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CHAPTER 1

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The author would like to express her gratitude to her Supervisor, Dr. Lim Suan Poh for her invaluable advice and guidance. Without her kind assistance, she would have had encountered a lot of difficulties in the course of her research.

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Chinese associations^{*} have existed for a long time and the first association established in Selangor dates back to 1865. This study is confined to those located in Kuala Lumpur. The data was collected by interviewing the secretaries of the associations. In this study, the secretaries of the 43 Chinese associations in Kuala Lumpur were interviewed to obtain information on several aspects of the associations. The aspects touched were: to see whether Chinese associations have adapted to the times or not; present and past functions of the associations; membership characteristics; nature of leadership; financial status; nature of social mixing; available facilities and attempts, if any, to keep up with the times.

^{*}In this context, Chinese associations refer to the types of associations interviewed by the author - the surname, district and provincial types. These three (3) are referred to by the Registrar and various sources as the "tsung tai" for the former and "hui kuan" for the later two.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY : Numerous authors (e.g.

Carstens, 1975; Freedman, 1965; Morgan 1952;

Moses 1932; Purcell 1956; Skinner 1957, 1958; Wan

Ming Sing 1967; Wong (1959) have written

about the early beginnings of the Chinese in South

The purpose of this study was to gain some insight into the status and workings of Chinese associations at present as compared to the past. In this study, only the surname (tsung tsi), district and provincial associations (hui kuan) are considered. Chinese associations* have existed for a long time and the oldest association established in Selangor dates back to 1865. This study is confined to those located in Kuala Lumpur. The data was collected by interviewing the secretaries of the associations. In this study, the secretaries of the 43 Chinese associations in Kuala Lumpur were interviewed to obtain information on several aspects of the associations. The aspects touched were: to see whether Chinese associations have adapted to the times or not; present and past functions of the associations; membership characteristics; nature of leadership, financial status; nature of social mixing; available facilities and attempts, if any, to keep up with the times.

and buildings.

The oldest association in Selangor is the Hui Chiu

*In this context, Chinese associations refer to the types of associations interviewed by the author - the surname, district and provincial types. These three (3) are referred to by the Registrar and various sources as the "tsung tsi" for the former and "hui kuan" for the later two.

With the founding of this association in Kuala Lumpur

every Chinese subgroup in Selangor was represented

(Wan 1967).

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY : Numerous authors (e.g. Carstens, 1975; Freedman 1960, 1965; Morgan 1952; Moses 1932; Purcell 1956; Skinner 1957, 1958; Wang Ming Sing 1967; Wang Gang Wu 1959.) have written about the early beginnings of the Chinese in South East Asia. Carstens, Freedman, Skinner and Wan have touched on Chinese associations in their works in passing. Much of what follows in this section is based on the work of these authors. The vast majority of them were started off as religious centres by the Chinese. Such beginnings are not peculiar to the Chinese community in Malaysia but have their roots and can be traced back to the 18th Century with the opening up of Penang and Malacca. According to Morgan (1952), the earliest settlers in Malaya were probably the Hokkiens. The real growth of the Chinese community according to Morgan began in 1873 when peace was restored in the Malay States by the British. Since then, with the opening up of tin mines, there were large scale migration until the 1940s. The Chinese migrants and highly influential clanmen such as Yap Ah Loy, according to Morgan comprised of miners, farmers, shopkeepers, tin-miners, woodcutters and charcoal burners, carpenters and contractors in roads, railways, bridges and buildings.

The founder members were usually successful, wealthy

they, "Organise themselves in relation to the economic roles for which they have been sent, they built up a social system in which leadership went to rich men and status depended directly on economic power". Wan (1967) had similar views to those of Freedman on the leadership of the Chinese community in Selangor. He said that the

With the founding of this association in Kuala Lumpur every Chinese subgroup in Selangor was represented (Wan 1967).

For the most parts, the Chinese immigrants intended and in return they gained recognition and prestige from to return home after they had amassed wealth. According to Morgan (1952) they retained close ties with their home villages. The setting up of one's surname or district Association serves to channel their loyalty to their Motherland.

Most of the Chinese associations had humble beginnings. The vast majority of them were started off as religious centres by the Chinese. Such beginnings are not peculiar to Chinese associations in Malaysia but have their roots in the village temples in China. The village temples in fact performed functions similar to associations in larger cities such as Kuala Lumpur, Singapore and Bangkok. (For a clearer exposition of the activities of village temples see Selby, 1900).

The founder members were usually successful, wealthy and highly influential clansmen such as Yap Ah Loy, Yap Kwan Seng, Chan Sow Lin, Loke Wan Tho, Cheong Yoke Choy and others. In discussing the leadership structure of the Malayan Chinese, Freedman (1960) commented that they, "Organise themselves in relation to the economic roles for which they have been cast, they built up a social system in which leadership went to rich men and status depended directly on economic power". Wan (1967) had similar views to those of Freedman on the leadership of the Chinese community in Selangor. He said that the leaders of the Chinese community offer their services

were founded to meet many needs. They protected the special occupational in-

and in return they gained recognition and prestige from the masses. However, the picture today is somewhat different. Unlike the past, Chinese political leaders today are not synonymous with Chinese association leaders. According to Wan (1967), Chinese leadership has changed since independence in 1957 since which time there has been increasing emphasis on parliamentary rule and multi-racial unity. (Skinner 1957, Pg 167)

In the past, members of Chinese associations were largely immigrant males of varying ages and occupations. They were usually Chinese educated. According to Carstens (1975) whose research was conducted in Singapore, members who joined Chinese associations were largely male above 35 of age and businessmen. Other than Carstens research, few studies have been done on the characteristics of members. However, Wang (1970), a historian did comment on the political inclinations of those who tend to join Chinese associations (See Chapter 4).

Chinese associations in the past performed numerous functions and helped the immigrants in many ways to adapt to their new environment. (Carstens, 1975; Skinner, 1957). To the author's knowledge, there are few detailed studies done on Malaysia Chinese associations except for that of Wan (1967). Skinner (1957) noted:

"speech-group and regional associations were founded to meet many needs. They protected the special occupational in-

terests of members; helped new world can immigrants from the home district or emigrant area to find jobs and get established; built and maintained temples with gods peculiar to the home district and cemeteries for the use of those who could not afford shipment of their deceased China for burial, provided the locale and occasionally for social gatherings of those from the same district or emigrant area and so on".

(Skinner 1957, Pg 167)

By virtue of their very nature, Chinese associations were made targets of political intrigue. For instance Skinner attributed the expansion of Chinese education during the nationalistic movement in China during the in Thailand (than Siam) to the speech-group associations. According to Skinner the growth of the speech group associations was due to the decline of secret societies and the introduction of modern Chinese education. According to him some of the speech-group associations were formerly secret societies and hence reorganised to become legitimate associations as pressure from the government on the Chinese increased in the 1940's.

past performed numerous functions embracing social economic and cultural aspects of Chinese life. They According to Carstens (1975) Chinese associations in uphold the Chinese way of life and helped to preserve the past often assisted members who wanted to return Chinese identity. According to Freedman (1960), tp China. These associations also helped to settle "The identity of the Chinese as a community rests in disputes between their own clansmen as well as those fact on a network of associations and on a Chinese between different clans. They also mediated in cases school system".

when there were any misunderstandings between the immigrant Chinese and the colonial government. According Wan's (1967) research on Chinese Associations provided to Carstens, in the past, marriages were conducted in some interesting insights into membership trends in the associations premises. He also noted that Chinese associations helped to locate clansmembers. A clans

Table 1: The Percentage Increase over the base year of 1949 of Societies in Selangor by Race

member from China or other parts of the world can often use the associations as central points for locating other clansmembers. Wan (1967) in his research in Selangor, like Carstens (1975) and Skinner (1957) also mentioned the welfare activities of these associations, although he did not elaborate on them.

	31/12/42
	35.1
	256.3
	90.4
	163.8
	101.3

By virtue of their very nature, Chinese associations were made targets of political intrigue. For instance during the nationalistic movement in China during the early 20th Century, Chinese associations were often used to collect subscriptions from the overseas Chinese. Purcell (1956) quoted an instance where all the Chinese associations throughout the Peninsula were used by the Japanese to raise funds for the "Co-Prosperity Sphere".

It seems, the Malaysian Chinese associations in the past performed numerous functions embracing social economic and cultural aspects of Chinese life. They upheld the Chinese way of life and helped to preserve Chinese identity. According to Freedman (1960),

"The identity of the Chinese as a community rests in fact on a network of associations and on a Chinese school system".

Wan's (1967) research on Chinese Associations provided some interesting insights into membership trends in

Source: Wan (1967) pg. 13, Table 5

Source: Wan (1967) pg. 13, Table 9.

