

**A HISTORY OF THE CHINESE CULTURE FOUNDATION
AND
THE CHINESE CULTURE CENTER OF SAN FRANCISCO**

Him Mark Lai

A HISTORY OF THE CHINESE CULTURE FOUNDATION AND THE CHINESE CULTURE CENTER OF SAN FRANCISCO

Him Mark Lai

INTRODUCTION

The Chinese Culture Foundation (CCF) of San Francisco is one of the earliest Chinese community cultural organizations founded in the United States in the post-World War II era. Its founders included both Chinese Americans and non-Chinese Americans. The organization operates the Chinese Culture Center (CCC) and offers programming to promote Chinese and Chinese American culture, serving the Chinese community as well as members of the larger society. This essay traces the evolution of CCF and CC and how this development was influenced and shaped by changes in American society, particularly in the Chinese American community.

THE SOCIAL MILIEU

During World War II Congress repealed the Chinese Exclusion Acts in 1943 and granted naturalization rights to Chinese aliens in this country. Thus Chinese Americans emerged from the War with optimistic prospects of improved status in American society. Slowly this was realized in the succeeding decades. The relaxation in immigration restrictions allowed a growth in the number of families also signaled the passing of the bachelor society.

During the exclusion period from 1882 to 1943, the oppressive atmosphere faced by Chinese in the country had fostered alienation among them toward America, and had encouraged the continued maintenance of strong sentimental ties to the ancestral land. Changes in the postwar decades such as the opening of more opportunities to Chinese Americans and tense relations between the US and mainland Chinese government however, weakened their links to China and encouraged them to identify with this country. Moreover, America's economic prosperity during the post-war decades fostered rapid growth of a western oriented Chinese American middle class that often was more fluent in English than in Chinese. The middle class comprising of businesspersons, professionals, and technical personnel with interests firmly rooted in this country had begun to forge numerous economic, political and social ties to mainstream America. As part of this development there was a strong desire among these Chinese Americans to be equal partners in American society. Within their own community a heightened sense of ethnic awareness and kindred feelings of community expressed their group solidarity to attain the common goal.

As this new middle class grew in number, it sought to play leading roles in pushing for change and modernization of the Chinese community. Using the links they had been developing with mainstream politicians, members of the new middle class such as Lim P. Lee, H. K. Wong, Paul Louie as well as some leaders of the Chinese American Citizens' Alliance promoted and supported projects to improve the quality of life in the Chinese community. For example, on October 24, 1951, San Francisco Chinatown saw the dedication of its first public housing project, East Ping Yuen, followed two weeks later by the opening of the Chinese Recreation Center. Most often the undertakings furthered and facilitated the

development of Chinatown businesses. Thus in 1953 Chinese American merchants initiated the first Chinese New Year Festival, changing a traditional festival into a tourist attraction complete with parades, exhibitions, and later, queen competitions, more familiarly known as “beauty contests.” By 1962 a public garage underneath Portsmouth Square opened to facilitate parking for Chinatown visitors. This middle class was eager and desirous of changing the community to better advance their class interests. However, their relatively small numbers and weak economic base in the Chinese community, as well as their limited influence in mainstream American politics, inhibited their effectiveness to push for changes in the heavily immigrant-dominated Chinatown community. Also, due to interlocking economic ties and working relations some of the new middle class had developed with the Chinatown elite over a period of time, self interest prevailed over the desire to challenge the status quo.

Since the mid-nineteenth century, the immigrant-dominated district associations, family associations, and secret societies had provided the leadership in a Chinatown bachelor society which was comprised largely of laborers socially isolated from mainstream America. During the twentieth century, especially during and after World War II, the increasing number of families, the higher level of education, as well as the increasing participation of Chinese Americans in mainstream American society all worked to whittle down the influence of the traditional organizations and undermined their ability to effectively exercise leadership in the community. Although the reins of power in most organizations were still held by Chinatown’s traditional elite comprised of prominent merchants and heads of secret societies, members of the new Chinese American middle class were beginning to enter decision making circles in some organizations. However, traditional events soon played a role in slowing this development and instead placed control of many organizations firmly in the hands of a small circle of politically partisan leaders.

