Between transnational network and the state : the globalization of diasporic Chinese voluntary associations

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**NANYANG
TECHNOLOGICAL
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SINGAPORE

**BETWEEN TRANSNATIONAL NETWORK AND THE
STATE: THE GLOBALIZATION OF DIASPORIC
CHINESE VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS**

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Between Transnational Network and the State: The Globalization of Diasporic Chinese Voluntary Associations

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A thesis submitted to the Nanyang Technological University in partial
fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

2018

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SUMMARY

Diasporic Chinese voluntary associations are re-inventing themselves and reviving. Since the 1980s, one witnessed the growing globalization of diasporic Chinese voluntary associations. This resulted in the institutionalization of social and personal relationships between different associations. World Clan Conventions – the collective performance of “Chineseness” at a single site – attended by thousands of individuals from that particular clan are emerging as common features of diasporic Chinese communities. In total, 125 different World Clan Associations are in operation. They are coordinated by a multitude of hometown (*qiaoxiang*) and diasporic Chinese actors to mobilize members who share the same primordial identity on the global level.

Within this thesis, World Clan Associations are re-imagined as transnational network organisations. Many academic studies have examined the transnational aspects of diasporic Chinese voluntary associations. However, much remains to be explored on the negotiations and cultural invention processes within the organisation’s networks. As such, providing an explanation of how interactions between state and diaspora shape the performance of Chineseness within the context of World Clan Associations. This thesis fills the gap in current research by exploring the collaborative relationship between *qiaoxiang* governments and diasporic Chinese voluntary associations, and how that shapes the performance of culture within the context of network organisations.

In addition, the concept of Chinese transnational network used in the context of diasporic Chinese organisations is limited in capturing the dynamic negotiations between different actors and over-emphasis the fixity of ethnicity. Hence, my thesis proposes a reformulated notion of “Chinese

transnational network” by drawing upon conceptual tools including “invention of tradition” and “network” as forms of “network governance” found in organisational studies

Using transnational methodology and drawing on empirical data of four case studies of World Clan associations, the thesis answers the following research questions. First, it explains how the cultural foundation of the organisation networks emerge. Second, I explain how the institutional mechanisms shape the behavior of various actors and re-invention of culture within the networks. Lastly, I examined the implications of the cultural networks created. Hence, the thesis contributes to an understanding of “Chinese transnational network” from an organisational perspective.

Chapter One – Introduction: Negotiating the Chinese Transnational Network

1.1. Research Outline

Across Southeast Asia, Mainland China and Taiwan, diasporic Chinese voluntary associations, which provide support to Chinese immigrants and provide them with a link to their hometowns, have been experiencing a revival on a global level. World Clan Conventions – the collective performance of “Chineseness” at a single site – attended by thousands of individuals from that particular clan are emerging as common features of diasporic Chinese communities. There are around 125 different World Clan Associations in operation. I use the term diasporic Chinese voluntary association in a similar way as Hu-dehart and Kuah-Pearce (2006) book on “voluntary organizations in the Chinese Diaspora”. The term “refer(s) generically to those associations that originate out of the migrant communities and are controlled by them, hence not official and non-governmental, even though many of these might have worked in collaboration with the...government”. They are also known in general as *huiguan* depending on whether they are organized based on clans (surname) (*zongqinghui*), dialect groups, hometowns (*tongxianghui*) or lineages.

For the previous four years, no matter which conventions I have attended around the world, no matter where it has been held, I almost always notice some existence of Chinese state presence within World Clan Associations and their associated activities. Within the World Lin Clan Association, the presence of the Chinese state has been marked by much controversy, with its partnership limited to specific projects. On the other hand, at the 13th World Nanan Convention held in Pattaya, Thailand, the Chinese state was present throughout the organisation and execution of the event. Officials scripted the speeches of diasporic Chinese leaders, received guests, and co-planned the programme.

Within the World Zhang Clan Association, the state exerts its presence in another way – it participates as one of the many members of the directorial board, holding equal voting rights and having an equal voice as its other members.

From these observations, state, more specifically the hometown (*qiaoxiang*) government, and diasporic Chinese voluntary associations work together under a common umbrella of a primordial identification that comprises hometown, dialect and kinship. Through performing a common “Chineseness” (Yao, 2009), each individual interest is persuaded and fulfilled within the performance. Within this thesis, I assume that World Clan Associations are transnational network organisations. In this way, my research explores the collaborative relationship between *qiaoxiang* governments and diasporic Chinese voluntary associations, and how that shapes the performance of culture within the context of a network organisation.

The transnational aspects of diasporic Chinese voluntary associations have been subject to a number of recent academic investigations. However, no analysis to date has dealt specifically on negotiations and cultural construction processes within each organisation’s networks. As such, providing an explanation of how interactions between state and diaspora shape the performance of Chineseness within the context of network organisation. This thesis fills the gap in existing research by exploring the collaborative partnerships between hometown governments and the diasporic Chinese voluntary associations in the context of transnational network organisation.

This thesis has three objectives. First, I attempt to explain the cultural foundation of the organisation networks. To do so, I first explain the process in which a continuity of culture and traditions are established within the network. Second, I would examine how the cultural context and

the institutional mechanisms within the network which shapes the behaviour of actors and reinvention of Chinese traditions. This is followed by an evaluation of the extent this shapes the behaviour and level of influence of *qiaoxiang* governments. Lastly, I examine the implications of the cultural network created as a result of negotiations between *qiaoxiang* governments and diasporic Chinese actors at the individual, organisation and network level. This contributes to the understanding of interactions between hometown and diasporic Chinese actors in the shaping of cultural performance in the context of transnational network organisations.

With regards to theory, the broad purpose of my research is to contribute to the existing understandings of “Chinese transnational network” from an organisation perspective. To do so, I reformulate a workable notion of Chinese transnational network by drawing upon conceptual tools including “invention of tradition” and “network” as forms of “network governance” found in organisational studies. Both concepts are complementary and help to bring out the dynamic relations within network organisations and how Chinese traditions are constructed. These analytical tools are covered more extensively in Chapter Two.

1.2. Context of study

In this section, I provide a contextual overview of the development of lineage and trace its use from the early Ming dynasty in China and its evolution into kinship, dialect and hometown affiliations within diasporic Chinese communities. I also examine how it has been reinvented in contemporary China and Southeast Asia as a result of globalisation. Lastly, I provide a summary of the three most significant developments affecting such forms of primordial identification within diasporic Chinese communities. This section would form the contextual background of my study.

Organisation through lineage can be traced back to the Ming dynasty. Lineage also refers to the Chinese word “zu”, a “corporate group which celebrates ritual unity and is based on demonstrated descent from a common ancestor” (Watson, 1982, p. 594). It can also broadly refer to “clans”, whereby the unity is based on a fictionalised heroic ancestor. The adoption of a lineage structure became prevalent within villages in traditional rural Southern China at the beginning of early Ming dynasty. This was attributed to the adoption of neo-Confucian rituals in the early Ming dynasty (Faure, 2007, p. 75). Lineage was kept alive through the claims of a common ancestor and the establishment of rituals that centred around the graves of kinsman and ancestors (Freedman, 1958). Common lineage estates emerged to provide regular funding for the rituals (Freedman, 1958; Hsiao, 1967; Potter, 1970). Artefacts such as ancestral halls, ancestral estates, ancestral worship rituals, genealogical records and tombs continue to forge ideological unity and solidarity among the lineage’s members (Freedman, 1966; Hu, 1948; Watson, 1982).

Lineage emerged as the predominant organisational structure within rural Chinese communities in the early Ming dynasty. In those days, belonging to a lineage allowed individuals to enjoy material benefits and profits derived from the ancestral property, including social welfare benefits and protection from bandits in the frontier regions, and helped maintain order in poorly governed parts of China (Hsiao, 1967; Potter, 1970). For individuals, membership in a lineage helped one to establish social status and was also used to evade tax authorities and military service. Different lineage groups also formed alliances with one another to create lineage unions that dominate a region. This allowed their members to reclaim large pieces of fertile land to bring more wealth and influence (Faure, 1989).

When Chinese people emigrate from China, lineage is reinvented to serve their collective needs in foreign lands. Strict kinship and lineage membership structures are replaced with other forms of affiliation with the process of migration. These other forms of affiliation include dialect group identification, territorial affiliation and surname associations. They emerge as middle range social organisations existing between local village communities and language communities within overseas Chinese communities (Crissman, 1967). These voluntary associations are used to serve various social functions. Using “the Man who has migrated to Hong Kong” as a case study, Watson (1975) revealed the various usage of lineage and voluntary associations in these communities. Members often serve as migration agencies, aiding the process of emigration from the beginning to settling in foreign lands. They provide job seekers employment opportunities overseas by hiring them within industries created by fellow clansmen members (Watson, 1975). These voluntary associations also have important social functions including the provision of welfare, funeral services, dispute settlement between their fellow clan members, integration into society as well as a means of accumulating socio-economic capital.

Lineage went through multiple periods of marginalisation and revival, and has emerged in slightly different forms with each revival in a different historical context. The denunciation of lineage as obstacles to the progress of China during the New Culture Movement in the early 1900s foresaw the marginalisation of lineage from the local rural communities in the “modern” Chinese state. Lineage during this period remained relevant in rural society but “incorporated...new language of constitutionalism and republicanism” (Faure, 2007, p. 341). This decline was further aggravated in the 1950s by the rise of the Chinese Communist Party. Land Reform and the Cultural Revolution led to the replacement of lineage with modern state institutions. The impact of Cultural Revolution

destroys large numbers of temples and ancestral halls. The state tolerated lineage practices within individual households but not collectively within the community. Hence, lineage was marginalised in the collective organisation of rural Chinese society (Tsai, 2007, p. 152).

As this thesis spans the 1980s, with the opening up of Mainland China, until the present, I will provide a contextual overview of the key events and development of primordial identification among diasporic Chinese communities. Between the 1950s and the 1970s, despite much marginalization by the Chinese Communist Party, primordial forms of identification such as lineage remained relevant within individual households. In the late 1970s, despite the various predictions of the ending of such primordial forms of identification and its replacement with *guanxi* ties (Yang, 1994, p. 114), lineage as a collective organisation of Chinese communities regained predominance. The decline of lineage was reversed with the pursuit of reform policies in 1978, driven by the initiatives of diasporic communities abroad rather than the “core” of cultural China. Changes within Mainland China and Southeast Asia created an environment conducive to the growth of lineage as a social institution that could transcend national borders.

Two main developments took place in Mainland China in the 1980s. First, the Chinese government allowed the flourishing of lineage as a way to maintain stability in society during periods of social transformation. Lineage, encourages mutual help and provides welfare support within a Chinese community. It also helps the community to achieve collective common goals. All these helped to stabilize society during times of development. Confiscated ancestral property during the Cultural Revolution was returned. Lineage activities surrounding ancestral property resumed, continuing its former function of fulfilling key social functions within village communities (Song, 2008). Second, Mainland China emerged as the “factory of the world”, which started from a shift in its economy from

a centrally planned trade regime to a market-oriented trading system. China's competitive market, cheap labour supply and manufacturing techniques drove its economic development (Cheung, 2009, p. 2). Foreign trade soared and its share of world trade grew. Eventually, in the 1990s, in preparation for accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO), import tariffs were reduced and non-tariff barriers were eliminated. Joint venture trading companies were set up and local industrial companies were allowed to conduct foreign trade. This culminated in Mainland China's accession to the WTO in December 2001 (Zheng, 2013).

As a result of Mainland China's economic development, diasporic Chinese communities in Southeast Asia have been experiencing "re-sinification" (Hau, 2012; Nyiri, 1997; Suryadinata & Tan, 1997). Re-sinification in this thesis refers to the "the phenomenon of increasing visibility, acceptability and self-assertiveness of ethnic Chinese" (Hau, 2012). The emergence of Mainland China as an economic and political superpower has led to an increase in the use of the Chinese language, Chinese philanthropy activities, and a return to China to seek investment opportunities (Cheung, 2012, p. 82). Re-sinification was made possible by the changing political context in Southeast Asia. Traditional Chinese voluntary associations that were previously banned were gradually allowed to be re-established in Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand. Therefore, around Southeast Asia, large numbers of diasporic Chinese began to re-establish their connections with Mainland China. They return to China as existential tourists to seek their roots and strengthen their cultural identity, bringing with them investment capital and donations. As such, within *qiaoxiang*, it gave rise to the recovery of infrastructures such as ancestral tombs, ancestral halls and temples, organised either by the local government or the diaspora. As a result, networks of relationships between Mainland China and diasporic Chinese communities have been strengthened.

Lineage, which forms the foundation of these networks, was again reinvented and extended itself beyond the territorial boundary of the nation-state. The relationships (*guanxi*) forged by frequent exchanges and travels by individuals between Southeast Asia and mainland China gave rise to a transnational “lineage network” (Kuah-Pearce, 2011). Lineage as a social institution has extended itself as a “cultural network”, forming nodes and sources that are spread across localities in Mainland China and Southeast Asia. Such nodes include the village polity, Chinese cities and overseas communities with lineage members, while sources are ancestral villages or places of origin. Within the lineage structure, collective memories and ritual reproduction “serve to unify and allow for expression of this cultural identity” (Kuah-Pearce, 2011).

The transnational cultural network is not limited to the individual level but has also emerged at the organisational level. The emergence of a new transnational field has been initiated by Chinese diasporic organisations, characterised by acceleration and institutionalisation of exchanges between organisations sharing the same primordial identity with each other. This phenomenon is also known as part of the “globalization of Overseas Chinese voluntary associations” (Liu, 1998).

Since the late 1980s, many scholars have observed a common feature among different clan associations in Southeast Asia – that diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations are reinventing themselves, initiating communications with kinsmen abroad, creating and joining the nodes to form global networking platforms. In Singapore, clan associations are assuming a “localized focus and a globalized outlook” (Kuah-Pearce, 2006, p. 63), forming collaborative networks with associations abroad (Pang & Suryadinata, 2015). Malaysia associations – in particular, Penang Hakka associations – have been developing “supranational overseas Chinese communities” (Nyiri, 1997), using digital

platforms to establish communications with organisations abroad. In Indonesia, scholars (Ding, 2010) also noted the “internationalization” of Chinese associations. They are increasingly travelling abroad to participate in World Clan Conventions and have joined as members of World Clan Associations.

Three main developments characterise this period of intensification of cultural networking at the organisational level. First, the Chinese state, which had for centuries marginalised lineage, is today not only re-embracing lineage but also actively organising lineage in this emergent transnational field built on exchanges between organisations. Capitalising on the spread of Chinese culture, the Chinese government is taking more initiative to engage diasporic Chinese as part of its efforts to extend China’s soft power (Cheung, 2012, p. 83) and its trade and investments abroad. It is in its interest to transform associations into “executors” (Barabantseva, 2005) or “loyal bridgehead” (Nyiri, 1997) of Chinese state interests.

One of the main initiatives that have emerged in recent years is the “going out and inviting in” initiatives (Liu & Dongen, 2016). “Going out and inviting in” initiatives involve various strategies – officials reach out to diasporic Chinese voluntary associations to establish contacts and exchanges with prominent leaders. *Qiaoxiang* governments are directly involved in establishing and endorsing activities of diasporic Chinese voluntary associations (Barabantseva, 2005). Not only that, prominent leaders are encouraged to visit their hometowns as part of the “inviting in” operation. The Chinese government is also taking an active role in establishing itself as the centre of coordination. To do so, the Chinese government has established various communication platforms. This was done in three stages, focusing on voluntary organisations, information channels, and media. The first stage was several large-scale conferences that foresaw the participation of diaspora leaders from different Chinese communities, such as the World Huaqiao Huaren Business and Industrial Conference and

Global Ethnic and Overseas Chinese. The second stage saw the establishment of Information platform to “facilitate exchange of business information”. Finally, media platforms were established to “assist in communication and promotion of Chinese policies” (Pan & Cui, 2017). These changes in the orientation of diaspora engagement policy have helped China to reclaim itself as the centre for transnational diasporic Chinese communities, symbolically, and as a nation-entity. All these initiatives have contributed to the active participation of governments within the cultural networks in the organisational context.

The second notable development is that the landscape of diaspora organizations and communities have undergone many changes with the increase in “new migrants” (Liu, 1998). These new migrants are usually students, professionals, chain migrants or illegal immigrants (Liu, 2005). According to the *International Migration Report* published by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs in 2017, 10 million international migrants are from China – a 4.2 million increase since the data was last compiled in 2000. This makes Mainland China the fourth-largest source of migrants in the world. These new migrants differ from earlier migration patterns, as they are not only from the traditional *qiaoxiang* regions but other regions in Mainland China. In addition, as first-generation migrants, they are more invested in China’s development, and hence more susceptible to Chinese nationalism (Liu, 2005, p. 305). Furthermore, they are also highly qualified professionals. The participation of new migrants has breathed new life into diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations and also changed the composition of leaders and orientation within the existing associations. They are also active in establishing associations, at times with the help of Overseas Chinese work departments from Mainland China. Examples of such in Singapore include the Tian Fu Association, Tianjin Club and Shanxi Association.

Lastly, due to the first two developments listed above, spatial distribution and activities of world clan associations are undergoing a shift in orientation towards Mainland China. As seen in the figures below, statistics show a general trend of the organisation of activities moving from Southeast Asia and southern provinces of China towards the northern part of China since the late 1990s. This shift in orientation is part of a long ongoing trend of changes in orientation in different historical periods. Each period is marked by the formation of an iconic global chamber of commerce organisations/conventions.

The institutionalisation of networks between organisations is not new. The late 1930s saw the formation of the China Relief Fund to coordinate support for the Sino-Japanese War. In 1963, the first global-level convention was held with the support of government agencies from the Republic of China, where the World Federation of Chinese Traders Alumni was formed. In the early 1960s, Taiwan emerged as the preferred location for coordinating exchanges between diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations.

The reasons for World Clan Associations' activities to center around Taiwan can be attributed to both the dynamics in the international system and domestic political changes after the Cold War. During the Cold War, both Taipei and Beijing claimed themselves as the sole representative of "China". They competed for the loyalty of diasporic Chinese. However, by 1950s, with the Cultural Revolution, the interactions between People's Republic of China (PRC) with diasporic Chinese were minimized. Beijing supported the communist movements in Southeast Asia's Chinese communities. However, for people who lived in PRC, their overseas links became targets of oppression. Government bureaucracies dealing with Overseas Chinese were dissolved. On the other hand, the KuoMinTang (KMT) government in Taiwan continued to strengthen their relationship with the diasporic Chinese.

The Chinese communities outside of PRC and Taiwan provided legitimacy for their claim of “China”, despite the fact that they only held control of Taiwan. The Cultural Renaissance Movement was launched (refer to section 5.3.1) (Han, 2017).

Therefore, as shown in figure A, a high number of conventions (Figure A) and secretariats are registered in Taiwan. Out of the 11 associations established between 1957 and 1977, eight are registered in Taiwan. The global clan associations were also often registered under Taiwan’s Implementation Regulations for Supervising Civil Organizations at All Levels, thereby assuming similar organisational structures and meeting formats with clan associations in Taiwan governed by the Taiwanese registration laws. They are mainly surname-based associations. The centrality of Taiwan gradually faded in the 1980s.

Figure I	Figure II	Figure III
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(Refer to Appendix B for methods of compilation for these images)

In the 1980s, domestic political changes in China and Taiwan shaped the spatial distribution of centers of World Clan Associations. In China, the launch of Deng Xiao Ping economic reforms shaped the relationship between China and diasporic Chinese. Diasporic Chinese are targeted as sources of investment and tourism. This was intensified after 1989 after the Tiananmen incident. A series of outreach campaigns were launched to showcase the achievements of China under Chinese Communist Party and instill a sense of pride of their “motherland” among diasporic Chinese. These campaigns provided a stark contrast to the diminishing ties between Taiwan and diasporic Chinese (refer to section 5.3.2) due to indigenization and democratization.

In 1991, the first World Chinese Entrepreneurs Convention was held, marking the start of a new era. The opening ceremony was attended by Senior Minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew. Geographical places such as Singapore and Hong Kong, which had linkages to the southern provinces of China such as Guangdong and Fujian, became active in organising world-level conventions. As seen in Figure II, Singapore and Hong Kong replaced Taiwan as the main locations where newly formed

organisations were registered. During this period, place-based identification gradually grew in importance in organising the Chinese diaspora at the global level.

The late 1990s marked a new period that showed not only the active participation of Chinese government agencies but also the reorientation of conventions into inland China. The year 2015 marked the start of World Huaqiao Huaren Businessmen and Industrialists Conference. The 1st Conference was attended by the Chinese Premier Li Ke Qiang. Provinces such as Yunnan, Shaanxi and Jiangsu, which are not traditional *qiaoxiang* regions, began to participate in the organisation of conventions. Local governments and their associated apparatus, as well as newly emerged middle-class businessmen, became important initiators and organisers of these conventions in Mainland China. All these contributed to a shift in the spatial distribution of World Clan Associations, as observed in the third stage of development in the late 1990s. Having situate the thesis within the wider context of evolvement of lineage to kinship/hometown/dialect ties, as well as the three most recent developments shaping the organization of these ties, the thesis will continue with the section on thesis structure.

1.3. Thesis structure

Chapter Two provides a critical review of diasporic Chinese voluntary associations. First, I will review how transnationalism has been used as an analytical tool and the limitations it presents to the study of diasporic Chinese voluntary associations. Second, I will reformulate a concept of Chinese transnational network, which would bring together the invention of tradition and network governance within organisational studies.

In chapter Three, I will discuss the methodology and methods underlying this research. I discuss how I went about selecting the four case studies, and the various sites that I focused on. I also provide details on the qualitative methods adopted in this study and the ethical issues associated with the methods.

Chapter Four addresses the first objective of the thesis: how traditions and culture are re-invented within network organisations. To do so, I draw on two main traditions in surname organisations, namely ancestor worship and gift exchanges. Using these two examples, I explain how continuity of culture and traditions emerge through the processes of initiation, adaptation and implementation.

Chapter Five examines the environment and institutional mechanisms within the organisational field that shapes the culture of diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations. This addresses the second objective of the thesis, as laid out in section 1.2. Environment is broadly divided into the broader contextual changes as well as changes in the organisational field.

The discussion continues in Chapter Six, which examines the role of *qiaoxiang* government in the network organisation. I examine the formal and informal institutional mechanisms as well as that shape the role of *qiaoxiang* governments in their collaboration with diasporic actors in network organisations.

The last empirical chapter, Chapter Seven examines the overall impact of the cultural network created through the collaborative efforts of the organisations. I examine the various implications of the cultural network on individual members, the diasporic organisation's actors, as well as its effects at the network level.

This thesis concludes with Chapter Eight, in which I review how each empirical chapter addresses the research problems. I summarise the key findings and how it contributes to the objectives of the thesis and end with suggestions for future research.

Chapter Two-Transnationalism and Diasporic Chinese Voluntary Associations

2.1. Introduction

This chapter seeks to position the thesis within the existing literature on diasporic Chinese voluntary associations, and Chinese transnational networks in diasporic Chinese communities. In the discussion, I provide a background review of the relevant literature and a justification of my theoretical approach for the research. To do so, I first provide an overview of the common characteristics of diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations. Second, I critically review how transnationalism has been used as an analytical tool, with a particular focus on its application to migrant's hometown associations. I examine the origin and appeal of the concept, and the aspects of the migrant/diaspora hometown association that it has served to illuminate. After this, I look at the application of the concept in the study of diasporic Chinese voluntary associations through the lens of Chinese transnationalism. I review the application of this analytical tool in the study of diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations and highlight the limitations it presents to the analysis in light of the recent development of these associations laid out in section 1.2. I then reformulate the concept of Chinese transnational network with "invention of tradition" and "network governance". This reformulated concept will then be used as the analytical concept for my empirical study of diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations.

2.2. Transnationalism in diasporic Chinese voluntary associations

Diasporic Chinese voluntary associations, one of the three main pillars of overseas Chinese communities (the other two being media and education), have long been of interest to scholars from different disciplines. Pioneering works (Freedman, 1960; Crissman, 1967) written in the 1960s

analysed the structural features underlying overseas Chinese communities. They noticed that the use of territorial origins and surnames to organise migrants was an extension of premigratory cultural patterns in China. Freedman (1960) saw similarities between organisation based on territorial origin and the formation of guilds in China. Guilds were formed when Chinese people migrated from one locality or province to another in China. On the other hand, organising migrants based on a common surname is a practice that comes from multi-lineage and single lineage villages in southern China.

Crissman (1967) noticed that these structural features of overseas Chinese communities are segmented and arranged in a hierarchical manner. The difference in speech groups formed the first level of segmentation. After which, they could be further segmented based on surname and origin. The lowest level of segmentation was the village community. Not only that, Crissman (1967) also noted that the diasporic Chinese voluntary associations were arranged in a hierarchical manner. The high-level organisations comprise chambers of commerce, secret societies, hospital committees and school boards. Ethnic Chinese elites serving in these organisations often acted as mediators between the Chinese community and the colonial government.

Since the publication of these pioneering studies, several works focusing on the structure, functions, and development of diasporic Chinese voluntary associations have been published (Chen, 2002; Fang & Xu, 1995; Li, 1995; Zhao, 2013; Zhuang, Jun, & Pan, 2010). Some of them focus on particular countries or cities such as Malaysia (Shi, 2013), Hong Kong (Choi, 2006), Singapore (Pang, 2016) and Thailand (Skinner, 1958). These works provide an extensive amount of empirical observations and explanations on the historical development, organisation structures, mechanisms and functions of these organisations. Several trends can be observed from these works on diasporic Chinese voluntary associations.

First, ethnic Chinese, regardless of their position, organise themselves based on five fundamental forms of relationships (*wu yuan*): kinship, territorial bonds, religion, occupational bonds, as well as bonding through materials and items (Zhao, 2013). The five traditional bonds have been weakened and diversified since the 1980s. This has been documented in Kuah and HuDehart's (2006) book on Chinese voluntary associations, which asserted that diasporic Chinese associations no longer use the five traditional relationships as the sole basis of gathering. Instead, charity, church, and other forms of communal places have emerged as new spaces in which ethnic Chinese people organise themselves. Through various case studies, scholars have examined the historical evolution of these organisations and spaces from the diasporic to the post-diasporic era in different local contexts (Kuah-Pearce & Hu-Dehart, 2006).

Second, the formation of such organisations is spurred by the collective needs of new migrants in foreign countries. They provide basic welfare services and reproduce the collective memories and identities of the hometowns of migrants in foreign lands. They are also a mechanism for migrants to protect themselves in the host country.

Third, these functions of Chinese voluntary associations can change over time in response to the changing social and political context. After the 1980s, some functions were kept while others were lost. Li (1995) divides the current functions of ethnic Chinese voluntary associations into three main categories. The first category is to govern the ethnic Chinese community. These organisations help to mitigate disputes and manage internal affairs within ethnic Chinese communities. They exist as a platform of exchange between old and new Chinese migrants, to promote Chinese education, preserve and promote Chinese heritage and culture, as well as provide welfare assistance to those in

need. The second function is to connect the ethnic Chinese community with the wider public. They help new migrants to integrate into society and participate in local affairs. Therefore, the leaders of these associations would enter local politics to provide a voice for the community. They would also hold activities that enhance cultural exchange between different ethnic communities in the host country. Lastly, ethnic Chinese associations also help to assist in managing transnational networking with other associations in different host countries and Mainland China, in turn improving business exchanges and enhancing ethnic pride. They have also helped diasporic Chinese to participate in Mainland China's development by attracting professionals to return and hold activities so that information and knowledge exchange can take place. It is also a medium through which diasporic Chinese can express support for China's foreign policy (Li, 1995).

2.2.1. The concept of "transnationalism"

The increased intensity and scale of transnational activities in recent years has spurred the demand for empirical analysis of diaspora and migrant organisations to move beyond a national or local framework. With the introduction of convenient and cheaper air travel, readily available telecommunications and the internet, travels and communication across borders have intensified. This has created a shift from earlier migration studies that saw migrants as cutting ties with their homeland when they moved abroad and integrated with the multicultural host society. Rather, it recognises the various cross-border activities that migrants and diaspora continue to engage in through the use of the concept of transnationalism.

The use of transnationalism marks a shift from earlier migrant studies by challenging the issues within methodological nationalism (Faist, Fauser, & Reisenauer, 2013, p. 136). Transnationalism is

defined as “the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multistranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement...build...social fields that cross geographic, cultural and political borders” (Schiller, Basch, & Blanc-szanton, 1994, p. 7). Methodological nationalism implies the need to shift both methods and strategy of research beyond the territorial container of the nation state. This opens up possible avenues of enquiry in policy studies that are not limited to states, but also networks of organisation and kinship groups.

Transnational social space becomes an alternative context in which the ties and practices become situated. Transnational social space refers to “relatively stable, lasting and dense sets of ties reaching beyond and across the borders of sovereign states” (Faist et al., 2013, p. 54). The analysis demands a focus on both de-territorialised and territorialised elements (Faist et al., 2013, p. 140). The former comprises the ties and relations that extends beyond borders, while the latter focuses on states to impose criteria of membership and controls over such flows. Both elements are analysed within the context of transnational social space.

A number of scholars have analysed migrants’ hometown associations using the concept of transnationalism and discovered the impact these institutions can have on both the hosting communities and their hometowns. Transnational hometown associations and other forms of diaspora associations can have a significant impact on the politics, development and cultural reproduction of both their hometowns and transnational migrant communities.

Much current research focuses on the structural conditions of migrant associations and how they shape the effects of the transnational migrant associations on the country of origin. The effects can be divided into economic, cultural and political dimensions. The role of migrant associations in

the economic development of the country of origin has been the focus of several current scholarly research (Fauser, 2014; Lampert, 2012; Portes & Zhou, 2012). Through a survey of immigrant organisations in three Latin American communities in the United States, Portes, Excoba, & Radford (2005) demonstrated the effects migrant organisations have on political campaigns, charity works and welfare distribution in their respective countries of origin. Other scholars focus on the political role of migrant associations, including their role in the mobilisation of social movements (Wayland, 2004) and citizenship participation (Dumont, 2008; Tona & Lentin, 2011).

Furthermore, migrant and diaspora associations are also active cultural actors. They play an important role in constituting and reproducing the diasporic imagination that brings dispersed diaspora into a single entity both in host countries and across networks of exchanges. Many scholars have explored their role in this process and have examined how a sense of belonging is reproduced in diaspora host countries through commemorative discourse, national holiday celebrations, and events that evoke a strong sense of nostalgia (Dumont, 2008; Fischer, 2017; Strunk, 2014; van Gorp & Smets, 2014). A sense of belonging can also be instilled across national boundaries. Using the Pan-American Nikkei Association as a case study, Takenaka (2009) examined how the Nikkei values and activities are perpetuated to reinforce the Nikkei communities and identities.

The conditions that shape the characteristics of transnational migrant organisations have also become a main focus of research in this field. Ludger Pries and Zeynep Sezgin's book on migrant organisations (2012) provides one of the more comprehensive conceptual frameworks to identify conditions shaping the cross-border structures and functioning of migrant organisations. Drawing on several collaborative and comparative case studies, the authors combine both sociology of migration

and organisational sociology. They identify three levels of environment, the first of which comprises the migration regimes of the countries of origin and arrival, as well as the regime that exists within the relationship. The second level includes structural and institutional factors such as the political, societal and economic system, as well as the historical context. This level also includes situational variables that are time-specific, such as opportunities and economic structure, as well as organisational fields and migrant compositions (Pries & Sezgin, 2012, p. 22). All of these factors shape the goals, coordination strategies and spatial distribution of resources of transnational migrant organisations.

The impact of migrant and diaspora organisations on both the hometown and the host country has drawn the attention of state officials, who have come to see migrant organisations as potential partners that they can work with but also monitor and control. Migrant and diaspora organisations are also a way for state officials to gain access to the diasporic and migrant communities (Portes and Fernandez-Kelly, 2015, p. 14). The spontaneous organisation of migrants and diasporic communities has become “a negotiated space where expatriate organizations and government officials alternatively competed and cooperated” (Portes and Fernandez-Kelly, 2015, p. 14).

This section has focused the origin and development of transnationalism with regards to migrant and diaspora associations. The literature illuminates the impact and conditions that have shaped the effect migrant and diaspora associations have on their country of origin as well as host countries, and also recognises the entry of the state into the process. The next section looks at how transnationalism has been applied to diasporic Chinese communities, with a particular focus on diasporic Chinese voluntary associations.

2.2.2. Chinese Transnationalism

The study of diasporic Chinese voluntary associations also adopts “transnationalism” as part of its analytical approach. This is called “Chinese Transnationalism” (Liu, 2002). The author defines the concept as a “transnational community that attempts to reconnect their places of settlement with places where they or their ancestors are born. Therefore, enable multi layered relationships to develop. The social field formed extends across geography, culture and politics” (Liu, 2002, p. 121). The focus of transnational practices in this section is on the socio-cultural dimension of Chinese Transnationalism. As Faist (2013) demonstrates in his work, transnational practices occur in four different spheres of social practice, familial, political, economic and sociocultural (Faist et al., 2013, p. 28). Socio-cultural transnationalism is defined as “transnational practices that recreate a sense of community based on cultural understandings of belonging and mutual obligations”. This is similar to the empirical description of the phenomenon laid out section 1.1. Therefore, in this section, I focus on the application of Chinese transnationalism on diasporic Chinese voluntary associations organised around the reproduction of cultural belonging as its primary function. These are mainly hometown associations (*tongxiang*) or clan associations (*zongqinghui*). Other forms of organisation commonly found within diasporic Chinese communities, such as chambers of commerce, religious institutes, as well as business and political institutions are not reviewed.

In addition, it is to be noted that Chinese Transnationalism differs from the concept of transnationalism used in section 2.2.1. Chinese Transnationalism encompasses not only the transnational practice between the society of origin and settlement but also includes the practices of diasporic communities living in different places of settlement. With the differentiation in mind, this section divides the existing literature into two groups. The first is literature that focuses on

transnational functions of the associations, which is discussed before proceeding to the concept of network and Chinese transnationalism (Liu, 2007). The second group illustrates how both concepts, often referred to as Chinese transnational network, have been drawn into the study of diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations. The section ends with the limitations of using Chinese transnational network to understand the empirical phenomenon presented in section 1.1 and provides a reformulation of the concept.