Table 1: The Percentage Increase over the base year of 1949 of Societies in Selangor by Race

Race	31/12/49	31/12/52	31/12/56	31/12/60	31/12/62
Chinese	100.0	-26.5	24.9	35.8	35.1
Malay	100.0	1.6	62.5	146.9	256.3
Indian	100.0	11.0	58.8	82.2	90.4
Mixed	100.0	30.0	142.7	142.7	163.8
All Races	100.0	- 2.7	83.5	83.5	101.3

Source: Wan (1967) pg. 13, Table 6.

Table 2: Societies in Selangor by Race (In Number and in Percentage)

Race	31/12/49		31/12/52		31/12/56		31/12/60		31/12/62	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Chinese	313	49.3	230	37.2	391	41.0	425	36.4	423	33.1
Malay	64	10.1	65	10.5	104	10.9	158	13.6	228	17.8
Indian	73	11.5	81	13.1	113	11.8	133	11.4	139	10.9
Mixed	185	29.1	242	39.2	346	36.3	449	38.6	488	38.2
All Races	635	100.0	618	100.0	956	100.0	1165	100.0	1278	100.0

Source: Wan (1967) pg. 13, Table 5

Total Membership of Societies in Selangor by Race (in Number and in Percentage)

	31/12/49		31/12/52		31/12/56		31/12/60		31/12/62	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
	167,704	61.4	280,850	59.3	490,490	66.6	620,965	69.6	329,657	52.0
	49,159	18.0	120,381	25.4	64,290	8.6	79,975	9.0	79,140	12.5
	20,111	7.4	20,998	4.4	44,779	6.0	49,338	5.5	61,855	9.7
	36,664	13.2	51,716	10.9	139,631	18.8	141,070	15.9	163,671	25.8
	273,638	100.0	473,945	100.0	744,190	100.0	891,348	100.0	634,325	100.0

Source: Wan (1967) pg. 13, Table 9.

In Malaysia, the picture is much the same. Tan Siew
Selangor there was a 101.3% increase in all societies
Sin, former Minister of Finance, in a speech given to
over a time period of thirteen years between 1949 and
the Hokkien Association in 1969, said that
1962. The increase was below that of the percentage
increase of societies of all races.

In 1949 (See table 2), Chinese associations accounted
for almost half of all societies in Selangor having a
total of 313 associations or making up 49.3% of all
associations in Selangor. But in 1962, Chinese asso-
ciations accounted for only 33.1% of all associations.

On the other hand, Mixed societies increased from
29.1% in 1949 to 38.2% in 1962 displacing Chinese
societies who had previously ranked first.

However, Wan's (1967) data indicates that in terms of
total membership of societies, Chinese societies still
have the most numerous members (see Table 3). As com-
pared to 1949, however, there is a considerable decline
in terms of membership in Chinese societies relative to
membership in Mixed and Indian societies.

In recent years, the attitudes of the Malaysian and
Singapore governments towards Chinese associations have
generally been quite discouraging. According to Carstens
(1975), although there is no move to abolish Chinese
associations in Singapore, they are, nevertheless, not
encouraged. Instead, multi-racial community centres are
encouraged to grow.

However, as Carstens notes, the functions performed by
Chinese associations are increasingly taken over by the

In Malaysia, the picture is much the same. Tan Siew Sin, former Minister of Finance, in a speech given to the Hokkien association in 1969, said that:

"In your deliberations, therefore, I am confident that you will be able to see things not only through Hokkien eyes, not only through Chinese eyes, but through Malaysian eyes as well because what you say or think or do can have a significant bearing on the national life of our country as well".

(Dawson 1969, Pg 36)

From this speech, we can see that the emphasis is on multi-racial understanding and that there is a move away from Chinese clan affiliations.

In sum, Chinese associations serve useful functions as indicated by Skinner (1957) and other authors. According to Skinner (1957), "In the Chinese community of Bangkok, the overall socio-political structure is dominated by the formal Chinese associations". Wan's (1967) findings on Selangor also indicated that Chinese associations serve useful welfare functions. In brief, then, Chinese associations were active in areas of educations, marriage solemnising, benovelent activities etc. However, most of the studies did not compare changes in the activities of Chinese associations over time although Wan's (1967) data on membership and strength of societies *do show that Chinese associations are slowing down in pace as compared to Mixed and Indian societies.*

However, as Carstens notes, the functions performed by Chinese associations are increasingly taken over by the

government. She attributes the decline in activities of Chinese associations to the failure of these associations to appeal to the younger generation. Despite the factors which threaten the existence of Chinese associations, these associations still help to keep the Chinese as a culturally distinct group in Malaysia. (see Freedman, 1960).

These regional associations ("hui kuan") were further divided into two groups - the "provincial" and the "district" associations. This division was considered desirable because the provincial and the district associations do differ in terms of membership, functions and policies. Thus, those associations representing a large area in China (e.g. the Kwang tung Province) will be classified as Provincial associations while those representing sub-areas within a province such as Pun Yuee (a district in Kwang tung) will be classified as District associations. In this study then, three types of associations were studied: provincial (P), district (D) and surname (S) associations.

These three types of associations were studied because it was felt that they were more representative of centres of Chinese culture and tradition as compared to some other types of Chinese associations (e.g. moral-uplifting,

* Throughout the text the abbreviations P, D & S refer to respective provincial, district and surname associations.

CHAPTER II

M E T H O D

Sample Selection : In the present research, only Chinese surname ("tsung tsi") and regional ("hui kuan") associations in Kuala Lumpur were studied. For the present purposes, the regional associations ("hui kuan") were further divided into two groups - the "provincial" and the "district" associations. This division was considered desirable because the provincial and the district associations do differ in terms of membership, functions and policies. Thus, those associations representing a large area in China (e.g. the Kwang tung Province) will be classified as Provincial associations while those representing sub-areas within a province such as Pun Yuee (a district in Kwang tung) will be classified as District associations. In this study then, three types of associations were studied: provincial (P), district (D) and surname (S) associations*.

These three types of associations were studied because it was felt that they were more representative of centres of Chinese culture and tradition as compared to some other types of Chinese associations (e.g. moral-uplifting, teaism or the nonexistence of office staff in some others).

In the final sample, 43 associations were included: 9P

* Throughout the text the abbreviations P,D & S refer to respective provincial, district and surname associations.

religious and occupational associations) which are more highly specialised in function. Membership, then is based on origin in a particular province (in the case of P associations), origin in a particular district (in the case of D association) and, in the case of S associations, members must bear the same surname.

In the present study, only Chinese associations in the Kuala Lumpur area were included. Kuala Lumpur is in many ways an ideal place for studying Chinese associations. According to Wan (1967), 70.3% of the Chinese associations in Selangor are concentrated in Kuala Lumpur. Wan (1967) notes that, "This is as expected for Kuala Lumpur district was the most important for administrative, economic and demographic reasons". According to Wan's data the "hui kuan" make up 45 out of the 61 P and D associations registered. The remaining 16 were the "tsung tsi" (surname). The "hui kuan" and the "tsung tsi" (altogether 61 of them) make up roughly 20% of all Chinese associations in Kuala Lumpur (29.0 of them).

The original intention was to include all 61 tsung tsi (S) and "hui kuan" (P & D) associations in Kuala Lumpur in the study. This was not feasible, however, because of failure to locate the associations in some cases because of absenteeism or the nonexistence of office staff in some others. In the final sample, 43 associations were included: 9P associations, 23 D associations and 11 surname associations (see Table 4).

Table 4: Associations included in the Study

Type of Association	No	No
Province (P)	9	20.9
District (D)	23	53.5
Surname (S)	11	26.6
Total	43	100.0

Interview: Secretaries : In this research, the secretaries of each of the 43 associations interviewed since they liaised with the committee members (Leaders) and the ordinary members. The secretaries are also the most knowledgeable individuals in the workings of the associations. It would have been ideal to have also included the leaders but this was not feasible in view of time limitations.

The Interview Questionnaire : For present purposes, a structural interview with both open and close ended questions was used. Since the main aim of the study was to ascertain the status and workings of the associations both in the past and the present. the following general topics of relevance to the present discussion were covered in the interview:

- (1) general biographical data e.g. age of associations, early history;
- (2) secretaries: membership, age and number of working years in the association.
- (3) type of associations: surname, district or province;

- (4) Functions: past and present and any difference;
- (5) Membership: past and present;
- (6) Reasons for membership and non-membership;
- (7) Position of women in Chinese associations;
- (8) Leadership characteristics;
- (9) Financial status: source of income, etc.
- (10) Communication: frequency of communication, language used and type of contacts;
- (11) Any facilities for the young to keep up with the times;
- (12) General opinion of the future of these associations and its usefulness.