The Cold War between the Soviet Union and the Western Nations had begun in the late 1940s. China became involved when the Communists defeated the Chinese Nationalists (Kuomintang) government in a civil war. The victors led the found of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in 1949 and aligned that nation with the Soviet Union’s socialist camp. In the meantime, remnants of the defeated Nationalist regime took refuge on the island of Taiwan. Before the dust even had a chance to settle in this conflict, fighting broke out between neighboring North and South Korea in mid-1950. By the end of that year the fledgling People’s Republic had also joined the fray when it went to aid of its North Korean ally and confronted the armed might of the United States and its allies supporting South Korea. Meanwhile, the Cold War engendered the growth of an anti-Communist hysteria in this country that resulted in political witch hunts dedicated to rooting out alleged Communist sympathizers. The federal government’s investigation into Chinese immigration fraud in the 1950s further abetted this pervasive atmosphere of fear in the Chinese community and led many Chinese to become politically circumspect. This era was soon followed by the US participation the the Vietnam War during which the PRC was again supporting the other side.

This situation was favorable for the hard-pressed Nationalist (Kuomintang) regime on Taiwan. It was allowed to mobilize the party network in America to take measures to cull the support of the Chinese in America. Gaining control of the traditional associations was not difficult for by this time small oligarchies were controlling most organizations. A number of these active members were already Kuomintang members or sympathizers. Kuomintang members also became active in other associations

and entered decision-making circles. Thus by the 1950s the Kuomintang members was increasingly able to control and use the traditional organizations led by the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA; also known as the Chinese Six Companies in San Francisco) to maintain political dominance in the community. They imposed a rigid one-sided exclusionary political orthodoxy on the Chinatown media, the Chinese schools, as well as on cultural activities and public opinion. The politically-correct view they advocated was that Republic of China on Taiwan was the sole legitimate government of all of China and that the influence of the PRC “Communist bandits” should be banished from Chinatown. They systematically excluded from organization decision making positions all individuals suspected of being unfriendly to Taiwan or advocating better relations with the PRC.

In the meantime, a continuous influx of Chinese refugees and immigrants from Hong Kong had greatly aggravated the severity of Chinatown’s social and economic problems in employment, housing, and crime by the 1960s. However, the CCBA demonstrated little interest in the understanding and dealing with these complex social issues. As the situation worsened in Chinatown, critical articles on the community’s problems began to appear in the metropolitan dailies.¹ The Chinese Six Companies, speaking for these organizations as a group, persistently denied the existence of any serious social and economic ills, all the while insisting that the Chinese community could take care of its own.²

By the time Chinese Americans growing up in the post-war era were emerging in society. Even more so than their parents, they possessed an intense desire to be equal partners in American society and were beginning to play active roles in mainstream politics. Although their primary interest was not Chinese politics, many nevertheless took a pragmatic view favoring normalization of US diplomatic relations with the PRC. The increased ethnic consciousness and concern for the community became part of this development that spurred many young activists with the desire to play roles in shaping Chinatown’s destiny. Taking their cue from civil rights movement in the US that had made gains when Congress passed the Civil Rights Act in 1964, these Chinese Americans became involved in social programs in the community. They became a progressive activist faction of the new middle class in contrast to the older more conservative group. These activists began vying with the conservatives for the leadership role among the middle class. Like David facing Goliath, or more fittingly, like new-born calves who were unafraid of facing tigers, the activists also challenged the CCBA and began attacking the latter’s inaction in the face of social problems and its failure to provide constructive leadership in the community. CCBA reacted by branding them as “a few unworthy Chinese” who teamed up with “some Caucasian agitators” to stir up Chinatown’s social problems.³ In line with the CCBA’s pro-Taiwan political position it also regarded the activists as pro-Communists since they favored better US relations with the PRC.⁴

It was these interactions in the Chinese community in the 1960s and the 1970s that became important factors in shaping the course of development of the Chinese Culture Center Foundation and the Chinese Culture Center. This may be considered as occurring in three principal stages: 1. Planning a Chinese Culture Center; 2. Opening and maturation of the facility; 3. Strengthening the Center’s ties with the Chinese community.

PLANNING A CHINESE CULTURE CENTER

J.K. CHOY AND THE SFGCCSA

Beginning in the early 1960s the civil-right movement led by African Americans had promoted increased ethnic awareness among non-white minorities. The validity of diverse ethnic identities analogous to ingredients in a “salad bowl” was beginning to replace the traditional notion of America and a “melting pot” where different cultures merge together into one homogenous mass. In the pursuit of cultural equity and the belief that the arts and culture should not be divorced from the community, cultural centers began to appear in ethnic communities to give expression to the ethnic identities of its members.