Chinese Transnationalism has been used in several scholarly works about diasporic Chinese voluntary associations, and are often based on single case studies of a specific group of Chinese whose ancestors could be traced back to a single person, or to a single location. These works (Chiang, 2015; Liu, 2010) demonstrate the role these organisations have in maintaining the relationships diasporic Chinese have with their hometowns (*qiaoxiang*) as well as their effects they have on the social and economic development of these *qiaoxiang*. Portes and Zhou's work (2012) illuminate the dynamics of Chinese immigrant organisations in the United States and their role in developing specific hometown villages in China (Portes & Zhou, 2012). Sinn (1997) shows how regional associations in Hong Kong have historically acted as bonding mechanisms between migrants in Hong Kong and *qiaoxiang*. They adapt their functions to the changing context (Sinn, 1997).

These scholarly works based on individual case studies have also included transnational practices of organisations that serve the transnational diasporic community. Relationships in transnational diasporic communities encompass ties between hometown and places of settlement, as well as between multiple places of settlement. The focus of these case studies draws from World Clan Associations organised around a hometown, dialect or surname identification. Liu's (1998)

article is the first article to focus on World Clan Associations. He identified that these associations and their related conventions have become platforms to cultivate *guanxi*, trust, and business contacts (Liu, 1998). On the other hand, through the case study of the World Hakka Conference, Zhou (2007) examined how these conventions emerge as platforms to cultivate cultural consciousness and ethnic group identification for the Hakka people (Zhou, 2007). The organisations were also the focus of Luo's thesis (2010) – drawing from a “transnational” analytical lens, he elaborated the various mechanisms that sustained transnational practices of various national, regional and World Clan Associations. These authors demonstrate that diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations are not only institutions that serve the transnational practices between hometown and countries of settlement, but also between Chinese communities located in different places.

In the second section, I attempt to analyse literature that attempt to use an analytical framework that combines Chinese transnationalism with Chinese networks in the analysis of diasporic Chinese organisations. The analytical lens is also called “Chinese transnational network” (Tan, 2007). The “network” aspect of Chinese transnational network is often used generically. At times, “network” is used interchangeably with concepts such as “social networks”. Liu's book (2007), defines a transnational network as “any form of network that extends beyond the territorial boundary of a nation state which creates multi-level communication and coordination between individuals, group, nations and regions” (Liu, 2007, p. 67). His definition derives from works that examined globalisation from a network perspective, such as Manuel Castells' *Rise of the Network Society* and David Grewel's *Network Power*.

From Castells and Grewel's books, we can derive a few characteristics of “network”. First, network emerges as social structures of society due to development of information technology.

Information technology created “an increasing disassociation between spatial proximity and the performance of everyday’s life’s function” (Castells, 2010, p. 424). Interaction between places are conducted through network of exchanges. This network comprises of hubs and nodes.

Second, the organisation of society around networks of exchanges creates “space of flows”. Space of flows “is the material organization of time-sharing social practices that works through flows” (Castells, 2010, p.442). It is created through “repetitive...exchange and interaction between physically disjointed positions held by social actors”. In Grewel’s perspective, these exchanges between actors of the same network are governed by a “standard”. A standard “is a shared norm or practice that facilitates cooperation among members of a network” (Grewel, 2008, p.10). Examples of a standard within Chinese transnational network is the common territorial/lineage culture. The common culture provides the common language which allows cooperation, exchanges and reciprocity to develop among its members. Third, the “space of flow” is directed by dominant elites in the society. The spatial logic is directed by social actors. These actors are usually elites that occupy leading positions in the society.

Drawing from the analytical lens of Chinese transnational network, scholars studied the formation, structure and function of the diasporic Chinese organisation networks. Examining the network of Jinjiang voluntary organisations, Ren Na and Liu Hong highlighted the influence they had on the economic development of the region (Ren & Liu, 2008). They also argued that identification in the network is embedded within the collective memory of the individual. This is further layered with lineage identification and cultural artefacts such as Nanyin music. Zeng’s (2007) chapter on transnational networks further extended the analysis within Ren and Liu’s work. She argues that the

network is built on a common territorial/lineage culture (*zongxiang wenhua*). The culture is both embedded within the network as a collective memory and a tradition, which allows it to be institutionalised and sustained for future generations (Zeng, 2007, p. 285). She continues the chapter by illustrating the functions of the organisation's networks.

Lastly, Chen (2002) in his study of Hokkien (a dialect group of southern Min Chinese) diasporic Chinese, identified four main characteristics of the organisation networks created. First, the majority of the organisation networks are initiated and supported by Chinese businessmen. Second, organisations that are reputable and possess a long history in their hosting countries often emerge as the leaders of the organisation network. Third, organisation networks overlap with inter-directorial leadership networks. Last, culture is central to the activities of the network as it drives business (Chen, 2002, pp. 127–136). From these works, we can derive the structure, functions, cultural foundation and participants of the organisation networks that were initiated by diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations.

One of the problems in many of the current literature on diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations is the tendency to focus on the functions of the network and the downplaying of the constructionist quality of the “culture” within these organisations. There has been little exploration of how the structural properties of the organisation network shape the construction of cultural artefacts and sub-ethnic identity. While I do not deny the importance of the culture that sustains the foundation of the organisation network as embedded within the collective memory of individuals and sustained as forms of traditions, the empirical phenomenon shows that “culture” can also be reinvented as a result of negotiations between organisations.

An examination of the empirical phenomenon described in section 1.1 shows that an organisation network is a transnational practice engaged by various different actors simultaneously in the production of cultural identification and obligations. These actors are diasporic organisations located in different countries, chambers of commerce and *qiaoxiang* government officials. The various actors have different organisational interests and goals. Some goals are more important than others as individual actors occupy more influential positions in the network when they hold the convention. This creates different forms of cultural artefacts and practices for the same lineage identification as the conventions move from one host to another. In the long term, as shown in image 1.1, the networks assume certain patterns of spatial distribution and produce specific variations of cultural artefacts. Actors do not always work as a cohesive unit. Rather, every decision is a product of negotiations. Hence, it is necessary to examine the negotiation process to understand how it shapes the culture constructed.

In particular, with the *qiaoxiang* government as a collaborative partner in organising World Clan Associations becoming the norm, it has become even more vital to study the negotiations that take place within the network. The interests of *qiaoxiang* governments lie in engaging the diasporic Chinese in their developmental projects and technological transfer. This may differ from the reason why many of these organisations' networks were formed in the first place, from the 1960s to the early 1980s. The primary objective is to promote a sense of sub-ethnic identification. To understand the nature and explain developments of the organisation network brought about by the introduction of governmental actors requires an examination of the micro-politics of the network and its impact on the production of cultural coherence.

2.2.3. Limitations of “Chinese transnational network”

While the concept of Chinese transnational network used in the context of diasporic Chinese organisations is clearly a useful analytical tool, it possesses two major limitations when examining the empirical phenomenon outlined in section 1.1. The network aspect of Chinese transnational network is often used uncritically. As Liu and Liao (2008, p. 17) stated with reference to works that use “network” in the study of diasporic Chinese communities, “network is used as a metaphor rather than an analytical tool”. The closest the concept of “network” has come to be defined is how it has been used in studies of globalisation.

The existing use of “network” presents two main limitations when applied to the study of diasporic Chinese organisations. First, as Owen (2007) indicated in his review of Castells book on *Network Society* (1996), spaces within a network structure are un-negotiated. In Castells’ (1996) understanding, they are dominated by elites (Owen, 2007). Castells understood space as both “space of flow” and “space of places”. Space of flows is created within a network as a result of the flow of information, capital or business alliance. Diasporic Chinese organisation networks are structures of the space of flows due to social capital and information exchanges. The aspect of how space has been negotiated between different agents and how it affects the network is largely missing in his framework (Owen, 2007).

The second limitation is that the network approach over-emphasises the fixity of ethnic and national identity. By identifying ethnicity as naturally given, it fails to capture and represent the dynamic process of how a group is constructed and how ethnic categories emerge, are distributed and applied (Amelina, 2012; Faist et al., 2013).

Given these limitations in the analytical approach of “network”, there is a significant gap in the literature, which reveals the need for a reformulated concept of Chinese transnational network. Diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations are organised form of Chinese transnational networks. The dynamic process of negotiation between member organisations and the process of how traditions emerge within the network cannot be capture within existing concept of “Chinese transnational network”.

To fill in the gap, I layer Chinese transnational network with two other analytical tools from organisational studies, namely “invention of tradition” and “network governance”. This helps to bring out the pattern of relations within diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations and how it relates to the traditions and culture that has emerged.

2.2.4. Reformulating Chinese transnational networks: invention and network governance

The reformulated conception of “Chinese transnational network” seeks to build on existing ambiguities in use by researchers of diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations. It draws on the analytical tools provided by “invention of tradition” (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983) and “network governance” in organisational studies. Network governance is the study of whole networks to examine how outcomes and collective actions come about through network management (Kilduff & Tsai, 2003). It illuminates the structural dynamics of how networks are developed and governed. These shape the construction of culture within the network structure.

In order to examine network governance within diasporic voluntary organisations, I would first perceive them as forms of “network organisations” and “goal-directed networks”. Diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations are organised form of Chinese transnational networks that possess

characteristics of “network organisations”. In the literature, the definition of network organisation varies. Provan and Kenis (2008) defined network organisations as “groups of three or more legally autonomous organizations that work together to achieve not only their own goals but also a collective goal”. Others (Barringer & Harrison, 2000, p. 387) defined networks as “constellations of businesses that organise through the establishment of social, rather than legally binding, contracts”. In general, two characteristics define network organisations. They have to rely on social interactions and have some form of collective goal.

All four case studies examined within this thesis displayed both characteristics of network organisations. World Nanan Clansmen Convention do not have any constitution. For the other three case studies, the constitutions are not legally binding. Many of the coordination and social interaction between members relied on informal rules and conventions (refer to section 6.3). These organisations also share a common collective goal.

Therefore, these diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations are also “goal directed networks”. Kilduff and Tsai (2003) argue that there are two kinds of networks: “goal-directed network” and “serendipitous network”. Goal-directed networks are networks with a clear collective goal, while a serendipitous network arises from a random selection and interaction process (Kilduff & Tsai, 2003). Diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations are goal-directed networks. All forms of coordination within the network are in the pursuit of the common goal. Despite differences in each individual’s interest, the network’s goal is to reproduce the sense of cultural identity through the performance of a common primordial identity and with that, create a sense of belonging to the greater sub-ethnic Chinese diaspora community. With perceiving diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations as both

network organisations and goal directed networks, I incorporate “invention of tradition” and “network governance” into the concept of Chinese transnational network.

The culture that forms the foundation of the diasporic Chinese voluntary organisation network is a “tradition” and it is “invented”. Culture is understood as “observed behavioral regularities when people interact: the language they use, the customs and tradition that evolve, and the rituals they employ in a wide variety of situations” (Schein, 2010, p.12). Traditions are culture. They can refer to “material objects, beliefs...images of persons and events, practices and institutions” (Shils, 2006, p. 13).

According to Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983), traditions are invented. After it is created, it is passed down from one generation to another. However, in the process of transmission, traditions can become modified due to selection and interpretation. The essential elements are kept but combined with other elements that cause it to change. The meanings of traditions can change over time due to the different desires of human beings located in different environmental contexts.

Within this thesis, I adopt three premises from Hobsbawm and Ranger’s understanding of “invention of culture” to understand culture within diasporic Chinese network organisations. The first and second premise is that traditions can be invented due to the actions and perceptions of agencies as well as changes in the societal context. The process begins with the initiative of an individual, a “group”, or it could arise informally over time. Once a tradition is invented, the practices “governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature” are repeated so as to impose a set of values and norms that bear reference to a historic past (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983, p. 1). Continuity with the past is largely artificially created. New context, new meanings, and a new purpose

enter the equation as traditions are passed on. This usually takes place when there is a change in the societal context, in which traditions there were designed for a specific form of society are no longer adaptable. In most cases, however, Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) note that it is not the issue of the inadaptability of the tradition itself per se, but rather, the deliberate choice of agencies in selecting or abandoning tradition for specific usage in a new condition. Therefore, both actions and perceptions of agencies as well as the changing historical context drive the invention of tradition.

From the first premise, it demonstrates that agencies shape the process of tradition re-invention within diasporic Chinese network organisations. As such, within this thesis, I would consider two different agencies that shape tradition re-invention. These agencies occupy different levels in the network structure. First, they are the clan associations who are members of the network organisations. The culture within each clan associations forms the sub-culture within the network organisations. Second, the culture within the network organisations itself. In other words, the culture within World Lin Clan Association, World Zhang Clan Association, International Teochew Federation and World Nanan Clansmen Association. They form the network culture. Network culture refers to “more than the sum of its organisational cultures and subcultures” (Whelan, 2017, p.122). It is a product of negotiations between member groups with different sub-cultures.

Taking this into consideration, in the application of this premise in Chapter four and Chapter five, we have to recognise the differences between network-level traditions and the traditions in each members that are embedded within the network structure. Therefore, the chapters examine how structural conditions have shaped the extent to which subcultures are independent, reinforce or are in conflict with each other.

With regards to the second premise, changes in social context shape the invention of tradition. To take into consideration the dynamics of negotiations within the network identified in section 2.2.3, network governance is drawn into the analysis. The context refers to two aspects. The historical period or external environment in which the World Clan Associations are formed, as well as the organizational field. According to studies on network governance, the organisational field comprises both the structural and relational properties of the network.

First, structural properties refer to the structural dynamics that have a direct impact in shaping the condition of exchanges between organisations that are structurally embedded within the network. It takes into consideration attributes such as centrality, structural holes, goal consensus and explicit controls governing members' obligations and participation (Kilduff & Tsai, 2003). Within network governance, an organisation's structure can be divided into three network forms based on different levels of centralisation and whether it is a participant or externally governed. On one end of the spectrum, a network can be governed entirely by its organisations, resulting in high decentralisation. On the other end, networks may be highly brokered, with an organisation acting as a central broker in all network management. An example of the former would be World Clan Associations that have no secretariat. All decision making is shared among its members. An example of a highly brokered network would be World Zhang Clan Association, where its secretary office controls many of the communication channels between its member organisations. As such, network design can be broadly divided into participant-governed networks, network administrative organisation, and lead organisation governed network (Provan & Kenis, 2008).

Second, relational properties within the organisational field also shape traditions. Relational properties examine the relationships between two associations in a network. Dyadic ties within a relationship between two associations are also influenced by other dyadic ties between other relationships in the same network. When associations frequently communicate with one another, ties become “embedded” within the relationships. The characteristics of the relationships also shape the outcome of the network.

With the first and second premise laid out, when considering the second objective of how the cultural context and institutional mechanisms shape the traditions within network organisations, I take into consideration notions of external environment and the organisational field that is determined by the structural properties within network governance.

Finally, traditions can also serve specific functions within a community. Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) identified three implications that traditions can have on a community, whether imagined or real. First, they can help to establish a sense of belonging and identification within a group or community. Next, they help to legitimise specific institutions and status in society due to the enactment of the tradition and lastly, help socialise individuals by transmitting specific beliefs, value systems and behavioural conventions. All these will be used to inform Chapter seven, which evaluates the impact of traditions on the various actors within network organisations.

2.3. Summary

Through the review of literature that takes a transnational look at diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations, I have identified the various aspects of cross-border functions of these associations. However, the focus on functions means it is limited in capturing the constructionist quality of culture

within network organisations. It is also unable to capture the process of negotiation that took place between agents embedded within the network organisations.

The emergence of such a gap within the literature is due to the limitations of the concept of Chinese transnational network in capturing such a phenomenon. My thesis begins to fill some of these gaps in the literature by reformulating Chinese transnational network to recognise the invention of tradition within such networks. In addition, I also draw on network governance to capture the dynamic process of negotiation that takes place within the network between different agents. With that, in the next chapter, I outline the methodological approach and methods I have taken in my thesis.

Chapter Three-Methodology and Research Methods

3.1. Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology and methods used in this research. In section 3.2, I discuss the fieldwork context and the rationale for selecting the four case studies. In section 3.3, based on the analytical framework established in Chapter 2, I examine the methodology used in previous studies on transnational analysis. Subsequently, I provide an overview of the methods used in this study and the problems I encountered in each approach. The chapter ends with a review of the ethical issues raised in section 3.7

3.2. Fieldwork context

The fieldwork context is the four network organisations. I will “follow” the events and moments of interaction that emerges in the network organisation. This is further elaborated in section 3.3. The selection of the four network organisations undergo three main stages.

First, in the beginning of my research, I approached Singapore Lam Ann Association as well as Lim See Tai Chong Soo Kiu Leong Tong. Both associations are members of World Nanan Clansmen Convention as well as World Lin Clan Association. My natural affiliation, bearing both a surname Lin and claiming ancestral affiliation with Nanan hometown had helped me to gain access to the organisation processs and internal preparatory documents.

During the second stage, I conducted a scoping survey scoping survey to generate a compiled list of diasporic Chinese voluntary associations that claim to operate at the global level. The methods used to generate the list are elaborated in Appendix B.

Lastly, from the compiled list of diasporic Chinese voluntary associations, I identified three main categories of such associations. The three categories are differences in membership criteria, different time periods and different registration behaviors. First, associations can be differentiated base on their membership on dialect, hometown affiliation and a common surname. Second, as illustrated in section 1.2, the centrality of the network organisations underwent major shifts from the 1960s to the 1980s, and in the 1990s. Lastly, the shift in centrality during each time period resulted in associations being registered in different countries. This gives rise to different organisation structures (see section 5.4).

Each case study presents organizational features that are commonly observed among associations in the category. As illustrated in section 1.2, the organisational features of clan associations in the 1970s are mainly surname based membership criteria, and the use of Taiwan as locations of their secretariat. Associations during this period are mainly registered in Taiwan. Hence, their organizational structures are shaped by the Civil Association Act in Taiwan. World Lin Clan Association presents all three features.

On the other hand, organisations after the 1980s usually exhibit two kind of registration behaviors. They are either not registered, or choose to register in Hong Kong. In addition, in the 1980s and 1990s are mainly hometown and dialect based membership criteria. They use Hong Kong and Singapore as locations of their secretariat. Hence, World Nanan Clansmen Convention as well as International Teochew Federation were selected. World Nanan Clansmen Convention did not register their association, while International Teochew Federation is registered in Hong Kong.

Lastly, organisations formed in the late 1990s feature activities that were mainly carried out in inland China and active participation of Chinese government. The World Zhang Clan Association was selected because of their activities in Hebei Province. The World Zhang Clan Association is also registered in Hong Kong, while their secretariat is located in Singapore. The World Zhang Clan Association and International Teochew Federation were also selected because of their willingness to share their archives and to be interviewed.

In the subsequent section, I briefly illustrate some of the major characteristics of the four case studies that have been selected to illustrate the context in which the fieldwork was carried out. After which, I will describe the World Clan Convention, one of the main fieldsite which I situate myself within to conduct participant observation (refer to section 3.6.1).

The World Lin Clan Association was spearheaded in 1980 by two clan members, Lin Lia Rong (President of Thailand Lin Clan Association) and Lin Deng (Chair of Temple of the Lin's Ancestor Juridical Foundation, Taiwan). It is registered with the Taiwan Cooperative and Civil Associations Preparatory Office. By 2015, it had around 35 member organisations. Its activities and communications are coordinated by a secretariat that is located in its headquarters that is shared with the Taiwan Provincial Lin Clan Association, the Taipei Lin Clan Association and the Republic of China Lin Chan Association. Since its formation, it has held the World Lin Clan Convention sixteen times. These conventions are concentrated in Taiwan and Southeast Asia, and are often held concurrently with the directorial and general meeting of the association.

The second case study, Teochew International Federation, was formed in 1980 during a Southeast Asia Teochew convention hosted by the Federated Teochew Associations of Malaysia. It is

registered under the Registrar of Companies in Hong Kong. By 2011, it had around 84 member organisations, with its activities coordinated by the secretariat located in the Federation of Hong Kong Chiu Chow Community Organizations. The Teochew International Federation is also associated with the Organization for Economic Cooperation of International Teochew Commerce and Industry and the International Chaoxue Research Society. The former is registered under Hong Kong's Societies Ordinance. Till 2018, it held the Teochew International Convention nineteen times. The spatial distribution of the convention is more diverse compared to the World Lin Clan Association. The International Teochew Convention has been held in places such as Hong Kong, Mainland China, cities in Southeast Asia, Paris, Vancouver and Australia.

The third case study is the World Convention of Nanan Clansmen that started in 1992. Initiated by the Malaysia Nanan Clansmen Federation preparatory committee, it held its first convention in 1992 at the Selangor Nam Ann Association. Since then, it has held fourteen conventions. No formal organisational structure exists. There is no formal secretariat. Decisions are made during general meetings held during each convention. It is affiliated to at least 77 Nanan Clansmen associations in 2014.

The youngest organisation was formed in 2002 during the Singapore Zhang Clan Association's 65th anniversary celebrations. There were around 62 member organisations registered as part of the World Zhang Clan Association in 2015. A secretariat located at the Singapore Zhang Clan Association coordinates its activities. The World Zhang Clan Association is registered with the Hong Kong Companies Registrar. To date, it has held the World Zhang Clan Association Convention eight times. The majority of its meetings are held in Singapore, Malaysia and Mainland China.

3.2.1. World Clan Convention: A sketch of the field site

One of the main activities which I actively conducted my ethnographic fieldwork within the four case studies are the World Clan Conventions. Conventions are important fieldsites as compared to other activities and communication channels because they are the only activity which activates all members of the network. It is the only activity that requires the coordination of all nodes and hubs of the organisation network. Hence, presents an opportunity to observe how negotiations between different agents of the network takes place.

In this section, I would use the 12th World Convention of Nanan Clansmen as an example to illustrate the scope, demographic and key aspects of a typical convention held by the World Clan Associations.

Name of Convention	Date	No. of Participants
7 th World Fujian Convention	November 2012	Around 4000
12 th World Liu Gui Convention	October 2012	Around 2000
10 th Worldwide Zhongshan Association Convention	August 2014	Around 1100
2 nd World Hu Clan's Convention	November 2014	Around 800
12 th World Convention of Nanan Clansmen	November 2014	Around 3000
World Chao Ann Convention	June 2016	unknown
The global Chinese Lee Clan Family Reunion Conference	November 2016	Around 1400
10 th World Xiao Clan COnvention	September 2016	Around 1800

Table 3.1: 2012-2016 World Clan Conventions held in Singapore

In comparison to other conventions that were held in Singapore from the year 2012 to 2016, World Convention of Nanan Clansmen is a relatively large convention (see table 3.1), with the number of participants totalling around 3000. Singapore emerges as one of the top destination for World Clan Conventions. According to a report produced by Singapore Federation of Chinese Clan Association, from 1989 to 2003, there were more than 38 World Clan Conventions held in Singapore.

As with most other World clan conventions, the main activities of World Nanan Clansmen Convention lasted for around three days. The day was a celebration of not only the gathering of Nanan clansmen from around the world, but also the 88th anniversary of Singapore Lam Ann Association. Over the three days, some of the key activities that stood out were the welcome dinner, gift exchange, economic forum, World Federation of Nanan Clansmen meeting as well as gala dinner. There was also a Fengshan cultural festival held in conjunction with the convention.

Image 3.1: Demographic profile of 12th World Convention of Nanan Clansmen (source: 12th World Nan'an Clansmen Convention preparatory documents)

The participants of 12th World Convention of Nanan Clansmen came from diverse backgrounds. First, they came mainly from Southeast Asia and East Asia. Over the three days, I have only noticed 5 representatives from North America. Out of the various countries, Malaysia and China clan associations sent the largest group of representatives to support the convention. Second, the convention featured large number of Chinese who belongs to the category of senior management.

Senior management refers to individuals who are CEOs or managers of business and chairpersons of other Chinese voluntary associations in Singapore and around the world. The businesses are usually Small-Medium Enterprise. Many of these individuals hold multiple positions in different diasporic Chinese voluntary associations. As seen from image 3.1, individuals categorized under senior management make up nearly one-fifth of the total attendees.

Several prominent government officials were also present over the three days. There were the Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Hsien Loong as well as Minister in Prime Minister's Office/Second Minister for the Environment and Water Resources. Grace Fu Hai Yen. Grace Fu Hai Yen was also the honorary consultant of Singapore Lam Ann Association. Chinese government representatives that were present included Nan'an City CPC Municipal Committee Secretary, Huang Nan Kang as well as Lui Jing, Deputy Director from Quan Zhou City People's Assembly. Representatives from Singapore's Embassy of the People's Republic of China were also present.

The activities conducted over the three days were both a celebration of the solidarity of Nanan clansmen as well as business networking event. Individuals fondly addressed one another with familiar kinship terms and spoke in hokkien dialect. Cultural items associated with Nanan were celebrated, from the food to performances, and dieties. Praises on the achievements of Singapore Lam Ann Association over the years were heard both on and off stage. In-between the activities, business cards were exchanged.

The four network organisations and the conventions provided the fieldwork context in which I conducted Marcus' method of "following", as illustrated in section 3.3.

3.3. Methodology and research design

Since the main conceptual tool used in this study is “Chinese transnational network” (see Chapter 2), methodological challenges of taking a transnational perspective are considered. Adopting a transnational perspective in the study of the cultural network of the diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations poses two main methodological challenges. The main challenge lies in the criticism of methodological nationalism. It challenges the notion that nations are taken for granted as the natural container of all forms of societal practices. The collection of data is limited to national state boundaries. This makes it inadequate to capture transnational social space that has emerged and the cross-border activities of migrants and diaspora. In transnational analysis, the nation state remains important, but attention has to be paid to societal practices that transcend borders, and their consequences.

The second challenge the transnational analytical lens brings to the existing analysis is essentialism. It requires the researcher to question natural categories of “ethnicity” in research design. The analytical lens intends to shift away from research that starts with how a particular ethnic group becomes assimilated and integrated into a national community (Faist et al., 2013, p. 141). Instead of assuming the “ethnic” group as naturally given, transnationalism requires the researcher to question how ethnicity is socially constructed and developed over time. It seeks to understand how communities are socially constructed in the process of interaction with other communities.

In response to the methodological challenges, the research method underlying this thesis draws on multi-sited ethnography, which traces ties and practices across borders, and within various sites. Sites to be studied are not present for a researcher to simply approach and investigate, but rather,

arise from the act of “following”. I adopt Marcus’ (1995) method of “following the metaphor”, which is to follow the “circulation of signs, symbols and metaphors” that would guide the selection of the sites. It is a constructive progress of developing the sites of analysis based on clues that emerge from the fieldwork. The process is constructive, produced by both the “researcher and the researched” (Falzon, 2009).

Therefore, for this project, I followed instances where interactions and events associated with world clan associations emerged. The identifiers are events where symbols, such as the World Clan Association’s crest, songs and narratives that are invoked within the network organisation, emerge. At the beginning of the research, I focused on following three main activities of world clan associations: the directorial and general meetings as well as the World Clan Conventions. The conventions are the most intense activation of the relationships between the different actors, during the organisation process and at the event itself, with the simultaneous gathering of different social actors in the celebration of a single event at the same time.

In the later stages, I allowed understudies of the associations to identify sites I should visit to gather data. Respondents usually identified the “coordinating centres” and sites where the next convention would be held. They would at times, refer me to associations to which they were closely affiliated and were also active in the World Clan Associations.

World Lin Clan Association	World Zhang Clan Association	World Convention of Nanan Clansmen	International Teochew Federation
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat of the World Lin Clan Association (Taiwan) • Taiwan (x2) • Thailand (x1) • Indonesia (x2) • Mainland China (x1) • Singapore Lim See Tai Chong Soo Kiu Leong Tong 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat of the World Zhang Clan Association (Singapore) • Mainland China (x1) • Taiwan (x1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thailand Nanan Chamber of Commerce • Singapore Lam Ann Clan Association • Indonesia (x1) • Mainland China (x1) • Taiwan (x1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat of the International Teochew Federation (Hong Kong) • Thailand (x1) • Singapore Teochew Poit Ip Huay Kuan
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Table 3.2: Sites visited from September 2014 to January 2017.

Table 3.2 shows the sites I visited from September 2014 to January 2017. Many names of the associations are kept confidential. The country indicates where the associations are located. The number indicates the number of different associations I visited in that country. The period of situating at each field site varies. The associations located in Singapore were the main field sites, which I frequented over several years whenever there were activities of interest. For the other sites, the time spent varied from two or three days to two months, depending on the activities taking place there (see section 3.6).

3.4. Conducting research at multiple sites

Several challenges in conducting fieldwork at multiple sites previously raised among researchers also emerged during my fieldwork. In this section, I would bring out some of the challenges and how that affect the strategies and methods that I used to conduct the fieldwork.

One of the main challenges of conducting fieldwork at multiple sites is gaining access

(Tomlinson, 2012). To get past the various gatekeepers at multiple sites, I followed what Patton (2002) refers to as the “known sponsor approach”. The process requires the researcher to “use the legitimacy and credibility of another person to establish their own legitimacy and credibility” (Patton, 2002, p. 313). In the initial stage, I approached the sites located in Singapore as a student from Nanyang Technological University seeking their help in this study. I was fortunate enough to also receive help from a few individuals who were members of these clan associations. The reputation of the university within the local context and among individuals made it easy to secure assistance from the associations.

After the initial stage, I relied on official introductions and referrals, as well as coincidental encounters with leaders of clan associations from other countries when I participated in the association’s activities. For example, when I was conducting fieldwork in Singapore between September 2015 and September 2016, during a conversation with one of the directors of the Singapore Lam Ann Association, I mentioned my interest in visiting the Thailand Nanan Chamber of Commerce, where the next World Nanan Clansmen Convention would be held. He sent a message to the director of the Thailand Nanan Chamber of Commerce mentioning my intention to pay them a visit, and I was immediately welcomed in Thailand. When I visited Thailand for the convention, I came across one of the directors of an Indonesia association, enabled me to conduct fieldwork in Indonesia two months later. The reputation of the introducers helped me to get past the gatekeepers and eased my entry into the various sites within the network.

Another challenge in conducting fieldwork at multiple sites is the issue of positioning. Having different sites, sets of subjects and conditions requires the researcher to continuously renegotiate his or her own social position (Marcus, 1995). Despite working at different sites, my social positioning

was socially continuous. This is because during the initial stage when I approached the sites in Singapore, I established some form of “position” within the associations by being both a member and researcher. I was part of the youth group of the Lim See Tai Chong Soo Kiu Leong Tong and Singapore Lam Ann Clan Association, while I wrote articles for the Singapore Zhang Clan Association’s commemorative magazines.

As such, when I went abroad to do my fieldwork, my position in these Singapore associations continued and shaped the conversations as subsequent sites and respondents were introduced to me. I was often mistaken as a representative of the Singapore associations at the conventions and, therefore, was introduced to directors and associations that were closely affiliated to the Singapore side. I had to continuously clarify and adjust my position as a researcher. This, however, impacted my choice of sites and methods used in the later part of the research. Sites identified were often associations closely affiliated with Singapore associations.

3.5. Archival documents

At the beginning of the data collection stage, I relied on materials from national archival centres and libraries to help me understand the interactions between diasporic Chinese voluntary associations in different countries and how they negotiated collaborative events related to world clan associations. Materials I looked at included meeting minutes, commemorative magazines, tape records, newspaper articles, pamphlets and letter exchanges, with a particular focus on those related to world clan conventions. The archival centres and libraries I visited over the course of the research included the National Archives of Singapore, Singapore National Library, Public Records Office of

Hong Kong, Taiwan National Central Library, and the archives of the Overseas Community Affairs Council, Republic of China (Taiwan).

The collections of the national archives and libraries are useful to a certain extent. Differing from the original intention that I started out with at the beginning of the research, the archives were mainly used to gather background information before conducting fieldwork and to help me in understanding the formal organisational structures of the network organisations. I could only find collections that included commemorative magazines and newspapers. The other archival documents mentioned above were not available. The earliest record I collected – the minutes of the meeting of the World Federation of Chinese Entrepreneurs Convention – is from 1977. It marked the first discussion of the World Lin Clan Association. The newspapers also contained opinions the participants had about the activities of the world clan association.

The meeting minutes found in the national archives were of little use to me because of two main issues. First, meeting minutes available in the collections were mainly from before 1980. The World Clan Associations of interest to me were all formed after the early 1980s. Furthermore, one of the main activities that of concern are World Clan Conventions. Preparatory meeting minutes and documents associated with the organisation process were not donated to archives or national libraries. As Chapter Two shows, the dynamic process of negotiation between agencies is largely missing from the current scholarly literature. This is due to the lack of availability of meeting minutes that are able to reflect these aspects. Due to the lack of primary and secondary sources from these national archives and libraries, I had to look elsewhere.

One of my main sources of information was documents kept in storage at individual clan associations. The documents were often disorganised and stacked in piles in storage rooms. With approval, I was allowed to comb through the piles of documents. In these collections, I found minutes of meetings after the 1980s, tape recordings of meetings and, more importantly, preparatory meeting minutes of World Clan Conventions. I also found letters, video recordings and gifts that were exchanged in the process of organising the conventions. These documents helped me understand the negotiations and discussions that took place during meetings held by the organisers of past conventions. They show how decisions were reached, and the various structural factors that shaped decisions regarding traditions performed.

3.6. Methods of data collection

Two main methods of data collection were used in this study: participant observation and interviews. They were used to collect data on the traditions within the organisations exhibited through performance to understand the informal structural conditions that shaped their culture and their impact on the various actors. This section ends with a discussion of the various ethical issues within the methods.

3.6.1. Participant observation

Participant observation was used to understand how participants at a site perceive and understand their world. For this, the researcher has to submit himself/herself to the culture of the site and generate a thick description from the insider's viewpoint. This is a strategy that enables "gaining access to otherwise inaccessible dimensions of human life and experience" (Jorgensen, 1989, p. 23).

Activities	
Directorial, general meetings and conventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16th World Lin Association Reunion (Indonesia, Medan) • Joint meetings of board members and Supervisors, 2017 (Singapore) • 8th World Zhang Convention (Singapore) • 12th World Convention of Nanan Clansmen (Singapore)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13th World Convention of Nanan Clansmen (Pattaya, Thailand)
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious rituals, private meetings between members of world clan associations, banquet, meetings and social activities of individual associations

Table 3.3: Activities observed over the course of the research.

Participant observation was used during the fieldwork to gain an understanding of the negotiation process within the organisations, how decisions are made and how members of different diasporic Chinese associations interact. It also provides an insight into the various unwritten conventions of the negotiation process. Through observation, I was also able to gain an overview of the rituals and gift giving practice that arise as traditions within the network. As such, the activities and events listed in Table 3.3 were of interest to me.