The Interview: The interviews were conducted by the author herself. The interviewer first introduced herself as a University student who was conducting a study on the status and workings of Chinese associations in Kuala Lumpur. The secretaries were requested to spare some time for an interview concerning their associations. All secretaries were assured that any information obtained would be treated in the strictest confidence, and that they did not have to answer any questions which they felt were too personal.

Since the interviews were to be conducted with the secretaries, it was assumed that the language used would probably be Chinese and more specifically Cantonese. Cantonese was chosen since it was the most widely spoken dialect in Kuala Lumpur. Since the

Questionnaire was formulated in English, it was necessary to have a Cantonese version too. Problems of translation are dealt with by Brislin et al (1973), who also provide useful suggestions concerning translation procedures. According to Brislin et al (1973), "Unless researchers present empirical evidence to support this claim that the different language versions of the same instrument are equivalent, translation problems will always be rival hypotheses for any obtained results". In the present study, the back-translation technique was employed. ever, is that it relies entirely upon the secretaries' self reports of their opinion about the The author first translated the English version of the questionnaire into Cantonese. Another person conversant in both English and Cantonese translated the Chinese version blind back into English. Those questionnaire items which are ambiguous were reformulated and translated as above. It was felt that the translation procedure employed yielded two language versions of the Interview questionnaire which are equivalent. (The Interviewer questionnaire used in the present study is presented in full in the Appendix).

The interview usually lasted around 45 minutes. Occasionally, when opportunities did arise, informal discussions were also held with older members who happened to be at the association premises.

CHAPTER III

Limitations of Study: Various limitations should be borne in mind in interpreting the data. The small

sample size does not permit generalization across

Malaysia as a whole. Instead it hoped that this research will be useful as an exploratory study of trends in some types of Chinese associations as there is little precedent for research of this nature in Malaysia.

studied were formed before the Japanese Occupation and The interview technique suffers from one major drawback, however, is that it relies entirely upon the

secretaries' self reports of their opinion about the status and workings of associations. These reports may be distorted, particularly in the direction of socially desirable behaviour. This possibility, then, should be borne in mind in interpreting the findings particularly when they are not supported by other evidence.

The age range of the associations studied is between 111 years (the oldest in Selangor) and 10 years (the youngest).

The data show that the Provincial associations tend to be older in history with percent of them above 50 years of age.

The interview with the secretaries revealed that the associations were usually founded by the richer clans--

CHAPTER III

RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

Biographical data Since the main aim of the study was to examine the past and present status of these associations, it was considered desirable to gain an idea of the history of the associations. The present data (see Table 5) indicates that 70% of the Chinese associations studied were formed before the Japanese Occupation and 30% after the War.

Table 5: Age of Associations Interviewed

Founding of Associations	No	%
Before the War	30	70
After the War	13	30
Total	43	100

The age range of the associations studied is between 111 years (the oldest in Selangor) and 10 years (the youngest). They are now open to the public in contrast to the past when they merely served their respective associations. The data show that the Provincial associations tend to be older in history with percent of them above 50 years of age. The interview with the secretaries revealed that the associations were usually founded by the richer clans-men,

Informal discussions with older members revealed likewise. In the vast majority of cases, the associations usually started off as temples for their own members to pray in. These temples performed functions very similar to those of village temples in China. In functions they were similar to village temples in China which according to Selby (1900) were virtually centres of social, legal and religious life.

In brief, Chinese associations usually started as temples. In the past, many of the associations studied provided a place of temporary shelter for the sick and unemployed. As these associations became more organised, they soon had their own association premises. These findings are consistent with those of Carstens (1975) who noted that Chinese associations usually started off as temples. According to Selby, they frequently began with a group of clan brothers (same surname) or men from the same district erecting a temple to their local Chinese deity. The formal associations were established some time later. Today a few of the major temples in Kuala Lumpur, such as the "Temple of Sin Sze" are still run by Chinese associations. They are now open to the public in contrast to the past when they merely served their respective associations. According to Carstens (1975), "The deities are now rarely seen as exclusive to one particular group and most of the temples are at present administered as fund-raising enterprises for the associations involved and members and non-members alike may use them for worship.

Chinese associations are also said to have links with secret societies, though there is insufficient data to prove this point in the local context. In Thailand, according to Skinner (1957), some of the speech-group associations were secret societies and had reorganised to become legitimate associations. Freedman (1967), on 19th Century Singapore also indicated likewise. In brief, Chinese associations usually started as temple in the past and were build by rich clansmen for welfare purposes.

FUNCTIONS OF ASSOCIATIONS: PAST AND PRESENT

As can be seen from the data collected, the associations are of varying ages, hence it is necessary to clarify what is taken to be "past" and "present". For present purposes, the "past" for those which were formed before the war refers to the pre-war years while for those which were formed after the war, the "past" refers to the early formation years. "Present" generally applies to the post-Independence years and today.

The vast majority of the secretaries interviewed said that in the past, their associations were involved in organising social gatherings, the provision of mutual help and the organising of benovelent funds. They also helped to locate clansmen and ran schools and temples.

Twenty-seven percent of the respondents interviewed also mentioned that their associations functioned as a bureau for locating clansmen in the past. This service was provided during the period of large immigration influx during the late 19th century until the immigration laws were passed in the 1930's after which large-scale Chinese immigration came to a halt. The immigrants at that time were illiterate. Other activities mentioned by the respondents were religious and cultural activities such as the Spring and Autumn Festival and other cultural activities peculiar to their individual district or province. The associations also performed important social functions such as the legalising of marriages according to Chinese rites and attending to clansmen's funeral rites. The secretaries also noted that the associations often acted as a bureau for those seeking information on kins and events in China. These findings are consistent with those of Carstens (1975), Skinner (1957), Tien (1967) and Topley (1967).

for example World War II which made them settle down in their new adopted home. All respondents interviewed noted that their associations provided facilities for social gatherings organised by the associations ^{which} provided the means whereby clansmembers can always go and relax. These opportunities for meeting clansmembers help to reinforce ties among clansmembers.

All associations interviewed, also have the objective of providing mutual help all along the history of their associations. In Chinese "mutual help" is "woo sheong bong chor" which means the aim is for clansmen to help each other either in the form of material and or otherwise in times of crises.

Twenty-seven percent of the respondents interviewed also mentioned that their associations functioned as bureaus for locating clansmen in the past. This service was provided during the period of large immigration influx during the late 19th century until the Immigration Laws were passed in the 1930's after which large-scale Chinese immigration came to a halt. The immigrants at that time were mobile and lacked stable addresses. Associations helped in the locating of clansmembers from all over South East Asia through its various counterparts (e.g. the Foo chow Associations in Kuala Lumpur and that in Singapore). Today, this service is no longer needed due to the changes which have taken place since the 1920's (Tien 1967). According to Tien the immigrant Chinese intention of returning home after they have gained a fortune was not always realised due to the cause of world events for example World War II which made them settle down in their new adopted homes.

In addition social ties with China have also weakened due to the severing of ties with kins back in China and as such there is no need for these associations.

Forty-nine percent of the respondents said that benovolent funds* were organised by their associations in the past. Today, however, only 16% of the associations interviewed still organise benovolent funds. Of the associations which still organise benovolent funds today, however, no new members are accepted rather membership is

*Benovolent funds serve as a form of security for the uses of funeral expenses of a subscriber.

limited to existing subscribers. This, in fact, means that no new schemes are operating. Some of the reasons for not operating new schemes involved problems in administering this fund, such as the misappropriation of funds. The new regulations imposed by the government were also cited as contributing causes to the decline in this activity. The lack of interest on the part of the Chinese towards this activity was also cited by the secretaries. The use of this fund which was primarily to safeguard for a "proper" funeral, is slowly facing a change in trend. Topley (1967) attributed this change to a movement to provide more for the living and less for the "dead". This may be a contributing factor to the decline in benevolent fund schemes. In the area of education, help usually takes the form of running schools. Sixteen percent of the associations interviewed built and managed schools for the Chinese community in the past. Two-thirds of these associations were run independently by the government authorities. Today, however, only 4.6% of the associations included in the study provide educational aid of some kind. Today these associations organised night classes as compared to the past when day schools were run. As in the past, the medium of instruction used was Chinese. Members are however given opportunities to learn languages such as English and Bahasa Malaysia as well.

The decline in the role of Chinese associations may be attributed to the increasing role of the government in the field of education. Another contributing factor may be the government's stress on Bahasa Malaysia and English which contrast with the associations which placed greater importance on Chinese education. (Chinese education run most of the Chinese schools in Malaysia).

The Chinese associations also catered to the religious needs of the Chinese. Thirty-five percent of the associations interviewed had their own temples or religious centres at some point in their association's history. Fifty-five percent of the Provincial associations maintained temples in the past. Temples maintained by them were generally open to the public. In contrast, only 4.3% of the District associations interviewed had temples. These temples were very similar in function to those of the Provincial associations except that they catered only to their own members. The nature of the deities maintained was based more on their own district.