In San Francisco Chinatown members of the new Chinese American middle class founded the Chinese Historical Society of America in 1963. This was the first organized attempt in the community to research and promote the history of the Chinese in America. Shortly afterward there came a push to establish a more inclusive Chinese cultural organization that would appeal to a wider range of people.

It was the members of the new Chinese American middle class in San Francisco that took the lead in establishing such an institution. A leading figure guiding the early efforts was Jun Ke Choy, commonly known as J.K. Choy.⁵ Choy was a Hawaii-born Chinese who had served the Chinese government for almost three decades. His most notable accomplishment was the reorganization of the government-owned China Merchants Steamship Company, of which he was the general manager from 1935-41. Choy returned to his native America in 1945 and became active in community affairs soon after his arrival. He became an outspoken, relentless and often tactless and intolerant critic of what he considered to be unproductive and outdated practices in Chinatown institutions that led to their ineffectiveness and encouraged corruption. He soon became a controversial figure in the community and those with vested interests in the status quo regarded him as an annoying gadfly. In 1954-55, Choy became the first executive director of the anti-Chiang Kai-shek, anti-Communist Crusade for Free Democratic China. The fact that the crusade was not only anti-Communist, but also anti-Chiang Kai-shek did not endear him to Taiwan partisans. Choy possessed an astute and shrewd political sense, honed by decades of experience in the treacherous sands of republican officialdom in mainland China. He also had numerous contacts in high political financial circles.

In 1957 Choy established and became manager of the Chinatown branch of the San Francisco Savings and Loans Association located at 1044 Grant Avenue. With thrifty Chinatown residents attracted by the institution’s higher interest rates as compared to banks, the branch became highly successful. By 1960 the branch had moved into an adjacent new building it built. Soon afterward the Kennedy administration took office in Washington. In America the civil rights movement was growing in intensity along with the demand for a renewed sense of national purpose, with an increased demand to enhance the quality of American life. This change in the national political atmosphere probably played a role in influencing Choy to convert the former office of the savings and loan into a Chinese Community Center, sometimes known as the Chinese Community House, wholly supported by his financial institution. The facility housed a small library, community bulletin board, and a meeting hall. Personnel stationed there also provided some assistance and advice on access to social welfare services.⁶ Choy probably had an idea of eventually using this as a launching pad for the social and political action in Chinatown.

Chinese Community House filled an obvious need in a Chinatown that was beginning to feel the pressure of numerous social problems. It soon attracted the attention of many individuals concerned with finding solutions to the community's needs. On February 26, 1963 Choy announced formation of the San Francisco Greater Chinatown Community Service Association Organization (SFGCCSA) "to keep pace with the times providing the maximum amount of social and other community services, as called for by President Kennedy in extending the service of the Peace Corps to help the underprivileged in communities throughout the country."

Among SFGCCSA's founders were Choy's associates from San Francisco Federal Savings and Loan Association as well as activists connected with churches and community groups. These included Lorna Logan, Director of Presbyterian Cameron House; Irving Kriegsfeld, Director of Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Center and Dr. John Rigney, psychiatrist and director of San Francisco Planning and Urban Renewal Association (SPUR). There were also prominent Chinatown figures such as Joe Yuey, Samuel Wong, Nellie Tom Quock as well as other businesspersons, professionals and enlightened community leaders.

Joe Yuey was one of the owners of the upscale Imperial Palace Restaurant and leader in the influential Chinatown fraternal association Suey Sing. An immigrant who had risen from humble beginnings, he had become a respected leader in the Chinatown business community. He was also a collector in Chinese art and well-known in art circles. In 1949 Joe Yuey was one of a group of Chinese American leaders who owned the newspaper *Chung Sai Yat Po* that advocated American recognition of the newly established People's Republic of China.⁷ Samuel Wong was a wealthy real estate owner. He had long been a critic of what he perceived as CCBA's lack of fiscal accountability to the Chinese community. Thus around the time of the founding of SFGCCSA, when CCBA was soliciting contributions to remodel the headquarters building, Samuel Wong offered to donate \$1,000 but pointedly announced in public that CCBA must first make public the income and expenditures for the construction of Victory Hall after World War II, as well as the accounts for "Double Ten" celebrations for the previous three years. Although the public opinion generally sided with Wong, CCBA rejected his contribution rather than release the figures.⁸ Nellie Tom Quock, a social worker, was born and raised in America but had long been interested in Chinese art and culture and was active in Chinatown cultural groups. Through her influence, the Tom family and the Tom Do Hing Foundation became active supporters of Chinese cultural activities, and of the future Chinese Culture Foundation as well.