One of the key activities during which I conducted participant observation was World Clan Conventions. I typically spent one to three months doing this, situating myself within the organiser's association during different stages of the organisation process. In these activities, I would assume the role of a "participant observer" (Denzin, 1973, p. 188). I attempted to find roles that would allow me to participate in the organisation process. This was necessary for me to gain access to discussions and meetings. My primordial affiliations with the surname Lin and Nanan eased the process of finding that role. I assisted in administrative affairs for organisers of the conventions. I assumed several roles,

including translator, interpreter and editor. This allowed me to sit in for many meetings held within the organisation and observe discussions that took place at the secretariat

I recorded my participant observation in several ways. First, I kept a detailed record of my observations in a notebook. As I was both a participant and an observer, it was difficult for me to openly take out my notebook and record at the moment of observation. These observations were usually translated into observation reports when I found time alone in the organisation or at the end of each day.

Not only that, I also took pictures and videos to record visual data, which helped me in creating more accurate fieldwork reports. I took many photos of artefacts such as ancestor tablets, plaque, alter tables, offerings, as well as the designs and layout of event venues. Videos were also useful in capturing the dynamism of the rituals and performances that took place during such activities.

3.6.2. Semi-structured interviews and informal discussion

To understand the opinions of diasporic Chinese leaders and private strategies of negotiations between diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations, and to evaluate the impact of the network, both unstructured and semi-structured interviews were used. I selected my interviewees based on the extent they were involved in communication between associations. Those chosen often were secretaries working in the secretariat, the general affairs manager, or communications officer. I also interviewed the chairpersons of the association. Strategies for meeting these people included networking with individuals I knew, participating in the association's social activities and approaching people to introduce myself.

The majority of the discussions were informal and audio recordings were not used. Most of the conversations began with a discussion of other issues before I slowly directed them to the topics and themes of interest. I built rapport with interviewees mainly by rearticulating my embodied primordial identity or by associating myself with specific clan or place-based associations that helped with the introduction. An agenda was used to “encourage a certain degree of consistency across different interview session” (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009) (Refer to Appendix A). It does not determine the order but served as a generic guide to ensure that themes that needed to be covered were done so during the conversations. Since audio recordings were not made of informal discussions, notes were taken immediately during and after the discussions. The notes were then rewritten for the fieldwork report.

Semi-structured qualitative interviews were also conducted for me to gain an in-depth account of the respondent’s subjective understanding without imposing any prior category (Denzin, 1989). These interviews were mainly used to verify information gathered during informal discussions and to delve deeper into areas that came up from the ethnography fieldwork. Audio recordings were taken when permission was given. The recorded interviews were then transcribed. In total, 13 transcripts and 17 memo reports were produced from these formal interviews. These interviews were mainly used to verify information that was gathered from the informal discussions and delve deeper into areas that came up from the ethnography fieldwork.

3.7. Research ethics

An ethical issue that came up during this project was the issue of confidentiality. Despite the fact that samples are selected on a large geographical scale, the community within these diasporic Chinese voluntary associations are tight-knit and small. Therefore, when interviews were carried out,

steps were taken to ensure participant information remains confidential. If caution were not taken, it would be easy for members of the community to identify each other when the report is made available. Therefore, all self-identifying information was removed by identity erasure in the final report. The opinions of these people were summarised as far as possible to remove connection to them. Any possible identifiers associated with a quote were also removed to ensure confidentiality.

Before entering the field, I was prepared to make my position as a researcher within the organisation explicit. This was an issue of concern because many members of such organisations move in and out at any one time. Additionally, organisations represent a private space and collecting data within such spaces require consent. However, when I conducted the fieldwork, this issue was naturally resolved. When I participated in any activity, I was always referred to as the “student from Nanyang Technological University”. Their acknowledgement of me as a researcher meant that I did not have to explain my presence as a researcher within the organisation.

Chapter Four-Forging Chinese “traditions” across an organisation network

4.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate how traditions are forged within the networks of organisations. In doing so, the chapter addresses the first objective laid out in section 1.1. Zeng (2007) argued in her study of network organisations that primordial identification based on lineage and territorial identification exists within the “collective memory” of the individual. This lineage culture is institutionalised as tradition, thereby forming the foundation of network organisations (Zeng, 2007). Many scholars (Chen, 2002; Zhuang, Jun, & Pan, 2010) use this as a basis for the discussion on the various characteristics, structures and functions of the network organisations.

According to Castells (2010), a network comprises of hubs and nodes which bear different weight and function within the whole network. The nodes share the same communication codes, or also known as “standards”. Each node bears a specific function within the network. He identifies one of the nodes as “communication hubs playing a role of coordination for the smooth interaction of all elements integrated into the network”.

Drawing from this perspective, I argue in this chapter that manifestation of the cultural logic within diasporic Chinese network organisations is built not only through natural categories of primordial identification embedded within the “collective memory” of the individual. Rather, a cultural foundation is also forged from two concurrent organisational processes that emerges from the various “nodes” of the network. This includes practices carried forward from member organisations as well as the gradual accumulation of initiatives by individual member organisations within the network organisation. The initiatives undergo processes of deliberate selection, circulation

and repetition that gradually become “standard” practices within the network organisation. These standard practices are then “guarded” by the “communication hub”. The “communication hub” is the secretariats that control the communication channels of the network organisation.

These standard practices or traditions are not guaranteed to occur in all network organisations’ activities due to the changes in organisers. It is only through long periods of observation that one begins to notice emerging patterns that are repeated over and over again in most activities of World Clan Associations. These emerging patterns form the traditions and cultural foundation of network organisations.

Traditions emerge from *guanxi* transactions between individuals and organisations. *Guanxi* means “interpersonal connections” (Bian, 2018. P.597). There are three main perspectives on how *guanxi* should be understood and conceptualized. First, institutional theorists (Guthrie, 2002, p.44) perceived *guanxi* as a product of the institutional structure of the society in “pre-reform” China. The centralized distribution system, weak rules that govern economic transactions and scarce resources led to the prevalence of the use of *guanxi* for instrumental purposes. As such, with the establishment of legal system and greater market competition, the use of *guanxi* is expected to decline (Guthrie, 2002, p.41). On the other hand, cultural scholars (Kipnis, 1997, King, 1994, Fei, 1992) saw *guanxi* as embedded within Chinese culture, in particularly Confucianism. Therefore, *guanxi* would not decline with market reform. It will continue to remain relevant. New practices and social forms will emerge as *guanxi* adapts itself to new institutional arrangements (Yang, 2002. P.259)

Lastly, the third perspective understood *guanxi* as “purposive network behaviors” (Chang, 2011, p.316). They are strategies to secure resources, bridge difference between groups for self-interest as

well as cultivate trust for instrumental purpose. It is a result of both exogenous (historical and cultural) as well as endogenous (outcomes and institutionalized behavior) factors (Chang, 2011, p.317). Bian (2018, p 602-603) continued to build on this perspective by focusing on the relational aspects of *guanxi*. He identified six relational dimensions such as role type, tie strength, tie-multiplexity, route of connectivity and embedded resources as predictors of *guanxi* behavioral outcomes.

There are five levels of *guanxi* transactions (Yang, 1994, p. 191). The foundation of the art of *guanxi* is to first build a sense of familiarity between two parties, followed by the exchange of material goods. *Guanxi* cannot take place without a basis of familiarity. The familiarity builds on the shared identities and experiences between two parties. From this, obligations arise and mutual aid can be provided. The second level is called “adding and layering”, which refers to the removal of barriers between two parties as one gives an item or gift to another. According to Yang (1994, p. 195), “the gift remains symbolically attached to and identified with the person of the donor, thus the gift becomes a medium for introducing the personal substance of its donor into the person of the recipients”. With the two processes in play, the other three levels – status antagonism, appropriation and conversion – can take place.

The first two levels of *guanxi* transactions are institutionalised in diasporic Chinese network organisations as traditions. Traditions are inbuilt and repeated within network organisations to reproduce a sense of shared territorial/surname identity among individuals. According to Yang (1994, p.114), one way to start the process of bringing non-kin ties into fictive kinship ties is by employing kinship addresses. This is observed within the case studies where individuals address each other with kinship terms. Kinship terms such as “*zongzhang*” (clan elder), “*zongjie*” (clan sister), “*zongshao*”

(wife of clan elder) or “*xiangzhang*” (township elder), “*xiangqin*” (township member) are used among individuals during activities regardless of whether individuals know each other. This is to extend familiar notions of kinship into unfamiliar relationships, so as to kick-start the process of bringing strangers into trusted relationships.

The exchange of material goods as a *guanxi* transaction is institutionalised in the form of banquets and gift exchange in the activities of network organisations. Banquets and gift giving help to solidify the shared identity generated from a common primordial identification. Traditions emerge not only from primordial identification but also *guanxi* transactions.

In the subsequent sections, I use two predominant forms of traditions observed within surname clan network organisations. These two traditions are ancestral worship and gift/banquet exchange. Through these two traditions, I demonstrate how standard traditions emerge despite local variations. To do so, I first explore the local adaptation of ancestral worship traditions within individual clan organisations and the creation of subcultures in the network organisation. Next, I illustrate how different components of ancestral worship become “standards” within the organisation network. The four processes involved are initiation, circulation, repetition and eventually standardisation. In the next section, I demonstrate how practices evolve from practices in individual member organisations to become established traditions in the network organisation. This is demonstrated through the traditions of gift giving and banquets. Lastly, the chapter examines the role of the secretariat in circulating and guarding standards. This helps to ensure the continuity of traditions within network organisations.

4.2. Ancestral worship

Ancestral worship is one of the main cultural traditions within network organisations that reproduce the kinship system found in surname identification. Ancestral worship refers to all the rituals and practices of paying respect to ancestors that have passed away (Freedman, 1966; Jordan, 1972). The fundamental belief that drives ancestor worship is that when an individual passes away, its spirit is moved to the afterlife, which has characteristics similar to the earthly world. Therefore, the spirit is subjected to the same needs and demands. It is the obligation of the descendants to carry out these rites and cater to their needs. In return, their parents will bestow protection and blessings on the descendants (Baker, 1979, p. 73). On the other hand, punishments may be bestowed on the descendants who do not fulfil their duties. Reciprocity between descendants and ancestors is central to the relationship embedded within ancestral worship (Wolf, 1978).

Chinese ancestral worship has been referred to as a non-intentional ritualised activity. In a study conducted by Ian Clarke on ancestor worship in Malaysian Chinese community, he argued that the act of carrying out the rites within ancestral worship is independent of individual intentions or motivations. This means that participants of the ritual can have different interpretations and hold different beliefs, whether Buddhist or Christian. The ritual itself has no meaning and is open to the ascription of different meanings by different actors. What matters within the ritual is the performance itself. The performance of the ritual is dependent on a set of norms and rules. Since it is a non-intentional performance, ancestral worship can play an important role in “social normalization transcending divisions between the followers of different ideological system” (Clarke, 2000, p. 287). In the case of Malaysian Chinese, ancestral worship assisted in the identification of Chinese identity, thereby creating a sense of community. In the clan organisation networks in this

study, ancestral worship helped in normalising individuals of different background and beliefs into a common extended kinship network that transcends national boundaries.

The underlying cultural notion of ancestral worship tradition is based on two principles, filial piety and “*li*” found within Confucianism. Filial piety is the first step towards the selfcultivation of “*jen*” (humanity) which underlies the performance of ancestral worship (Slote & Vos, 1998). In Confucianism, there are five *wulun* (cardinal relationships). Filial piety forms the basis of the relationship between father and son, which by logic, extends itself to the other relations. Filial piety includes the cultivation of meaningful relationships within the family. This includes providing care, being obedient and respecting the wishes of the parents in return for the gift of life they have bestowed (Freedman, 1966). This respect remains even after the death of the parents. The living has to provide offerings, worship and take care of their parents in the afterlife. By performing the rituals of ancestral worship, the individual is defining the relationship between himself and a group of ancestors. The individual is identifying himself as the descendant carrying out his obligations within the performance. By extension, within the collective observance of ancestral worship with a common group of ancestors, the participant is identified not just as a descendant, but as part of the extended kinship network. Identifying as a part of a kinship network entails the proper observation of duties and obligations as stipulated within the five cardinal relationships. This duty drives mutual help and support among members of a kinship network.

Ritual in the form of *li* also underlies the performance of ancestral worship. *Li* in Confucianism is understood as various patterns of behaviour including “political institutions such as...ceremonies and life-cycle rites to standards of decorum and social manners” (Chow, 1994, p. 9). However, more

than just ceremonies and behaviour, these practices are expressions “of the inner moral quality *jen* (humanity or perfect virtue)” (Chow, 1994, p. 9). *Jen* represents “all the values that define the ideal humanity” (Chow, 1994, p. 9). *Jen* needs to be self-cultivated. The repeated performance of ritual reflects the inner moral quality of *jen* within an individual. On the other hand, when an individual conducts oneself in accordance with propriety, it would allow one to cultivate perfect virtue. Therefore, both principles of filial piety and *li* underlie the performance of ancestral worship in network organisations.

4.2.1. Subculture: ancestral worship and local variations

Traditions are carried over to foreign lands when people move abroad, but are manifested in a variety of forms due to the differences in the local context. As Chen (2000) brought out in his discussion of Chinese traditions, traditions establish their “continuity in its principles and characteristics, but changes in content due to differences in space” (Chen, 2000, p. 13). As migrants integrate into their local society, traditions brought from the homeland assume new characteristics, which reflect local conditions and culture. In particular, after World War II, the association of Chinese with communist movements led to a ban on Chinese migration. As a result, the expression of Chinese culture was suppressed in various Southeast Asian countries. This period marked the rise in anti-Chinese riots and nationalising efforts imposed by Southeast Asian governments. In this context, Chinese ethnic identity underwent a period of intensive integration and assimilation into local society. Hence, despite the continuation of tradition brought from their homeland, the traditions developed various forms of manifestations.

There is a colourful variety of ancestral worship within the World Lin Clan Association. This is because the host for each World Lin Convention changes when it is held in different countries. A mix of local variations of traditions emerge. In general, the directors and chairpersons of each World Lin Clan Association do not forcefully interfere in the organisation processes. Hence, traditions and activities of World Clan Associations reflect a variety of localised practices. One can appreciate such differences by looking at the altars of different member associations of the World Lin Clan Association (Image 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3), where differences in the hierarchical arrangement of the deities and the image of Bigan can be observed.

Image 4.1: Altar in Yayasan Sosil Lestari Indo Makmur (Lim) (16th World Lin Clan Convention organiser) in Medan, Indonesia, 19 November 2016.

Image 4.2: Altar in Thailand Lim Clan Association (1st and 14th World Lin Clan Convention organiser) in Bangkok, Thailand, 29 September 2016.

Image 4.3: Altar in Los Angeles Lim Clan Association (member of the World Lin Clan Association) in Los Angeles, USA.

Source: (Li, 2018)

The pictures above show altars and memorial halls of three different Lin Clan Associations in Medan, Indonesia, Bangkok, Thailand and Los Angeles, USA.

According to Wolf (1978), placement of deities reveals the hierarchy of the deities for the altar. The deity that owns the altar is often placed in a central position. The “guest” deity or ancestor should be placed in an inferior position to the left of the “owner” of the altar (Wolf, 1978, p. 155). In Medan, Indonesia, the central deity is Mazu, the goddess of the sea. The second-level deities are referred to as Buddha and Guanyin by the members of Yayasan Sosil Lestari Indo Makmur (Lim) (Mr Hock, 3 November 2016). The deities with the most inferior positions are Bigan and Lin Jian. This differs from Thailand, whose ritual centres on the three ancestral tablets on the highest level of the altar. The central deity is Bigan, followed by Lin Jian and Lin Lu. All three of them are founders of Lin lineage. Lin Lu is regarded as the first ancestor of the Southern Min Lin lineage. The images above reveal differences in understanding of the hierarchy of deities and ancestors for different local associations.

These differences in arrangements emerge because of different local societal contexts. In Yayasan Sosil Lestari Indo Makmur (Lim), Mazu is regarded as the highest deity because of the historical circumstances that the Indonesia Lin Clan Association experienced. Yayasan Sosil Lestari Indo Makmur (Lim) was formed in the 19th century together with a Mazu temple located in an area called Labuhan. Mazu was the only deity that the Lin clan members worshipped in the early years.

Buddha and Guan Yin were added during the Suharto era. According to one of the senior clan members, the addition of Buddha was to adhere with the six official religions recognised in Indonesia (Mr Hock, 3 November 2016). Bigan and Lin Jian, the two founding ancestors of Lin lineage were only added in the early 2000s. Therefore, within the association, Indonesia Lin clan members only celebrate Mazu's birthday, which takes place every year on the twenty-third day of the third lunar month. Following the Buddhist traditions, monks are brought in to chant in front of the altar. The circumstances unique to the Medan Indonesia Lin Clan Association thereby resulted in a different arrangement of deities compared to Thailand.

Besides the hierarchy of deities on the altar, other differences can also be observed. This includes the image of Bigan, which varies from place to place. One of the most obvious differences is the colour of the beard. The beard of Bigan in the image shown in Image 4.3 is grey in colour while it is white in the portrait in image 4.1 and image 4.2. The variation in ancestral worship extends to the ritual process, the recognition of the birth and death date of Bigan, offerings and memorial hall arrangements. The negotiation between the different local variations in a World Clan Association is subjected to the organizational dynamics within the network organization. This will be discussed in chapter 5.

4.3. Network culture: forging a "standard" ancestral worship

Traditions can emerge from within the network organisation despite constantly changing hosts of its activities. Continuity of culture can emerge even while each activity is held independently and voluntarily by member organisations. In the next section, I elaborate on how "standard" traditions emerge. This usually starts with an initiative by a member organisation that is part of the network,

which selects and promotes specific forms of traditions that are then circulated and repeated. With repetition, the tradition emerges as “standard” within the network. Using ancestral worship, I demonstrate how layers of “standard” ancestral worship are gradually added into the network.

4.3.1. Description of space: building makeshift ancestral halls (zongci)

Communal ancestral worship is carried out in two places: ancestral graves, and ancestral halls. Ancestral halls are places where the tablets of ancestors are placed. It is said to symbolise the “corporate personality...and its authority over living members” (Hu, 1948, p. 64). They are placed where important meetings are held for a lineage group. They are also places where disputes are negotiated. Within surname associations, these memorial halls are places where rituals and activities take place. They are places where individuals with a common surname gather to provide mutual assistance for one another, settle disputes and fulfil collective welfare needs.

Within world clan network organisations, ancestral halls assume makeshift and short-lived characteristics. Activities that typically took place in traditional ancestral graves and ancestral halls now take place in banquet halls, restaurants and meeting rooms. The rooms are decorated within the necessary items to assume the functions of an ancestral hall and are taken down once the event is over. Organisers rotate between different member organisations from different diasporic Chinese communities.

There are cases in some associations where funds are raised to build a permanent ancestral hall or temple. Such physical spaces, which are symbolically important in re-establishing solidarity, do not stop the cycle of circulating ancestral halls in different sites among member organisations. The World Zhang Clan Association, for example, raised funds from its members in different diasporic

communities to construct the 0.06-km² Zhang Ancestral Temple. It also worked in collaboration with the local and provincial government as part of the development of an integrated industrial zone. Together with the temple, it helped in the development of the 3.3km² Zhang Biological Industrial Park and a 5 km² industrial park.

I visited one of the ancestral temples in Qinghe, Mainland China, during a field trip in 2016. Upon entering the ancestral temple, one is first confronted by a wall with an illustration of the legend of the surname Zhang. Behind the wall, in the centre of the temple sits a 9.8 metre-tall sculpture of Hui Gong, the founding ancestor of the Zhang surname. The second floor houses the ancestral hall that contains the ancestral tablets. Other features include portraits of directors of the World Zhang Clan Association, panels of World Zhang Clan activities held at the temple in the past, and a brief description of Zhang clan associations around the world (Fieldnotes, 9th August 2016).

Despite the intention to reposition all secular and religious rituals towards the centre of the Zhang ancestral temple in Qinghe, the attempt was met with much resistance, as seen in the conversation among a few clan elders on this issue:

A: If the convention is always held within the same location, the convention will lose its function of networking....

B: I do not agree that the Zhang Ancestral Temple should be used to hold all world Zhang clan activities. This is because the origins of the Zhang surname is debatable. Since the Song, Ming and Qing dynasties, there are various versions of where the ancestral homeland of Zhang surname is...we need to respect history, respect the interest of all stakeholders.

C: ...it would allow clan members to bring their family to different places to attend the World Zhang Clan Convention.

From the conversation, we can see that even the creation of a permanent Zhang Ancestral Hall does not stop the circulation of makeshift ancestral temples. The interests and aspirations of different stakeholders extend beyond lineage identification. From the conversation above, we can identify tourism, the debatable origins of the Zhang surname, as well as *guanxi* transactions as possible reasons for resistance. This prevents the consolidation of all its activities at a permanent site. Therefore, with the continuous circulation, creation and dismantling of temporary ancestral halls in different locations, how does a “standard” ancestral hall emerge within a world clan network organisation? To illustrate this, I draw on my observations of ancestral worship in the World Lin Clan Association.

Image 4.4: Layout of the makeshift ancestral hall (*zongci*) at the 16th World Lin Clan Convention in Medan, Indonesia, 21 November 2016.

The emergence of a “standardised” makeshift ancestral hall (*zongci*), which are a set of items that enable the transformation of any space into a place of worship, began as an initiative of a few Lin clan members from Taiwan in 1996. One of the main people involved in the creation of the

“standard” makeshift ancestral hall is Lin Jia Zhen, the seventh and eighth Chairperson of the World Lin Clan Association. In November 1998, Lin Jia Zhen assumed the position of chairperson of the World Lin Clan Association. Not only is he a successful Taiwan businessman who owned Goldsun group in the 1990s, he also inherited the title of Chairperson of Taiwan Temple Foundation from his father, Lin Deng. Therefore, he possesses a high volume of social capital. This allows him to assume a well-established position in the Lin clan networks (refer to section 5.4.1). Immediately after he assumed the position, he was motivated to create a “standard” ancestral worship rituals and layout of the ancestral hall. He wanted to remove differences in the worship procedure for associations around the world. In his words, he said,

“To standardize the ancestral worship procedures and rules...eliminate differences between different places. This will prevent other surname associations from humiliating us. This will affect the reputation of the glory of our ancestor” (E. X. Lin, 2006).

After he made his decision with the help of his secretary, Lin Jia Xiang, they travelled to different countries and localities as secretary and chairperson of the World Lin Clan Association for the next nine years. As they travelled, they observed the variety of rituals and various needs of member organisations belonging to the World Lin Clan Association. Eventually, around 2007, they proposed a potential standardised makeshift ancestral hall.

The guidelines for the “standard” makeshift ancestral hall took into consideration organisational needs. Firstly, memorial halls in member clan associations are often too small to house hundreds of clan members who came from overseas to their halls. Therefore, ancestral worship is

often held in non-traditional spaces such as restaurants or convention halls reserved especially for such occasions. Member organisations may not have the items and experience necessary to create an ancestral hall within these areas. Furthermore, many organisers do not have prior experience in conducting large-scale worship as part of their usual association activities, making it difficult for them to host the guests invited for the occasion. The issue of time management for such large-scale ancestral worship activities also presents many challenges for the organisers. Lastly, the items selected for the guidelines must be easily prepared anywhere in the world and must be portable so that the secretariat can easily bring them from Taiwan in times of need (Mr Lin/1, 30 May 2016). Therefore, a guideline that it is easily replicated and executed was issued to organisers of World Lin Clan Association activities to facilitate the process.

The proposed standard makeshift ancestral hall reflects the familial networks and societal context of the initiator. First, familial networks shaped the proposed standard. The procedure for ancestral worship and makeshift halls uses the temple for the Lin's Ancestor Juridical Foundation as its foundation. This is because of Lin Jia Zheng's affiliation with the temple. His father, Lin Deng was one of the founders of the relocated temple, built in 1831. He is also the chairperson of Lin Surname Private Limited, registered in 1961. In the early 1960s, to buy a piece of land to relocate the temple for the Lin's Ancestor Juridical Foundation, Lin clan members in Taiwan each borrowed 20,000 New Taiwan dollars. Through the crowdfunding initiative, it acquired a piece of land totalling 1,090 m². On that piece of land, it built the ten-storey Lin Surname Building. After that, the temple signed an agreement with Lin Surname Private Limited to manage the land and acquire properties and resources. When Lin Deng stepped down as the chairperson of Lin Surname Private Limited, his son

took over as the chairperson of the company. Given the close affiliation of Lin Jia Zheng and the temple, the rituals of the temple were naturally chosen as the foundation of the standard ritual.

Second, the proposed standard ancestral hall also reflects the societal context in which the initiator is located. The practice of creating makeshift ancestral halls comes from his experience within Lin Clan organisations in Taiwan. Several national-level Lin Clan associations in Taiwan do not own permanent memorial halls or clan buildings. The Republic of China Lin Clan Association and the Province of Taiwan Lin Clan Association, for example, share a secretariat with the World Lin Clan Association and Taipei Lin Clan Association. Since the early 1990s, large-scale meetings such as membership meetings where thousands of clan members meet would often be held in restaurants or rented meeting rooms. Before each meeting commences, Lin clan members in Taiwan practice the ritual of bowing towards the statue or portrait of ancestors as a sign of respect. Therefore, there would be large posters of the founding ancestors of the Lin Clan attached to the walls of the meeting rooms used as a makeshift ancestral hall. The use of a makeshift ancestral hall for such rituals in Taiwan was extended to World Lin Clan Association's meetings and activities.

In the initial stages, the proposed standard ancestral hall was driven by the initiatives of the World Lin Clan Association Secretariat. To replicate the act of bowing to the ancestors before each meeting commences, representatives from the secretariat prepared three posters of Bigan, Lin Jian, and at times, the Yellow Emperor. This was not extended to the main ancestral worship that took place during the convention. The secretariat would bring items that were available at that moment to allow the ritual to take place. However, in 2005, after the circulation of the "proposed" ritual within the network organisation, the standard makeshift ancestral hall was used by a larger number of organisers. Communication channels available to World Lin Clan Association was used to circulate the

guidelines to recreate the standard makeshift ancestral hall. One of which was the 29th World Lin Clan Association Magazine as well as the meeting minutes for the general meeting that year. The guidelines include a list of offerings, two mats for kneeling, incense sticks, a large poster printed with the image of a set of deities (Bigan, Lin Jian, Lin Lu and Mazu), duties written on the left and right of the image of the deities, white gloves and stash for the worshippers. With its circulation, the number of organisers of World Lin Clan Association activities that adopted the standard makeshift ancestral hall grew.

Through the repetition of the practice within the network organisation, the makeshift ancestral hall gradually emerged as a standard within the World Lin Clan Association (see section 4.3.2). Therefore as seen from the process of creating a makeshift ancestral hall, the initiator and his deliberate selection played an important role in the construction of the tradition. The standard tradition was circulated through the communication materials, which through repetition emerged as the standard tradition.

4.3.2. Standard ancestral worship rites

The World Lin Clan Association has standard guidelines for ancestral worship rites, which are available for organisers interested in using them. The rites of ancestral worship take place once every two to three years at the World Clan Conventions.

This standard also originated as an initiative of the seventh and eighth chairperson of the World Lin Clan Association, Lin Jia Zheng. The initiative began with a seminar held in March 2002 in Henan, Mainland China, where scholars from Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan were brought together for seven days of discussions of controversies existing within the Lin genealogy. This included the

birth and death date of the founding ancestors, their positions within the genealogy and places of burial. The conclusion drawn from the discussions was that ancestral worship should be carried out in spring and autumn, on 4 April and 25 October, which are considered to be the birth and death date of Bigan respectively.

During the series of initiatives initiated by Lin Jia Zheng, designing a standard for the correct observance during ancestral worship was also discussed. In the words of the chairman, the ritual was simplified in a way that did not depart from the stringent requirements of the rites of traditional ancestral worship (Lin Jia Zheng, 7 June 2016). The rites of the temple for the Lin's Ancestor Juridical Foundation were also used as a reference but were simplified for standardisation.

With the design and standard in place, the guidelines were circulated among several communication channels. Within the guidelines produced were three sets of scriptures for the invitation, sending off, and informing the ancestors of the occasion. The detailed sequence, which includes the rites of the ritual to be carried out, was also listed. The entire ritual would take about one hour. The list of guidelines of rituals was circulated in the 2005 World Lin Clan Association Magazine and in its meeting minutes. A team of volunteers also travelled to more than thirty countries including Japan, southern provinces of Mainland China and the Philippines to promote the set of rituals. This was followed by a series of seminars held by the R.O.C. Lin Clan Association in 2009 to teach the ritual standards to all the other Lin associations in Taiwan.

Guidelines for ancestral worship	
Standard	Implementation in one of the conventions
1) Head worshipper (“ <i>Zhu Ji</i> ”) leads all members present.	1) President of World Lin Clan Association leads all members present.
2) Vice worshipper (“ <i>Fu Zhu Ji</i> ”) representative leads all vice-worshippers.	2) President of current convention organiser leads his clan.
3) Accompanied worshipper (“ <i>Pei Ji</i> ”) leads all accompanied worshippers.	3) President of the next convention organiser leads own association members and all World Lin Clan Association directors.
4) Head of the highest order participating clan associations leads all group representatives.	4) Reputable individual leads the heads and vice heads of each country representatives.
5) Accompanied worshipper, vice worshipper and head worshipper lead all members present.	5) Honorary president leads all members present.

Table 4.1: Guidelines for ancestral worship.

Ancestral worship ritual not only remains central to the reproduction of unity and solidarity but is also important in the reproduction of hierarchical relationships embedded within the community. In the context of “Tsu” in China, Hu (1948) demonstrated how leaders of the lineage and prominent elders assume the main roles. However, in the case of diasporic Chinese communities, they are usually held by successful businessmen who contributed greatly to the clan associations. Looking at the context of world clan associations, given that each director participating in the activities has contributed significantly to their own local clan associations, how would the positions be allocated?

The hierarchy of individuals involved in ancestral worship rituals is based on three criteria. The position of the individual within the world clan organisation, the hierarchy of individuals within the organiser’s association, as well as prominent individual that enjoys a high reputation within the network. As seen in Table 4.1, the head worshipper who assumes the highest position within the organisation itself is usually the chairman of the world clan organisation. The vice worshipper and accompanied worshipper are from the current organiser and the next convention’s organiser. The

fourth order, which leads all the other leaders of participating member organisations, is usually an individual who enjoys a high reputation around the world. Assuming these positions within the worship rites confer reputation and recognition among clan members.

With the design and circulation of these makeshift ancestral halls and ancestor worship rites, one can start to observe a convergence of ritual practices within the world clan organisation over time with repetition. Components of the ritual were adapted as a whole, or at times combined with local traditions to execute the ancestral rites within the world clan convention. In the case of World Lin Clan Associations, components of the rites can be observed within the 12th, 13th 15th and 16th Lin Clan Convention held in Singapore, Philippines, Cambodia, Malaysia and Indonesia.

4.3.3. Common ancestral image

In surname associations, the sense of unity is based on “putative, or fictionalised, descent from historical (or even mythical) figures” (Watson, 1982, p. 603). This extends itself to the relationship between organisations. It is possible for this form of “fictive kinship” (Baker, 1979, p. 172) to assume a strong enough character to drive the acquisition of common property, rewriting of genealogy and mediation of disputes. In one instance during my visit to a Zhang clan association, the secretary proudly told me about an event they had held. Driven by a belief of DNA commonality due to a common ancestor, they collaborated with some local universities to take DNA samples from over 500 members of the organisation. They wanted to establish through science that all Zhang surname members shared a DNA commonality because they are descendants of a common ancestor (Mr Zhang/1, 31 March 2016). The strong belief in the kinship relationships drove the attempt to establish “scientific evidence” of such linkages.

The image of the mythical founding ancestor Bigan is reproduced within the network organisation to reclaim a sense of bonding and solidarity based on the recognition of a common ancestor. As demonstrated within the World Lin Clan network, the ancestors recognised by the World Lin Clan Association include the first individual given the surname Lin, the father of the individual who was first given the surname Lin and the first individual bearing the surname Lin to enter the southern Min region. This also includes Mazu, the goddess of the sea. In the World Lin Clan Association, she is called “Lin Mo” the twenty-third generation descendant of Lin Lu, the first individual bearing the surname Lin to enter the Southern Min region.

Image 4.5 (left): The image of Bigan used from the first World Lin Clan Association Magazine (*Changlin*) in 1986 until issue 28, released in 2001 (Singapore, 24 December 2015).

Image 4.6 (right): The image of Bigan used in the 29th World Lin Clan Association Magazine, released on 20 November 2005 (Singapore, 18 December 2015).

Images 4.5 and Image 4.6 are the two images circulated of Bigan in the World Lin Clan Association. Image 4.6 was recognised as the standard image and has been used since 2005. The

standard image adopted by the World Lin Clan Association originated from the initiatives by Wulong Bigan Research Society. In 1994, during the 5th World Lin Clan Convention, it brought the image, claimed to be the oldest image of Bigan, to the convention. The image was kept in Nanan Neicuo village, Fujian. It was first used for Bigan worship in the village in Jing Jiang Xian before being circulated to Quanzhou, Nanan and Tongan. The Wulong Bigan Research Society requested for permission to hang the image that was used in Nanan villages in the centre of the convention hall during the 5th convention in 1994. After the convention, various individuals, such as Japan Lin Clan's Representative Lin Pei Ji, made 3,000 copies of the image and circulated it to the clan associations in Japan. South Korean representative Lin Yun Hua made 5,000 copies of the image and circulated it in South Korea. At the 6th convention in 1996 in Malaysia, World Lin Clan Association chairperson Lin Yu Ling again made 3,000 copies of the image and circulated them among participants. Through the widespread circulation by individual clan members, the image gained much popularity within Mainland China and diasporic Chinese communities.

The image was circulated through the various communication channels. In 2003, during the directorial meeting, the image was adopted as the standard for ancestral images in World Lin Clan Association activities. Since then, with the publication of the twenty-ninth issue of the World Lin Clan Association Magazine in 2005, all World Lin Clan Association magazines have adopted this image. It was also printed in large portable banners and used for ancestral worship in makeshift ancestral halls and during meetings (Lin Chen, 6 June 2016). With wider circulation, more members of World Lin Clan Association have adopted the standard image.

The Image gained further recognition when local individuals began adopting the image within their own associations. A conversation with an editor of a Lin surname magazine indicated that he

chose this image over those used by his association in the local magazines because the image was recognised by Lin clan members around the world (Mr Lin/4, December 2016). He said that such recognition must imply that it is the “correct” image. Furthermore, by observing the collection of plaques, banners and flags kept in the Singapore Lim See Tai Chong Soo Kiu Leong Tong, one can observe that more organisations chose this image to circulate overseas in the form of gifts. The image between the different organisations converged to the standard that began as an initiative of a few individual organisations.