The finding that the Provincial associations maintain gods which are worshipped by the general public which the district and surname associations maintain ancestor tablets and "locality specific gods" is consistent with that of Benkowitz's (1975) study in Hong Kong. Benkowitz named the gods which are idolised by the general public as "national gods" while the "locality-specific gods" are

related to the "Great" and "Little" traditions respectively. Some examples of "National" gods are "Kuan Tin" while the locality-specific gods are based on occupations, places and locality (e.g. deities of the rocks and rivers.)

The temples maintained by the surname associations are quite similar to the District association except that here much greater emphasis is placed on ancestor veneration as compared to the gods. Family kins or friends of a deceased clansman can place a tablet in the association premise through a payment which varies (e.g. to class, and position in society). Hence, these temples of the surname associations are exclusive to the use of clansmembers. In this respect surname associations may be considered more clannish than the district and provincial associations. According to Lang (1968) throughout history the Chinese have been an exogamous group of the same surname, whose members were held to be related to one another by descent from a common ancestor.

There is a reported decrease in religious activities today as compared to the past. The present data indicate that 21% of the associations interviewed have some form of religious practise as compared to 35% in the past. Today places of worship are often reduced to shrines. This is largely a matter of economics because most of the associations are situated in commercial areas where rentals are high. This being so, is often considered economically inexpedient to maintain the temples for religious use

as compared to commercial uses. The regulations imposed on commercial areas also contribute to the decline in religious activities. The government has passed regulations to the effect that commercial concerns in Kuala Lumpur should not be engaged in religious activities or vice versa. Chinese associations have usually opted for the former.

Information was also obtained on cultural activities (e.g. Spring and Autumn Festivals, Lion Dances, Tachi or the Chinese art of self-defence) both in the past and present. The present findings indicate that more associations organised cultural activities in the past as compared to today.

The present findings indicate that 11% of the provincial associations, 56% of the district and the vast majority (82%) of the surname associations organise Spring and Autumn Festivals in the past. The author was told by several secretaries that cultural activities such as the Spring and Autumn Festivals have lost much of their significance as reflected in the poor attendance of members today compared to the past.

The following functions were also listed by the interviewees such as the finding of jobs for clansmen and helping the sick. These welfare activities of the associations have been the objective since the formation of these associations. The other activities mentioned

were the burying of a fellow pauper clansman, settling of disputes between different subgroups, associations often mediated as a go-between between the government and the Chinese. The interviewees also noted that facility, associations in the past provided temporary shelter to the sick and those who had no homes. Today, many of the functions have become obsolete because many of these functions have been taken by the government via the Ministry of Social Welfare.

From the present data, it is evident that the activities Help extended to members in the past are in some ways different from help extended today. Whereas in the past help was available only to clansmembers, today donations are given to the needy who need not necessarily be members who appealed through the newspapers. A new activity carried out by several associations today, ~~not carried out by several associations today~~, not carried out in the past is the giving of prizes and even loans to members children for excellence in academic performances.

various reasons have cited. One reason often quoted Academic Performance. The provision of these prizes which usually range from \$20.00 to \$100.00 and larger amounts for loans, are considered the most practical social-benefit provided for clansmembers and their families today. The provision of prizes and loans may be an attempt to help the Chinese in the field of education while formerly was the major functions of Chinese association.

is today the concern of the Labour and Manpower Ministry. This feature of encouraging academic excellence is not surprising as the Chinese, as a people, are noted for their high regard towards education. Forty-eight per-cent of all associations interviewed provide this facility, 88 percent of the Provincial associations, 18% of the surname associations and 17% of the District associations. It is of interest to note that those associations which provide educational aid are the richer associations. In and, there-fore, are more concerned with Malaysia rather than China. From the present data, it is evident that the activities of these "hui kuans" and "tsung tsis" have generally declined through the years. This can be seen in activi-ties such as the organising of benovelent funds, and in areas of cultural and educational facilities. In the service as a bureau for locating members these associa-tions have also suffer the same fate.

Table 6: Associations which practice Spring and Autumn Festival or present.

When the secretaries were asked as to why there was a

declaine in association's functions and activities,

various reasons were cited. One reason often quoted

is that there are new bodies taking over the functions

previously performed by the Chinese associations. Since

Independence in 1957, the government has been increasing

ly involved in catering to the needs of the Chinese com-

munity as more and more Chinese have become citizens of

Malaysia. Schools once maintained by the associations

are now administered by the government. The problem of

unemployment which was once the concern of the association

ciations, which can be subdivided are under the Provincial

is today the concern of the Labour and Manpower Ministry. In other words, social and economic problems have increasingly become the concerns of government bodies such as the Ministry of Social Welfare and the Ministry of Education.

Another reason cited by the secretaries for this decline is that the Chinese themselves particularly those of the younger generation, are brought up in Malaysia and, therefore, are more concerned with Malaysia rather than China. Whereas, in the past, Chinese associations performed a very useful role in helping the immigrant adapt to the surroundings in Malaysia, this no longer applies to the present generation, who do not regard the kindred back in China with significance as they increasingly regard Malaysia as their home.

Table 6: Associations which practice Spring and Autumn Festival at present.

Type of Association	%	No.
Provincial	11	1
District	57	13
Surname	82	9

From the interview data, it is evident that some activities are not carried out by all associations, (see Table 6). For example, only one of the Provincial association (11%) as compared to 56% of the District and most of the Surname associations (82%) celebrate the Spring and Autumn Festival today. The reason for this is because the District associations, which can be subdivided are under the Provincial

associations, usually celebrate this festival. There is thus no need for the larger provincial associations to duplicate this function which has been reformed by the district associations. Furthermore, this festival is not celebrated by many of the Fukien associations at both the district and provincial level because it is not a common practice for the Fukien people to celebrate it.

In brief the data indicate that functions such as the maintenance of schools and temples, the celebrating of the Spring and Autumn Festival, the organising of benevolent funds and the locating of clansmen are on the decline. It has been suggested that the setting up of other bodies (e.g. youth clubs, inter-racial societies) providing similar facilities catering to the social, educational and cultural needs of the Chinese, may, at least in part account for this decline. Lack of feelings toward one village or district or origin ("heong ching") may also account for the decline in interest in these Chinese associations. This is especially so with the district and provincial associations which are based on territorial origin. Kinship ties of this kind may be affected adversely with the establishing of homes in Malaysia.

Associations today are also aware of their role becoming less important. However, in an attempt to adjust, these associations now give prizes and loans for educational purposes. It may reflect on the attempt on the part of the associations to be more practical in their activities. Recently, numerous Chinese associations and their leaders

have contributed much to the Tunku Abdul Rahman College Fund.

Usually the income of these associations come from more than one source, for example, rentals and mahjong rates or membership fees and donations. It is only the poorer ones or those which are in the process of rebuilding their associations which raise money from donations and the collection of mahjong rates. In this connection, it is of interest to note that 58.8% of the provincial associations forbid mahjong sessions on their premises (at least as stated in their Constitution). Carstens further commented that the Chinese society has never united as a whole in anyone issue due to the particularistic nature of the Chinese. This situation can be said to apply to the Malaysian context.

Information was also obtained on the financial standing of the associations. The responses of the respondents were classified as Very Good, Sufficient and Not Good. "Very Good" usually implies that the associations have sufficient income to cover their expenses. "Sufficient" means that their income covers their expenditure. "Not Good" means that there are insufficient funds to carry out the objectives of the associations. (See Table 7).

STATUS OF ASSOCIATIONS: The income of the associations come largely from three main sources: rentals from property, donations and membership fees. Eighty-eight percent of the secretaries reported that their associations main source of income come largely from rentals collected from property owned by their associations, while 7% said that their funds come largely from donations and membership fees. (Donations usually come from the richer clansmen.) Only one (2.4% of the respondents said that their funds were largely from mahjong rates (see Table 7).

Table 7: Main Source of Income of Associations

Main Source of Income	No.	%
Rentals from Property	38	88.2
Donations, Membership fees	33	7
Mahjong rates	1	2.4
Motive of all 8 sources	1	2.4
Total	43	100.0

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Table 8: Financial Position of Associations as reported by respondents

Financial Position	No	%
Very Good	30	69.7
Sufficient	7	16.3
Not Good	6	14.0
Total	43	100.0

Table 8 indicates that 69.7% of the associations interviewed are in good financial condition, whereas 16.3% find their funds sufficient (average) and 14% are in poor financial condition.

In interpreting the data on increase or decreases in

MEMBERSHIP TRENDS

Information was also obtained on membership size, past and present. However, it was not possible to obtain complete information on membership size in the past due to incomplete information furnished by the secretaries and the lost of old records. This, then, should be borne in mind in interpreting the data. At present, 30% of the associations interviewed have more than 1,000 members. Of these associations 61% of the Provincial associations have more than 1,000 members as compared to 27% and 12% of the District and Surname associations respectively.