SFGCCSA became a platform independent of the CCBA and traditional associations for advocating and launching community projects. The founding president and executive vice president were J. K. Choy and Joe Yuey. The two established a complementary working relationship that was to last throughout the next decade.

PLAYING THE POLITICAL GAME

Coincidentally with the founding of SFGCCSA in February 1963, the city government announced a month later that the city-owned land at Kearny and Washington Streets opposite of Portsmouth Square on the edge of Chinatown (formerly occupied by the Hall of Justice that moved out in 1956) was up for sale for a minimum price of \$850,000. The City soon received an offer from the Howard Johnson interests to buy the land for construction of a 21-story auto court and was inclined to approve the deal. Getting wind of the pending sale J. K. Choy, representing SFGCCSA, contacted City authorities regarding the possible conversion of the abandoned building into a museum, cultural center, or other public facility for use by the community. When the City came back with the conclusion that such a project would be economically unfeasible, Choy and his associates, through the mayor's office, persuaded a reluctant Board of Supervisors to postpone a decision on the land to allow Choy's group to make a feasibility study and come up with a similar proposal for a Chinese cultural and trade center.⁹

In April 1964 SFGCCSA contracted the firm of J. Francis Ward who did the architectural design for the Ping Yuen public housing project to draw up preliminary plans. Most of the design was the responsibility of a young architect Thomas Hsieh.¹⁰ Subsequently in May SFGCCSA entered into a working arrangement with San Francisco Redevelopers in a proposal to acquire and develop the site.¹¹ In the meantime SFGCCSA also established a cultural committee chaired by Prof. John D. LaPlante, acting as head of Stanford University Museum, to work with the architect to formulate ideas for the facility. Committee members included representation from San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, educators, experts on Chinese arts and culture as well as lay persons actively involved in such activities. There were also individuals such as Chinese Historical Society of America founders H.K. Wong, Ching Wah Lee, and Thomas Chinn. Others were SFGCCSA members.¹² The group came up with a conceptual plan envisioning a Chinese Cultural and Trade Center on the site that includes apartment and/or motel area, a garage, a cultural center with theater, museum and social areas, a commercial area of shops and offices. However, San Francisco Redevelopers soon ran into financial difficulties. SFGCCSA terminated the working agreement in late December and so informed the City in January 1965.¹³ The project was now left without a developer.

On March 1, 1965, the County Board of Supervisors met to consider the proposed project. A supervisor raised the objection that the long delay in developing the site was "robbing San Francisco of needed tax revenues." However, SFGCCSA successfully lobbied the Board to pass a resolution by a vote of 7 to 2, turning over the property to the Redevelopment Agency to begin negotiating with several prospective buyers, select a design and developer and dispose of the land by December 31, 1965.¹⁴ By November 30 the Agency had approved two concepts for further study. One was by Clement Chen and Dartmond Cherk, while the other was by Campbell and Wong & Associates and Chan-Rader & Associates. It was not until a year later, on November 15, 1966, before the Redevelopment Agency finally recommended the investor's group, Justice Enterprises, Inc. to be the developer to construct a 27-story skyscraper based on a modified version of a design submitted by Clement Chen and Associates. The structure was to be operated as a Holiday Inn. Furthermore, Justice Enterprises was to build a 20,000-square foot facility dedicated to cultural activities within the edifice and to contribute \$70,000 toward its completion.¹⁵

FOUNDING OF CHINESE CULTURE FOUNDATION

Meanwhile advocates of the proposed center incorporated on October 15, 1965, as the Chinese Culture Foundation of San Francisco (CCF). The new non-profit corporation's stated primary objective was "to establish a forum of Chinese culture in San Francisco by means of collection and presentation for public enjoyment and education the best historical contemporary paintings and objects of fine art and the best examples of early Chinese culture, artifacts and articles depicting the contribution of the Chinese people in the United States; and to present outstanding artistic, literary, dramatic, dance, and musical expression, and other creative and performing arts, by Chinese and Chinese American artists." CCF will establish "a museum, library, auditorium, and other appropriate facilities for carrying out the programs and purposes of the Foundation"; i.e., a Chinese Culture Center.¹⁶