4.3.4. Articulating a narrative of legends and obligations

The image shows two musical score sheets. Song A, titled '長江之歌' (Song of the Yangtze River), has lyrics about the Yangtze River and its significance. Song B, titled '林氏之歌' (Song of the Lin Family), has lyrics about the Lin family's history and values. Both sheets include musical notation with numbers 1-7, likely representing a specific dialect or style of music.

Song A

Song B

Legends are often regarded as the foundation of lineage. They serve to unite multi-surname groups that settled in the same region (Faure, 1989, p. 10) and assign rights to settlements. In the case of the organisation network, the purpose of legends is to unite multiple lineage and surname groups regardless of the place of origin. Legends are manifested through the use of songs, which also reflect obligations. In Zeng’s study (2003) of world clan associations, she demonstrated that songs also play a role in emphasising dialect identification, common experience, as well as the

organisation's goals. For example, Song A and Song B are circulated within the World Lin Clan Association. Song A tells the story of the father of the mythical founder Bigan. It narrates the story of his loyalty and courage to give advice to the King of Zhou, which resulted in his death. With his death, his pregnant wife, with the surname Chen, escaped to a cave, where Bigan's son Jian Gong was born. After his birth, he met King of Zhou, who gave him the surname Lin. He later resided in Qinghe.

Similar to the creation of a standard image, the "standard" song that was circulated among the World Lin organisation network was created as a result of an initiative of one of its member organisations. Between the first and third conventions, Song A was the only song that was sung and circulated. In 1992, one of the members of Singapore Lim See Tai Chong Soo wrote another song in celebration of the 4th convention that was to be held in Singapore (Mr Lin/2, 24 May 2012). Song B was created, but the sense of unity was built on the character "Lin" itself. In its fourth and fifth line, the song's focus shifts from the legend and focuses on the surname itself: "One wood (*mu*) makes a wood, but two woods make a forest. Let us work together...descendants of Lin, the spirit of Lin is great unity".

The song was popularised during the convention and was sung by several individual clan associations. In Singapore alone, Sai Ho Piat Su and Singapore Teochew Sai Ho Association would perform this song within their weekly choir practices. Similarly, Thailand Lin Clan Association as well. According to some of the directors who adopted the song, the song was preferred for its "more relaxing" tune, while the tune of Song A was regarded as "imposing", and that it sounds "like a national song". Eventually, because of their popularity, the World Lin Clan Association adopted both songs as the official songs.

4.3.5. Obligations and duties

Image 4.7: A tablet that states the Lin organisation's main teaching: loyalty and filial piety (*zhongxiao*), located in Singapore Lim See Tai Chong Soo (Singapore, 30 December 2015).

The legends of the ancestors also reflect the duties and obligations of the descendants. They were circulated with the songs and poster that was printed for ancestral worship. This is also known as “family teachings” (*jiaxun*). The main teaching circulated within the Lin network organisation is “loyalty and filial piety” (*zhongxiao*). Around the year 1061, the twenty-fourth generation of the first ancestor that moved to the Southern Min region, Lin Lu, served under the fourth emperor of the Song dynasty. On one occasion, the descendant of Lin Lu requested to go home to sweep the ancestral tomb. The emperor requested the genealogy of the descendant and came to learn about the story of Bigan. He wrote two words “loyalty” and “filial piety” before returning the genealogy to the descendant. From then on, the teachings were remembered and reproduced among Lin descendants. These teachings are circulated within the world Lin network organisation.

To help people remember the teachings, they are usually articulated in the form of a “spirit” (*jingshen*). The meaning of spirit remains largely ambiguous. In World Lin Clan publications, it can refer to the “spirit of loyalty and filial piety” (*zhongxiao jingshen*) or the “spirit of loyalty and love for

country” (*zhongzhen aiguo*). It can also mean being honest, keeping promises, responsibility and humility. Spirit mainly takes the form of known virtues embodied by the ancestors that are recognised by the surname organisation. It is often articulated together with “unity in kinship and neighbours” (*dunqinmulin*) as well as “world Lin remains one family” (*linshiyijiaqin*). Given its vagueness, how does a common recognised spirit emerge?

A common spirit may be created by an individual or organisation. The individual may begin defining the notion of the “spirit” and wait for the other members to adopt the definition. If other members adopt the definition and circulate it, the spirit emerges as the “standard”. In the World Nanan Association, for example, Koxinga is a well-respected hero and was repeatedly articulated as the ancestor that binds the Nanan community together in the organisation network. In the early days, before the 12th World Nanan Clansmen Convention, the “Koxinga” (*chenggong*) spirit was referred to as the “Nanan spirit” (Mr Lee, 30 March 2016). In its ambiguity, it means the courage and fighting spirit to break new frontiers and seek new grounds, or it could also mean working hard and never giving up. In the words of some of the clansmen, it is embodied within the notion of the famous Hokkien song “*Ai Pia Ga Ei Yia*” (Mr Lee/2, 29 April 2016)

In recent years, the Nanan spirit has diversified from the ambiguous affiliation with Koxinga to a more defined notion, from an initiative led by Li Cheng Li, the head of the Arts and Literature Committee of the Singapore Lam Ann Association. In his book, published by the Singapore Lam Ann Association in 2012 for the 12th World Nanan Convention, he defined the Nanan spirit as embodied within not just Koxinga, but also Li Zhi, a famous Chinese philosopher in the Late Ming dynasty, and Guo Zhong Fu, a child known for his filial piety commonly known as the deity of Guang Ze Zhun Wang.

Born in Nanan, Shishan, in the year 923, Guo sold himself to the family of Yang to raise money for his father's funeral. After the burial, he moved to Fengshan to pursue the Tao and ascended to heaven. In his book, Li defined the Nanan spirit as stubbornness and courage, bravery, a willingness to accept difficulties and to learn to overcome challenges – qualities embodied by the three individuals above. Guo showed loyalty, love and an acceptance of all human beings, while Li Zhi demonstrated creativity and a willingness to accept changes and Koxinga's courage of fighting to open new frontiers.

The precise ancestors that one draws from depends on the initiator that articulates the spirit. Li Cheng Li was affiliated with Singapore Lam Ann Association, which started as the Hong San See temple. The temple was built in 1836 to provide mutual help to Nanan clansmen in Singapore (Tan Aik Hock, 2 April 2016). It was only in 1924 that the Singapore Lam Ann Association was initiated, though it continues to manage the temple dedicated to Guang Ze Zhun Wang (Li, 2014). It is extended beyond Singapore to the FengShan Ancestral temple dedicated to Guang Ze Zhun Wang in Nanan, Shishan. Not only have they formed a "Nanan Feng Shan Tourism Site committee" to raise funds for the reconstruction of the Feng Shan Ancestral temple in the 1980. In the year 1983, fifty-four of Nanan clan members donated 240,000 RMB to reconstruct the gateway of the Feng Shan Ancestral temple (Chen & Wu, 2006). The strong affiliation of Singapore Lam Ann Association with the Guang Ze Zhun Wang deity shape the selection of individuals that embody the Nanan spirit.

With the publication of his book, the Nanan spirit was popularised both within the network organisation as well as among participants of the World Nanan Convention. It continued to be circulated at the following few conventions. Excerpts were taken from the book to illustrate the Nanan spirit at the 13th thirteenth World Nanan convention. In 2018, the Nanan spirit was used as the theme for the 14th World Nanan Convention held in Nanan Mainland, China. Titled "Overseas

Chinese memory, Nanan spirit”, it includes a series of activities, including academic conferences, a media platform to promote the overseas Chinese spirit within companies and schools, the building a root-seeking platform and the compilation of genealogy (Lin, 2018).

In summary, layers of different components of ancestral worship accumulate to form the standard within a network organisation. This usually begins with the initiative of an individual or an organisation, circulation and eventually, with enough repetition, it gets adopted as the standard. As such, standards often reveal the societal context and the interests of the initiator.

4.4. Gift giving and holding banquets

Gift giving and holding banquets are two traditions that are commonly practised in organisation networks. Both practices are central to *guanxi* transactions as illustrated in section 4.1. With the familiarity between organisations and individual being established through the identification of common lineage and kinship, the exchange of items reduces the barriers between two individuals. It breaks down boundaries between an insider and an outsider. This happens because the act of giving an item is seen to be equivalent to the donor giving part of the donor to the receiver (Mauss & Evans-Pritchard, 2011, p. 10). In the process, the donor introduce some form of personal substance into the receiver. This create a linkage between the receiver and the donor through the gift. The “gift” enters the personal space of the receiver, creating “moral (and at the same time, material) advantage over the recipient of one’s generosity” (Yang, 1994, p. 43). Such moral advantage can then be converted into some kind of values in the future when the received repays the debt. The process has to adhere to “*renqing*”. “*Renqing*” refers to the “the observance of proper social form” (Yang, 1994, p. 122).

4.4.1. Gift Exchange

The practice of gift exchange between member organizations was carried over from local organizations into the network organizations. Members expect gift exchange to be carried out since the formation of World Clan Associations. A specific amount of time will always be allocated to conduct gift exchange between the organiser, and participating organizations. Sometimes, a separate segment of exchange activities will also be conducted between the Chairperson representing the world clan organizations with leaders of member organizations. The gift in these scenarios falls closer to the category of “expressive gift” rather than “instrumental gifts”. Instrumental gifts are gifts that have clear instrumental goals. On the other hand, expressive gift “reinforce the affective sentiments and feelings of obligation” (Yang, 1994, p. 122) within the fictive kinship network. The obligations include broad notions of mutual help as stipulated within Confucianism. On the organization level, this may translate obligations to provide support for each other’s activities in the future, or reception/aid to fellow clan members when travelling abroad.

The kind of gifts exchanged during this period can be in the form of cash or material items. Material items commonly observed during the process includes plaques, flags, or plates. Engraved on these items are symbols of friendships such as the word carving of “*Dun Zong Mu Zu*” (Clan Harmony and Peace), as well as words of praises such as “*Zong Zu Zhi Guang*” (Achiever of the Clan). Statues of founding ancestor and duties can also be exchanges to serve as a reminder for solidarity built on the kinship network. The act of exchange is often accompanied with photographs taken.

Unwritten social conventions govern the exchange of gifts. The practice is an art because it entails specific ways of doing things. As observed by Lin (2001), “*guanxi* has distinctive public and private phases”. The public performance of giving red packets serves as a form of congratulation

and friendship. It is also a way to help the organiser to cover expenses. In the words of one clan chairperson talking about the practice of giving red packets, “It is a polite exchange. If it is our turn to hold the convention they would do the same...this is similar to holding weddings in your house, children’s birthday...if you treat me, of course I have to return with a red packet” (Mr Zhang/2, 3 June 2016).

However, unwritten conventions such as the amount of money and timing of exchange governs the process. These conventions are not publicized. Knowledge of these conventions are often kept privately within organisations or within the memories of individuals with more experience in attending such events. As demonstrated within Kipnis (1997) studies on gift giving, there is a consistent relationship between the monetary value of the gift with the depth of human feelings and closeness of the relationship. This is also observed within the network organisations. There is a known rate to be exchanged depending on the depth and closeness of the relationship of the organisation with the organiser (Mr Lin/5, 1 June 2016).

The timing also matters – some organisation networks prefer to present the red packets publicly, while others prefer to do so in private. Discreetness needs to be maintained during the gift exchange. In the process of exchange, the favor giver may want to convey an image “as one who expects no return and whose action is propelled by an altruistic spirit” (Lin, 2001, p.161). In such scenarios, private exchange is preferred. Exchanging money publicly could lead to misunderstanding as a form of payment for services rendered for an occasion that was actually intended to demonstrate the prestige and generosity of the organiser. The failure to perform the act of exchanging gifts in

accordance with social etiquette can lead to a backlash in the reputation of the organisation within the network organisation.

Besides the exchange of gifts, the passing of flags from one organiser to another also constitutes another major tradition. The organising committee keeps the organisation's flag and seal until the next convention two years later. The seal is used to stamp the certificates issued to office holders in the World Clan Associations. A specific time during the event is allocated for the act of passing these two symbolic items to the next organiser. The handover process usually takes place between the current convention organiser and the organiser of the next one. The chairman of the World Clan Association, or the coordinating office will at times overlook the act of passing the flag. In this case, this act of giving is different from the gift exchange. Instead, the flag and seal symbolise the responsibility of holding the convention. To receive the flag and seal is to receive the responsibility of continuing the activities within the organisation network.

4.4.2. **Banquets**

Organisers are expected to look after all the welfare of the guests upon their arrival. They are also expected to pick up their guests from the airport by greeting them with large banners. Transportation has to be arranged from the airport to the accommodation as well as to the banquet venue. Local performances are usually held during the banquet to entertain guests. The organisers may at times work with a specific tour agency to bring the guests on a tour around the country. Guests expect to enjoy the full hospitality of the organiser when they are invited to a banquet. It is important for the banquet to be grand and well-organised.

Generosity during the banquet can endow reputation to the individual and the organisers. Within a guanxi transaction, the receiver can payoff the giver through public recognition of the favors. The spread of this recognition is determined by the extensity of the social network (Lin, 2001, p. 158). This helps to promote the reputation of the giver within the community. The organizer accumulates social capital. Therefore, in the case of network organisations, it is common to overhear participants discussing how generous an individual might be due to his/her sponsorship or the amount of wine served in previous years. Words of a well-organised and generous banquet can spread throughout the network. However, on the other hand, a badly organised event can leave organisers with years of poor reputation.

Banquets are also subjected to similar cultural etiquette as gift giving. Of particular importance at the banquet is the order of speeches and seating arrangements. Most of the time, the hierarchical positions of individuals are unknown to the organisers. In addition, each country has different seating and speaking protocol. For example, in mainland China, the most important guest is often the last to speak, while in places such as Thailand, the most important guest is the first to deliver the speech. The seating position of the guest of honour is often arranged in coordination with the secretariat of the World Clan Association. The organiser, in most cases, would not be familiar with all the participating member organisations. As such, seating arrangements are often left to the secretariat. The secretary of a World Clan Association noted that participants are more willing to accept arrangements made by the secretariat because of its neutrality (Ms Zhang/2, 31 March 2016). Badly planned seating arrangements can cause disputes and unhappiness that affect the experience of the banquet.

Therefore, as seen from both practice of gift giving and holding banquets, practices and social conventions of member organisations can be brought into network organisations, creating expectations that eventually lead to the emergence of standard traditions in all world clan activities.

4.5. How is the continuity of traditions secured?

As seen in the examples provided, the continuity of traditions is largely guarded by the secretariat of the world clan association. Within the network, the secretariat becomes the “communication hub” which fulfils the important function of coordinating the network. Therefore, the network centers around the particular locality in which the secretariat is located. The continuity of network culture is determined by the interests of the actors within the secretariat. The secretariat works closely with the chairperson of the World Clan Association. Hence, in this section, I would demonstrate how the continuity of the “network culture” is secured by the secretariat through their control of the communication channels.

In each World Clan Association, there is usually one over-arching secretariat. This secretariat shares their office space and manpower with the secretariat of one of the members of the World Clan Association. The secretariat is managed by an individual who holds the position of “honorary secretary/general secretary”. Together with the chairperson, they drive the standards of the organisation network through circulation within the communication channel.

The official task of the secretariat is to manage the daily administrative work of the World Clan Associations as well as to coordinate different communication platforms that encompass the different parties. The secretariat determines the traditions that they would secure. In the World Lin Clan Association, the standard ancestral worship rituals, as stipulated above, were offered as

guidelines to all organisers. This created a convergence in the rites practised within the World Lin Clan Association. However, this is not true for the World Zhang Clan Association. Hence, rites assume a variety of local characteristics, depending on where the activities are held. The three main communication channels available to the secretariat are the convention, magazines and the internet.

4.5.1. World Clan Conventions

The world clan conventions that take place among the member organisations are one of the largest communication platforms that secretariats can tap on. Organisers of the convention are obligated to work with the secretariat for every convention. This is not only because this is stipulated in some of their constitutions. More importantly, as coordination centres for all world clan organisation activities, they have the experience, knowledge and contacts of its member organisations. Through years of observance and participation in the convention, the secretariat understands the common problems that can happen with large-scale events. Furthermore, formal members of the world clan associations are always required to keep their information updated on the contact list managed by the secretariat. The secretariat also has the personal relationships and knowledge of the dynamics of relationships within the organisation's networks. This is because they often act as mediators and have to constantly interact with its members for other activities outside of the world clan associations. The organisers also require the secretariat's assistance to reach out to promote the convention and attract the participation of members who are not in their network.

Therefore, organisers often communicate with the secretariat for matters of convention. For example, discussions with the secretariat for the fifth World Zhang Clan Convention held in June 2011 started as early as November 2009. The secretariat also sometimes takes part in the

organisation process. No matter where the world clan convention is being held and its organiser, the secretariat remains a constant presence.

The secretariat ensures continuity of traditions within world clan organisations. According to the administrative records of one world clan organisation, three items must be satisfied. First, the basic structure of the regular convention must be in place. This includes traditions such as holding banquets, gift giving, passing of the flag and ancestral worship. Suggestions on how to avoid common problems and guidelines on how each aspect can be carried out may be offered. The general secretary would typically arrive a few days before the convention to ensure the venue and logistics are prepared so these practices can be carried out smoothly.

Second, in most cases, the secretariat will interfere in the organisation of the convention to ensure that traditions are maintained and proper etiquette is kept. One of the most important practices is to ensure the right hierarchy of individuals, which entails balancing individuals on the local organisation's VIP list and those on the organisation network's VIP list. The secretariat often directly interferes in the seating of guests of honour at the banquet, gift giving, photo-taking sessions and even transport arrangements. Individuals who are politically active, bankrupt or have a bad reputation may be banned by the secretariat from participation even if they are invited by the organisers.

Lastly, the secretariat also ensures that administrative procedures are in place to ensure the continuity of the organisation network. This includes the election procedure, membership and directorial meetings and financial accounting. It also ensures the convention does not engage in politics or religious celebrations, such as the birthday of deities. All promotional materials at the

global level need to be approved by the secretariat. Promotional materials that contain political statements, opinions about current social issues as well as policy declarations will be rejected by the secretariat. In controlling of these items, the secretariat establishes a system to ensure that the quality and the continuity of essential traditions within the organisation network.

4.5.2. Organisation magazines

The secretariat also manages the organisation's publications. There are two kinds of publications within an organisation – the commemorative magazine published by the organiser of World Clan Conventions and the organisation magazine published by its secretariat. The secretariat manages the content of the organisation's magazine. According to a senior editor for these magazines, the challenge of editing their content has always been the balance between profit and representation. Magazines sell advertisement spaces and articles to individuals to promote businesses and build reputation. Indeed, magazines require the sponsorship of these individuals but the secretariat ensures that the standards, equal representation of clan association members as well as traditions that are used to build solidarity among the different associations are well-represented.

4.5.3. Websites

Websites function as a one-stop information centre for member organisations to obtain updates on recent activities held by the world clan associations. The worldzhangclan.com and worldlins.com are examples of websites that were built for this purpose. Worldzhangclan.com was established in 2004, along with the clan's Facebook page and Weibo account. At the website, there are application forms, its constitution, activity reports, and articles on Zhang culture. There are also links to the webpages of the organisations around the world.

4.6. Conclusion

In summary, this chapter argues that “standard” traditions emerge within network organisations due to two processes. From the gift giving and holding banquets practices, I have demonstrate the process of how traditions emerge from continuity with member organisation practices. On the other hand, ancestral worship illustrates that “standard” traditions can emerge through initiatives by the organisation or individual, and subsequent circulation and repetition, which create a convergence of practices. The practices that emerge are guarded by the secretariat, which is able to control communication channels. The secretariat ensures the continuity of traditions despite changes in organisers of the activities and a lack of forced interference in the organisation of activities of world clan associations.

In this chapter, I have demonstrated that standard traditions are not embedded within the collective memory of the individual, but rather are subjected to the initiatives and interests of member organisations. Therefore, in the next chapter, I will continue the argument to demonstrate that the “invention” of tradition does not only occur from the process of localisation and the creation of local variations of traditions (Zeng, 2007). It is also influenced by transnational space created by the dynamics of interaction and interests existing within the network organisation.

Chapter Five-Organisation Dynamics and “Network Culture”

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss the relationship between the invention of Chinese tradition and organisational dynamics within network organisations. This will help to fulfil the second objective lay out in section 1.2 of my earlier chapter. In order to achieve this objective, I will examine both the organisational and structural forces that shaped the invented Chinese traditions with special focus on the activities hosted by of World Clan Associations. In my work, an “invented tradition” is defined as “a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past” (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983, p. 1).

Several existing works draw-on the “invention of traditions” to study various cultural manifestation within Chinese diasporic communities. In these works, invented traditions have been removed from *qiaoxiang* and taken root in Chinese diasporic communities. Chen (2000), who had examined Chinese weddings, funerals, religious practices, and festivals, argued that Chinese tradition had retained its continuity across time, but re-invented as it moved across spaces (Chen, 2000, p. 14). As migrants move abroad, traditions from the same origin continue to be practiced within the Chinese diasporic communities. However, variations of the same traditions emerge because of localization of Chinese traditions.

Diasporic Chinese re-invented the traditions brought from their hometown in accordance with the norms of the societies that they have settled in. The process of re-invention could also occur within clansmen organisations. The re-interpretation of Chinese traditions occurred due to the

changing needs of its members. In the context of Singapore, it was also shaped by the sociopolitical context, particularly when state-society interactions were concerned (Chan, 2003).

Besides, within *qiaoxiang*, the re-invention of tradition had occurred in response to the social and political circumstances within China. In his edited volume, Tan Chee-Beng collected a volume of case studies to illustrate the reproduction of tradition in post-Mao Southern China. One of the chapters was written by Wang (2006), who examined the cultural works of the Bureau of Culture in Quanzhou. He examined the politicized conservation of heritage and traditions in the latter, an act that was intended to replicate fictive kinship with overseas Chinese communities. In return, overseas Chinese communities contributed to the reconstruction and preservation of these once-absent traditions (Wang, 2006). The participation of overseas Chinese in *qiaoxiang* within these projects created a “negotiated” culture which was brought up in Kuah-Pearce’s (2011) book on *qiaoxiang* and Chinese Singaporeans. She argued in her monograph that groups within Singapore Chinese communities reinvented their culture when they migrated overseas. This created various forms of “sub-culture” within the cultural network. These branches of subculture shared elements that are similar to the overall cultural framework and possess features that are distinctive from it. Cultural network extends itself from the *qiaoxiang* to the various cultural branches within the various diasporic Chinese communities. Hence, when Chinese Singaporeans visited their ancestral villages, these “sub-cultures” found within Singapore interacted with the culture in the ancestral villages. Specific elements of each “sub-cultures” are selected based on the shared knowledge of what constitute the traditions. Through these interactions, culture in the ancestral villages became a “negotiated culture.”

From the review of these works, I had derived two main aspects from invention of tradition. The invention of tradition can take place either within localized settings of individual diasporic Chinese communities or within the *qiaoxiang* themselves. These works privilege a micro basis of analysis, focusing on individual relationships with *qiaoxiang* and re-interpretation of culture. There is insufficient attention given to the meso-level interactions that mediated the macro- and micro- forces that conditioned these organisations. In particular, re-invention of traditions that emerged from the transnational Chinese networks created by diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations.

This chapter builds on these existing works by focusing on “invented traditions” that took place within organizational interactions operating within transnational spaces. It takes into consideration the transnational space created through communication, information exchange and social transactions between diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations located in different countries. In order for us to study the meso-level interactions among network organisations, it is critical that we take into consideration the “network culture” and “sub-culture” that existed within these network organisations.

Differences in the socio-political environment, which I had discussed extensively in section 2.2.4, cause each voluntary organisation to reinvent its own organisational culture. This led to a variation of traditions within voluntary organisations despite sharing common primordial identity. In section 4.2.1, I have demonstrated a few of these instances through the study of the ancestral worship rites where cultural elements derived from indigenous sources were incorporated into traditions brought from the ancestral villages. Therefore, this created several sub-cultural systems within network organisations.

When organisations come together within the transnational space created by the network organisations, traditions are negotiated between member organisations. The process of negotiation creates the network culture. “Network Culture” is produced from the interaction between the various “sub-cultures” embodied in the member organisations who organised and participated in the activities of these organisation networks. The purpose of negotiation is to reproduce the collective performance of “chinese-ness”. This creates the transnational Chinese cultural network. Hence, this chapter attempts to describe the environmental context, organisational and structural dynamics that shape the emergence of “invented traditions” within network organisations.

To illustrate my argument, I will draw on the manifested rituals, practices, values and norms observed within World Clan Conventions as case studies. Following the established analytical framework laid out in section 2.2.4, the chapter will proceed its argument through three sections. Firstly, it will contextualize the macro-environment that shape the organisational field of network organisations. Secondly, I will focus on the varied structures that make “network governance” possible. In addition, I will also demonstrate the role of the lead organisation and secretariat in shaping “invented traditions”. Through these discussions, I will be able to bring out the various mechanisms available in network organisations that influence the process of invention. In the last section, I will use one of the main dyadic ties to illustrate the relational factors shaping the process of tradition re-inventions. From these three sections, I would have examined the various environmental, organisational, and structural factors that shaped the “invented traditions” in World Clan Conventions. By doing so, this chapter serves to answer how organisational dynamics shaped the invention of traditions within the context of transnational network organisations.

5.2. Brief Overview of organisation process for World Clan Conventions

World Clan Conventions are one of the main activities within World Clan Associations. The organiser of World Clan Conventions, which happens once every two to three years, is rotated between its member organisations. Member organisations host the conventions. For a member to host the convention, applicants must submit a proposal two years in advance, while concurrently bidding for the convention. As one of the secretaries said, “it is like an Olympic event” (Fieldnotes, 15 April 2016). The selected member organisation, who had won the bid, would proceed to form an independent preparatory committee. The preparatory committee is not only independent from the directorial board of the World Clan Associations, but it is led by an appointed chairperson, general secretary and executive committee as well (see figure 5.1). Positions within the preparatory committee is appointed by the host of the convention. The preparatory committee will oversee the planning and execution of the entire convention. In addition, they will also work closely with the secretariat and Chairperson of World Clan Associations to ensure the success of the World Clan Convention.

Figure 5.1: Organisation Committee in 12th World Nanan Clansmen Convention. Source: 12th World Nanan Clansmen Convention Commemorative Magazine

5.3. Environment

In this thesis, environmental context is defined as the changes in the socio-political conditions that underpin the activities and motives of World Clan Associations. Re-invented “traditions” had occurred due to variations in the socio-political context, and these can be divided into three major phases. They are the pre-1985, post-1985 and post 1990s. Within these different phases, the changing political and economic environment within Southeast Asia, Taiwan and Mainland China shaped the participating actor’s interpretation of “lineage”. These different interpretations would finally shape the “traditions” that were manifested within network organisations.

5.3.1. Pre-1985: Cultural Renaissance Movement

世界客属总会 (World Hakka Association)	1974	世界郑氏宗亲总会 (The World Cheng's Clansmen General Association)	Unknown
世界许氏宗亲总会 (World Xu Clan Association)	1982	世界王氏宗親總會 (The Federation of Ong(Wang) Clan Carnival)	1977
世界李氏宗亲总会 (World Lee Clan Association)	1973	世界陈氏宗亲总会 (World Cheng Clan Association)	1974
世界曾氏宗亲总会 (World Wide Tsang Clansmen Association)	unknown	世界邓氏宗亲总会 (World Teng Clan Association)	1974
世界颜氏宗亲总会 (World Yan Clan Association)	1974	全球梁氏宗亲总会 (International Liang's Family Association)	1970
世界柯蔡宗亲会 (World Ko & Tsai Relations Association)	1978	世界吕氏宗亲总会 (The Lu's Federation International)	1976
世界潘氏宗亲总会 (World Pan Clan Association)	1977	世界董阳宗亲总会 (World Dong Yang Association)	1982
世界至孝篤親舜裔總會 (World Zhi Xiao Du Qing Clan Association)	1982	世界昭伦宗亲总会 (World Chau Luen Association)	1982
世界马氏宗亲总会 (World Ma Clan Association)	unknown	世界黄氏宗亲总会 (World Huang Clan Association)	1980

世界林氏宗亲总会 (World Lin Clan Association)	1981	世界丘氏宗亲总会 (World Qiu Clan Association)	1979
世界冯氏宗亲总会 (World Feng Clan Association)	1959	世界中山同乡总会 (World Wide Zhong Shan Association)	1971
世界梅氏宗亲总会 (World Mei Clan Association)	1975	世界谢氏恳亲大会 (World Xie Clan Association)	1978
世界郭氏宗親總會 (World Kuo's Clan Association)	1982		

Table 5.1: World Clan Associations initiated in Taiwan: 25 out of 36 associations (exclude World Federation of Chinese Traders Alumni). Source: *ZhongHua MingGuo ZongQing PuXi XueHui*

In the 1970s, record shows an exponential growth in the number of World Clan Associations. This timing closely coincided with the cultural environment, and the diasporic politics initiated by the KMT Government in Taiwan. Meanwhile in Mainland China, it closes its doors to the world and initiated the Cultural Revolution.

After the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) assumed power in 1949, preferential treatment for overseas Chinese and their family members ceased. Family members of Overseas Chinese were suspected of being class enemies, and were thus targeted for oppression (Han, 2017). Relations between these overseas Chinese and their ancestral villages at home soured with the mass destruction of lineage artifacts and buildings that took place throughout the Cultural Revolution. Eventually, in 1968, the Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee was dissolved.

On the other side of the strait, after the Cold war, with the retreat of the KMT government to Taiwan in 1949, the KMT government had begun a series of campaign to legitimize its control over Taiwan. In 1966, the KMT government launched the Cultural Renaissance Movement in Taiwan. The Cultural Renaissance Movement was a series of cultural programs that attempted to mobilize traditional Chinese culture in the pursuit of national unity and the KMT's agenda. This was a

continuation of the cultural reunification movement in Taiwan, which witnessed the scouring of any traces of Japanese influence from Taiwan. In this movement's bid to eradicate any hints of Taiwan's colonial past under Japanese rule, Japanese publications were banned and a standardized Mandarin was imposed on the indigenous population in Taiwan. The Cultural Renaissance Movement rode upon a nationally defined Chinese culture to cultivate a spirit of national solidarity. It is a response to oppose the cultural destructions that were ongoing in Mainland China during the Cultural Revolution.

With the loss of Taiwan's United Nations' seat in 1971, traditional primordial ties were relied upon as an alternative means of conducting public diplomacy. In addition, the KMT government tried to generate support from the overseas Chinese on the basis of shared primordial ties. As a part of her diasporic policies, the KMT government attempted to portray itself as the guardian of an authentic Chinese culture (Chun, 1994). Thus, by portraying itself as a salient defender of a pristine Chinese culture that was being besieged by communist iconoclasm across the straits, the KMT's leadership and enactment of diasporic policies continued unabated. In return, the KMT gained the support of anti-Communist Overseas Chinese communities in the United States of America (USA) and various Southeast Asian Countries. Such policies also reignited the impression of Taiwan as the motherland (Wang, 2011).

Within this context, Taiwan voluntary associations such as the *Tongxianghui* and *Zongqinghui* began to extend their ties abroad. With Mainland Chinese migrants from China, who had migrated to Taiwan after World War II, as the main drivers of these associations, World Clan Associations were born. As seen from the table A, these were usually surname clan associations. Two other influential associations that emerge during this period were the World Federation of Chinese Trade Alumni and Global Chinese Language Press Associations.

Most the organisations initiated during this period had extended their “lineage” ties with clan members in other countries under the aegis of public diplomacy and national unity. According to the published annual magazines by the Republic of China Genealogical Society (*ZhongHua MingGuo ZongQing PuXi XueHui*), many of these associations’ articles relate the formation of these World Clan Associations to the political agenda of the Taiwan government. In this publication, several write-ups of World Clan associations activities can be found. For example, within the write-up of the World Gan Clan Association, it says that the World Gan Clan Association was formed with the aim of “to improve the coherence of overseas Chinese to their homeland (ROC), enhance public diplomacy, we invite all overseas Chinese to return for ancestral worship”. Similarly, in World Zhi Xiao Du Qing Clan Association, it was recorded that association’s formation would help “to improve coherence of overseas Chinese with their homeland (ROC), call for unity among the four seas”. The opening convention of the World Xu Clan Association likewise justified the group’s *raison-d-etre* in similar terms, where the organisation would serve “to unite and lead overseas Chinese, through unity and mutual help”. It also says that the World Xu Clan Association would “remember our roots and repay our homeland. We will practice the three principles of the people and unify China”. As seen from these similarly worded instances, the authors of these write-ups drafted these declarations for the purpose of promoting a common lineage culture by tapping upon extended kinships as a part of Taiwan’s diaspora policies.

5.3.2. Post-1985: Cultural synergy between Southeast Asia and Mainland China

世界颜氏总会 (World Gan Clan Association)	1991	Singapore	世界马氏联谊总会 (World Ma Clan Association)	1999	Thailand
世界庄严宗亲总会 (World Assembly Zhuang Yan Clan Reunion)	1990	Singapore	世界南安同乡联谊会 (World Nanan Clansmen Association)	1992	Malaysia

世界何氏总会 (World He Clan Association)	1994	Malaysia	世界彭氏宗亲联谊大会 (Worldwide Peng Clansmen Convention)	1993	Malaysia
世界刘氏总会 (World Liu Clan Association)	1997	Malaysia	世界晋江同乡恳亲大会 (World JinJinag Clansmen Convention)	1993	Singapore
世界戴氏宗亲总会 (World Dai Clan Association)	1994	Philippine	世界赤溪客属恳亲大会 (World ChiXi Hakka Convention)	1997	Malaysia
世界马氏联谊总会 (World Ma Clan Association)	1999	Thailand	世界庄严宗亲总会 (World Zhuang Yan Clan Association)	1990	Singapore
世界六桂堂宗亲总会 (World Liu Gui Association)	1990	Philippine	环球萧氏宗亲恳亲大会 (Xiao International Association)	1995	Thailand
世界苏姓宗亲总会 (World Su Clan Association)	1994	Philippine	世界福清同乡联谊会 (World Federation of Futsing Association)	1989	Singapore
世界惠州同乡恳亲大会 (Huizhou World Convention)	1994	Singapore	世界安溪乡亲联谊会 (World Anxi Folk Association Convention)	1992	Singapore
世界安溪乡亲联谊大会 (World Anxi Folk Association Convention)	1992	Singapore	世界丰顺同乡联谊大会 (World FengShun Convention)	1990	Singapore
世界福州十邑同乡大会 (World Federation of Funzhou Association)	1990	Singapore	世界同安联谊大会 (World TongAn Fellowship Conference)	1994	Singapore
世界中山同乡恳亲大会 (Worldwide ZhongShan Association Convention)	1996	Malaysia	世界海南乡团联谊 (International Federation of Hainan Association)	1989	Singapore

Table 5.2: World Clan Associations initiated by Southeast Asian Voluntary Associations after 1985 and before 2000. Source: Refer to Appendix B

After 1985, changes in the political conditions of Taiwan, Mainland China and Southeast Asia initiated new developments of World Clan Associations. Firstly, in Taiwan, the depoliticization of lineage took place in the year 1981 with the implementation of the Cultural Reconstruction Movement under President Chiang Ching-Kuo. In the 1990s, Taiwan underwent democratization. As a result, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) came into power and eventually assumed presidency in the year 2000. Under the leadership of the DPP, ties between diasporic Chinese and

Taiwan slowly diminished. This is because DPP is traditionally associated with advocacy of a Taiwanese identity. Riding on the wave of indigenization and de-sinicization in Taiwan, the DPP government passed a series of laws that limited citizenship rights for overseas Chinese. The target audience of diasporic policies thus pivoted from Overseas Chinese to Overseas Taiwanese (Han, 2017, p. 10). These adjustments thus privileged Chinese who could trace their ancestral lineage to Taiwan at the expense of mainland Chinese descendants. This led to a weakened connection between Overseas Chinese and the Taiwanese authorities.