When asked to compare past and present membership, 69% of the interviewees reported said that membership in the past and present has remained family contacts. Twelve percent reported a decline in membership and 14% reported increases in membership while the remainder (5%) were uncertain as to whether there is any change in membership size in their associations.

Characteristics of Ordinary Members, Secretaries and Leaders: Past and Present

Table 9: Membership Trends: Present as compared to the Past

Membership Trends	No
No change	69
Declaine	12
Increase	14
Not Sure	5
Total	100

largely Chinese-educated and this is so throughout their association's history. The only difference is that, in the

In interpreting the data on increase or decreases in membership size, what should also be taken into consideration is the fact that the Chinese in Malaysia has increased over the years. In view of the population increase, when "no change" is reported it can be interpreted as a decline in membership. Even in the cases when increases are reported, we cannot be entirely sure whether there are cases of actual increase or not. Thus, if we accept that no change in membership can be interpreted as a decline in membership then, the present data suggest a decline in membership in 81% (12 + 69) of the associations interviewed.

Occupation-wise, members today are from a more diverse background. The data on financial conditions and membership indicate that there is a positive relationship between the size of membership and the financial standing of their associations. The data show that the richer associations tend to provide more services for their clansmembers and therefore probably attract more members. Provinces specializing in certain trades. According to Freedman (1957), the

Characteristics of Ordinary Members, Secretaries and Leaders: Past and Present

small businessmen and all of them share a common "lower class" culture. Numerous other authors (e.g. Skinner 1957) and Tien (1967) made similar observations with their members both in the past and present were largely male; 12% of the respondents said that the majority of their members are largely of the female sex while only 2% said that they have an equal proportion of male and female members. Today we still find certain occupational group dominating certain associations. In the case of one of the associations studied, members today are still solely

All respondents interviewed noted that their members are from the construction and carpentry trades. In another, largely Chinese-educated and this is so throughout their members today are mostly retired rishaw-pullers. association's history. The only difference is that, in the

past, members were less well-educated as compared to the present. Today, there is also a sprinkling of English educated members.

There is general agreement among the respondents that members today are largely middleaged (i.e. 40 years of age and above) and that the vast majority of them are retired men. In brief, associations today attract the old as compared to the past, when members were of differing ages.

Occupation-wise, members today are from a more diverse range of trades and occupations. According to the secretaries in the past, when the immigrants first arrived members of a particular association usually had certain common occupation and small business. This has largely to do with the socio-economic background of the immigrant Chinese, who came from districts and provinces specializing in certain trades. According to Freedman (1957), the immigrants were comprised largely of ex-peasants and small businessmen and all of them share a common "lower class" culture. Numerous other authors (e.g. Skinner (1957) and Tien (1967) made similar observations with regard to the characteristics of the immigrant Chinese. Most were self-employed men in small family concerns. Today we are still find certain occupational group dominating certain associations. In the case of one of the associations studied, members today are still solely from the construction and carpentry trades. In another, members today are mostly retired rishaw-pullers.

It is also interesting to note that certain districts associations are dominated by members bearing certain surnames. For example, many of the members from King Chau Association studies, have the surname "Hing" whereas the Ho Po Association has many members with the surname "Lau".

The members status in their families was also noted. There is general consensus among the respondents that members are largely heads of households/extended families. This finding is consistent with those of Freedman (1957) and Carstens (1975).

In brief, members in the past and present have common features in terms of sex, family status and educational background. Members of the present do, however, differ from those in the past, in that they come from a wider range of occupations and are mostly middle-age.

THE SECRETARIES : The secretaries of the associations are in charge of the daily running of the associations, such as registration, the keeping of accounts and the collection of membership fees. They literally run the whole show especially in those associations that are staffed by one person alone. They occupy a key position in so far as they are the links between the members and the leaders. The characteristics of the secretaries themselves have several common features vis-a-vis sex, membership and age.

Ninety-one percent of the secretaries interviewed are male. Ninety-one percent of the secretaries interviewed are also members of their respective associations. The research data also indicate that preference is often given to members in this post of secretaries.

quite different from those of today. As noted in Sixty-three percent of the secretaries interviewed are above 50 years of age, and they are usually retired men. These men work in these associations partly with the intention of spending their spare time and also with the intention of serving their associations. It is of interest to note that most of the secretaries are also born in China. They are perhaps ideally suited for their jobs which, after all, involves a deep understanding of their own district or provinces in China.

THE LEADERS: The leaders of the associations are usually successful businessmen who express their philanthropic deeds through the Chinese Associations. Their position in the associations is based on a patronage kind and their duties are to give advice and make decisions during the committee meetings. Often it is they who give donations when a clansman needs financial help. However, the leaders are, on the whole, largely ignorant of the daily running of the associations.

The leaders today tend to be above 40 years of age, male, Chinese-educated, self-employed businessmen. This is also the case with the associations with largely female members,

here to, leaders are largely male. Seventy-six percent of the interviewees said that the leaders are largely self-employed businessmen.

The duties performed by the leaders in the past are quite different from those of today. As noted in Chapter I, the leaders in the past were usually pioneers in the setting up of the associations. They helped in the establishing of the associations and in the organising of the various welfare activities, areas which need not concern the leaders of today as most of the associations are already established.

The concentration of the rich Chinese (who usually derived their wealth through business) in the associations reflect the Chinese leadership structure. As Freedman (1967) notes with regard to Chinese leadership in Singapore, "In a society based economically on business are largely from peasant China, social differentiation was geared very closely to the distribution of wealth. Men who made money moved up in the social scales, and those who lost declined".

Reasons given by Secretaries	No.	%
Ignorance	38	88.4
Malaysianization	20	60.5
Obsolete Functions	5	11.6

In sum, the provincial, district and surname associations cater largely to groups of people with particular characteristics. The ordinary members, leaders and secretaries of the associations are largely male, self-employed, Chinese educated and heads of households. These features are common both in the past and at present. Today, unlike the past, however the members are largely middle-aged.

It would seem then, that a large proportion of potential members; that is the young, salaried, the professional and the English-educated are not members.

Since these people make up a large proportion of the population in Malaysia today, it must have important implications on the future of Chinese associations.

Why Chinese associations fail to appeal to certain sectors of the Chinese population

Since various investigations (e.g. Topley, 1967) have commented that many Chinese do not join Chinese associations, it was decided to ask the secretaries as to why a large group of Chinese population do not join these associations. The reasons cited are tabulated in Table 10. Among the reasons cited by the respondents were ignorance, lack of interest, Malaysianization, lack of time, obsolete functions and others.

Table 10: Reasons given by Secretaries for non-membership

Reasons given by Secretaries	No*	%*
Ignorance	38	88.4
Lack of Interests	36	83.7
Malaysianization	26	60.5
Lack of Time	5	11.6
Obselete Functions	5	11.6
Others	10	23.0

*These are mutually exclusive categories

*The position of the young and the women will be discussed later.

As can be seen from Table 10, ignorance and lack of interest on the part of the Chinese in general are the most common reasons given for non-membership. Ignorance from a lack of knowledge of what the associations stand for, and a lack of knowledge of the functions and activities performed by them. This is seen by them as especially applicable to the English-educated since most of the news and periodicals are published in Chinese. Lack of interest (83.7%) is seen to particularly applicable to the local born Chinese who are taught, do not look upon the Chinese associations in the same light, perhaps as those who are China-born. This finding lends support to Freedman's (1957) observations that, "Locally-born Chinese often have no or little knowledge of the village from which they originate, and for them, as a result, the category of chlin-lang* from one localised lineage hardly exists".

About 60% of the respondents cited Malaysianization as one of the main reasons for non-membership. Malaysianization is seen by the respondents to cover changes in various social, political, cultural and economic lives of the Chinese. An example of Malaysianization is in the case of mixed marriage (e.g. a Hainanese marrying a Hokkien) and the whole process of living in a multi-racial culture.

The intermarriage of various dialect group is seen by

*One's kins, in this case based on one's district or province.

some of the respondents as weakening Chinese clan affiliations. Furthermore, the present Malaysian educational system is seen as inhibiting Chinese clan identity and thus move away from Chinese clan interest.

Other reasons given by the respondents for the non-commitment of the Chinese towards Chinese associations include lack of time in the part of the Chinese (1.6%). Some of the secretaries interviewed noted that some of the functions performed by the associations are obsolete and not necessarily in line with the needs of the Chinese today.