The thirty-four CCF founders each, from his or her own perspective, had an interest in promoting Chinese and Chinese American culture. The majority were Chinatown businesspeople and leaders in Chinatown organizations, mostly of the immigrant generation. More than half were active participants in SFGCCSA, which assumed the role of principal supported of CCF until the Chinese Culture Center (CCC) opened. There was also a significant minority of America-born Chinese and non-Chinese that were connected with financial and neighborhood organizations, social agencies, churches, or cultural circles. The political leanings of individuals among the founders varied from moderately conservative to moderately liberal. J. K. Choy became acting president of the fledgling organization aided by Quailand Tom of San Francisco Savings and Loan Association as secretary; Samuel Wong as treasurer. Later Joe Yuey became executive vice-president. He was to continue in the role of Choy's right-hand man in the organization until after CCC began operations.¹⁷

After a year of intense negotiations, CCF signed a lease with Justice Enterprises on November 21, 1967, for 20,000 square feet of space including the entire third floor of the new structure plus storage and plaza areas as a cultural center for fifty years at an annual rental of \$1. The lease provided for an additional ten years at the end of fifty years if the structure continued to be operated as a hotel. The developer agreed to contribute \$650,000 for construction of the facility that would include an auditorium seating 500 persons, an eighteen-foot high exhibition hall, and lecture rooms and offices for community uses.¹⁸ As the project inched towards the start of construction the Nationalist regime on Taiwan also became increasingly interested in the Center and invited M. Justine Hermann of the Redevelopment Agency and Clement Chen, project architect to Taipei to discuss support for and involvement in the cultural aspects of the forthcoming facility. As a result of the negotiations Dr. Paul H. C. Wang, Director of the Bureau of Cultural Affairs, Ministry of Education arranged for gifts of publications, films, artwork, etc., from the National Palace Museum, the Nation Historical Museum, city of Taipei and other Taiwan institutions. Taiwan authorities also agreed to provide the services of an architect to consult on embellishment of the pedestrian bridge connecting Holiday Inn and the Chinese Culture Center to Chinatown. Later that year they sent noted artist-architect Chi-kwan Chen to assist with the final design.¹⁹ Ground-breaking for building construction that took place on August 20, 1968, with a projected completion date of early 1970.²⁰

HOLIDAY INN AND THE BRIDGE

Now that the Holiday Inn with a Chinese cultural center was going to be a reality, the project became caught in the swirling political currents of the community. The late 1960s was a period of social

action in America sparked successively by movements demanding civil rights for African Americans and other ethnic minorities, and an end to the Vietnam War. The tumultuous events sparked a demand for change in the Chinese American community. In 1968 street youths organized as the Wah Ching, with George Woo as their spokesperson, demanded at a meeting held at Chinese American Citizens' Alliance Hall that CCBA and the traditional organizations contribute funds to help solve the youth problems.²¹ In 1968 and 1969 activist Chinese American students participated in strikes demanding the establishment of curricula on Asian American Studies in San Francisco State College and University of California at Berkeley. The students soon combined forces with community activists pushing for change in Chinatown.

When construction began on the Holiday Inn, the activists negotiated fruitlessly with the contractor to place Chinese American workers in construction jobs on the project. Their failure spurred a group to form Chinese for Affirmative Action (CAA) to promote equal opportunities for and to fight discrimination against the Chinese in America. While construction was going on, CAA continued to press Holiday Inn to train and hire more Chinese on its future staff.²² As construction proceeded other dissenting voices felt that the site should have been used for public housing. Thus when the Holiday Inn sans pedestrian bridge was formally dedicated by San Francisco Mayor Alioto on January 13, 1971, not only were there firecrackers, a lion dance, speeches and two young ladies popping out from a giant fortune cookie, but present also were young activists with signs shouting "Housing for the people --not a hotel for tourists."²³