Across the straits, during the reform years in 1980s, Mainland China actively sought to reestablish its relationship with the Overseas Chinese. In 1978, as a means of liaising with the Chinese abroad, the Chinese government turned their attention to the relatives of Overseas Chinese and Overseas Chinese who have returned to China by providing them with special welfare benefits. In addition to the special welfare benefits, traditional *qiaoxiang* regions such as southern provinces of Fujian and Guangdong were turned into Special Economic Zones (SEZs). The Chinese government granted special privileges for diasporic Chinese who invested in Mainland China in these special economic zones (Barabantseva, 2005, p.13). These privileges were illustrated within 1983 legislations and 1985 State Council provisions (To, 2014, p.118). The purpose of all these actions served to attract overseas Chinese capital into China in the form of donations, remittance and capital investment.

Lastly, in Southeast Asian countries, anti-Chinese movements that had persisted in the previous years since the 1950s have since subsided. The years after the 1980s marked the abolishment of anti-Chinese policies and the normalization of Mainland China's relationship with several Southeast Asian countries. Malaysia established diplomatic ties with Mainland China in 1974. The Philippines re-

opened diplomatic channels with Mainland China in 1975 while Singapore and Indonesia re-established their ties with Mainland China in 1990.

With the gradual stabilization of diplomatic relations and Southeast Asia's re-engagement of the CCP, a new set of World Clan Associations emerged. One of the most prominent platforms was the World Chinese Entrepreneurs Convention founded by Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce in 1991. Several Clan Associations within Southeast Asia also began to establish their own World Clan Organisations (see table B). In total, more than half – namely 24 out of 44 – of the World Clan Associations established during this period were founded in Southeast Asia. Unlike the pre-1985 World Clan Associations, where only 8 percent of the total associations were place-based association, many of the established associations during this period were placebased associations. After 1985, nearly 50 percent of the newly established associations were place-based associations with members identifying themselves on the basis of a common hometown.

With Taiwan becoming more irrelevant in the overall schema, many of these associations began to shift parts of their operation to Mainland China. World Clan Association would chose to establish branch organisations in China. For example, in 1978, International Association of Guan Clan and the International Longgan Association have submitted applications to establish their organizations within Mainland China (Guerassimoff & Guerassimoff, 2007). Alternatively, World Clan Associations have also began to encourage Chinese voluntary associations in China such as the Chamber of Commerce to hold the activities of the World Clan Associations.

Within this context, lineage traditions and primordial identification assumed strategic value within the World Clan Associations. In addition to constructing a sense of connected-ness and

belonging to these sub-ethnic communities, the need for business networking grew in significance. This is evident during the 12th and 13th World Nanan Clansmen Convention held in 2014 and 2016 respectively where business related activities could be observed. These activities include economic forums where prominent Nanan businessmen and government officials were invited to speak on business strategies and opportunities. Not only that, the conventions would also include tours of factories belonging to local directors of the organisers as part of the programme. In other conventions, trade deals and local trade fairs were concurrently organised. The main goal of the sub-ethnic reproduction was still the same, but the need for commercial networking grew in importance. This created new forms of activities within the World Clan Associations.

However, the assumed compatibility between business relationship and lineage traditions do not necessarily dovetail with one another, and new complications have spawned as a result. In World Lin Clan Association, various proposals had been made to incorporate opportunities for commercial exchange during various convention. However, these proposal were not accepted. According to some of the clansmen whom I spoke to during my fieldwork in various locations, they believe that business transactions can potentially hurt or devalue the worth of kinship ties. Disputes arising from differences in business interests were unavoidable and could potentially compromise the parent organisation's coherence. This failed attempt at incorporating business elements into the World Lin Clan Activities led to the formation of a splinter group in 2011, namely the World Lin Chinese Chamber of Commerce. The World Lin Chamber of Commerce operates independently of World Lin Clan Association, which further underscores a reality where business interests do not necessarily dovetail with lineage relations.

Clearly, as the internecine split within the World Lin Clan Association had demonstrated, business interests and clan affiliations do not always align themselves in a manner befitting of the bamboo network or earlier held notions of *guanxi*. Inconsistencies and contradictions over familial ties and material gains abound, and the Lin Clan had coped with this dilemma by bifurcating the two into distinctive interest groups rather than engaging both under the auspices of a single event.

5.3.3. Post-1990s: 'Going Out and Inviting In'

In post 1990s, the diasporic policies of Mainland China shifted from economic development within *qiaoxiang* to the engagement with new migrants and organisations abroad. A series of government mechanisms created for this purpose, such as the China Overseas Exchange Association, were founded in the 1990s (Liu & Dongen, 2016). Together with the *qiaoxiang* voluntary organisations organised around clan membership, they had developed a series of activities that attract diasporic Chinese into China. Chinese businesses in Mainland China were also encouraged to “go out”, and collaborate with foreign business in economics, science and technology (Liu & Dongen, 2016, p. 818).

Within the World Clan Associations, this took the form of three distinctive phenomena. Firstly, there was an increasing number of *qiaoxiang* governments who organised these conventions. Secondly, there is a prominent increase in the participation of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce from Mainland China. Lastly, in response to these two factors, and the changing member composition of overseas Chinese due to the influx of new Chinese migrants, lineage has been invested with new meanings that reflected the political agenda of the Chinese government.

In response to the changing political and economic context in Southeast Asia and Mainland China (illustrated in section 1.2), the Chinese participation increases, and they are taking an active role within the World Clan Association. Conventions organised around clan membership become readily available platforms to build business networks. To illustrate the increase activeness of Chinese participation, I will draw on the changes within the World Nanan Clansmen Conventions. During the 1st Nanan Clansmen Convention meeting held in 1992, no Chinese representative was present. In 1994, when the 2nd World Nanan Clansmen Convention was held in Philippine, four government officials, Yu Mao Gui (Quanzhou city vice mayor), Lue Guo Jing (Nanan city vice party secretary), Li Jun (Nanan city vice mayor) and Jia Qiong Na (OCAO director) were invited to sit for the meeting. Only 10 individuals representing Nanan and Quanzhou were invited to participate as a “congratulatory representative”. In 9th Nanan Clansmen Convention held in 2010, only Shen Zheng, Macau and Hong Kong clan associations were members of the Association. However, during the 13th World Nanan Convention held in 2016, 58 Chambers of Commerce from Mainland China were represented within the executive committee. The example of World Nanan Clansmen Conventions illustrates one of the many growing trends of Chinese participation.

Government agencies in collaboration with local organisations have also shown an increasing interest in engaging with these platforms to create new networks. Government agencies include the United Front Department Work Department, All-China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese, Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee, and local government agencies. Many government agencies have expressed an interest in organising the World Clan Convention. Local *qiaoxiang* governments often collaborate with local voluntary associations to bid for these conventions.

In addition, *qiaoxiang* government also encouraged the internationalization of local clan associations meetings (Guerassimoff & Guerassimoff, 2007, p. 261). They hope that through these local clan meetings, diasporic Chinese would be attracted back to participate in these meetings, and therefore recreating a sense of solidarity with the *qiaoxiang*. The Overseas Chinese Affairs Office had also organised new platforms such as the Grand Union of Global Chinese Overseas Organisations and Global Ethnic Chinese Forum that attracted a large number of representatives and participants from a wide spectrum of backgrounds (Liu & Dongen, 2016, p. 818). From here, we can see that government agencies were not just engaging with existing World Clan Associations, but creating new niche areas that would better serve their own interests.

Due to the participation of mainland Chinese organisations and government authorities, diasporic Chinese are facing new challenges in maintaining their representation within the World Clan Associations. The spike in the number of mainland Chinese participants have presented new threats to Overseas Chinese, the latter who fear that they were being crowded out from prominence by their mainland Chinese counterparts. As one clan leader noted, “there are many organisations in Mainland China. If we were to rotate the convention equally among the members, the conventions will never be held by any clan associations outside of China” (Mr Tan, 08 March 2016). Similar sentiments were also expressed in another set of meeting minutes, where a clan member remarked that, “if we allocate power according to the proportion of members, Mainland Chinese will take control of the leadership in World...(clan organisation), do you think the leaders within Overseas Chinese communities will agree?”. These remarks were often mentioned during private conversations and not during the official meetings. Through these communications and records, one can easily observe that the diasporic Chinese leaders are wary that they would lose their voice and representativeness

within World Clan Associations. This creates an underlying tension between the government authorities and diasporic Chinese voluntary organizations.

To accommodate the surge in participation by Chinese mainlanders, pre-existing rules and constitutions of these organisations have been altered. The constitution has to ensure that diasporic Chinese voluntary organizations will continue to secure their voice and rights within the formal rules of the associations. In the World Nanan Clansmen Associations, the convention is rotated to ensure that one convention will be held in Mainland China, and the other outside of Mainland China (Mr Tan, 08 March 2016). Similarly, within the International Teochew Federation, the constitution was re-drafted in 2003, and a Regular Executive Committee was formed. The committee holds the right to void any decisions made within the Federation should two or more of its committee members reject the decision. One of the criteria to become part of the Regular Executive Committee is to be one of the founding leader of the Federation, or organised at least twice of the convention. At this point in time, the regular executive committee is represented only by Southeast Asian Clan Associations as well as Hong Kong and Macau.

The participation of mainland Chinese organizations and political authorities as well as inclusion of new Chinese migrants have gradually transformed the conventional notion of “lineage” within the Conventions. New definitions of “lineage” are thus structured in a way such that they dovetail with China’s national goals which is evident given an increasing emphasis on business activities. According to one clan elder who held the 12th World Nanan Clan Convention in Singapore, he said, “in China, many of our fellow Nanan Clansmen are doing business in other provinces...they form Chamber of Commerce...(we want to) attract them to come for the convention using the Economic Forums” (Mr

Lee/2, 29 April 2016). The forums are especially attractive to these members who are looking for more business collaboration opportunities.

Another piece of evidence that showed the alignment with Mainland China's national goals was the observation that national narratives articulated by the Chinese government such as the "China Dream" and the opposition of Taiwanese independence were used within World Clan Conventions. World Zhang Clan Associations, for example, signed a "ZhengZhou" declaration in 2016 that "guards peace and unification". Chinese newspapers in Thailand, Singapore and Hong Kong reported the declaration immediately after the event (Sohu, 2017). In the 12th World Wang Clan Convention, according to its webpage, a "Chong Qing" declaration was signed in 2015. The document states, "to revive the grandness of Chinese Culture, enhance our clan members...to accomplish the shared China Dream". In World Guang Dong Community Federation, we can also see similar narratives in the "Macau Declaration" signed in 2013 ("Di Qi Jie 'ShiAo' FaBiao 'HaoJiang XuanYan' Xia Jie Yishi XiNi [7th World GuangDong Convention released the Macau Declaration],” 2013). Similar statements were being observed in the 29th World Hakka Convention held in Hong Kong with the "World Hakka Declaration" ("ShiJie KeJia Ren GongTong XuanYan" [World Hakka Declaration], 2017). As such, from these declarations, we can see the gradual alignment of many of the World Clan Associations with national narratives articulated by the Chinese government.

As shown from this section, one can see how the changes in the political environment shapes the interpretation of "lineage" and hence invented traditions. Before 1985, lineage within the World Clan Associations were linked to the anti-communist agenda and public diplomacy in Taiwan. As the environment changes, celebrations of primordial identity adopted a capitalist core. It also began to assume narratives of Mainland China's national agenda, thereby creating new forms of practices in

World Clan Conventions. Belonging to a clan membership gradually acquired new layers of meaning due to the changing environment of the World Clan Associations.

5.4. Structural Forms of Network Governance

Within the next section, I will elaborate upon the various organisation and structural dynamics within network organisations that shape the “invention” of tradition. To do so, I will first lay out how different environmental context give rise to different forms of organisation structure. After which, I will elaborate on the conditions for the formation of “lead organisation”. This will follow by identifying the various factors in determining the “central” position of a network organisation and hence identifying the “lead organisation”. After which, I would proceed to illustrate how the variations in the structural positioning of “lead organisations” shapes the extent of influence the actors exercise. In the last part of this section, I would bring out the mechanisms that shape actors’ interaction, and performances of “invented tradition”.

Environmental Context and Organisation Structure: Registration Laws

Registration laws in different historical periods shaped the organisation structure of the network organisation. In Pre-1985, many of the World Clan Associations were registered under the “Civil Association Act” in Taiwan. In the process of registration, the constitution was drafted in accordance to the guideline available in the Cooperative & Civil Associations Preparatory Office. The guideline contains information such as the number of directors and committee members, length of tenure, nationality of directors as well as rules on conducting meetings for the association. Hence, the constitutions in associations such as World Lin Clan Association, mirror the strict guidelines found

in the Cooperative & Civil Associations Preparatory Office. This gave rise to the organisation structure observe in World Lin Clan Association.

After 1985, there were two kinds of registration behaviors that shape the organisation structures of World Clan Associations. First, some associations such as World Nanan Clansmen Convention chose not to be registered in any country. Hence, there are no fixed official secretariat and guidelines on holding meetings are flexible.

On the other hand, some associations chose to register in Hong Kong under Hong Kong Companies Ordinance. In this period, Hong Kong had emerged as the preferred location for registration due to the ease of registration. Registering under the Hong Kong Companies Ordinance gives two benefits. First, it allows the association to run business for profit, and second, the association is regarded as a separate legal entity. As a legal entity in its own right and separate from its owners, it helps to protect the registered owner in times of financial difficulties.

The Hong Kong Companies Ordinance gives much flexibility to the the organisation structures of World Clan Associations registered in Hong Kong. The only key limitation within the Companies Ordinance is section 474, which states “secretary of a company must...have its registered office or a place of business in Hong Kong”. Unlike the “Civil Association Act” in Taiwan, it does not require the association to submit preparatory and general meeting minutes. Any changes in the organisation structures does not need to be reported. Hence, associations such as World Zhang Clan Association would usually have two secretariat, one which is only in charge of generating financial reports and tax issues located in Hong Kong. The other, located elsewhere to coordinate their activities. They have the flexibility of shaping the organisation structures in accordance to their own interest.

5.4.1. Lead Organisation-secretariat

Within a network organisation, the “lead organisation’s” interest can influence the collective goals of the network structure. Therefore, in the case of World Clan Associations, the organisation that controls the secretariat, and the chairperson can influence the traditions that emerge.

In the four World Clan Associations examined within this study, all the associations are variations of lead organisation-governed networks. In this thesis, “lead organisation governed networks” are defined as horizontal networks where a single organisation, theoretically a part of the network itself, heads the coalition on the basis of superior resources and an established legitimacy. Having to be in this position allows them to coordinate network level activities and establish key decisions within the organisation. Governance involves “the use of institutions and structures of authority and collaboration to allocate resources and to coordinate and control joint action across the network as a whole” (Provan & Kenis, 2008, p. 3). In each of these organisation structures, one can identify the presence of a “secretariat” (refer to image E) that coordinates all the daily activities, and an elected chairperson that leads the World Clan Association. As illustrated in section 3.3, most secretariats for World Clan Association are located within an existing member organisation.

There are two main factors that influence the member who assumes the position of “lead organisation” in World Clan Association. They are the “first mover’s advantage” as well as the social capital possess by the “chairperson”. These two factors determine the different patterns of network governance structure of the World Clan Associations in the initial stages of formation.

In order to illustrate both factors, I use Bourdieu's concept of field and capital. According to Bourdieu, he identifies three distinct forms of capital: cultural capital, social capital and economic capital. In this section, I will focus on social and economic capital. Social capital is understood as "aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition". The volume of social capital is dependent on "the size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right" (Bourdieu, 1986, p.86).

The position of a social agent within an autonomous "field" is determined by the volume and structure of their capital. A "field" in Bourdieu's sense, is an "autonomous domain of activity that responds to rules of functioning and institutions that are specific to it and which define the relations among the agents" (Hilgers and Mangez, 2015, p.5). The main bearers of the capital of a specific field are able to define the rules and legitimize the activities in the field (Hilgers and Mangez, 2015, p.6). For example, Lin Jia Zhen, possesses a high volume of social and symbolic capital. He was able to define the standard ancestral worship rituals in World Lin Clan Association (refer to section 4.3.1).

The "first mover's advantage" refers to the advantages brought about by being the first initiator of the World Clan Association. An organisation who initiate the first convention or meeting has the advantage of assuming the role of the "lead organisation" in the initial stage of formation. In World Lin Clan Association, World Zhang Clan Association and International Teochew Federation, all three "lead organisations" (secretariats) are located within members who held the first meeting/convention.

One of the main reason is because, as the first organiser, the networks that were mobilized to attend the first preparatory meetings and convention are likely to be networks closely associated with them. These networks would later form the founding members of the association. These founding members make the key decisions in the earlier stages. The World Lin Clan Association for example, was based on the networks associated with the World Chinese Trader's Convention held in 1977. The purpose of this convention is to build relationships between overseas Chinese traders with Taiwan, so as to promote economic exchanges. During the convention, exhibitions are held to promote export products from Taiwan. In 1977, Lin Deng (Chair of Temple of the Lin's Ancestor Juridicial Foundation, Taiwan), the key founder of World Lin Clan Association, invited all businessmen with the surname Lin for breakfast during the convention. During the breakfast, he generated support for the formation of World Lin Clan Association. These Chinese businessmen were likely to be businessmen with commercial affiliation to Taiwan. As such, the members who attended the initial preparatory meeting and formed the first World Lin Clan committee were both personal networks closely related to Lin Deng. They were also overseas Chinese businessmen with strong economic interest in Taiwan. This created a "field" which were based on a network of connections related to Taiwan Lin Clan Associations. Therefore, giving the Taiwan Lin Clan Associations the advantage of emerging as the "center" of the World Lin network organisation (refer to section 5.4.3).

Another factor that shapes the pattern of network governance is the amount of social capital possessed by the Chairperson. The higher the volume of social capital possessed by the Chairperson, the greater the influence of the individual within the field generated within the network organisation. The influence translates to having a greater say within the organisation. It also helps to raise funds

and mobilize resources from the other members (refer to section 5.4.4). According to one of the members of World Clan Association who participated in the initial process of organising the association, he said,

“In the beginning, the (informant’s) clan association helped set up the World Clan Association. We travelled around Nanyang and Taiwan to visit all the clan associations. However, we do not have someone as reputable and rich as (name of the first chairperson)...Before (name of the first chairperson) assumed his position, there was another guy who wanted to set up .the same World Clan Association...it failed because he does not own as much resources...and not as influential” (Mr Zhang/2, 3rd Jun 2016).

From the interview above, it shows that the initial process of setting up the patterns of network governance was also influenced by the individual who possesses high amount of social and economic capital. By extension, his influence shapes the extent of control and influence of the lead organisation and secretariat. After all, they serve as the informal arms of the Chairperson’s influence.

The volume of social capital owned by the Chairperson is determined by both his achievements outside of the network organisation as well as the contributions he made within the network organisation. The hierachization of each field is determined by “an external...principle of hierarchization that applies to the field the hierarchy prevailing in the field of power, and an internal...principle that hierachizes in accordance with the values specific to the field” (Hilgers and Mangez, 2015, p.8). The hierarchy of the individual is determined largely by his achievements outside of the network organisation in business or cultural arts scene. Lin Deng, for example, was the founder of Goldsun group, a large corporation in Taiwan that operates TransAsia Airways and Taiwan Secom

Co.Tiong Hiew King, founding chairperson of World Zhang Clan Association controls Rimbunan Hijau, a Malaysian multi-national logging corporation. The economic capital increases the volume of social and symbolic capital owned by the Chairperson, giving them and their affiliated association a greater influence over the network organisation created. Therefore, shaping the position of “lead organisation” and pattern of network governance.

5.4.2. Centrality, Secretariat and “Lead Organisation”

Image 5.1

Image 5.2

Image 5.3

Image 5.4

Image 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4 are World Lin Clan Association, World Zhang Clan Association, World Nanan Clansmen and International Teochew Federation respectively

World Lin Clan Associations

World Zhang Clan Association

International Teochew Federation

World Nanan Clansmen Convention

Image 5.5: Organisational structure of the four case studies

Image 5.1 to 5.4 represent the network governance structure of the four organisations networks. The lead organisation occupies a position of high “centrality” in the network structure. I have represented their presence within the network structure using “yellow” nodes. “Centrality” is measured by “degree”, “between-ness” and ‘closeness” on the structural level (Brass, and Burkhardt, 1992). “Degree” is based on the number of links one actor has with the other. “Between-ness” measures the extent to which the actor fall between pair of other actors on the shortest paths connecting them. Lastly, “closeness” will examines the quality of the relationship, and how “close” a person is to another person in the network.

The secretariat, and the chairperson of each World Clan Association is a part of the organisation network’s core. Network structure takes precedence over hierarchical structure within World Clan Associations. Positions within the organisational structure as shown in image E are often represented on a symbolic basis. These positions are given to secure resources and establish one’s reputation. Since participation and compliance occur on a voluntary basis, there are no sanctions to ensure the compliance of orders finalized within the decision-making structure. Hence, “central” actors within these network structure often exert more influence. According to the concept of “centrality”, there

are three factors used to secure the “centrality” of secretariat and chairperson within the network organizations. This is based on “degree”, “between-ness” and “closeness”.

Firstly, the secretariat facilitates all administrative communication between its members, thereby positioning themselves as the member with the highest “degree” of interconnectedness within the network. By working closely with the Chairperson, secretariat constantly updates their contact list, and ensures that information sent to them are accurate. Secretariat in all four World Clans association have established themselves as the most connected node. Hence, by ensuring that they are the most connected node as compared to the others within the World Clan Associations, they can maintain as the center position.

Secretariats do not just serve as the “administrative” center, they also fill up the “structural holes” within the organisation network by acting as middle-men between member organisations. This further enhances the number of relations that they have with other organisations. For example, a series of requests were made to the World Zhang Clan Association in 2010 as illustrated within reports of the 5th General Meeting. On the 4 December, Taiwan Zhang Liao Jian Clan Association paid a visit to Singapore Zhang Clan Association and accompanied by the general secretary of World Zhang Clan Association to visit the Riau Island, Indonesia Kalimun Zhang Clan Associations. Similarly, a request was made from a representative in Qinghe People’s Congress for the general secretary of World Zhang Clan Association to bring them around the southern part of Mainland China for networking. Mainland Chinese officials have also made requests for the general secretary to accompany them for visits in Southeast Asia. As member organisations tap into the central position of the secretariat to enhance their network, the secretariat also increases the number of networks it has with other organisations.

Another role that ensured the secretariat and lead organisation remains central to the organisation network is the role of initiating contacts in the recruitment of new member organisations. However, many of the new organisations are brought in through personal connections. Within the World Lin Clan Association, new members are included, at times, through initiatives of the members who have participated in the Lin Clan Organisations in Taiwan. One of the senior director of Japan Lin Clan Association was originally from Taoyuan, Taiwan and lived in Japan for several years as a representative of a Taiwan Multinational Company. Whenever he returns, he would visit the secretariats in Taiwan (Mr Lin/6, 01 July 2016). The Cambodia Lin Clan Association and the Fujian Bigan Research Society were also drawn in by a personal relationship with a member from the Taiwan Lin Clan, who had previously invested in Mainland China and Cambodia (Mr Lin/5, 01 June 2016). According to a member of the World Lin Clan Association, one of the key responsibilities of the secretariat is to expand the organisation's activities, through the recruitment of new members and allowing new members the opportunity to host the convention (Lin C. 06 June 2016). This same process can also be observed for the World Zhang Clan Association, as they assisted in the registration of new members. The General Secretary often travels to various places in mainland China and parts of Southeast Asia to recruit new members who have yet to register.

"Closeness" of these relationships are maintained through regular visits between associations. This includes participating in the activities and festivals organised by its members. "Closeness" extends itself to the private level. This includes taking the time to pay respect and attend the weddings, and funerals of its members or their kin. Take for example, in 2011, World Zhang Clan received news of the passing of a prominent Singapore Zhang Clan member who also holds a position in the World Zhang Clan Association. The secretariat received over 60 donations from members

around the world. An altar was set up in the Singapore Zhang Association for 49 days for clan members from different parts of the world to come and pay their respects. Similarly, in an interview with one of the Chairpersons in the World Lin Clan Association, he said that “In Taiwan, especially the more rural places, it becomes more important for the chairperson to be present... during the wedding or funeral...it matters if you attend. Similarly in Southeast Asia, they treat this importantly...when his (referring to one of the director in World Lin Clan Association) mother passed away, he informed us and we were all there the next day” (Lin C., 06 June 2016). The events demonstrated not just the solidarity shared by members of the World Clan Association on a personal level, but also the importance of organisation in the “center” to be present in major life events to maintain “closeness” with its members.

Therefore, based on degree, between-ness and closeness, both the secretariat and Chairperson can maintain positions of high “centrality” within the network structure. In the next part, I will explore how the distribution of “centrality” shapes the influence of the “lead organisations” on the “invented tradition”.

5.4.3. Variation in Governance Structure

The distribution of “centrality” shapes the extent of influence the “lead organisation” can have on the “invented tradition”. Through the comparison made between two extreme examples, World Lin Clan Association, and World Nanan Clansmen Convention, I will examine the difference influences layered upon the “invented traditions”

In the World Lin Clan Association (image 5.1), both the secretariat and the Chairperson of the executive committee, who manage the daily affairs of the World Lin Clan Association, are located

within the same group of organisations. This group of associations forms the “center” of the Lin network organisation. This can be deduced based on the location of secretariat and the personal background of the Chairperson. The secretariat between Taipei, Taiwan Provincial and Republic of China Lin Clan Associations share the same resources, manpower and work space. Also, from the background of the previous five Chairpersons of World Lin Clan Association, all of them had experience managing the Taiwan Provincial Lin Clan Association. Lin Cheng, for example, was previously the Chairperson of Taipei, YongHe District Lin Clan Association, before becoming the Chairperson of Taiwan Provincial Lin Clan Association, and eventually taking up the role of Chairperson in World Lin Clan Association.

The management experience of the Chairperson ensures that the World Clan Association remains deeply embedded within the dynamic networks of Lin Clan associations in Taiwan. This is due to two reasons. Firstly, when the Chairperson assumes the position of World Clan Associations, he would bring with him the networks that he had accumulated in previous posts as he progresses slowly up the associations’ organisation ladder. Before he could assume the role of the chairperson in national level associations, he must secure the recognition and votes of smaller associations. According to Lin C. (06 June 2016), he said,

“To be a chairperson, you have to give up a lot of time and money. For example if you are the Taiwan Provincial Lin Clan Association’s chairperson, you have to be present in every meetings of member associations...such as Hualien City, TaiTung City, Kee Lung...before assuming the post of chairperson, as a vice-chairperson, you have to go

for all the events...in this case, by the time you want to be the Taiwan Provincial Lin Clan Chairperson, people would recognize you”.

The process of accumulating recognition and personal networks while the chairperson progresses up the organisation’s ladder are brought into the World Clan Association when he assumes his position. The associated networks helps the chairperson to secure resources and generate support to participate in the World Clan Associations. Therefore, embedding the World Lin Clan Association deeply with the Lin Clan networks in Taiwan.

Not only that, the chairperson will carry with him a group of trusted staff and directors that follow him into the World Clan Associations. According to Mr Hong (02 July 2016), one of the senior clan members in the association, he said,

“When the chairperson of the (district name) association became the chairperson of Taiwan Provincial Lin Clan Association. He would bring 20-30 directors with him into the association...ensure that people will vote for him...the more people he brings, he ensures support from the various district associations”.

As the chairperson assumes his position in World Clan Association, he will bring a team of people whom he can trust. From the conversation above, he would also confer positions to secure the support of individuals who voted for him, and to ensure continuous support in future activities. One of the vice general secretaries of the World Lin Clan Association for example, worked with the chairperson of World Lin Clan Association since he was a chairperson of a district association. He continued his position when the chairperson was voted into the Taiwan Provincial Lin Clan Association as well as the World Lin Clan Association. Therefore, practices within the local clan

associations in Taiwan were carried over to the World Clan Association with the appointment of the Chairperson. This also ensured that the Taiwan Lin Clan associations consolidated its central position in the Lin network organization.

Therefore, a single yellow node shown in image 5.1 represents the “central” position in the World Lin Clan Association. In this instance, the yellow node represents the Taiwan Lin Clan associations. Since the secretariat is formally recognized within the constitution, the relationship between the yellow node and the other nodes is represented with a solid line in image 5.1.

Occupying a strong “central” node explains the influence of the Taiwan Lin Clan associations over the World Lin network organisation. Common practices that have emerged in the World Lin Clan Association bear a huge resemblance with practices established by the Taiwan Provincial Lin Clan Association. As reflected in section 4.3, the methods of ancestor worship, meeting structure and function of the organisations are similar to the Taiwan Provincial Lin Clan Associations. For example, within the directorial and general meetings of Lin Clan associations, members must conduct ancestral rites at the start of every meeting. This was not observed in neither Yayasan Marga Lim in Medan nor Lim See Tai Chong Soo Kiu Leong Tong in Singapore. The manner by which meeting minutes were structured, as well as processes of conducting meetings also shared many similar traits. Traditions and practices found within the Taiwan Provincial Lin Clan Association, Taipei Lin Clan Association, and Republic of China Lin Clan Associations are often brought forward into the World Lin Clan Conventions regardless of the changes in the organisers.

The case study of World Lin Clan Association provides a stark contrast to the World Nanan Clansmen Convention. In the case of World Nanan Clansman Convention, there is no single official

appointed administrative center to manage the network (image 5.3). The secretariat and the chairperson positions rotates depending on the organiser who is holding the event. In the words of an interviewee, “Convention is shared governance (*gong zhi*)...this year is Singapore (referring to the convention), the secretariat is held in Singapore, if next year (the convention) shifts to Philippine, the secretariat shifts to Philippine...” (Mr Lee, 30 March 2016). Decision-making only happens during the general meetings held in every World Nanan Clansmen convention.

The center (indicated by the yellow node) in this case, is the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (OCAO). Due to its unofficial status, dotted lines were used to represent the relationship of the “center” with the other nodes. It is deemed un-official as it is not stipulated within the constitution that OCAO should help in the coordination of convention activities. However, in recent years, OCAO has emerged as a coordinator for various administrative functions. OCAO came to assume this position because of the “broker” position it holds in the Nanan Organisation Network. Overseas Chinese organizations often relied on the assistance of United Front Work Department (UFWD) to invite officials and Chamber of Commerce within Mainland China. Nevertheless, despite its unofficial status, the OCAO continued to help in receiving applications to hold the convention, coordinate invitations, and manage the meeting process.

However, as compared to the World Lin Clan Association, because of its unofficial status, the influence of the OCAO is dependent entirely on its dyadic relationship with the event organiser. As a result, the OCAO’s involvement varies greatly among different organisers. Participants from OCAO or UFWD were minimal during the 10th World Nanan Clansmen Convention held at Jarkata, Indonesia in 2012. The organisers were focused on using this convention to express its local identity and detested

the involvement of any officials (Mr Dai, 30 November 2016). However, during the 13th World Nanan Clansmen Convention, held in Pattaya, Thailand in 2016, the OCAO and UFWD were deeply involved with the planning, organisation, reception and speech drafting. Micromanagement of this nature extended to the drafting of the event's seating arrangement. The unwritten status of OCAO and UFWD as the "center" of organisation network meant that it is dependent on the organisers to decide upon the extent that they would like to engage with these informal coordinators, therefore constraining the OCAO and UFWD influence within the organisation network by fiat.

Images 5.2 and 5.4 represent two other variations of organisation network embodied by the World Zhang Clan Association and the International Teochew Federation. These are considered "partnership" centers because of the role division between chairperson and the secretariat. The secretariat is managed by Singapore Zhang Clan Association while the chairperson is from Malaysia Zhang Clan associations. Therefore, the World Zhang Clan Association centers on a partnership bond between Zhang Clan Associations in Malaysia and the Singapore Zhang Clan Association. As seen from table A below, the main Zhang Clan Association involved is the Persatuan Klan Zhang Negeri Sarawak. The secretariat is managed by Singapore Zhang Clan Association, and until 2018, the chairperson of World Zhang Clan Association was held by Malaysia Zhang Clan Members (see table below). Together, they manage the various subcommittee within the organisation network. The other members of World Zhang Clan Associations are represented within the presidium, executive committee and general meetings.

Name	Executive Committee in World Zhang Clan Association	Concurrent Position in local Zhang Clan Associations
张晓卿 Tiong Hiew King	1 st and 2 nd Executive Committee	Permanent Honorary Chairperson and Founding Chairperson of Persatuan Klan Zhang Negeri Sarawak
张允伏 Teo Hoon Hong	3 rd and 4 th Executive Committee	Chairperson of Singapore Zhang Clan Association
张贵芳 Chong Kiew Kong	5 th Executive Committee	South Johor Zhang Clan Association
张庆信 Tiong King Sing	6 th Executive Committee	Honorary Chairperson of Persatuan Klan Zhang Negeri Sarawak
张仕国 Tiong Su Kouk	7 th Executive Committee	Permanent Honorary Chairperson of Persatuan Klan Zhang Negeri Sarawak

Table 5.3: List of Chairperson in World Zhang Clan Association

Similarly, the International Teochew Federation is also engaged in the partnership as represented by image 5.4. This is different as compared to the World Zhang Clan Association, whose chairpersons are generally from a Malaysia organisations with a permanent secretariat located in Singapore. Within the International Teochew Federation, the secretariat is permanently located within the “lead organisation”: Federation of Hong Kong Chiu Chow Community Organisations. The chairperson of International Teochew federation, rotates every two years. This rotation depends on where the following International Teochew Convention will be held. The partnership changes every two years because the position of chairperson is being rotated between different members every 2 years. Together, the secretariat coordinates other platforms such as the International Teochew Academic Platform established in 1993. Members are represented within the executive committee and general meeting.