The greater individualism of the Chinese is seen as running counter to the well-being of Chinese associations. Various other reasons for non-membership include the emergence of more bodies (e.g. multi-racial club, youth clubs) of a more secular nature. These bodies are seen as competitors vis-a-vis the membership of the Chinese associations:

In the light of these findings, Freedman (1957) comments are of relevance:

		Contacts	
4	2.3	4	7.0
1	40.5	1	48.9
			32.5
			4.0
			7.0
			100.0

"Colonial administration, a Western legal system, trade, industry, modern Chinese and English education, contacts with non-Chinese, all these and many other kinds of factors in the Colonial situation force the Chinese to act beyond the narrow framework set up by their kinship system."

SOCIAL CONTACTS OF ASSOCIATIONS

To gain an idea of how active Chinese associations are today, social contacts both within associations (between the associations and its own members) and between associations (between one association and another). In addition, data was also collected concerning the frequency of meetings and the languages used at such meetings. (See Table 11).

The interview data indicate that associations typically establish contacts with their members in two ways, which can be classified as direct and indirect contacts. Direct contacts refer to face-to-face meetings between the association leaders and the ordinary members. Indirect contacts refer to communication via newspapers or newsletters through which members are informed about the association's activities.

Table 11. Associations interviewed: Frequency of Direct and Indirect contacts

No. of Direct Contacts	%	No. of Indirect Contacts	%
4	2.3	4	7.0
3	46.5	3	48.9
2	32.5	2	32.5
1	18.7	1	4.0
Nil	0	Nil	7.0
T O T A L	1 00.0	T O T A L	100.0

As can be seen from Table 11, 79% and 81% of the associations interviewed have between 2 to 3 direct and indirect annual contacts with their members respectively. All associations make at least one direct contact per year and all but 3 associations (7%) make at least one indirect contact yearly. Only one (2.3%) of the associations interviewed meets (direct contact) 4 times yearly and only 3 associations make more than 4 indirect contacts annually. In the indirect contacts that are made through newspapers and newsletters it is Chinese which is the medium used. On the other hand, at face-to-face meetings, dialects peculiar to the associations are used with the exception of one association - the Kwangtung Association, the largest association in terms of membership which uses both English and Chinese at its meetings. Social contacts with other associations can be classified into 2 types: those with its own branches (e.g. the Chan Association in Kuala Lumpur and the Chan Association in Ipoh), and those with different types of associations (e.g. the Chan Association and the Lee Association). With regard to contacts with its own associations branches, 93% of the respondents said that they have contacts with each other. On the other hand, contacts with different associations are virtually non-existent although these associations are all within Selangor..

In brief, most associations have at least 2 to 3 contacts with their members annually both directly and indirectly. In the indirect contacts that are through newspapers and newsletters, Chinese is usually used. At face-to-face contacts, the provincial and district associations use dialects and sub-dialects peculiar to their own associations. The surname associations, usually use Mandarin as a common medium as well as a mixture of the various dialects.

The ethnocentrism of the Chinese associations is reflected in their insistence on retaining the use of Chinese even at the time when Bahasa Malaysia is increasingly gaining significance in Malaysia today and despite the fact that a large proportion of the Chinese are English-educated. The tendency to have social contacts with one's own association branches further illuminates the clannish attitude of the Chinese and the restricted nature of Chinese social relations. This finding is consistent with those of Skinner (1957).

According to Skinner, it remains a fact that social relations are far more frequent within speech-groups than among them. This can be seen in the occupational structure, and to a lesser extent in patterns of education, religion and recreation. According to the Statistical Handbook of Peninsular Malaysia (1973) issued by the Statistics Department (see Table 12) nearly half of the population of Malaysia is of the female sex. However, the role of women in Chinese associations is quite insignificant; as noted earlier most

ADAPTABILITY AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF CHINESE ASSOCIATIONS

According to the Statistical Handbook of Peninsular Malaysia (1973) issued by the Statistics Department (see Table 12), 81% of the population of Malaysia is below 39% of years. As stated earlier, the associations interviewed cater largely to those above 42 years of age, an age group which represents less than 20% of the population in Malaysia. To attract more members, the younger Chinese should be encouraged to join as they represent the major portion of the population.

In view of the sizeable proportion of those who do not join, an attempt was also made to find out whether the associations studied were making any attempts to attract the larger segments of the Chinese population in Malaysia; that is, the younger generation and the women. The data indicate that 32.6% of all associations interviewed reported that they have youth sections to cater to the needs of the young. Seventy-seven percent of these associations are Provincial associations. Only 9.3% of the associations interviewed also have a Women's Section which is usually incorporated into the Youth Section.

The position of women in Chinese associations was also noted. According to the Statistical Handbook of Peninsular Malaysia (1973) issued by the Statistics Department (see Table 12) nearly half of the population of Malaysia is of the female sex. However, the role of women in Chinese associations is quite insignificant; as noted earlier most

Table 12: Distribution of Population by Age-Groups (1970 Census)

Age Group	Persons	Males	Females
0 - 4	1,370,428	698,718	671,710
5 - 9	1,357,800	692,375	665,425
10 - 14	1,197,886	606,849	591,037
15 - 19	976,597	484,096	492,501
20 - 24	744,936	366,394	378,542
25 - 29	549,683	273,199	276,484
30 - 34	534,171	265,091	269,080
35 - 39	420,352	204,883	215,469
40 - 44	373,721	186,606	187,115
45 - 49	310,228	152,570	157,658
50 - 54	275,817	139,890	135,927
55 - 59	223,351	117,210	106,143
60 - 64	194,868	101,519	93,349
65 and over	279,717	145,245	134,472
T O T A L	8,809,557	4,434,645	4,374,912

Percentage of persons below 39 years is 81%

Source: Statistical Handbook of Peninsular Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur 1973. Pg 5, Table 1.3.

CHAPTER IV
GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

of the members are of the male sex and only 12% of the associations interviewed have a majority of female members. When questioned as to whether any attempts were made to attract women into their associations, all of the respondents said no attempts were being made at present.

When the secretaries were asked their opinions of the usefulness of continuing these associations, 93% of them said that Chinese associations should be continued. One of the main reasons given is that although the associations are not providing as many welfare activities to their members and the Chinese as a whole today as compared to the past, nevertheless, they still serve some functions in various activities in areas of welfare, social and cultural purposes, donations to hospitals and homes for the aged, appeals through newspapers.)

Although from Wan's (1967) data, Chinese associations in Selangor still have the largest membership as compared to the societies/associations of other racial groups they have decline relative to the other societies in terms of number of the respondents said that they were uncertain about the future prospects of Chinese Associations. A small minority (6%) said that the associations will continue while the remaining 6% made no comment.

The present research shows, for instance, that almost a third (30%) of the associations interviewed have more than 1000 members. It is evident from the research that few attempts have been made on the part of the Chinese associations to keep up with the needs and interests of the younger generation and the women.

CHAPTER IVGENERAL CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter the findings of the research are summarised and discussed in the light of other evidence (e.g. Carsters 1975, Freedman 1956, Skinner 1957, 1958) The implications of the study are discussed and the future of Chinese associations is considered in the remainder of the chapter.

Chinese associations has been consistent over the years both in the past and present of retaining their basic objectives in maintaining clan identity and providing welfare services to their members and to other Chinese. However, many of the functions have become obsolete. Put aside this, many of the functions have on the whole decline in various activities in areas of welfare, social and cultural activities (see Chapter 3).

Although from Wan's (1967) data, Chinese associations in Selangor still have the largest membership as compared to the societies/associations of other racial groups they have decline relative to the other societies in terms of number of societies (see Chapter I, Table 1 and 3). Although Chinese associations are not attracting large numbers of Chinese today their presence can still be felt as a group. The present research shows, for instance, that almost a third (30%) of the associations interviewed have more than 1000 members.

There are also more recreational facilities available to the Chinese for example, cinemas, nightclubs and tourist spots.

However, despite the fact that Chinese associations still command more members as compared to other non-Chinese associations in Selangor they have, within themselves, declined over the years in terms of size of membership (cf Wan, 1967). The present findings indicate that 81 % of the associations interviewed experienced a decline in terms of membership size. Some of the reasons cited by the secretaries for non-membership include: ignorance and lack of interest on the part of the Chinese and the process of Malaysianization (see Chapter 3).

The observed decline in membership in the Chinese associations interviewed may be attributable to a variety of reasons. Since the independence of Malaya in 1957, there has been an increase in the number of multi-racial societies/organisations. In 1963 multi-racial societies accounted for 38.2% of all societies in Selangor compared to 29.1% in 1949 (cf Wan, 1967).

Perhaps one of the reasons for the decline in membership of Chinese associations may be attributable to competition between them and other multi-racial societies. Most of the Malaysian Chinese today also differ from the early immigrants in that they are local-born. Being local-born, they may be expected to have different values and attitudes. They may find that other organisations are fulfilling their needs more effectively than the Chinese associations. Today there are also more recreational facilities available to the Chinese for example, cinemas, nightclubs and tourist spots.