The elevated pedestrian bridge planned by the developer to span the busy arterial of Kearny Street and facilitating access between the hotel containing the proposed culture center and Chinatown became another point of connection. Opponents charged that the structure will obliterate some precious open space and shut out the sun on Portsmouth Square -- traditionally a place where Chinatown elders relaxed and children played. Particularly, they pointed out that the bridge will cast a shadow over the children's play area. Thus when the City Recreation Park and Planning commissions respectively approved the bridge on November 14 and 21, 1968, soon after ground-breaking for building construction, they required that the playground be moved to another part of the park. Detailed design, however, was not approved until more than two years later on January 4, 1971, when the City issued a construction permit with the proviso that the bridge be designed to withstand the heavy traffic expected for some Culture Center events, adding some \$160,000 to the originally estimated \$480,000 construction cost. The bridge finally opened for traffic in August 1971, but the facility for Chinese culture still remained an unrealized dream. However, anticipating its early completion, San Francisco Federal Savings and Loan Association offered to CCF use of its Chinese Community House for use as a temporary office from October 1, 1968, to January 31, 1970.²⁴ As events unfolded and the opening was delayed for another three years, CCF had to move after termination of the lease successively to temporary offices at 41 Spofford Alley, 560 Pacific Avenue, the lobby of Holiday Inn, and finally in the unfinished CCC facility.²⁵

PLANNING THE FACILITY

While the construction was progressing on the Holiday Inn CCF board modified the Foundation's internal structure. In 1969 the maximum number of directors on the board increased from thirty-four to forty-four in an attempt to broaden the base support to make CCC a reality.²⁶ New faces appeared as the

CCF board added more member of the Chinatown business community as well as non-Chinese from the larger community influential in the political and cultural spheres.

On July 1, 1969 the CCF board appointed Shanghai-born William D. Y. Wu as the first Executive Director of the culture center in the making. Wu had been involved in the embryonic Asian American movement on the East Coast. When he accepted the appointment he was teaching at Dartmouth College and had just established a seminar *Arts in Society*. In the course enrollees worked on problems of culture in black ghettos, depressed white communities, etc., giving Wu an opportunity through observations and implementation to work out a theoretical blueprint for a community-type institution such as a Chinese Cultural Center.²⁷

The facility that Justice Enterprises had agreed to construct and turn over to CCF was originally meant to be only one floor with a twelve-foot headroom. \$70,000 was allowed for finishing the interior for occupancy. As Wu worked with the board on concrete plans for the facility it gradually became clear that there was inadequate working space in the facility as planned by the contractor. The CCF boards decided the facility should be 20-foot high with an auditorium and a mezzanine. The Foundation also requested the contractor to relocate four columns that would obstruct the audience's line-of-sight in the proposed auditorium. All these changes resulted in unforeseen additional design and construction costs. The Redevelopment Agency had to arbitrate the dispute that arose between CCF and Justice Enterprise as to the share of fiscal responsibility borne by each party. Thus after the Holiday Inn was formally dedicated on January 13, 1971, followed by the completion of the bridge in August of the same year, the Culture Center remained an unfinished cavernous vault awaiting resolution of the dispute. Even more important, CCF had not come up with its share of the construction money.²⁸ It was during this period that CCF became embroiled in the political controversy that was to affect the CCC's course of development for the next two decades.

POLITICAL CONTROVERSY

According to time-honored practice in the Chinese American community, CCF had planned to solicit contributions from Chinese all over the United States to build the Chinese Culture Center. On August 6, 1969, its requested and received the important unanimous endorsement of the board of directors of the influential Chinese Six Companies urging the Chinese community to support the Center.²⁹ After this endorsement, many major families and district associations responded positively with pledges for donations, and as the culture center was more finalized, membership and donations increased. On September 7, 1970, a San Francisco delegation consisting of Joe Yuey, Park Louie, Albert Wong and George Wu flew to New York to obtain the approval of the project in a meeting with the representatives from seven major associations of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of New York, the most influential traditional organization on the eastern seaboard.³⁰ Everything apparently was going smoothly.

A fortnight later the situation suddenly changed when the Chinese Six Companies voted on September 22 to withdraw its support from CCF because certain unnamed Foundation officers had made unfavorable remarks about Nationalist China in an article that appeared in the February 23, 1970, an issue of *Newsweek*. In that essay reporter Min Yee had quoted Joe Yuey as saying: "It's a question of what a

government can do for the people. The Nationalists were in power for forty years and nothing happened. Look at China now, after only twenty years. No matter now you look at it, the Communists are helping the people.”³¹

In reality CCBA’s break with the CCF was the culmination of a situation that had been festering over several years. At the time a change in the international and national arenas was already in the air. In 1968 the United States’ next-door neighbor Canada had announced its intention of establishing diplomatic relations with the PRC. The United States was already exploring means to relax tensions with the Chinese mainland. Correspondingly, the Taiwan Kuomintang regime and its supporters abroad stepped up efforts to buttress their interests in different countries and to ensure continued sympathy and support for Taiwan. In the Chinese American community the principal effort continued to be the maintenance of Taiwan. Thus although expressions of opinions favoring the better US-PRC relations were not uncommon even among Chinese Americans, open advocacy, especially in a national periodical, was unacceptable to supporters of the Taiwan regime guarding against political heresies in the Chinese American community.