Therefore, as seen from the comparison between the various methods of network governance, in particular from World Lin Clan Association and World Nanan Clansmen Convention, the extent of influence possessed by the “lead organisation” is dependent upon the concentration of “centrality” and recognition within the World Clan Association. Secretariat, chairpersons, and their associated organisations occupy the “lead organisation” positions within the network organisations. “Invented traditions” that have manifested within the conventions are ultimately molded by the practices and culture of “center” organisations. As such, this section demonstrates how structures of network governance have shaped the invention of tradition in the context of network organisation.

5.4.4. Network Management: Institutional Mechanisms and Mobilization

The mechanisms in network governance also shape the traditions as they determine how organisations within the network organisation interact with, and influence one another. The lead organisations rely on coordination mechanisms to keep the network functioning. Coordination mechanisms “have the very difficult tasks of governing uncertainty, managing conflict between members, and, in general, coordinating network activities” (Dongen, 2013, p. 54; Moretti, 2017). In order to identify the coordinating mechanisms, I will focus on three aspects within the four network organisations under study in this thesis. The first aspect that I will focus on is the formal rules that govern institutional behaviors within network organisations. Secondly, my analysis revolves around the mechanisms that allow for the resolution of personal differences and disputes in order to achieve collective goals at a network level. The collective goals include successful performance of collective “Chinese-ness”, and completing major projects that the organisation seeks to accomplish during the conventions. Lastly, I will also focus on how conflicts and differences in opinion resolved. With that,

this part of the chapter divides the mechanisms into two distinct types, namely the institutional mechanisms, and behavioral mechanisms.

Institutional Mechanisms

In organisation networks, by-extension of Confucianism, the primordial identity embodied within members enable collaboration to occur. This has to be guided by institutional mechanisms. Institutional mechanisms are “structured mechanisms that guide interactions on ordered paths” (Moretti, 2017, p. 58). Within most of the World Clan Associations, the guidelines of interaction were formalized within the constitution. In the World Lin Clan Association’s constitution for example, it is stipulated that an executive committee and supervisory board meeting is to be held once every 6 months, and a general meeting should be held annually. The regular executive meetings and supervisory board meetings are held once every 3 months. The rules can extend itself to the arrangement of meetings, and have also taken the form of guidelines for appropriate behaviors throughout these meetings. The guidelines of the World Lin Clan Association, for example, clearly defines the roles of the member who chairs the meetings, stipulate the format of the meeting minutes as well as the rules of giving suggestions, express agreements and raise questions. All these establish a foundation for effective communication and information sharing, which in turn make achievement of collective goals possible.

Although collective decisions are made through informal private dialogue governed by unwritten conventions, the presence of voting as stipulated within the constitution ensures that meeting comes to a collective decision. However, in most directorial and general meetings in the World Clan Associations, meetings rarely last for more than an hour. The meeting would often end

with a decision announced without formal voting and everyone clapping in unison and agreement. In such cases, decisions were either made prior to the meeting, or in some cases, governed by unwritten conventions.

During my interview with an organisation elder member of the organisation network, he narrated the story of how they come to a collective decision. In his description, he was narrating how they decide the next organiser of the convention, he said,

“When (one of the organisations) wanted to organise the convention that year, the night before the meeting, they went around to several hotel rooms (the place where representatives of clan organisations stay) to ask for support in their appeal...the ones they are more familiar...for (those organisation such as) Myanmar, where they have no contacts ...but we have, we would call the (clan) leaders of the Myanmar side, to help them...” (Mr Lee, 30 March 2016)

In such scenarios, the proponents who wants to hold the convention would first try to garner support from participating organisations. This creates and ensures a certain level of consensus among participants prior to the meeting. During the meeting, the proponents would first articulate his suggestion, and those whom he had made prior contacts would follow by clapping in agreement. Thus, it is clear that decisions are often made in advance behind the scenes, since such meetings only serve to rubber stamp an already premediated ‘consensus.’

Disputes that arose within the meeting are also rarely resolved by votes, but rather by unwritten conventions such as “comity” (“*li rang*”). Since the relationships between the organisations are built on common markers of identification, such as kinship, it made sense for detractors to make

their opposition known behind the scenes, instead of airing out their dissatisfaction publicly at these meetings. Concurrently, proponents of a given idea would attempt to win these dissident factions by engaging them on an informal basis. As an elder during the interview had said,

“it is very simple...we are all from the same place (territorial origin)... not a company or a corporation...do not need (votes)...if there is anything, people would just put it on the table to discuss, after discussion, we would make a decision” (Mr Lee, 30 March 2016)

During the decision making process, one has to understand the consensus that is being articulated by the participants present in the meeting. If the dominating opinion did not fall inline with what one is attempting to achieve, he would have to demonstrate his generosity by withdrawing his proposal. This ensures that a consensus is achieved by having all the participating members to clap in unity and agreement. It is undesirable for conflicts to go beyond the meetings and into the public eye.

Lastly, interlocking directorship is also central to ensure commitment, and to raise funds for the organisation. Interlocking directorship remains a central characteristic within the Chinese communal leadership structure (Liu & Wong, 2004, p. 51; Skinner, 1958). Leaders assume several concurrent positions within business and associations networks. This allowed them to build interrelated networks and relationships through holding multiple positions. In all organisation networks, the bulk of the directors hold concurrent positions within the World Clan Organisation as well as their local clan organisations. Positions are given to not only ensure representativeness of member organisation in the decision making process, but also to secure the leaders' commitment. In some of organisation

networks, it can also help to ensure resources and time commitment. In the World Lin Clan Association, for example, holding a specific position meant donating a specific amount of money to the association annually. This is also known as “*zhi wu juan*” (occupation donation). The number of position holders determine the amount of funds that the association is able to raise to sustain their activities.

Behavioral Mechanisms: Framing and Mobilization

Mobilization of member organisations for resources, information and commitment is central to the emergence of a collective decision. We will use three different scenarios to examine the framing and mobilization of some member organisation resources. In the first scenario, we will look at the fundraising for a flood in Nan’an caused by Typhoon Meranti in 2016 during the 13th World Nanan Clansmen Convention, the latter which generated around 22 Million RMB in response. The second scenario examined in this chapter is the fund-raising for the construction of World Lin Cultural Museum in WeiHui, Bigan Temple between the year 2009 and 2012. This initiative led to the raising of 6 Million RMB. The last scenario is the fundraising for Zhang Ancestral Temple Hall (“*HuaXiaZhangShiZhuTing*”) which amounts to a total of 40M RMB. From the 3 scenarios raised above, five main framing and mobilization strategies to generate resources for the projects were observed. They are the reinforcement of primordial affiliation, alignment of goals, leading by example, peer control, and conferring reputations.

Although individuals participate in the convention for a variety of reasons, these reasons were affiliated to the common primordial identity, which can be interpreted as an expression of the organisation’s common goal. These common goals and primordial affiliations are strongly articulated

within the song, flag and crest (Zeng, 2007). Besides articulating the common goals within these symbols, the different interests and projects have to also be aligned with the common goal while articulating and interacting with one another. For example, although participants of these conventions may arrive in the event's destination for the ostensible purpose of registering their attendance at these conventions, they may have other peripheral interests to attend to as well. This include tourism, seeking business opportunities, or organisation networking. Private companies may approach organisers to participate in the convention, as they see the convention as an opportunity to promote their products through sponsorship. The World Zhang Clan Association for example, had received requests from toiletry and wine companies to participate in the association's activities. Whatever these reasons were, these companies have to frame their interests under the common goal of contributing towards well-being and cultural prominence of the Zhangs.

After framing the event under the collective network goal, the organisers who wanted to use these conventions to raise funds would remind the participants of their primordial affiliation. The narrative repeatedly reminds the members that by belonging to the clan, they needed to fulfil a certain level of responsibilities, and obligations. This was evident in a strategizing report produced by the 4th World Zhang Convention, which wanted "to use the success stories of predecessors to encourage donations". This is similarly observed during the fund raising of World Lin Clan Museum at *Bigan* Temple, and Meranti Typhoon in World Nanan clansmen Convention. Narratives that reinforce the cogence and worth of clan membership are consistently re-articulated. This reminds the audience of their responsibility as clan members thus nudging them towards supporting their respective clan associations' cause in turn.

Using peer pressure, and to “lead by example” helps to raise more funds. In an interview with one of the chairpersons of the World Lin Clan Association, he mentioned that it is important for him to initiate the fund raising and donate a sizable amount to the needy cause in question. This is his “responsibility” as a Chairperson (Lin Jia Zheng, 07 June 2016). According to records in the World Lin Clan Association meeting minutes, as a sign of respect, the other clan members would not donate more than the Chairperson would. Hence, by kicking off the fund raising with a significant amount, it provide a basis for aspiring donors to peg their respective donations to.

In some other organisation networks, individuals will be placed within the crowd to kick-start and keep the momentum of donation going. This creates a ripple effect that pressures other participants to donate during the convention.

Conferring reputation to an individual also helps to accumulate resources. During one of such fund raising events, the chair of the meeting would attempt to raise funds by first describing her personal experience of her visit to the clan association of a specific director. She would then comment during the event on how generous and wealthy the association is, before asking the person to “express” (*biaoshi*) his opinion about the fund-raising project. The director, as a reply to her approach, would respond to her with a specific amount of money (Fieldnotes, 19 November 2014). In this instance, it is very good example on how one can raise the reputation of influential individuals in exchange for donations. In another case study of a different organisation network, donations to the organisation project allowed the individual to receive a plaque or a certificate. A book called “Donation Memorial” (Gong De Ji Nian Ce) honored all donors, and the amount donated. On rare occasions, a more permanent structure such as huge plaques will be erected on behalf of the donors

(Fieldnotes 09 August 2016). For examples, name of donors, who had donated above 50,000RMB, together with their histories, were carved onto the pillars erected in front of the Zhang Ancestral temple. Such methods of acknowledgement provide an excellent venue for donors to accentuate their clan's legacy while raising their own profile vis-avis other clan members.

Lastly, the success of mobilization is also dependent on the volume of social capital possessed by the chairperson of the organisation network. In the formation of organisation networks, the success of initial mobilizations were often dominated by influential individuals. This include founding Chairperson of Persatuan Klan Zhang Negeri Sarawak, Tiong Hiew King and Chairperson of Taiwan Temple foundation, Lin Deng. These individuals are all prominent businessman and clan leaders in their own country. They not only enjoyed high reputations, but also possessed a large number of connections. All these characteristics made it easier for organisations to raise funds, secure participation, and mobilize resources from other members (Mr Zhang/2, 03 June 2016). According to a clan elder in World Lin Clan Association, he said,

“It is dependent on the personal relationships of the chairperson. You can send an invitation over to invite specific clan members, but without any connection, people would ignore you. If there is some form of established relationships, people would come and support to boost member's participation” (Fieldnotes, 08 January 2016).

Personal networks of the initiator of the mobilization determines the success of the network organisations.

5.5. Relational Characteristics

One of the main dyadic relationship that shapes the “invented culture” manifested during the convention is the relationship shared between the organiser of the convention and the secretariat. The interaction between both organisations determine to the extent of the organiser’s autonomy when deciding to appropriate elements of indigenous culture and practices into the organiser’s running of day-to-day affairs. Therefore, three main factors within this relationship determine the nature of negotiation between the organiser and the secretariat. They are: firstly, the extent the organiser wants to use these conventions as an expression of local identification; alignment in goals; and the prevailing asymmetry in knowledge, resources and power.

5.5.1. Local Identification

Conventions are avenues for organisers to express their local identification. The extent of local influence is still dependent on the purview of the center, thus it may led to collaboration or resistance of interference from the “center”. In one organiser’s preparation for a World Lin Clan Convention, the conversation about whether to use the ancestor worship “standards” proposed by the World Lin Clan Association secretariat goes as follows:

1:03:54 “Ancestor worship is important, regarding this issue, we need to decide if we would take charge of this as part of our responsibility. If we want Taiwan to be responsible, they are willing to do it...shall we let Taiwan do it? or should we do it”

1:07:35 “We receive authorization from them to be the organiser of the convention. We have the right to ask for things. They have no right to request us to do anything”

1:12:43 “Since this event is held in (country A), we should use the (country A) style of conducting the rites”

The desire to express their local identity in the convention can stalled suggestions and collaboration with the secretariat. In the conversation above, the organiser attached its local identification with the rites of ancestral worship and refused suggestions from the secretariat. Their interest in protecting and expressing local identification are the major driving factors that pushed them to hold conventions that are independent from the world organisation’s influence.

Adopted symbols such as crests and organisation songs can be re-designed by local organisers to emphasize their local identity. When the World Nanan Clansmen Convention was held in Indonesia, the organiser had re-scripted the Convention song to include Indonesia traditional musical instruments such as the Kedang, Kecapi and Suling. The crest, an important symbol that express the unity of the Nanan clansmen, is also often re-designed (Mr Dai, 25 November 2016).

From left to right: 11th, 2nd and 7th World Nanan Clansmen Convention Crest held in Indonesia, Philippine and Taiwan respectively. Source: World Nanan Clansmen Convention Commemorative Magazines

Organisers incorporated certain local elements or part of their crest within the World Clan Organisation crest. In the 11th World Convention of Nanan Clansmen held in Indonesia, the ring of patterns represent unhusked rice. It is intended to represent harvest. As the biggest producer of rice in the world, the use of unhusked rice as symbols also brought out the unique feature of Indonesia (Mr Dai, 25 November 2016). Harvest represent collectiveness and common prosperity of Nanan clansmen. In other cases, elements of the organiser's crest were incorporated into the World Nanan Clansmen Convention crest. From the records of the 11th World Nanan Clansmen Convention preparatory meeting minutes, the crest of the 2nd Convention held in the Philippines was subsequently appropriated as a part of the Philippines' Lam An Association crest. The map of Nanan within the crest is not an accurate territorial representation of the current map of Nanan; yet, it is included as a part of the crest. This inaccurate representation was carried forward to subsequent conventions held in other countries. It was only till the 11th World Nanan Clansmen Convention held in Indonesia that the crest was altered. On the other hand, in the 7th Convention, the colorful ring surrounding Taipei Nanan Association was also drawn into the convention crest for that year. The

crest, a symbol of continuity and solidarity, was altered to reflect the local characteristics of Taiwan, Philippine and Indonesia Nanan associations.

5.5.2. Alignment of goals

It is possible for the goals of the secretariat and the organiser to reinforce one another, which can result in a higher level of collaboration. In the case of 12th World Nanan Clansmen Convention held in Singapore, the consistency in all three actors interests manifested into cultural platform that was layered with business interests. OCAO and UFWD from the City of Nanan wanted to use the convention to draw Nanan Clansmen back home for investment, donation and economic development. The Ministry of Trade and Industry in Singapore, saw this as an opportunity to build public diplomacy, and thus sought to establish channels for communication and investment between Singapore and Mainland China during the event. The organisers wanted to enhance participation. This manifested into the 2nd Nanan Economic Forum. The alignment of interests led to the collaboration between the center of the organisation and the organiser.

5.5.3. Asymmetric Knowledge, Resources and Manpower

The level of supply of manpower and resources to hold large-scale clan conventions can shape the level of interference from the lead organisations of the network. One of the key concerns that were raised during my fieldwork within the various secretariat that I have visited, was the lack resources and knowledge. This is particularly true for newly formed organisations. Manpower issues are mainly due to the absence of specialists available to conduct key rituals within the convention, as well as individuals who have the linguistic skills necessary to receive guests from abroad. The latter is especially critical as these conventions are held in Southeast Asia, where a panoply of spoken

languages made a common working language for day-to-day communication elusive. Not only that, if the association is incapable of raising funds, it has to rely on subsidies from lead organisations, which creates greater interference. The amount of funds required is greatly determined by the cost of living in the hosting country. In the World Lin Clan Association, in order to assist new members in holding directorial and general meetings, 50,000TWD or 200,000TWD was given for each meeting held. All participating individuals are required to pay around 100 USD in order to assist the organiser. The higher the reliance on the “center” for resource and manpower, the greater the leverage the “center” has on the organiser.

The level of experience and knowledge of the organiser can also determine the level of collaboration between the organiser with the administrative center. If I were to compare the 12th World Nanan Convention in Singapore and the 13th World Nanan Convention held in Pattaya, Thailand, they present a stark difference. The Thailand, Lam Ann Association was reformed in 2013, where it was succeeded by the Thailand Lam Ann Chamber of Commerce. During the 13th World Nanan Clansmen Convention, the organiser worked closely with the lead organization to prepare and ensure the successful execution of the event. The lead organization was heavily relied upon for mundane matters. (Field notes, 19 September 2016). As a new organization, Thailand Lam Ann Chamber of Commerce lacked knowledge of the size, reputation and personal relationships with overseas Nanan organizations. Hence, they could only rely on the lead organization to invite and convince the overseas Nanan associations to participate in the event.

The Singapore Lam Ann Association, on the other hand, holds a vast knowledge and experience in holding large scale conventions. Before they held the 12th World Nanan Clansmen Convention, they have organised the 80th and 85th anniversary of their own association and the 3rd World Nanan

Clansmen Convention. These conventions foresaw participants of thousands of overseas Nanan clansmen. Their long established relationship with many of the invited member organisations meant that most of the reception and prior arrangements were accomplished by the organisers themselves with minimal assistance from lead organization. They are able to execute the bulk of the event by themselves. Therefore, as seen from the comparison, the level of knowledge and experience determine the amount of collaboration between the secretariat and the organisers.

5.6. Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter draws on the concept “invented tradition” to demonstrate how Chinese traditions were re-invented within the context of network organisation. Within this section, I have argued that “invented tradition” is shaped by four main factors. First, traditions are shaped by the change in the context and environment. Second, the governance structure and coordinating mechanisms determine the extent of influence of lead organisations. Lastly, as the conventions rotate between the various actors, the dyadic relationship between the secretariat and the organisers shape the traditions manifested during the convention. The extent in which the organiser’s interest and culture is able to manifest itself is determined by the attachments they have on using these conventions as an expression of local identity, alignment of interest and the resources, or knowledge that they have in relative to the “center” of the organisation network. Therefore, this chapter has contributed to the understanding of how traditions are invented on the organizational level within the transnational space created by the network organizations.

Chapter Six- *Qiaoxiang* Governments and Network Organisations

6.1. Introduction

State is an integral aspect of diasporic Chinese network organisations. As demonstrated in section 1.1, diasporic Chinese “cultural networks” are created by the negotiation between Chinese diaspora and government actors within the context of network organisations. *Qiaoxiang* government cannot control the network organisations who are operating within the transnational space beyond its territorial boundaries. It cannot control all governance arrangements, nor impose its form of governance. Rather, it becomes structurally embedded within the network relations. As one of the many participants, it makes mutual adjustment to its behaviour relative to the other actors in the context of the transnational inter-organisational relationships.

Within this chapter, I illustrate how the *qiaoxiang* government institutions are shaped by the institutional mechanisms embedded within the network organisations. More broadly, how the role of the Chinese government changes when it extends its instruments outward into a “transnational space” that is created by the diasporic Chinese actors themselves.

The term *qiaoxiang* has many definitions. In the broadest sense, it refers to “village of sojourners” (Yow, 2013, p. 3). Some authors have defined specific criteria to identify *qiaoxiang*: Fang and Xie (1993) used four criteria. Firstly, it is a community within Mainland China comprises of large numbers of Overseas Chinese (*huaqiao*), returned overseas Chinese (*guiqiao*) and family members of overseas Chinese (*qiaojuan*). Secondly, it has economic, cultural and ideological ties with overseas Chinese. Thirdly, Fang and Xie (1993) also identified that the region enjoyed prosperity from remittance despite the lack of resources. Lastly, *qiaoxiang* also enjoyed higher levels of education

and culture because of schools set up by overseas Chinese (Fang & Xie, 1993, p.309). The first two criteria are shared with other authors (Zheng, 2006; Cai, 2006). Xia (2013) extended the criteria to include possession of Overseas Chinese Affairs governmental institutions as well as being different from non-*qiaoxiang* regions (Xia, 2013). In general, traditional *qiaoxiang* refers to the southern provinces of Fujian and Guangdong regions. One of the earliest works on *qiaoxiang* is the work by Chen (1938). In his book he compared emigrant communities and nonemigrant communities in the Southern Min and Guangdong regions. Through comparison, he analysed the impacts migration have on the various aspects of the community such as living conditions, food, marriage, and beliefs (Chen, 1938).

With the publication of his work, many other works have emerged. In particular, since the 1978 reform policy, major transformations occurring in the *qiaoxiang* regions, as well as their ties with diasporic Chinese outside of China, generated interest among several scholars (Li, 2005; Xia, 2013). These works have illuminated three key aspects of *qiaoxiang*. The first is that cultural affinity between diasporic Chinese and *qiaoxiang* creates a space for negotiation (Douw, 2010). Cultural affinity can be built on the recognition of a common ancestor (Wang, 2006), deity (Zeng, 2006) and hometown (Tan, 2007). Such forms of cultural affinity have also been mobilized by the Chinese government at various historical stages (Douw, 2010) as well as by Chinese businessmen in order to accumulate economic capital (Chung, 2010; Smart, 2010). Cultural affinity can be translated into social capital that allows businessmen to extend their networks beyond the locality and with government officials.

The second key aspect is that these overseas Chinese connections create varying impact on *qiaoxiang* after the economic reform (Graham & Woon, 1997). Through comparison of various

locations in the Pearl Delta Region, Graham & Woon (1997) identified several factors that shape the developmental process. This includes market forces and geographical proximity to places such as Hong Kong, GuangZhou and Macau. The nature of political, economic and cultural ties also shapes the patterns of development. Overseas Chinese from Taishan for example, preferred to donate to public projects rather than invest in collective enterprises. Collective economy remains weak. Yow (2013) in his book on GuangDong *qiaoxiang*, has also explored the varying impact of economic reform through comparing Panyu and Xinyi before and after 1978.

Lastly, within *qiaoxiang*, there are various overlapping social networks that allow interactions to take place with diasporic Chinese. Within Kuah-Pearce's book (2011) which is based on her study of Singaporean Anxi Chinese with the *qiaoxiang*, she focused on lineage as a cultural network that allows cultural negotiation to emerge across boundaries. Zheng (2006) on the other hand, saw network as multi-levelled with each node made up of a specific resource. In the case of *qiaoxiang*, the nodes comprised of *qiaoshu* (family members of overseas Chinese), *qiaohui* (remittance and donations), Chinese business and Chinese associations. The different networks are bonded by a common Chinese culture. With network as his framework, he examined the influence of *qiaoxiang* on overseas Chinese and vice versa (Zheng, 2006).

The focus of this chapter is on the *qiaoxiang* government and their role within the network after the 1980s. In many existing studies on Chinese policies towards diasporic Chinese after the 1980s, the analysis have been on the nature and content of the policies (Fitzgerald, 1970; Guerassimoff & Guerassimoff, 2007; Sun, 2010; Thunø, 2001; Xiang, 2003). Cheng and Ngok's (2010) studies of government policies in JinJiang, Fujian and Xinhui, GuangDong, illuminate the various organs

responsible for overseas Chinese affairs within these *qiaoxiang* areas. Within the article, they also raised some key aspects within *qiaoxiang* government's initiatives. This included maintaining ties with leaders of diasporic Chinese communities, organising activities to promote ties, and publications for overseas Chinese.

On the other hand, other scholars, such as (Dongen, 2013), have examined the rationalities behind the policies, which revealed contradictory aspects of territorial, neo-liberal and liberal governmentality. In Liu and Dongen's (2016) article, they drew on the concept of "transnational governance". The article explains the interaction between the Chinese state and diaspora when the state extends its instruments and influence beyond its territorial boundaries. However, instead of focusing on co-optation by the Chinese state, where diaspora is perceived as passive actors, it noted that the Chinese government assumes a steering role. The article examines the inclusion of active diaspora within the government institutions in diaspora policy. The participation of diaspora actors shape the state's policy preferences and implementation options (Liu & Dongen, 2016, p. 820).

This chapter intends to continue the discussions on diaspora policies and *qiaoxiang* government institutions when it extends its instruments and influence beyond its territorial boundaries. Unlike Liu & Dongen (2016) that focus on diaspora participation within institutions created by the government institutions, I focused on how the government institutions are shaped by the mechanisms embedded within the institutions created by the diaspora in the transnational space. Therefore, while engaging in "state transnationalism", whereby the Chinese government attempts to extend beyond its borders to shape the narratives and identity of diasporic Chinese abroad, they are also integrated into the dynamics of the transnational bottom-up process created by the diaspora. These mechanisms

created by the organisational dynamics and rules set by the diaspora actors limit the participation and influence of *qiaoxiang* government

In order to do so, I draw on the World Clan Associations as an example and observed the role of *qiaoxiang* government institution in the network organisations. I will first examine how engagement with these organisation network forms part of the overall diaspora policies initiated by the Chinese government. This will be followed by a list of various governmental organs involved. In the subsequent sections, I will examine how informal conventions, formal rules and obligations as well as structural positioning shape the role of *qiaoxiang* government in the network organisations. Within formal rules and informal conventions, I will examine how the primordial requirements, mutual beneficial expectations and representativeness shape the form of existence and how government behave in the network organisations. In the next section, I will bring in the concept of “structural positioning”. With that, I will illustrate the different positions government actors can assume within the network relative to the other actors. Then, I will continue to look at how this shapes the level of influence government institutions have on the “cultural network” that was created.

6.2. Engaging with World Clan Organisations as part of Diaspora Policy

4 th World Nanan Clansmen Convention	Nan'an City People's Government
2 nd , 4 th and 6 th The World Zhang Convention	Pu Yang City People's Government (2 nd) Xing Tai City People's Government (4 th) Shao Guan City People's Government (6 th)
9 th International Teochew Convention	Shantou City People's Government

Table 6.1: Conventions organised by *QiaoXiang* People's governments (Source: Commemorative Magazines)

Government institutions travelling out of their territory to participate and host World Clan Associations activities form part of its campaign of the “going out and inviting in” movement. The main objectives of the campaign are two folds. Firstly, it is used to draw diasporic Chinese back to *qiaoxiang* for investments. Secondly, it is to promote Chinese culture among diasporic Chinese communities, and to foster support for the political regime. Another objective is the promotion of unification with Taiwan (Liu & Dongen, 2016, p. 223).

On one hand, as part of the “inviting in”, they would organise various activities such as Chinese New Year, mid-autumn festival, national day, local deity birthday or summer youth camps to strengthen the ethnic ties between ethnic Chinese and their *qiaoxiang*. They also create several platforms that encourage diasporic Chinese to participate. This can include conferences and forums such as the “Grand Union of Global Chinese”. It could also be in the form of museums (To, 2014, p. 165) that display the achievements of Overseas Chinese and artefacts of interest to the Overseas Chinese. All of these are intended to build and strengthen the emotional connections and personal histories of overseas Chinese and Mainland China. Such moves not only help them to export Chinese government’s presence abroad, but also became means to draw diasporic Chinese back to the homeland for investments and donations.

On the other hand, as part of “going out” initiatives, organisations are one of the main targets of the Chinese agenda. Officials would send delegates to travel out of the country to expand their networks with prominent ethnic Chinese. They would then invite them to visit the *qiaoxiang*. In countries where there are no Chinese voluntary associations, they encourage the formation of associations to meet Chinese officials (Thunø, 2001, p. 925). As part of the convention, not only do

they participate as organisers, but also as delegates and speakers. (Liu & Dongen, 2016; Thunø, 2001, p. 817). Table 6.1 shows the list of conventions within the four organisation networks hosted by the *qiaoXiang* local governments. They would also send performance troops to perform at the conventions. In the 12th World Nanan Clansmen Convention for example, “*Qin Qing Zhong Hua Yi Shu Tuan*” (performing arts group) was sent by All Chinese Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese (ACFROC) to perform during the opening ceremony. The performing arts group comprises performers from local performing arts troops such as “*Fu Jian Sheng Shi Yan Ming Ju Yuan*”, organised every year by ACFROC to tour and perform for the Chinese communities around the world. Since its formation in 2008 to 2017, it had travelled to over 70 countries and held over 900 performances. All these initiatives help to strengthen ties with diasporic Chinese organisations (Liu & Dongen, 2016) while exporting mainland Chinese national agenda abroad.

State Actors: Government Institutions engaging in Overseas Chinese Affairs

There are four main institutions responsible for Overseas Chinese Affairs (Cheng & Ngok, 2010; Liu & Dongen, 2016). Many of these departments have sent officials to participate in the conventions. The two major organisations are the United Front Work Department (UFWD) as well as the ACFROC.

United Front Work Department (UFWD) comprises of both the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (OCAO) and Zhi Gong Party. Zhi Gong Party ensures that Overseas Chinese Policies are conducted in accordance to Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) interests. OCAO is incorporated under UFWD during the release of the “Plan for Deepening the Institutional Reform of the Party and State” in 2018. Its primary function is in policy making, and supervision of policy implementation. It is also deeply involved in the research of Overseas Chinese. Results from this research would be promptly reported

to the relevant departments. Lastly, it also helps the state council executive to guide and coordinate the different departments in Overseas Chinese affairs. On the other hand, the Overseas Chinese Committee under Zhi Gong Party shapes, guides and manages the interests of its members who are mainly Returned Overseas Chinese and their relatives. It also researches and develops legislations and policies (Cheng & Ngok, 2010, pp. 116– 117) as well as liaise with diasporic communities.

The second institution is the All-China Federation of Returned overseas Chinese Association (ACFROC). It is responsible for returned overseas Chinese; protecting their rights, interests and welfare in Mainland China. It also engages with the diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations. The institution filters down to the provincial and city level, enjoying the same level as the Foreign Affairs Office in the local bureaucratic structure (To, 2014, p. 76). Both Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) as well as National People’s Congress (NPC) contain Overseas Chinese Committees. A committee for liaison with Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and Overseas Chinese under CPPCC was established in 1983. Lastly, there is the Overseas Chinese Affairs committees in the National People’s Congress (NPC). The NPC committee appears to manage the legislation and supervision of implementation of policies. They would evaluate the bills and proposals related to Overseas Chinese affairs submitted by the Standing Committee. However, “it has no real power as its activities are confined to discussions and approval of measures that are decided upon within higher echelons of the CCP” (To, 2014, p. 80). All four institutions manage the Overseas Chinese affairs within the Chinese government bureaucratic structures.

When the activities of World Clan Associations are hosted by one of the government organs above or by the City’s People’s government in Mainland China, it has to undergo various levels of

government institutions approval. Using one of the World Zhang Conventions that was held in Pu Yang County in 2005 as an example, I will demonstrate how the county government of Puyang sought for approval. The process is drawn from the personal experience of Zhang Man Biao, communication officer of World Zhang Clan Convention of that year and Pu Yang City UFWD deputy minister (Zhang, 2017).

In 2003, Puyang County People's Government received approval from World Zhang Clan Association to hold the 2nd World Zhang Clan Convention in Puyang County. Upon receiving the news, the county officials first proceeded to the Puyang city committee and city government for approval. The officials from these two departments raised the issue to Henan Provincial level committee and government. After which, news of this event was sent to central UFWD for approval.

On November 2004, the central UFWD replied. They expressed that they wanted Pu Yang City to send a team of representatives to Beijing to report on the event. With the various city officials, Zhang Man Biao travelled to Beijing in 2005. In the year 2005, OCAO was still a separate government institution that worked independently under the State council. Zhang Man Biao and his team of city officials travelled to the central UFWD, OCAO and CPPCC. In the process, they met up with the CPPCC vice-chairperson. During the visit, the vice-person, who also bears the surname Zhang, told the city government representatives that in order for him to participate in the convention, he needed the approval of CPPCC. The CPPCC had to further gain approval from CCP Central Committee.

After the visit, the team returned to Puyang City. The next day Central UFWD called and informed the team that the CCP Central Committee had approved the convention. From the experience of Zhang Man Bian and his team, we can see the process of gaining approval within the

government institutions to hold the convention. Each level of institution, from the county to the city, provincial, and CCP central committee, become activated when the World Clan Conventions are hosted by the Pu Yang City Government.

6.3. Formal and informal rules and conventions

Within this section, I will explore the formal and informal rules and conventions that are embedded within the network organisations. These formal and informal rules shape the behaviour that *qiaoxiang* governments have within the network organisations. This section will draw mainly on the World Zhang Clan Association as an example. I will first illustrate how membership criteria laid out within the constitutions shape the forms of government existence within network organisations. After which, I will illustrate how informal expectations of mutual beneficial relationships and representativeness shape the government institutions behaviour in World Clan Associations.

6.3.1. Qiaoxiang and membership criteria

Two main membership criteria within World Clan Associations shape the behaviour of *qiaoxiang* government has when they engage network organisations. First, the principle of “nongovernmental” status within the rules and constitutions. As stipulated within the constitution for the criteria of participation within network organisations, many of the associations state that only voluntary associations are allowed to participate within the Association. This means that governmental institutions do not fit the criteria. For example, according to World Nanan Clansmen Convention, the participation criteria states that “all national and regional Nanan Clansmen Voluntary Associations (*tongxianghui*) are allowed to participate in the association”. In World Zhang Clan Association, it wrote “all corporation of Zhang Clansmen, Liao’s Clansmen, Jian’s Clansmen and Yan’s Clansmen...are eligible to apply for corporate membership”, however, only “legally registered entities

maintaining valid corporation status and certain organisation structure with at least 50 members...shall be entitled to vote at any meeting". From both constitutions, diaspora government organs listed in section 6.2 neither fulfil the criteria of "voluntary associations" nor "corporation status". Therefore they are not allowed to participate as corporate members with equal voting rights unless they adapt to the constitutions and rules.

Secondly, according to the constitution, symbolic relevance to the membership criteria limits the kind of government institutions that can participate in the network. World Clan network organisations are sustained mainly by cultural affinity. The cultural affinity is derived from the collective memory of the ancestral homeland which is required to be performed within the network organisations. Through these collective memories of the ancestral homeland, they drive the return of diasporic Chinese back to the homeland, providing assistance, resources and investments into the region (Kuah-Pearce, 2011, p. 11). On the other hand, cultural identity is also instrumental where businessmen juggle multiple identities to gain the benefits from articulating the cultural identity found within the organisation network.