As noted in Chapter 3, members of Chinese associations today represent only a small portion of the Malaysian population. Furthermore, membership characteristics today and in the past have very similar trends socially, economically and politically. In the past, most of the migrant Chinese were either illiterate or Chinese-educated, self-employed who joined with the purpose of widening their social ties. They were usually male and heads of households. Today members of Chinese associations are also mainly male, self-employed, Chinese-educated and heads of households. However, members today are mostly middle-aged as compared to members in the past who were from varying age groups.

Today the Chinese population in Malaysia has increased considerably and become more heterogeneous in terms of educational and occupational background. Many second and third generation Malaysian Chinese, while being brought up in a basically Chinese background, are also exposed to English and Malay education. Although often stereotyped as businessmen, today Malaysian Chinese are much more occupationally varied than the migrant Chinese.

As noted earlier, the members of Chinese associations today are still basically similar to those of the past in terms of sex, education and occupational backgrounds and family status. This implies that a large group of Chinese such as the professionals, government servants and other salaried workers as well as the English educated, the young and women are largely excluded. The exclusion of this large

group of Chinese from Chinese associations may be attributable to the fact that a good network of social connections which is demanded in business circles may not be applicable to them. They are then less inclined to feel the need to join these associations.

Wang's (1970) comments on the people who join Chinese associations are of interest. He noted that those who joined these associations were from a particular political and social orientation. He classifies the Chinese in Malaysia into three distinctive political groupings:

- (1) a group whose commitment to politics was to China,
- (2) a group inclined to the politics of the respective communities and (3) a group inclined to politics whether indigenous, colonial or nationalistic. Wang notes that it is the first group comprising of the hard-headed and realistic majority of the Chinese who are most concerned with the posture of trade and community associations.

They are also the most modest in their aims and frequently give the impression of being non-political. According to Wang (1970) "These organisations help provide security and recreation, offered their leaders respect and status and preserve Chinese customs and practices and kept them all Chinese". Wang went on to comment on the change in the second group's political orientation. This group began to accept more and more easily the third group's aspirations in response to the demands of an independent Malaya, suggesting that this second group will with the passing of time become smaller.

The present findings on the decline in membership of Chinese associations would appear to support Wang's observation that this group of people who are inclined to be attracted to traditional organisations such as the "hui kuan" and "tsung tsi" will be decreasing in numbers. This process will go on as the Chinese increasingly recognise Malaysia as their home.

It would seem that the Chinese associations with their objectives and traditional activities are not in keeping with the political and social changes in Malaysia. It is felt that Chinese associations would have to make radical changes in their objectives and activities in order to attract the larger proportion of the Chinese. Such a task however, involves many adjustments which may go against the basic principles of the associations in so far as the preservation of the clans is concerned.

As stated earlier, only 12% of the associations interviewed have women making up a majority of their membership as contrasted to 86% of the associations which have a majority of male members. These associations with largely female members are from the Sun Tak, Pun Yuee, Nam Hoi districts; and the last two are surname associations with a dialectal bias towards the Sun Tak district. According to the secretaries interviewed, many of the women from these districts are hardworking people who left their homes in China to make a living in Malaysia. The earnings are often sent back to China to support their families. These women who migrated to Malaya were because of economic difficulties

of their breadwinners. - These women as a result look upon themselves the responsibility of looking after in China often worked as rubber estate workers, amahs, ladies-in-waiting at weddings and sometimes serve in temples as well.

From the information collected from some of the secretaries and the elderly members, we can see that these women were holding similar responsibilities as their male counterparts. The data suggest that these women join the associations with similar aims as their male counterparts. Since they have families to support back in China or in Malaya most of them then join to get some security from the associations.

One unusual case is that of the Au Yong Tsung Tsi Association whose ordinary members are exclusively women who are mainly from the Sun Tak district in Kwangtung. This association differs radically from the other associations interviewed in terms of sex, marital status and life-style of the members. This particular association appears to be very similar to the "chai tang" (vegetarian houses) described by Topley (1954) in Singapore. The members, exclusively women, practice celibacy and are usually vegetarians. They describe themselves as "Women who put their own hair up" after passing through a ritual ceremony. (For a clearer description see Topley (1954)). According to Topley these women of Sun Tak were disinclined to marriage as they preferred to be in an unmarried state earning to support their families and themselves. The main reason behind this act is that the Sun Tak district was badly hit by economic difficulties. This situation deprived many poor families

of their breadwinners. These women as a result took upon themselves the responsibility of looking after their families*.

In this particular association those who are still working visit their association when they are on leave.

Those who have retired usually spend their last years living in the association premise. It is interesting to note that even if these women do marry, they would earn money to support their husbands and children by another wife. Unlike their unmarried counterparts, the married ones will return to their husband's home to pass the last years of their lives instead of going to the "vegetarian houses".

Information from the secretaries interviewed as well as that from some of the older members indicate that these women have similar responsibilities as their male counterparts. Given the patrilineal kinship system of the Chinese this group of hardworking women stand out as a very unusual group of women. According to Ho (1975), they represent the pioneer Chinese Women's Libber. However, this group of women is becoming increasingly small. Of the five associations with a majority of female members studied, only one association interviewed reported an increase in membership. The Au Yong Tsung Tsi Association, for example, reported no new members. These data suggest that such associations have little future since many of their members are a dying breed.

*According to Topley, "In the nineteenth century in the Sun Tak district of Kwangtung, a protest against marriage was organised. Many girls joined a movement called the girls "who do not go to the family".

It is however, of interest to note that even in these predominantly "female associations" the leadership is exclusively male. This reflects the paternal nature of Chinese society.

The secretaries interviewed were aware that women were under represented in Chinese associations. They indicated however, that no special efforts were made to encourage women to join Chinese associations. The present data indicate that women are under-represented in Chinese associations as compared to the men. The general attitude of these associations toward female membership is that the doors are always open to the women to join the associations.

This neglect of the younger generation and the women is a serious problem. As noted in Table 12, 31% of the population of Malaysia is below 39 years of age with women constituting nearly half of the population of Malaysia. Besides the non-appeal to a particular sex and age category, occupation-wise the associations tend not to appeal to the non-business group. In terms of religious inclinations, the associations appeal to those who are inclined towards the practice of traditional Confucianism.

Many features of the data reflect the inward-looking nature and clannishness of Chinese associations in the recruitment of members, secretaries and leaders. In fact, the very nature of Chinese provincial, district and surname associations is clannish in so far as recruitment to these associations is based on common origin vis-a-vis province, district and surname, respectively.

In the recruitment of secretaries, they were selected for experience and hence they were usually China-born. In the associations interviewed, they were usually members of their associations they are working at. They are usually Chinese educated and retired men who are supposed to know the background of their associations.

The leaders elected are usually richmen of high socio-economic standing in Chinese society who can donate generously. This feature is in line with the findings of Purell (1951); Skinner (1957, 1958); Topley (1967) and Freedman (1956). According to Freedman (1956) in order to move up the social scale in the Chinese society "money is the most general criterion of success". This implies that those who are unsuccessful economically will find it impossible to be leaders in the Chinese association.

As noted earlier, social contacts between associations of the same kind are carried out (e.g. the Chan Association in Kuala Lumpur and the Chan Association in Malacca rather than the Chan Association and Lee Association in Kuala Lumpur.)

The language medium used in direct and indirect contacts also reflect on the persistence of these associations in maintaining their clan identities. Skinner (1957), in reference to the Chinese in Thailand said, "In spite of the steady narrowing in prestige differentials among speech-groups during the past half-century, social, economic and political relations among the Chinese are far more frequent

within speech-groups than among them". Skinner (1957) further noted that the speech group associations are further devoted to furthering and protecting the special interest of each group within the Chinese population". Among the Chinese population in Singapore, Freedman (1956) observed that:

"In ordinary circumstances, Chinese see speakers of dialects other than their own as culturally distinct from themselves, not only in their language but also in a number of customs. They may also associate the speakers of a particular dialect with a particular type of economic activity or role".

(Freedman 1956, Microfilm)

The present findings show up the ethnocentric and restrictive attitude of the various associations and their attempts to maintain their distinctiveness. This would appear to have remained virtually unchanged over the years since the establishing of the associations. This feature shows that the difficulty of considering the Chinese as a homogeneous group. According to Wang (1959), the divisive factors working in the Chinese-status, class, home villages and occupations were a hindrance to the formation of Chinese political organisation in Malaya during the 19th century. In discussing the division of the Chinese, Khoo (1970) notes that:

".....of the three major groups in this country, the Chinese are perhaps the most different to study. Too often, there is a tendency to see the Chinese as one big ethnic group. But Chinese history itself, as well as the history of the Chinese in this country, have not shown unity to be a strong tendency among the Chinese".

