-language press, which explored a variety of options for community building ranging from ethnic nationalism to cultural revivalism and ultimately to political nationalism. Each of these solutions made room, progressively, for the concept of a Chinese diaspora which was neither particularly Australian nor especially rooted in China, but included all Chinese around the world who shared their sense of suffering and disappointment.

In Chapter 1 Karl Deutsch was noted as highlighting the significance for modern societies of the process of social mobilisation whereby 'major clusters of old social, economic and psychological commitments are eroded or broken and people become available for new patterns of socialization and behavior' (Deutsch 1961:492). The mobilisation of Australia's Chinese residents by the Chinese-language press—as Chinese, as Australians, and as members of a transnational Chinese diaspora—points to a similar process at work in late 19th and early 20th century Australia, when clusters of older social, economic and psychological commitments yielded to new social networks and ways of being Chinese Australian in a modern urban setting.

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MAKING CHINESE AUSTRALIA

Urban Elites, Newspapers and the Formation of Chinese-Australian Identity, 1892–1912

MEI-FEN KUO

The Chinese press was the largest foreign-language press in Sydney in the late nineteenth century, and the only foreign-language press to publish continuously from the 1890s into the 1920s. Yet the story of Chinese-language newspapers during this period of emerging Australian and Chinese nationalism has, until now, been left untold. Beginning with a review of an especially bitter conflict that split the Sydney Chinese community, in 1892, and ending two decades later with the establishment of the earliest political alliance between Chinese-Australian elites in Sydney and Melbourne, set up to support the building of the Republic of China, *Making Chinese Australia* demonstrates how the interpretations and narratives of journalists and editors of Chinese-Australian newspapers played a powerful role in shaping the social identities and historical awareness of Chinese Australians. In the process of relating this important narrative, Mei-fen Kuo employs new historical and philosophical frameworks to initiate a dialogue between Chinese-Australian history and international and diasporic Chinese studies.