At one glance, *qiaoxiang* are the natural embodiment of the primordial identity that determines the membership criteria. Different primordial Chinese identity is affiliated with different *qiaoxiang* regions. Hence, government officials within the region would be invited to participate in the convention. Within the World Nanan Clansmen Convention, the *qiaoxiang* are based in the city of Fujian Province, Nan'an city. Therefore, in most scenarios, Nan'an city governmental institutions that worked with Overseas Chinese affairs would host or attend the convention. Its affiliated Quan Zhou city, in which Nan'an is a county city of, would also participate. On the other hand, Teochew dialect is affiliated with the Chaoshan region in the eastern Guangdong Province. City-level governmental

institutions related to this region would often also attend these conventions. World Lin Clan Association is affiliated with Henan, Wei Hui City. More specifically, the Long Wo Village on the west side of Wei Hui City. Long Wo Village is a Rock Cave which is believed to be the birthplace of “Lin Jian”, one of the founding ancestors of the surname Lin. Every 4th of April of the lunar calendar, clan members around the world would travel to Henan Bigan temple to celebrate the birthday of Bigan.

Even though these *qiaoxiang* are naturally affiliated with the primordial identity that forms the foundation of the network organisations, they are not without competition. Competition comes from other localities who claim affiliation to the primordial identity. This is illustrated in the case of World Zhang Clan Associations. The competition arose from the context of fiscal decentralization that was part of Deng Xiaoping’s economic reform in 1978. With fiscal decentralization, county, city and provincial governments can gain greater control over their local economy. This therefore creates intense competition between local governments. They are each vying to attract capital investment and business from diasporic Chinese (Wang & Bramwell, 2012).

Within such a context, different local governments who are affiliated with the primordial identity can engage in different ways with the network organisations. In World Zhang Clan Associations, affiliations can come in several ways. The *qiaoxiang* may be the ancestral land of the founding ancestor. However, even the location of ancestral land can be a subject of debate. In Zhang Clan, there exists three different narratives that point to three different ancestral lands. Three location exists: Hebei Province, Qing He County; Henan Province, Pu Yang City and Shanxi Province, Taiyuan City. All three locations are thought to be the territory granted to the founding ancestor “Zhang Hui”. “Zhang Hui” is the first person bearing the surname of Zhang. During the Fourth Annual

Directorial Meeting held in August 2010, the meeting concluded that both Pu Yang and Qing He are both places of origin and that all forms of conflict or arguments that might arise from holding different opinions on the places of origin shall be avoided. Within World Zhang Clan Association, it recognizes both Qing He County and Pu Yang City. Taiyuan City remains unrepresented in the association.

Ancestral land of a founding ancestor is not the only way to claim affiliation. Place of birth, death and administration of a founding ancestor of a specific branch of the lineage can also be used to claim affiliation. Within a single lineage, there are several branches. The branches are created when descendants of the same ancestors migrate within Mainland China or out of Mainland China. The first person who reaches the residing place of a single branch is regarded as the founding ancestor for that branch. Therefore, it is possible for the birth and death place of the founding ancestor of each branch of a single lineage to be places of affiliations or claims of belonging to the “ancestral homeland”.

Lastly, affiliation can also come from being the birth place of famous ancestors within the lineage. Many government institutions have also approached World Zhang Clan Associations by associating themselves with the birth place of famous ancestors that can be found within the genealogy. Officials from Guang Dong Province, Shao Guan City and Fujian Province, Shao Wu City have approached World Zhang Clan Association for collaboration. They based their claims as the hometown of “Zhang Jiu Ling”, a famous minister of the Tang dynasty. Similarly, Shao Wu City also claims that the city was the birthplace of “Zhang San Fen”, a Taoist legend who was rumoured to have achieved immortality and also the founding ancestor of a main branch within the Zhang genealogy. These claims and narratives drive collaboration efforts with the World Zhang Clan Association. Shao Guan City, for example hosted the 6th World Zhang Clan Convention.

Therefore, as seen from the various ways in which government institutions can claim affiliation to the primordial identity that forms the foundation of network organisations, competition is intense. For the next section, I will illustrate how both the criteria of “nongovernmental” participation and primordial affiliation shapes the form of existence and behaviour of institutions within the network organisations.

6.3.2. Forms of Existence and Behaviours of *Qiaoxiang* Governments

Government institutions assume different forms of existence and exhibit specific competitive behaviours within the network organisations due to the membership criteria. In some cases, prominent government officials may assume the positions of honorary advisors. They can also participate as direct members if the constitution is not fully implemented. However in most scenarios, *qiaoxiang* governments would establish a representative presence within the decision-making process of the network organisations. They would assume a variety of different forms which may not be immediately recognizable in order to adapt themselves to the constitutions and rules.

Variation of existence

Within a network organisation, besides direct participation, there are a number of ways in which the government can participate in the organisation process while conforming to the “non-governmental” criteria. From the case studies, the government can take three possible forms of existence; partnership with a local voluntary organisation; creating a voluntary organisation and assuming concurrent roles within the local voluntary organisation created; and partnership with a diasporic Chinese voluntary organisation. Participating through these various forms allow their

choices to be heard during the decision-making process and influence the organisation process of the World Clan Conventions.

The Chinese state can participate in the organisation network directly by hosting the conventions, assuming positions of honorary advisors and speakers. Representatives from the government institutions and local Chinese embassy are important. The presence of government representatives will, not only, raise the prestige level of the event, but also provide a sense of validation to the organiser whose collective memories are connected with the *qiaoxiang* symbolic role. When the officials are invited to speak at the conventions as guests of honour, it provides an opportunity to report on the political, economic and cultural context of the *qiaoxiang* as well as their future development plans.

Besides direct participation, other forms of existence can also take place. Firstly, they can collaborate with local voluntary associations such as the local Chamber of Commerce or Surname Research Societies. Through the local voluntary association, they can participate in the bidding process and co-host the conventions. For example, on the 11th International Teochew Convention, the organiser, Chao Shan Chamber of Commerce of Beijing worked closely with government institutions such as Beijing Overseas Exchange Association to organise the convention. Using the name of the partner, the government are able to attract the conventions into their cities, and shape the content of the conventions.

The partnership can extend itself into influencing the composition of the partner organisations. Within Mainland China, many of these local voluntary associations' leadership structures are led by retired officials. The current Chairperson, Zhang Ying Hao is a retired official.

The previous Chairpersons and vice-chairpersons have also been retired officials from the local government. Also, according to one informant, individuals working within the Qing He Zhang Clan Associations office are mostly civil servants and retired public servants. They were appointed by the government to work at the association (Fieldnotes, 10th August 2016).

Formally, the relationship between Qing He Zhang Clan Association and the county government is mediated through an institution known as “Qing He Xian Zhang Shi Wen Hua Ban Gong Shi”. The organisation also mediates the relationship between the government institutions with Qing He Zhang Research Society. However, as seen through the background of these individuals in Qing He Zhang Clan Association, the composition made it possible to establish a strong collaboration with the local government when the convention was held in Qing He. During the 2nd executive directorial meeting, it was also through this association that the interest of developing an integrated industrial zone surrounding the Zhang Ancestral Temple was made known to the members of the World Zhang Clan Associations.

The second form of participation for *qiaoxiang* governmental institutions is the creation of a voluntary association by the government so that it can participate in the network organisations. These governments would create research societies and surname associations, and allow the officials to assume dual positions within the created associations. Examining the Pu Yang Zhang Surname Research Society’s list of chairpersons revealed that most of the chairpersons were also government officials at the point of their appointment. Zhang Guang En, the founding chairperson of the research society was also the Pu Yang county CPPCC director when he was chairing the research society. His subsequent successors such as Zhang Huan Shu and Zhang Hong Jiang were also Pu Yang County

officials at the time they assumed positions within the association. This allowed them to directly participate in the organisation network as both government officials and leaders of the voluntary association.

Participating in the form of civil organisations, such as the research society, has allowed greater flexibility in tending to the organisation activities where they are held in areas with politically constrained context. In one of the World Clan Conventions, for example, the political context within the hosting country made it impossible to bring in government officials from Mainland China to attend the World Clan Convention hosted in that country. Officials manoeuvred the restrictions by first creating a research society. All the officials that were invited had to join the research society as its members. From the side of the organisers, a cultural society was also created. Books were also published to demonstrate that the society was active and legitimate. Since cultural society is non-governmental, the government officials were able to participate in the convention for that year in the name of cultural exchange. (Field notes, 29th May 2016). By covering any official involvement, the network was able to hold activities within regions that were politically sensitive to government participation.

Lastly, it is also possible for government institutions to work closely with other Chinese clan associations outside their locality to extend their influence in the decision-making process. Collaboration can be both long term collaboration and per-event basis. For per-event collaboration, government institutions may approach individual organisers who are organising the activities of the World Clan Association and seek collaboration. The 13th World Nanan Clansmen Convention in Pattaya, Thailand, is an example (refer to section 4.4.3). Alternatively, they can assume more long

term partnerships with individual clan leaders outside their locality. These clan leaders can help to represent government institutions during the decision-making process. Zhang Jiu Ling (Shao Guan) Research Society, for example, was an organisation led by Zhang Zhi Cai who was a Standing Committee Member of CPPCC, Shao Guan Municipal Committee in 2015. In the representation of the Zhang Jiu Ling (Shao Guan) association in the Presidium and 6th Directorial Membership Board, representatives submitted by Zhang Jiu Ling Association consisted of several individuals from Hong Kong Zhang Clan Association. These leaders often assume concurrent positions in both Zhang Clan Association in Hong Kong and Zhang Jiu Ling (Shao Guan) Research Society. This allowed the individuals to speak on behalf of both organisations within the decision-making structure of the organisation network.

Competitive Behaviour

The various *qiaoxiang* governments that have claimed affiliation with the network organisation compete for the limited resources. At some point in time, one *qiaoxiang* government may attempt to monopolize the conventions. This struggle to gain control can be observed during conversational exchanges recorded within the 2nd time of the 4th session directorial meeting minutes. During the meeting held in 2001, a proposal was submitted through World Zhang Clan secretariat office. The letter requested for Qing He Zhang Ancestral temple to be fixed as the place to hold all subsequent World Zhang Clan conventions. This proposal was rejected on the basis that World Zhang Clan Association would have to acknowledge both Qing He and Puyang as the ancestral lands of Zhang. The attempt to embody the entire spirit of Zhang within a single *qiaoxiang* and monopolize all forms of capital within the network was rejected due to the presence of competing *qiaoxiang* governments.

Zhang Sanfeng Temple	3 rd time 6 th session directorial meeting (2014)	Nanping City, Fujian Province
Zhang Hua Sun Memorial Hall	6 th time 6 th session directorial meeting (2015)	Longyan City, Fujian Province
Zhang Jiu Ling Cultural City	3 rd time 5 th session directorial meeting (2012)	Shao Guan City, Guangdong Province
Hua Xia Zhang Ancestral Temple	3 rd time 3 rd session directorial meeting (2008)	Qinghe County, HeBei Province
Hui Gong Mausoleum	2 nd time 2 nd session directorial meeting (2005)	PuYang City, Henan Province

Table 6.2: Projects proposed (Source: World Zhang Clan directorial meeting minutes)

Not only that, competition also ensued to channel the limited resources of World Zhang Clan Association into the *qiaoxiang* regions. Several city and county governments have approached World Zhang Clan to channel their resources into the region (see table 6.2) In one of the responses recorded in one of the World Zhang Clan 2nd session directorial meeting, a director said, “If every region were to propose the same request from World Zhang Clan Association, we have the heart but it is beyond our grasp”. The limitation of resources and manpower meant that World Zhang Clan Association can only choose certain projects over another. *Qiaoxiang* governments intending to propose collaborative efforts have to compete with each other on the limited resources available.

6.3.3. Expectations and Conventions

Informal expectations of maintaining mutual beneficial relationships as well as representativeness among all members shape the *qiaoxiang* government’s behaviour. *Qiaoxiang* government cannot rely simply on their symbolic relevance illustrated in section 6.3.2. Rather, they have to offer additional material benefits to compete with the other member organisations. Through

the convention bidding process and collaborative projects, I will demonstrate how the expectations of the other network members shape the negotiation process between the *qiaoxiang* government and network members. In addition, the need to maintain representativeness also limits the extent *qiaoxiang* is able to participate as a full member within the network organisations.

Mutual Benefits

Qiaoxiang governments are expected to compete with the other member organisations. In order to do so, it is expected that they are able to offer additional resources and investment opportunities. This would enable both the *qiaoxiang* government and the network organisation to develop a mutually beneficial relationship with government institutions that have a comparative advantage not only because of the natural affiliation to the cultural identity, but also because of their high level ability to mobilize resources. Since they are able to mobilize a large amount of subsidies and resources, it has given them substantial advantage in the bidding process.

During the bidding process, *qiaoxiang* governments as with the other competing member organisations, have to market themselves as a potential place for holding the convention. Within the bidding documents of World Zhang Clan Association and International Teochew Convention for example, *qiaoxiang* governments have to demonstrate several key aspects to fulfil the variety of interests of other member organisations. They will first re-emphasise the symbolic relevance of the place with the primordial affiliations within the network organisation. Next they need to demonstrate that they possess sufficient manpower, facilities, and resources to enable them to successfully hold the convention. To this end, a letter of commitment from the local government agencies such as the tourism board or from specific high-level officials would be advantageous. These items would ensure

that the activities of the network organisations are operating at a high level. Lastly, they have to attract others by presenting why the place is attractive for tourism and investments. Therefore, it is evident that the *qiaoxiang* government has to take into consideration the various material interests of participants on the network level.

In the bidding process, *qiaoxiang* governments have been able to outbid the other member organisations because of their mobilization abilities. Their capability of mobilizing resources are way beyond the resources that any other Clan association can mobilize. As such, one can notice that the conventions held by city governments are often larger in scale and with more participants. Take for example, when Xing Tai City People's Government held the 4th World Zhang Clan Convention in 2009, not only were they able to mobilize the police department to escort and clear the roads for guests to arrive at the convention hall, they were able to train up to 50 tour guides and 250 volunteers to assist in the tour within a short period of time. They also cleaned up and decorated the roads and public spaces with lineage culture related symbols and exploit large numbers of private and public spaces for activities. In order to ensure the food quality, they were also capable of maintaining controlled food sources. This created a convention that was grander and on a larger scale, which benefits the World Clan Associations as well.

Another instance when we can see how material interests shape government behaviour is the decision-making process of collaborative projects. As shown in table B, several *qiaoxiang* can approach World Clan Associations for collaborative projects. The directors take into account the number of investment opportunities offered before considering collaboration proposals from the various *qiaoxiang* government institutions. The benefits of the collaborative projects have to be

mutual, so *qiaoxiang* cannot rely solely on their symbolic affiliation. Take, for example, World Zhang Clan associations, they received a request from a government institution to develop the ancestral tomb of a famous ancestor from the Zhang lineage within their city. Instead of jumping directly into the development because it was symbolically important to the Zhang identity, the members took into consideration mutual business opportunities. In the records of the meeting minutes, one of the clan member responded to the requests as below:

“To expect World Zhang to sponsor all Zhang Famous individuals and ancestral temple is not practical....World Zhang has been established for over 10 years, but yet we do not have a building for our operation...with regards...to the request...we suggest that unless they can provide land substitution, we will not participate...”

As seen from the response above, the need to perform the responsibilities set by the clan identity has to be balanced out with the business interests. From the perspective of local government institutions, collaborating with overseas Chinese helps to attract ethnic tourism into the region. Not only do they bring in investment and knowledge transfer, they also became an alternative source of tourism income and economic development for these regions (Lew & Wong, 2002). On the other hand, ensuring mutual beneficial business opportunities is important for the diasporic Chinese clans. This is because not only does it benefit individual clan members but it also generates sufficient funds to ensure the continuity of World Clan Associations.

One of the successful projects that World Zhang Clan Association has engaged in, and was able to create a sustainable mutual beneficial relationship, was the integrated Zhang industrial zone in Qing He. According to third session of the third annual directorial meeting minutes, the industrial

zone combined the Zhang Ancestral temple with the Zhang Biological Center (“Zhang Shi Sheng Tai Yuan”), Cashmere Technological Park (Yang Rong Ke Ji Yuan), as well as the Vehicle Production Parts Park (“Qi Mo Pei Jian Yuan”). Through working with the World Zhang Private Limited (“Shi Zhang Kong Gu Gong Si”), it co-developed the ancestral temple with an investment of up to 15 million RMB. Qing He government also gave 0.08 km² piece of land which World Zhang Private Limited are free to develop independently. In return, the government gained investments from diasporic Chinese businessmen and the World Zhang Association gained a sustainable source of income as 5% of the profits from the company would be used for sustaining the activities of the association.

Therefore, as seen from both the bidding process for the conventions as well as the negotiations on the collaborative projects, network organisations expect material repayments for their efforts put into the region. In order for the *qiaoxiang* government to engage in these collaborative activities, they need to go beyond articulating symbolic relevance to the membership criteria of the World Clan Associations. They have to market themselves as a viable partner that is capable of providing sufficient resources and opportunities of investments. Only through such behaviours can they garner the support of the stakeholders in the network organisations and build mutual beneficial relationships with the network organisations.

Maintaining representativeness

Individual nodes each possess exit power which limits the extent of influence government institutions can have within the organisation network. Participation within organisation networks is on a voluntary basis, and each actor is free to leave at any point of time.

The power of exit and non-participation generates a renewal mechanism that make each World Clan Association develops into a specific nature over a long period of time. For example, in World Lin Clan Association, denial of business interests and lack of China representatives (as elaborated in section 6.4) has led to the break up of World Lin Clan Association. World Lin Clamber of Commerce was formed in 2011 with the intention to grow business opportunities and set up Chamber of Commerce within Mainland China. Members within World Lin Clan Association sharing similar interest would minimize participation and engages in the World Lin Clamber of Commerce. The exit and non-participation of these members slowly shapes the nature of World Lin Clan Association. Therefore, over a long period of time, members within each World Clan Association would generally comprise of individuals who are supportive to the inclination of the association.

However, even with the renewal mechanism in play, stakeholders try to ensure that the interests of its existing members are well-represented. They try to maximize participation and minimize members from dropping out. This is because participation of actors from different countries ensure representativeness and legitimacy. It also helps to secure more resources when they are pooled to conduct collective goals of the organisation network. The need to balance each individual actor's interest to prevent exit from the network structure presents one of the main challenges to the government institution's participation

One of the main contentions within World Clan Associations is the overt representation of political interests. Having a strong political inclinations attracts certain types of members but also stops certain influential members from joining the associations. Existing members can also threaten withdrawal and non-participation due to the overt political inclinations of World Clan Associations.

When speaking to individuals participating within the conventions, individuals often expressed that the World Clan Associations are non-political. In Chinese diasporic communities, since the 1960s, allegiance has been divided between Republic of China government and the People's Republic of China government as the "motherland". Cross straits issues and "One China" Policy are politically sensitive. At times, when the political intentions are too overtly expressed, participants and organisers can choose to withdraw from the organisation network. For example, during the 12th International Teochew Convention held in Singapore, in the year 2003, the organisers received a letter in reply to the invitation stating:

"International Teochew Federation mission, is to be open, democratic and use sincerity to build friendship between clansmen and develop our hometown... not to be tainted with politics. Politics have caused clansmen who value peace, democracy and freedom disappointment, and refusal to participate" (Source: 12th International Teochew Convention, preparatory documents)

In another interview conducted with one of the elder clansmen from World Zhang Clan Association, he said:

"Zheng Zhou declaration...wants everyone to sign...to oppose Taiwan independence. I did not want to go, if I were there I would not know what to do...this is not right, Clan Associations is family matters, should not bring in politics..." (Mr Zhang/2)

Similar concerns are expressed among the audience in reaction to the speech, made by representatives from Chinese Consulate General in Medan, Indonesia during the 16th World Lin Clan Convention. As a quote from one of the directors in the organising committee:

“She kept on using the word “Hua Qiao” (Overseas Chinese) and “Zhu Guo” (Homeland), which I have personally told her is not applicable anymore. We are ethnic Chinese and our homeland is Indonesia. We are lucky that the Northern Sumatra governor has already left” (Field notes, 21st November 2016).

As seen from the dialogues above, political sensitivity within Southeast Asian countries as well as Cross-Straits issues made some members wary of overt political sides and interests represented within organisation network. The strong participation of Mainland Chinese government institutions in expressing their interests can clash with some member’s local identification. This might lead to members dropping out of the network, thus affecting the representativeness and legitimacy of the organisation network. As such, this limits the extent *qiaoxiang* government institutions can influence the policy decisions in the World Clan Associations.

6.4. Positioning Strategy

The member organisations associated with governmental organs can be positioned differently within the network organisation, which gives them different levels of influence within the network structure. Each node within the organisation network is interdependent on each other for resources and information. Whenever one of the nodes holds the activity of the organisation network, such as the convention, the success is dependent on the support of others for contact information, mobilization of participants and resource donations. “Positionality” shapes the level of participation and influence of the node within the decision-making process. Nodes occupying a “central” position control more crucial resources and information within the network organisation, thereby creating

more dependency of other nodes on them. This creates a greater possibility of bringing in the outcomes that they desire within the organisation networks (Brass, 1984).

This section demonstrates the three possible positions that *qiaoxiang* affiliated agencies can assume within the network. I will examine how they came about acquiring the positions and the extent of influence this “position” has on the decision-making process within the organisation. The *qiaoxiang* affiliated agencies that will be the focus here, are the Bigan Temple Office for World Lin Clan Association, Zhang Pu Yang Chinese Research Society in World Zhang Clan Association, as well as OCAO in World Nanan Clansmen Convention.

The three agencies listed above are selected as examples because these organisations represent different forms of existence that a government institution can assume within the network organisation. Not only that, they are also influential members who frequent the directorial meeting and General Meeting Board of the network organisations of which they were involved.

From the organisation network, we can observe three positions that government institutions can assume within the network. They are the existence as a central actor (image 6.1), existence as one of the main nodes (image 6.2), and external partnership (image 6.3). The three forms are not mutually exclusive and can be combined in different variation within any single organisation. Each of these positions is indicated with a cross.

Image 6.1 to 6.3 (left to right): World Nanan Clansmen Convention, World Zhang Clan Association and World Lin Clan Association

Interests of “lead organisation” and decision-making body as well as network culture within World Clan Associations determine the positions of the government institutions within the network. The extent whereby one association came to assume the position of lead organisation and network culture is closely associated with the historical context that gave rise to the association (refer to section 5.3 and 5.4). Therefore, within World Lin Clan Association which is formed before 1985, government affiliated organs assume external partnership with the network organisation (image 6.1). On the other hand, government affiliated organs in World Zhang Clan Association and World Nanan Clansmen Convention are able to participate in the decision making body of both organisation (image 6.2 and 6.3). The three forms of positions will be illustrated below.

Firstly, government organs can be excluded completely from the core decision-making process within the network organisation, assuming individual “relational” single event based external partnership with the network. This can be seen between the relationship of World Lin Clan Association and Bigan Ancestral Temple. The history of Bigan Ancestral temple can be traced back to the year 1992. On the 5th of May, 1992, WeiHui City Government and Municipal Committee of CPC established the WeiHui Bigan Memorial Association “*Wei Hui Shi Bigan Jinian Hui*” as part of its initiative to develop heritage tourism sites. This initiative hopes to enhance the cultural recognition

and increase collaboration that would extend WeiHui City's advantage in attracting investment opportunities. Led by the Municipal Committee of CPC General Secretary and Mayor, it organised the annual Ancestor Worship to celebrate Bigan Birthday. This ancestral worship, which attracts thousands of participants every year, helps to reconnect diasporic Chinese to their roots. It draws an emotional connection between the ancestral land and the diasporic Chinese by celebrating their responsibilities as descendants of Bigan. In 2003, Bigan Ancestral temple and its surrounding environment totalling 0.87km² was integrated into a tourist site developed by the Wei Hui City Bi Gan Lin Garden Development Private limited led by the WeiHui City Government. Despite its symbolic importance as birth place of the founding ancestor within the surname Lin collective memory, partnership with the Bigan Ancestral temple continued to remain as external (indicated in image C above).

The position of Bigan Ancestral Temple remained external mainly because of the "lead organisation" and the interests of the decision-making body within World Lin Clan Association. The participation of Chinese government related institutions within World Lin Clan Association had always been a debatable issue since 1992. Dominated by clan associations in Taiwan within the network, the sensitivity was made worse by the complex political relationship between Taiwan and Mainland China. The lack of participation was often associated with the political biasness of Taiwan-based Lin Clan Association although such accusations often lacked substantial evidence. According to a public letter circulated to the World Lin Clan Association in 12th November 1992:

"during the meeting, (he) distributed poster publicizing his Henan trip...brag about donating RMB500,000 to BiGan Temple for their first instalment restoration fee...such statements...is publicizing political interest...why allow him to speak of their political

interest...when (one of the organiser) were ask to refuse HeNan BiGan Memorial Association participation in the convention...because of the fear of their political agenda?”

The argument continued, to 2017, when one clan elder complained on a newspaper report claiming:

“In today, Mainland Chinese Lin Clan Members comprise of 20 million individuals...but they are underrepresented” (eNanyang, 2017).

From the point of view of some of the directors, Chinese Clan members were underrepresented because of the societal registration law in Mainland China. The societal registration law in Mainland China made it difficult for clan associations to become registered. In response to the restricted registration laws, clan members in Mainland China often set up research societies. The problem with research societies is that membership criteria are not limited to surname Lin members which made it difficult to admit them into the World Lin Clan Association. This issue is also observed when representatives from Bigan Ancestral Temple came to participate in the World Lin Clan convention. Several participants expressed their dissatisfaction that the Ancestral temple of the Lin ancestor was managed by individuals who did not even possess the surname Lin (Field notes 20th November 2016). Without the possession of surname Lin, this made it difficult to admit them into the organisation network.

Therefore, due to the interests of the decision-making body within World Lin Clan Association, collaboration with Bigan Ancestral temple was limited to external partnership. At times representatives of the Bigan Ancestral Temple were able to participate in the directorial meeting, but

they were limited to the articulation of the progress of the World Lin Cultural Museum, a collaborative project between World Lin Clan Association and BiGan Ancestral Temple. As they are not part of the membership, they do not enjoy voting rights, neither can they participate in the other decisions made within the meetings of World Lin Clan Association.

Using another case study of World Zhang Clan Association, Zhang Pu Yang Research Society remains one of the nodes within the organisation network (see image 6.2). As one of the noncentral members within the organisation network, Zhang Pu Yang Research Society enjoys equal benefit as any other members stipulated within the constitution. This includes having two representatives within the Presidium who are able to nominate candidates to participate in the election of the directorial board. They also enjoy the participation of at least two representatives within the directorial board and therefore are allowed to participate in the directorial meeting, and general meeting, having their interest represented across the board.

The World Nanan Clansmen Convention produced another scenario of “positionality” of government institutions. OCAO and UFWD occupies a position of centrality, as indicated within image 6.1. As observed within the 13th World Nanan Convention, the UFWD is in control of the communication list with the Chamber of Commerce in Mainland China while OCAO manages the interaction with diasporic Chinese Associations. These government institutions are able to rise into positions of centrality because of a three main reasons. Firstly, the control over communication channels. When an organisation attempts to organise a World Nanan Clansmen Convention, they require a list of contacts to invite. Since World Nanan Clansmen Convention has no secretariat, the list of contacts is generated from their own networks, lists of contacts handed over from the previous organisers, as well as OCAO office. Since the OCAO office are known to keep the most updated and

detailed list of contacts as well as closed relationships with many of the member organisation, they become the key organisation that every organiser approaches for the contacts. This creates a permanent actor within a flexible partner with the flexible organisation network. In the words of one of the directors in World Nanan Clansmen Convention:

“In China, they can call upon more Nan’an Clansmen. We cannot do so. Let me raise an example, on the year they did this (convention), Japan participated...Africa too...because they have the communication network. They would all attend, but only when it is in China” (Mr Lee, 30th March 2016).

Secondly, according to the 2013 OCAO appraisal report, OCAO was able to solidify its position as a relatively well-connected node among the other member organisations because of the activities they engage in. Not only do they keep an updated information list of ethnic Chinese abroad, they often pay regular visits to other hometown associations, participate in diasporic association celebratory events, and receive diaspora members who return to their Nanan city. In addition, they also helped organise large scale events that involve regular contacts with diasporic associations such as Lee Kong Chian 120th birthday celebration and World FengShan cultural festival. This helps to solidify them as a well-connected node and hence a reliable partner to engage in when holding World Nanan Conventions.

Lastly, OCAO and UFWD have established themselves as an important “broker” that fulfils structural holes within the network structure. They are able to connect organisers with Chamber of Commerce in Mainland China as well as government officials. According to President Xi, in his 20th May 2015 Central United Front Meeting inaugural speech held in Beijing, he said:

“All China Federation Industry and Commerce(ACFID) is the bridge between business and government sector...the UFWD is responsible for covering all Chamber of Commerce, ensure that the ACFID provide guidance, and service...ensuring that the Chamber of Commerce developed in the right direction”.

Several of the previous organisers of World Nanan Conventions often relied on UFWD to contact the Chamber of Commerce in Mainland China .This applies to the invitation of government officials as well.

Therefore, as observed within the 12th and 13th World Nanan Clansmen Conventions held in 2016 and 2018, occupying a central “position” allowed these government organs to have the opportunity to exert influence in the program of the conventions to a large extent. It had become a common practice for the organisers of the convention to send their agenda to the OCAO and UFWD office or travel to Mainland China to discuss the conventions within the governmental organs. Despite not having any constitutional rights within the organisation network, due to the three reasons stated above, they had come to assume an important node in the network. This included making decisions on who next organiser would be, drafting the meeting agenda, and coordinating the general meeting. They would often arrive before the commencement of the convention to assist in the process of seating and speaking arrangements and reception (Field notes, 20th November 2014, and 19th September 2016). With their control over the communication channels, occupying a “central” position gave them considerable leverage in influencing the convention with their interests.

In summary, the structural “positioning” of *qiaoxiang* government also shapes the extent of influence it has over the network organisation. Government agencies who are able to secure a more central position would be able to gain greater leverage over the other member organisations.

6.5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has demonstrated how institutional mechanisms created from the organisational dynamics within the network organisations shape the role of *qiaoxiang* government within the network structure. I have highlighted three main aspects. Firstly, formal membership rules in the form of primordial identification and “non-governmental” practices shape the form of existence and competitive behaviours of the government agencies. Conventions in the form of material interest mean that the *qiaoxiang* government have to negotiate on the grounds of resources and benefits to secure a mutual beneficial relationship with the network. The need to ensure representativeness also limits the extent of influence *qiaoxiang* governments can have on the network organisation. The last section explored the “positioning” of the government agencies, and the extent of influence specific positions are able to give to the government agencies. Through these three main mechanisms, we can see that *qiaoxiang* governments are unable to control the network but rather act as a participant subjected to the organisational dynamics within the network organisations.

Chapter 7: Implication of “Cultural Network”

7.1. Introduction

In this last empirical chapter, I intend to explore the implication of the Chinese cultural network created based on invented traditions for the various actors participating in the organisation network. Impacts can occur in different level, individual, organisation and the network level. Participation can come in the form of organising the activities of the organisation network, as well as participating in one of the organisation network activities. The chapter will first, explore the individual benefits of participation, which is to accumulate “symbolic capital” as well as extend one’s *guanxi* (social relationship). It is also to seek a sense of belonging to a larger Chinese community. Both benefits will bring about mutual help and business opportunities. After this, the chapter will proceed to explore the implication for each individual organisation node. It will also explore the benefits organisation can gain from organising or participating as member organisations. Lastly, I would explore the collective impact of the organisation network, by exploring the benefits brought about for the organisation members from their collective efforts within the network structure

7.2. Individual Level

Individuals participate in organisation network activities are driven by many reasons. Some merely as an excuse to travel. Others, were family members from other countries invited by the organisers. Two main reasons stand out among the participants. They are to accumulate symbolic capital. It is also driven by a desire for belonging to a transnational sub-ethnic Chinese community.

7.2.1. Accumulate Symbolic Capital and Extension of *Guanxi*

Individual members participate in conventions are driven by both, an intention to accumulate symbolic capital, as well as, to establish business networks. According to the study conducted by Liu (1998), leaders of the individual clan associations had actively participated in the conventions not for economic self-interest, but for the accumulation of symbolic capital. Conventions offer an excellent platform for accumulation as it offer a place of gathering for government official, clansmen as well as transnational entrepreneurs. He also continued, while using Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital, that these capital can be converted into social and economic capital.

In addition, individual will also take the opportunities to extend their *guanxi* through such organisation network. In return, these *guanxi* can have a variety of use-context. Having a wide network of personal and social contacts have its benefits depending on the context when it is being used (Yang, 1994, p. 91). According to a Taiwan business entrepreneur who frequently participate in such forms of conventions, he said

“At times, I would think that it has been a long time since I've travelled, I wanted to go out for a walk...to also connect with these clan members. It does not bring much benefits, although once in a while if we see each other, we can do some small business”
(Mr Lin/5, 1 June 2016).

The extension of social contacts has the potential to bring about future business opportunities. For the younger generation of diasporic Chinese in Southeast Asia, and Small Medium Enterprise business entrepreneurs from Mainland China, they saw the convention as an opportunity to forge

business partnerships that would come to use in the future (Liu, 1998). In the words of a Singapore business entrepreneur whom frequently travelled for such convention, he said

“It happened after the convention...during then Singapore held the convention...I am in the brick business...supply not high enough...so I went to Malaysia to find a Nan’an Clansmen I met during the convention...bought bricks from him...I do not know him...but since we are both from Nan’an...” (Mr G. Lee, 8 March 2016)

Through the exchange of name cards and conversations during the convention, *Guanxi* are forge. This correspond to the two observations that Liu (1998) had made within his article. He claimed that business entrepreneur’s economic activities were becoming more transnational, making substantial investments beyond their home country. They are willing to participate in the opportunities emerging from global capitalism, and China’s Open door policy. In addition, these business entrepreneurs also possessed multiple identities, seeking cultural affinity with ancestral homelands to legitimize investments in Mainland China (Liu, 1998, pp. 591–592). Therefore, activities such as the World Clan Conventions become venues where such business connections can be forge.