(Khoo (1970) pg 83)

As noted, the aims of Chinese associations have remained basically the same. However, the Malaysianization policies which emphasise national unity would appear to be conflicting with the objectives of the Chinese associations. On the one hand we have the different Chinese association each encouraging clannish identity while on the other, we have national policies which encourage the intermingling of the three main ethnic groups Chinese, Indians and Malays.

From the present findings, it is evident that many of the concepts and policies of the Chinese associations are not in line with those of the government. If these associations are to continue to serve useful functions in the current Malaysian context, they have to make several changes to adjust to the different needs of the Malaysian Chinese living in a changing socio-political climate.

THE FUTURE OF CHINESE ASSOCIATIONS

It was noted in the last chapter, that the vast majority (88%) of the secretaries interviewed were uncertain of the future of Chinese associations in general; a minority were even pessimistic. Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority of the respondents were of the opinion that Chinese associations should be continued.

It is evident that many of the Chinese associations are obsolete in their functions. On the whole they have not kept up with the needs of the time. In pursuing the same policies as in the past Chinese associations have not kept up with the needs of the time. They are today, only attracting a small proportion of the Malaysian Chinese.

(i.e. the youth, women, professional and the non-~~Christians~~.)

The recruitment of leaders still follow a rigid structure.

Many of the early functions ~~are~~ taken over by ^{the} government and other organisations especially welfare and educational facilities shows that it is evident that the Chinese associations should expand their activities in order to attract more members. One possible move is to have more exchanges with other associations for example inter-surname or inter-dialect associations. The associations can also provide more practical facilities to the Chinese community such as in the giving out of loans and scholarship for educational purposes. As stated earlier, this provision has been started by a few of the wealthier associations.

Despite the diminishing role of the Chinese associations and their various limitations, their very existence allows the Chinese a sense of identity or belonging. As centres, where one has a chance to meet fellow kins of the same surname or common descent in terms of province or district, they serve the need to belong to a particular group of Chinese and a Chinese in general. This feeling is especially felt by the older Chinese. Just as the Malaysian community in England would have their own society, the Chinese in Malaysia who are either immigrants or decendents of immigrants could identify with these associations.

It should nevertheless, be borne in mind that this research is based on a small sample and as such there is no intention to generalise the findings to Chinese associations in Malaysia as a whole. It is suggested that more future research

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should be done in greater depth by including associations in other areas which may have differing objectives and policies. This study is more exploratory of trends and as such caution is necessary in interpreting the data. However, other related studies on the Chinese in South East Asia (e.g. Carstens 1975 and Topley 1967) on Singapore, Skinner (1957) on Thailand and Wan (1967) on Kuala Lumpur) do lent support to present data.

In the face of fostering Malaysian unity and identity more multi-racial bodies should be encouraged in the future. Greater level of participation among the various races and peoples from various walks of life are necessary in order to foster this sense of Malaysian identity. As suggested, the Chinese associations on their part can also play a part by being more "open" in their policies of recruitment and in the types of facilities made available.

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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

A. Biographical data

- 1a. When was this association founded?
Lee gar wooi goon gai see sing lap ga?
 - 2a. How many years have you been working in this post?
Lee lai yee doh cho chor your gai loi ah?
 - 2b. Are you a member of this Association?
Lee lai ng lae yee doh geh wooi yur lei ga?
 - 2c. What is your age?
Lee gei dor suei ah?
- B. 1a. Name of Association?
- 1b. What type of Association is this - surname, district or provincial type?
Lee gar wooi gur lai mut yah wooi gun lei gah - sing, yin yit lai chow lay ga?
- 1c. What is the address of this association?
Lee gar wooi geh dai chee lai mut yah ah?

B. FUNCTIONS

1. What were the functions performed by this association when it was first set up?
Yee chin gar woi gur sur sur sing lap gor see, yow bong chor wooi yuh mut yah lei yik ah?
2. What are the functions of this association today?
Yee gar wooi gur bong chor wooi yur chor mut yah ah?
3. What are the similarities and differences of functions now and before the Japanese Occupation?
Mut yah seong tung ah yee gah tung gow sww? Mut yah seong char ah?

C. MEMBERSHIP

1. What is the size of membership?
Yow gae dor gor wooi yur ah?
 - (i) Now
Yee gar
 - (ii) Before the Japanese Occupation
Yap pur chae mei leh gor see lear?
2. Bearing in mind the general increase in population is the membership rate increasing or decreasing?
Wooi yur yow lang gah doh yit lai sue chor ah?

D. LEADERSHIP

- a. Who are the leaders in this association? (leaders refer to those policy makers or those who has a say in the running of this association?)
Beer gor har yee gor wooi gur gah ah tow, chit see gor chit tung see, wah see yan.
- b. Are they paid or on a volunteer basis?
Yeow ug yeow leong gin lee dit yan, yit lai cho chee sin.
- c. What type of occupations do they hold?
Dor soh chow mut yah chit yip lee dit tung see?
- d. What type of educational background are they from?
Dar soh duct mut yeah shuee chut see?
- e. Are they usually male or female?
Dor sow hai nam yan chow hai lui yar?

E. FINANCE

1. Where does the Association get most of its funds from?
 - i) Membership fees
 - ii) Donations
 - iii) Festival collections
 - iv) Property
 - v) Others

Lee gan wooi gun gor dit lui hai been doh lay ga?

- i) Wooi yun fai
- ii) Gun lui
- iii) Dai yit chee sow yap
- iv) chan yip sow yap
- v) Kai thar

2. Is this association in a good financial standing compared to the other associations?

Lee gan wooi gun gear ging chai low ng low ah, lor dai yee dit wooi gun lay beh?

F. COMMUNICATIONS

1. How often does this association get in contact with its members?

- i) Newspapers, newsletters and other indirect means
- ii) Meetings

Lee gar wooi gun yeow gei ho tung gor dit wooi yun lua lock?

- i) Poh chee, sun
- ii) Wooi

- 2a. What language is used in contact through indirect means?
Yooing mut yeah mun lay doh chip bun?

- b. What language is used during meetings?
Hooi wooi yit lai chip hun yong mut yap wah ah?

3. Does this Association have any contact with others?
Lee gar wooi gun yeow ng yeow tung?

- i) Associations of its own type eg. Fui Chiu with other Fui Chiu Associations.
Chee kee gor dit wooi kin chick Lai Fui Chiu tung fan Tui Chiu luen lock.

- (ii) With other associations Fui Chiu tung Cha Yong
Chee kee gor gar goi been gar dit chick see, Fui Chiu tung cha Yong.

Lee gan wooi gun gor dit lui hai been doh lay ga?

- i) Wooi yun fai
- ii) Gun lui
- iii) Dai yit chee sow yap
- iv) chan yip sow yap
- v) Kai thar

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- (ii) With other associations Fui Chiu tung Cha Yong
Chee kee gor gar goi been gar dit chick see, Fui Chiu tung cha Yong.

- 3a. Who formed the majority of members today eg. male or female, Chinese educated or English educated, average age, what occupation and whether they are heads of households?

Wooi yun ee gah doh soh lai mut yah yar doh ah e.g. nam chow yit lai lui, tong shu gow yook yit lae ying mun gow yeol, dai yeok gah doh suei ah, chow mut yah gung tung hai mai gar cheong doh?

- 3b. Before the Japanese occupation who form the majority of members eg. Male or female, Chinese educated or English educate, average age, what occupations and whether they are heads of households?

4. In your opinion why do people join this association?
Cho mut yah leh yow gor dit yan choong yee yap lee goh wooi gur?

5. What are the reasons for potential members not joining?
Cho mut yah lei yow gor dit yan yap duct doh ng moi yah?

- 6a. Are women encouraged to join this association

- i) today
- ii) before the Japanese Occupation
- i) Yee gar lee gar wooi gun yeow ng yeow gun lai doh dit lie yar cham gar?
- ii) Gow see yap pun chai mai lay gor see?
- iii) Very little contact with any other association, Sui tung dai yee dit wooi gun luen lock.

G. POSITION TODAY AND THE FUTURE

- 1 a. Is this association keeping up to the younger generation's needs?
Yee dor dit chit bai lee kup ying dor dit low sand yan yip lee ah?

- i) if positive, what are the facilities?
Yee gu yeow, yeow mut yah chit bai?
- ii) If no, why not?
Yee gu moh, mut yah lei yeow?

- 2a. How do you see the future of Chinese Association in general?
Lee sheong ter, lee dit wah yar geh wooi gun cheong loi dim
yeong leh?
- b. In your opinion, do you think it is worthwhile to continue on
with these association?
Lee wah, lee dit wooi gun chick ng chick duck choon lock
lui ah?

General Comments Open To Interviewee

1. Government control over the activities of associations.