Besides business purposes, such *guanxi* relationship can also be used in other social context. As one of the Singapore business entrepreneurs said

“Sometimes if I need to travel to other places, I would tell him ‘hey, I have a friend who needs to go to this place, can you help me bring him around, (the *guanxi* relationship partner in other countries) will be able to bring him” (Mr Lee, 8 March 2016)

Having a “correspondence” overseas, not only brings in business opportunities, but also help to provide mutual help to each other. This includes looking after the children of other leaders who are

travelling to another country for study, or introducing other connections within the residing countries in the times of need. These are benefits that I had illustrated come from the long term engagement in *guanxi* building, in which World Clan activities provide an effective platform to do so.

7.2.2. Re-discovering a sense of belonging

Many participants were interested in re-discovering the sense of community through the World Clan Associations. As one of the participants said,

“Blood is thicker than water. Emotions from belonging to the same hometown will never change” (Mr G. Lee, 8 Mar 2016)

During the convention, participants who have often participate in such conventions greet and update each other on their lives. Some would go around exchanging drinks. Friendship is build over time through repeated interactions during the convention and other transnational clan activities. The convention presents a time to not only re-discover and unite the bonds build on kinship. It was also a time to meet old friends.

7.3. Organisational level

Participating and organising activities within the “cultural network” also provide different forms of benefits for organisations. Organising a World Clan Conventions could help to sustain the associations by boosting new members as well as activating its networks and relationship embedded in the organisation itself. On the other hand, participating in World Clan Conventions helps to increase the number of activities within a local association where members can enjoy tourism benefits. It also helps the newly established associations to anchor one’s position within the network and learn common cultural and administrative practices of managing the association.

7.3.1. Publicity and Membership Increase

Holding of World Clan Convention often can help to increase publicity, thus increasing their membership participation. Such conventions are often held in conjunction with the local anniversary celebration. (Liu, 1998). World Clan Conventions can spur increased level of marketing through media thereby bringing greater public attention to the anniversary celebration, which are often limited only to its immediate member and their associated networks. For example, according to the 12th World Nanan Clansmen Convention preparatory documents, when the convention was held in Singapore, the media campaign was launched on 3rd October 2014. The launch was released on the five main newspaper in Singapore, LianHe WanBao, ShinMin Daily news, The Straits Times, My Paper and Omy. After which, between 19th October and 19th November 2014, news release was conducted almost every other day, with it intensifying as the event approaches. This includes the “Lion City heritage tour” in October 19th, “temple tour” in 2nd November and “using streets signs to see the spirit of Nan’an” in 9th November. Besides these articles, that focused more on Nan’an cultural items, the event itself was also massively reported. With an increased in publicity, recruitment of new members after the convention became relatively easier. According to one of the organising committee member in Singapore Lam Ann Association, he said

“when we held the 88th anniversary, it was good. The members will come, even if we don’t invite them to join as members. Why? This is because the newspaper publicized.”

(Mr Lee, 8 March 2016)

It is common to see significant membership increase as well as increase youth participation with the organising of World Clan Convention. Similarly, when Kao Hsiung Lin Clan Association held

the 7th World Lin Clan Convention, the number of members, in particularly those with wellto do backgrounds increased. According to the records that was published in the 21st issue of World Lin's Clan magazine, within that year alone, the number of individuals applying for Double Yang Festival had increased by about five folds, and the number of scholarship applications had doubled. They also observe an increase in the number of young members participating in the association when they organise the World Clan Conventions on the year 1999.

7.3.2. Activating Organisation and Its Associated Network

Organising World Clan Conventions help to activate the networks and social relationships embedded within the organisation, therefore sustaining a long-term relationship. Associations maintain their social relationships through their seasonal gathering for ancestor worship and banquets. Holding a World Clan Conventions will bring members back together to work towards a collective goal. As illustrated within the experience of Kao Hsiung Lin Clan Association when they held the 7th World Lin Clan Convention, he said

“Due to the fact that we are about to hold the 7th World Lin Clan Convention, therefore (the directors) are particularly concern about association activities...provide money and resources...passionate with giving” (source: 21st issue World Lin's magazine)

Therefore, from the above statement, we can deduce that by holding a large-scale convention, it could help the association to improve the cohesion within, and provide opportunities for members to contribute towards collective goal. With a more cohesive members, not only it will improve the turnout of other activities that will be held in the association during that year, but also improve the amount of commitment, and resources that members are willing to sacrifice for the clan association.

Kao Hsiung Lin Clan Association, for example, observe that the number of existing members attending the general meeting increase by a third on the year they held the convention compared to the previous years.

Organising World Clan Conventions is also a means to activate local and regional networks that are associated with the clan association. In order to hold the convention, resources were drawn from a variety of personal social networks. In the 16th Lin Clan Convention held in 2016 for example, the preparatory meeting was held in the brother of the Chairperson's hotel. The event hall and restaurants were the support from the General Secretary's friend. In addition, his friend also supplied the uniform that was worn during the convention. He proudly took a group photo of the thousands of delegates wearing the shirts and sent to his friend at the end of the convention. The ancestral worship was held in the primary school that was sponsored by the Vicechairperson. The hall, which held the ancestor worship, was named after his parents. The Chairperson's wife prepares the afternoon snacks, and the vice-chairperson, who is also a lawyer manages the negotiation with government agencies on custom issues and tourism visa.

Individuals were drawn in during one of the last few meetings from Lin Clan Associations around the region to help with the reception and logistics issue. The performers on the night banquet were the wives of the members. By looking at these examples that I have highlighted above, we can see that resources, and individuals' contributions were drawn from various social networks among its members to accomplish it (Field notes, 16-20 November 2016). Through the meetings and interactions generated in the preparation process, it has enhanced the unity and cohesiveness of the association and their associated networks.

7.3.3. Increase in Association Activities

Participating for World Clan Activities, have been incorporated as one of the many activities that clan associations hold for their members. Tourism activity of the organising county had always been one of the major attraction for attending World Clan Convention. Therefore, in many of the associations, they would organise large tour groups consisting of hundreds of delegates that will attend the convention as well as tours around the country that is organising the convention. This is held once every two years, and participants are offered very affordable cheap tour packages. The conventions usually covered food, transport and local tours in the hosting countries. Due to the large number of delegates coming for the convention, organisers could easily secure better deal with the hotels, and discounted vouchers for major tourist attraction. For many organisers, they will also offer affiliated tour agencies for organisation who plan to come for the event, and at the same time, wish to travel around the country before or after the convention. Since these tour agencies are affiliated with the organising committee, and are perhaps at times, companies of one of the directors or members, they are able to offer a better package deals and better services. Better services are offered, and guaranteed because it is often tied to the reputation of the association. Logistics that are not well arranged can sometimes leave a bad impression for the organiser. Having a bad impression meant, that the organisers become vulnerable to poor publicity and reputation within the Chinese communities. Delegates will at times, file their complaints on local Chinese newspaper. An example of which can be seen in New Chinese Daily News in 3rd November 1999, on complaints of the 10th International Teochew Convention. Therefore, it became vital for tour agency to ensure that the delegates are welllooked after.

With such great travel packages, members, and their respective family members are encouraged to participate in the bi-annual travel plan with their fellow clan members. Therefore, in the process of conducting fieldwork in several of the conventions, participants often indicate that the purpose of attendance is to tour the country. Organisers intending to organise the convention would also publicize their local tourist interests within the bidding documents to attract votes to hold the convention.

7.3.4. Newly Established Associations: Establishing One's Position Within the Network

For newly established associations, participating and organising organisation network activities are critical in their establishment within the clansmen community. Organising the World Clan Convention is one way in which a new association can familiarize itself with the other members, and introduce himself into the community. Through the process of preparing, communicating, negotiation as well as offering a banquet to the other member organisations, it offers an opportunity for the other participating associations to know the activities and personnel within the organiser's association. It also helps build stronger social relationships between the newly formed associations and the other members that are beyond just attending a convention.

For the participating new members, convention offers a way to exchange information and introduce themselves to the clansmen community. During the 16th World Lin Clan Convention, a couple delegate, while waiting at the airport for the organising committee to arrange their transport to the hotels expressed that they were from a newly formed association in Malaysia. The association was only established one year ago. They are in the process of raising funds and have yet to acquire a building for themselves. They registered themselves to the convention to “interact” (*Jiao Liu*) with

the other member organisations and get to know the different leaders from the different associations (18 November 2016). This would also help them to collect experiences of managing an association, build networks, and collect information of activities in other associations.

By participating in World Clan Associations, it also offer newly formed associations an opportunity to observe and learn the “network culture”, such as, the ancestor worship rituals, and image of ancestors recognized by the network members. For a newly establishing clan association, the selection of legitimate ancestor rites, sculptor and image is important. Conventions offer an opportunity for them to learn what were the commonly recognized practices and rituals recognized by the majority of the member associations. Therefore, the ritual team and directors in World Lin Clan Association have often been sent abroad to assist some of its member organisations and their associated temples in their ancestor rituals. One of which is the Japan Lin Clan Association.

7.4. Network Level

Implications on the network level refers to the overall goals that the network have accomplished through the collective management of the organisation network.

7.4.1. Expansion of Platforms of Collaboration

Within organisation networks, over time, it can expand and develop into various form of collaborative platform in different areas. International Teochew Federation is an example which started out as a simple clansmen meeting that had expanded itself into a variety of other institutionalized platforms. These institutionalized platforms in turn drawn in new networks. The International Teochew Federation comprise of Teochew International Economic Cooperation Organization (TIECO) as well as International Conference on Chaozhou studies. They are also closely

associated with International Teochew Doctor Association as well as International Teochew Youth Conventions.

International Conference on Chaozhou studies first started out in 1993 by the initiation of famous Chinese sinologist, named Jao Tsung-I. In 1992, he called for the establishment of “Chao Zhou Studies” during the 2nd directorial meeting in Chao Shan History Culture Research Center. After which, in December 1993, the first International Conference on ChaoZhou Studies was being held in Hong Kong Chinese University sponsored by Hong Kong Chiu Chow Chamber of Commerce. This led to the development of an International Teochew Doctor Association. The association intends to build a network of Teochew dialect doctoral scholars, managed by the son of the honorary chairperson International Conference of Chaozhou Studies. It aims to create a platform that builds collaboration on academic work and further development in research.

On the other hand, the business network was only established with the first proposal to set up a Teochew International Economic Cooperation Organisation. The proposal was made on November 2009, during the 15th International Teochew Convention presidium meeting. After its approval during the 16th convention held in April 2011, ShenZhen ChaoShan Chamber of Commerce proceeds with its preparation, and finally materializing into TIECO in 2015 during the 18th International Teochew Convention held in Vancouver. The purpose of such convention will be to build a network of individuals in business, members and non-members, to enhance business exchanges, collaboration and development. Therefore, as seen from the experience of International Teochew Federation, what started out as an annual meeting has developed into multi-layer platforms of a varied nature. The institutionalization of the clan network in the form of a permanent secretariat and biannual convention allow various institutionalized platforms of collaboration to emerge. This helps to draw

in individuals and organisations from different sectors into the picture with their cultural identity as a basis of expansion.

7.4.2. Solving Collective Challenges: Maintain Sustenance of Organisation

国际潮青联合会 International Teochew Youth Convention	世界海南青年大会 World HaiNan Youth Convention
世界广东华人华侨青年大会 World GuangDong Youth Convention	世界南安青年联谊会 World Convention of Nanan Youth Clansmen
世界泉州青年联谊会 World QuanZhou Youth COnvention	世界安溪青年联谊会 World AnXi Youth Convention
世界江门青年大会 World Youth Congress of JiangMen	世界晋江青年联谊会 World Jin Jiang Youth Association
世界晋江青年联谊会 World JingJiang Youth Association	世界福建青年联合会 World FuJian Youth Association

Table 7.1: List of World Youth Convention

Forming a network organisation allow organisations could also help to solve collective problems such as the decline of youth participation. Many younger generation of ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia lacks the identification with ancestral hometowns as well as their kinship groups. In countries such as Singapore, many of the younger generation Chinese could only speak Mandarin and English but not dialect. The challenge to attract the younger generation into the clan associations have been discussed in several of the World Clan Conventions. In order to solve this issue, Hong Kong Chiu Chow Chamber of Commerce raised the first International Teochew Youth Convention in 1999. The efforts started out in the 8th International Teochew Convention in 1994, when the convention was held in Hong Kong. With the efforts of the youth team of Hong Kong Chiu Chow Chamber of Commerce, they established contacts with the various youth group in different countries, subsequently paying a visit in October to Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand Teochew Clan Associations. (Source: 8th International

Teochew Convention letters of exchange) On that year, large number of youth delegates were sent to participate in the convention. This effort eventually materialize into the International Teochew Convention.

Conventions can become platforms where organisations can solve collective problems. It helps to bring together small youth groups from different associations to engage in collective activities that promote awareness of Teochew culture while still catering with their interests. This include more business oriented activities such as inviting finance, business and banking professionals to give a speech, tour around industries and factories, as well as tourism. Conversations were also spoken in Mandarin or English rather than dialects. These conventions help to encourage younger generation join their own local clan associations, and develop enthusiasm for the sub-culture.

7.4.3. Strengthen Existing Transnational Networks Between Organisations

Through organising and participating in World Clan Activities, it helps to maintain and strengthen relationships between associations. From these bi-annual meetings, organisations are kept updated on the changes in members, leadership structures and activities within associations. According to the director of one of the member associations from World Nanan Clan Convention, he said

“When our youth group just started...during the convention met a few Malaysian youth group members. So, we decide to organise young people activities together... Originally we only did local...with Malaysia, this indirectly expands our own activities”
(Mr Lee/2, 29 April 2016)

Similarly, in World Lin Clan Associations, Thailand Lin Clan Association, during their conventions in 2011, had collaborated with the Cambodian Lin Clan Association to donate for the disable soldiers. In previous years, they have also collaborated with Singapore Lin Clan Associations to raise items to donate for the Cambodian orphanage. From these activities, we can see that conventions can help to strengthen relationships between organisations. As they interact with each other, they gain insight of future plans and activities, thereby exposing themselves to opportunities for collaboration. Collaboration across countries help to bring about extension of an individual's organisations own activity into not just limited within their own residing countries but across nation.

Strengthened relationships also help member organisations to support each other's activities and provide help for members in need when clan members travel across different countries. For example, in 2017, Taipei Lin Clan Association send a large team of delegates of over 50 people to support Lim See Tai Chong Soo Kiu Leong Tong 90th Anniversary celebration. In return, in 2018, Singapore Lim See Tai Chong Soo Kiu Leong Tong formed a team of 50 people to travel to Taiwan to attend their 60th anniversary (Field notes, 7 June 201). By having such back and forth exchanges, it helps support each other's organisations activities and ensure a healthy turnout during the conventions.

7.4.4. Preserve and Promote Sub-Culture

World Clan Associations can also help to preserve, and promote lineage sub-culture on the network level. As a collective entity, this enable them to accomplish larger scale cultural project through two ways; consolidate each member's resources to create impactful projects; Or to loan support for the collaborating institutions. In terms of collective promotion of sub-culture, this include

raising funds from clan associations in different parts of the world to build cultural museums and set up foundation funds. The World Zhang, and World Lin cultural museum are two examples of such collaborative efforts. Started in 2009, the World Zhang Cultural museum was initiated by Persatuan Klan Zhang Negeri Sarawak. Within the next two years, using World Zhang Clan Association as a platform, funds and artefacts that were displayed within the museum were raised from Zhang clan members from all over the world. Eventually, the entire museum was built using the funds raised, located on the 3rd floor of Persatuan Klan Zhang Negeri Sarawak Building, totaling an area of 8000 square feet. As an independent institution, co-managed by World Zhang Clan Association and Persatuan Klan Zhang Negeri Sarawak, the management board consists of individual members from both institutions. The purpose of such initiative is to preserve Zhang cultural artifacts and documents from around the world. Such efforts are also seen in International Teochew Federation, where they set up an International Teochew Cultural Foundation which provide grants on documenting Chao Shan history, research projects and publish Chao Shan Culture related books. It also awards individuals who have contributed to Teochew research.

Besides using World Clan Associations as collective platform to generate resources, they also support external institutions by either loaning its brand to existing projects, or help to publicize an effort. World Clan Association represents a brand that legitimize projects and helps to mobilize resources. External agencies may approach World Clan Associations for collaboration. Collaboration can be in the form of borrowing the name of World Clan Association. In this case, they would indicate within their publicity campaign that they were supported by the World Clan Associations. This helps to attract sponsors and allow them to easily approach other external partners to raise funds for the project. For example, in November 2012, Zhao Jie, member of cultural committee in World Zhang

Clan Association and director of Chinese Zhang Historical and Cultural Research center planned for a film called “Gong Ding Tian Xia”. The script focus on the story of Hui, founding ancestor of Zhang lineage, who invented a bow to defeat Chi You. Rather than raising funds from World Zhang Clan members, the individual approach World Zhang Clan to request for its brand to raise investments funds. The resolution was passed in 2012 during the third time of the 5th session directorial meeting. World Zhang Clan Association agreed to such initiatives, although in exchange, World Zhang Clan will supervise the process, and demand reports of all investors and their investment amount. The project was eventually positioned as supported by World Zhang Clan Association.

Another key initiative that World Clan Associations are deeply involved is the compilation of genealogy. Limited by time and resources, it is difficult for an individual association to compile the various branches of the genealogy scattered in around the world. However, with the support of various World Clan Associations and their collaborative platforms, it helps to ease the process. One ongoing project in 2018, is the compilation of the book of “Hua Xia Zhang Genealogy” which aims to consolidate all the Zhang genealogies into a single book. The Zhang Ancestral Temple and Qing He County City Government who created an editorial committee for this initiative led this project. In 2018, notices were circulated for members of World Zhang Clan Association to provide their family genealogical records, ancestor graves, and description of the history of Zhang lineage in their respective countries. This initiative demonstrated that World Clan Organisations are capable of not just directly promoting their own sub-ethnic culture. It is also able to collaborate with external partners by loaning out their brand name for cultural initiatives.

7.4.5. Expansion of Welfare Needs Provision and Genealogy Compilation

Besides providing welfare to the individuals in the ancestral land, World Clan Organisation also provide them to members that belong to the organisation network. In World Zhang Clan Association for example, they set up a World Zhang Clan Educational funds that provides scholarship to the needy students. As long as the student bear the surname Zhang, Liao or Jian, he can apply for the scholarship, regardless of his nationality. This initiative started out with the donation of two Singapore Zhang elders, before generating further donations from other clan members in other parts of the world to set up the foundation.

Besides, there are also more event based charity work. These event based charity work can be focused on the ancestral homeland or more broadly, the needs of any member organisation. In the 13th World Nanan Clansmen Convention held in Pattaya, Nan'An City was hit by Typhoon Meranti, which created heavy flooding in the region. In the matter of a day, over 22 million RMB was raised to support the reconstruction efforts from the floods. Such efforts can be more broadly targeted on any member organisations that are in need (Fieldnotes, 9 September 2016). For example, when Taiwan was hit by earthquake in 21 Sep 1999, support and help were sent immediately to World Lin Clan Association. The collection of letters from Canada, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Japan and Vietnam expressing their concern on the welfare of Taiwan Lin Clan members can be found within the 23rd World Lin's magazine which was published on 1st April 2000. On that year, Lim Sai Hor Kow Mock, from the Benevolent Association in Canada, had also raised funds for the earthquake. Similarly, during the East China flood in 1996, World Lin Clan Association had also raised a total of 510,000 TWD donations from its members. This sum of money was then passed to the Red Cross to help with the reconstruction process.

7.4.6. Collective Property and Investments

In many of the World Clan Associations, it is common to see the conventions ending with trade deals and investment collaboration signed. In the World Nanan Clansmen Convention alone, during the 9th World Nanan Convention, 44 investment deals ranging from architecture, machinery to mobile accessories industry when the convention was held in Guang Dong Province, ShenZhen. In the next year, during the 10th World Nanan Clansmen Convention, “Return Nanan industrial investment deal” was also signed at the end of the convention. Many of these deals were more symbolic without necessary materializing into actual investments. They hinge unto the publicity generated from the conventions, so as to accumulate symbolic capital in the process. Nevertheless, conventions do offer opportunities for investments to be channeled into the region. In particular, when some of these conventions are held concurrently with local trade fairs.

It is also possible for members of World Clan Conventions to consolidate funds to set up a company that performs collective investments into particular region. The World Zhang Private Limited is an example of such effort. Such effort started with an agreement signed with Qing He County Government, who requested for collaborative development of a piece of land in Qing He County. This initiative was known as “Yi Ting Liang Yuan” (One Foyer, Two Gardens). The land comprise of World Zhang Ancestral Temple. Around the Zhang Ancestral temple was the biological gardens. Beyond the garden is the Zhang Industrial Park and Zhang Biological Center. 20 million RMB was raised from the collective resources of directors within the World Zhang Clan Association to build the Ancestral Temple. In return for this effort, Qing He government provides 0.08km² of land. If the investment within each piece of land is not less than 1million/666m² RMB, World Zhang Clan Association is free to develop the land as per their interest. The government will guarantee basic

public infrastructure and approval process. Such collaborative efforts allowed member organisations to pool their resources together to invest.

7.5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has illustrated the economic and social implications for individual, organisations, and network collective in the organising and participating in the activities of World Clan Associations. The “network culture’ provided a foundation in which the organisation network is built, creating opportunities for collaboration that would create impact on the *Qiaoxiang*, as well as the residing countries of the various member organisations.

Chapter 8 – Conclusion

The thesis seeks to explore the collaborative relationship between diasporic Chinese and *qiaoxiang* government in the creation of cultural network. By analysing the negotiations within diasporic Chinese Voluntary Network Organisations and their associated activities, I have examined the process of “invention of tradition” (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983). My empirical analysis had demonstrated how traditions and culture associated with the performance of “Chinese-ness” within transnational Chinese network are not naturally given nor are they simply a product of collective memories of individuals. It is actually a product of negotiations from the organisational interactions between both *qiaoxiang* governments and diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations. *Qiaoxiang* governmental institutions are no longer a sovereign entity that controls the network, but rather, they are structurally embedded, and shaped by the mechanisms within the network organisations.

This final chapter summarizes the main findings and arguments of the thesis. In the first section, I review how each chapter addresses the research problems. After which, I reflect on the key contributions that I have made within the thesis. Lastly, I would end this chapter with suggestions of future directions of research.

8.1. Chapter summaries

Chapter One outlined the research problems that I attempt to examine within this thesis. First, to understand how the cultural foundation within the networks are established. In order to do so, I explain how the continuity in traditions and culture are created, despite the “unstable” nature of the network. Second, to examine how environmental context and institutional mechanisms within the network shape the process of “invention of tradition”. Third, to examine the implication of the

“transnational Chinese network” for the various level of actors in the network organisations. I situate this thesis within the context of the continuous evolvement of “lineage” from the early Ming dynasty until its use within modern diasporic Chinese communities.

Chapter Two reviewed the literature that is relevant to my thesis topic. I focused on the studies of diasporic Chinese voluntary associations from the perspective of “Chinese transnationalism”. This include the transnational roles of voluntary associations within the *qiaoxiang* and diasporic Chinese voluntary Associations as well as some of the mechanisms that can be found within the networks of organisations. However, through this review, I have also identified the lack of focus on the constructionist quality of culture within the network organisations. With that, I end this chapter with a reformulated concept of “transnational chinese network” that incorporates both the analytical tools of “invention of tradition” within “network governance”.

Chapter Three provided an overview of the methods and transnational methodologies used within my fieldwork. Within this chapter, I considered the challenges of conducting multi-sited ethnographies and the implication this has on my research methods. My fieldwork examined the interactions and negotiations between the various organisations within the World Clan Associations through archival documents, interviews and participant observations.

Chapter Four to Seven are empirical chapters that proceed in accordance to the premise of “invention of tradition”. I first establish how “continuity” of traditions emerge, before examining the various environmental and organisational factors that shape the process of invention. It end with the implications of the cultural network on the transnational diasporic Chinese communities.

Chapter Four examined how traditions are forged within network structure in the context of network organisations. Through an empirical analysis of two main traditions, ancestral worship and gift/banquet exchanges found within surname based World Clan Associations, the chapter demonstrates how a “standard” tradition arise from the wide amount of local variations. In order to do so, I examined the underlying cultural notions within the two traditions. After which, I demonstrated how each tradition arise from the process of selection, circulation and repetition. The last process of securing the “standard” is the adaptation traditions into the network organisation and “guarded” by the secretariat.

In Chapter Five, I discuss the relationship between invention of Chinese tradition and organisational dynamics within network organisations. I focused on the meso-level interactions between organisations within the four case studies selected. Drawing on the World Clan Convention as the main activity of focus, the chapter investigate the various factors that shape the traditions that are performed within the conventions. In the process, the chapter begins with a longitudinal perspective. From this perspective, it captures the environmental context that shapes the trends of traditions performed. After which, I illustrate the structural features and relational characteristics. In the process, I bring out the role of the lead organisation, and institutional mechanisms that shape the cultural network. Within the relational dynamics, I focus on one of the main relationship, between the organiser and the lead organisations. I brought out how the local identification of organisers, asymmetric resources and alignment of goals shape the emergence of traditions within the network organisations.

Chapter Six focuses on the role of *qiaoxiang* government and how they become structurally embedded within the network organisation. I examined the various mechanism that limit their role in the network organisation making them participate as an equal partner as the other member organisations. This include the membership criteria that shapes their form of existence and competitive behaviour. Not only that, informal expectations such as material benefits and representativeness also limits their ability to exert full control over the network organisations. Lastly, I draw on the concept of “positionality” to examine how various structural positioning within the network organisation confers levels of influence to the *qiaoxiang* government.

Chapter Seven explores the implication of the “invented tradition” within the different levels of agents in the transnational Chinese community in the context of network organisations. “Invented traditions” form the foundation of the transnational cultural network. I explored the project and benefits of participation the network has on the individual, organisational and network organisational level.

8.2. Contributions

The thesis has sought to provide an understanding of how ‘invented traditions’ emerge from the organisational dynamics formed between *qiaoxiang* government and diasporic Chinese voluntary organisations within the context of transnational network organisations. Several common strands have emerged across the four empirical chapters.

The first finding is that Chinese culture and traditions that forms the foundation of Chinese transnational network are a product of organisational interactions. I refer to this as “standards” within network organisations. While it continues to remain true, that primordial identification forms

the foundation of transnational Chinese network, and is embedded within the “collective memory” of the individuals. “Chinese-ness” also a product of initiatives that were gradually accumulated over time from various organisations. This “standard” that emerge has to be repeated, circulated and guarded in order to establish continuity within the unstable network. Therefore, creating the foundation of transnational Chinese network within the context of network organisations.

In addition, my research also demonstrates that organisational factors also determine the extent of influence each actor has within the process of cultural invention. Structural positioning remains key to understanding the influence each organisation has over the development of the network organisations. Organisations occupying a more “central” position are able to exert greater influence on the network as it develops. This applies for both *qiaoxiang* as well as diasporic Chinese voluntary associations. Even though within each activities of network organisations, the organiser changes. However, the actor holding the central position would gain a greater leverage over the organiser as it interacts with them to ensure success in the activity. This allowed the perpetuation of the interest of actors occupying higher central positions.

Not only that, all actors, regardless of diaspora organisations or *qiaoxiang* governments are subjected to the formal and informal mechanisms that are created within the network organisations. All actors operate within the constraints set by these mechanisms. They include the constitutions which determine the decision making process and membership criteria. Informal expectations and mechanisms that emerge from the network such as framing, mobilizing, expectation of material benefits and representativeness limits the extent that one actor can have over the control of the entire network governance.

Lastly, through examining the negotiations within the Chinese network organisations, my research shows that existing conceptualizing of “transnational Chinese network” is inadequate in understanding the layers of complex interaction that lead to the creating of culture within the network. While the current approach on transnational Chinese network in the organisational context have overwhelming focus on the functions of these organisations, it is unable to capture how the negotiations and mechanisms interacts with the construction of culture in the network. This meant that it is unable to explain how network changes with the participation of *qiaoxiang* government and why it came to assume a particular form over a period of time. Thus, I have reformulated the concept and layered it with “invention of tradition” within the context of “network governance” to capture the nuances of organisational negotiations in “chinese-ness” construction.

8.3. Directions for future research

The thesis opens up several areas for future research. First, the thesis focus on the World Clan Associations that were initiated by the diasporic Chinese. The results generated are based on four case studies which are selected partly due to practical reasons of accessibility. Therefore, the results are not generalizable. More World Clan Associations initiated by diasporic Chinese could be explored.

Not only that, a comparative analysis between World Clan Associations that were initiated by the *qiaoxiang* government and new Chinese migrants would also be valuable. Examples of World Clan Associations initiated by *qiaoxiang* governments are World Fujian Convention and World Convention of Nanan Youth Clansmen. These conventions are initiated by the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office. They would partner with different Chinese Chamber of Commerce within China or Chinese clan associations around the world to hold the conventions. They often serve as platforms to encourage

economic collaboration and interactions between diasporic Chinese with their hometowns. The conventions are also avenues to promote the hometowns. These World Clan Associations have slowly rise in prominence and have at times challenge the existing network organisations that have been created by the diasporic Chinese in Southeast Asia. A comparative analysis of these associations would help illuminate the impact of these associations on the existing ones. It would also reveal if the existing structural and organisational dynamics identified within this thesis is applicable to these newly formed network organisations.

Second, while I examine the network organisations, I recognized the impact that the local context in which the lead organisations are located and *qiaoxiang* have had on the network organisations. Further empirical analysis that pays attention into the historical, political, economic and social context of these two agencies as well as their associated regional networks would be valuable. It would help to illuminate how the dynamics within the local context are brought over into the network organisations. With that, it would bring out how the network organisations can structurally limit or extend the individual organisation' interests.

Lastly, the main focus of this thesis had been on the meso-level interactions, and how this translation into the process of producing "invented culture". Further directions can be explored by bringing in the individual networks such as business, kinship and friendship. In particularly, personal relationships that were established prior to the network organisations would help to illuminate further how the network organisation emerge. It would also provide further insight on how the dynamics of personal relationships shape the structure of the work as well as the traditions over time.

Using the analytical tools of network governance and invented tradition, the thesis has captured the collaborative relationships between *qiaoxiang* governments and diasporic Chinese voluntary association in the process of constructing culture. While individual networks between *qiaoxiang* and the various diasporic Chinese communities around the world continues to remain important, I intend to bring attention to the meso-level interactions that shape cultural reproduction in the transnational Chinese network. Drawing on four Chinese World Clan Associations, my research demonstrates, that agencies are structurally embedded within the network organisations. The formal and informal mechanisms, network and relational structural aspects shape the roles, behaviours and form of existence of the various agencies in the network.

List of Interviews

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Mr Zhang/1, Personal Communication, 17 March 2016

Ms Zhang/2, personal communication, 31 March 2016

Mr Lee, Personal Communication, 30 March 2016

Tan Aik Hock, Formal Interview, 02 April 2016

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Mr Lin/2, Formal Interview, 24 May 2016

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Mr Lin/1, Personal Communication, 30 May 2016

Mr Lin/5, Formal Interview, 01 June 2016

Mr Zhang/2, Formal Interview, 03 June 2016

Lin C., Formal Interview, 06 June 2016

Lin Jia Zheng, Formal Interview, 07 June 2016

Mr Lin/6, formal interview, 01 July 2016

Mr Hong, personal communication, 02 July 2016

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Appendix A: Interview Guide

<p>Personal</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is your role in the organisation? How long have you been in the organisation?<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. What is your role within the preparation process of the World Clan Conventions?
<ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Describe your experience in the World Clan Convention.<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. What are the changes in the World Clan Conventions over the years?b. Why did you participate in the convention?c. What are the benefits of participation for the organisation?d. What does it mean for you to participate in the convention?
<p>Application</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Could you describe how your organisation organise the convention?<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Why do the organisation decide to hold the convention?b. How did the organisation apply to be the organiser?c. What criteria does the organiser have to possess in order to hold the convention?
<p>Preparation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">4. How does the organisation go about preparing for the convention?<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Formation of preparatory committeeb. Fund-raisingc. Appointments and job distributionsd. Decisions on symbolic identifierse. Exchange of gifts
<p>Coordination</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">5. How does the coordination with the various stakeholders for the event occur? What is the relationship with the various stakeholders?<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Within the organisation?b. Local stakeholders: sponsors, government officials, government departments, other related clan associationsc. Overseas stakeholders?
<p>Implication</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">6. What is the impact of the conventions on the individual, organisational and network level?

World Clan Associations

7. How was the committee being formed?

- a. What are the issues being discussed?
- b. What are the coordination/resolution process for the issues?
- c. appointments within the association

d. Meeting rules and conventions

e. Organisation structure

8. How do specific symbolic identifiers (flag, song, theme) came about?

Secretariat

9. What is the role of the secretariat in the World Clan Associations?

- a. How do the organisers negotiate with the secretariat?
- b. On what aspects of the conventions do they collaborate?
- c. Why are the secretariat involve in the organisation process?

Appendix B: Scoping survey for total number of World Clan Associations

There is no existing database on the number of World Clan Associations. The information was collected through a scoping survey that involved various stages. First, I went through the Singapore National Library, NUS Chinese library, Wang Gungwu Library for their collections of World Clan Associations' commemorative magazines. After which, I scoped through the list of registered societies in registry of societies in Singapore and The cooperative & civil Associations Preparatory Office in Taiwan. I had also included the Hong Kong Companies Registry and Societies registry list. World Clan Associations are mainly registered within these three countries. In the second stage, I used google and baidu search engines to search for keywords such as "*kenqingdahui*" (world clan conventions), "*shetuanlianyi*" (clan association), and "*shijiezhongqinghui*" (world clan associations). In addition, using the list of ethnic identifiers available on the list of associations provided by Singapore Federation of Chinese Clans Association in both Chinese and English, I had cross-checked for World Clan Associations associated with each of the associations. The last stage was to allow the names of World Clan Associations to emerge when I conduct my fieldwork. During informal conversations and scoping through the archives kept within individual associations, I took note of World Clan Associations names and added them to my list.

One of the main challenge that I encountered during the process which affected the list of organizations compiled was the rise of "*shanzhai shetuan*" (fake associations). A list of these associations were released by the Ministry of Civil Affairs of People's Republic of China in 2016. These associations usually begins with the name of "global", "China" or "international". They are non-functional associations that were formed with an intention to raise funds illegally. I had taken precaution by cross-checking my list of organizations with the list released by the Ministry of Civil

Affairs. In addition, I only included organizations that have held at least three or more times of large scale events. Members have to comprise of organization members in which at least one of which must be located in Southeast Asia so that I am able to verify the associations. If the above criteria was not fulfilled, at least one of more associations located in Singapore, has to report participation in the World Clan Associations. This allowed me to verify the data. Hence, the list generated would have underestimated the number of new associations formed after 2012.