An addition factor was that during this same period President Lyndon Johnson’s domestic “War on Poverty” program had led to the establishments of social agencies in Chinatown funded by federal money. Their appearance attracted the influx of western-educated professionals and idealistic students intent on changing the Chinese community and bringing it into the American mainstream. Prominent among these were activists pushing for action on issues such as unemployment, housing, and juvenile delinquency prevention. Some of the activists soon came into conflict with guardians of the status quo as represented by the CCBA and the traditionalist organizations. The Chinatown-North Beach Economic Development Agency was one of the principal battlegrounds. A number of activists were also on the board of directors of SFGCCSA and/or CCF. Most advocated such liberal policies as US recognition of the PRC, opposition to the Vietnam War, integration in the public schools, etc., all of which were diametrically opposite to the political stances of the Kuomintang and CCBA.

CCF, along with SFGCCSA, had been two of the few major Chinatown organizations outside the orbit of the CCBA. CCBA leaders had long been irritated with the outspoken and sometimes scornful criticism emanating from the CCF leaders such as J. K. Choy and Samuel Wong. CCBA was especially sensitive to what was perceived as their questioning of CCBA’s leadership capability and right to occupy the top position in the Chinatown community hierarchy. These organizations were also free from the political domination by the Kuomintang, who suspected the political reliability (i.e., support for Taiwan) of their officers, J. K. Choy and Joe Yuey. Thus individuals in power in both CCBA and the Kuomintang had an underlying hostile and distrustful attitude toward CCF and principals connected with the organization.

CCF foes seized available opportunities to harass and to discredit individuals connected with the organization. Earlier on in 1966 they had struck at the outspoken J. K. Choy. On the morning of Oct. 12, 1966 Choy found garbage and rubbish heaped at the door of Chinatown’s San Francisco Savings and Loan. At the same time rumors circulated in Chinatown that the financial institution was about to fail and the president had fled to Mexico. A run started on the Chinatown branch as anxious Chinese Americans flocked to withdraw their hard-earned savings. More than \$3 million in funds was distributed in three days before the panic subsided.³² Again in 1969 the Chinese community was rife with the talk charging

that Alan Wong, SFGCCSA member and CCF founder, was affiliated with Communist and radical groups. Wong, a member of the Chinese Y.M.C.A. staff, was affiliated in the “War on Poverty” Program where he often clashed with board members speaking for CCBA. He had also openly advocated better understanding between the US and PRC. Wong finally had to run a personal advertisement in the Chinese newspapers to refute these groundless allegations.³³

Toward CCF the Taiwan partisans exhibited in turn the velvet glove and iron fist. In early 1970, eleven Taiwan government agencies held a March 5 ceremony at the Literature and Arts Center of the Cultural Bureau in Taipei to formally donate art objects and decorations for installation on the pedestrian bridge connecting Holiday Inn to Chinatown.³⁴ Taiwan government representatives also offered to lease space in the facility for a Republic of China information office; however, CCF turned down this offer since it felt that, being Chinese American in origin, there must be no doubt that the organization is no the agent of any foreign government.³⁵

During the same period, articles hinting that certain CCF board members were politically undesirable and embarrassing to the Taiwan government began to be planted in Chinatown newspapers. On May 4, 1970, the pro-Taiwan *Truth Semi-Weekly* reported that the Taiwan government was about to take over the Culture Center. Subsequently Taiwan Consul-General Chou Tung-hua and Chinese Six Companies director Foo Hum requested an August 21, 1970, meeting with Justin Herman, director of the Redevelopment Agency and Foundation representatives to discuss changing the composition of the Foundation board of directors. But despite heated exchanges and unsubstantiated changes during the talks, no one could really openly disagree with the appropriateness of the Foundation’s policy that J. K. Choy’s reiterated: “We operate according to by-laws. We exclude no one.” It was after the failure of this attempted takeover of the Foundation board that Taiwan supporters staged the vote to annul the CCBA endorsement.³⁶

Unwilling to let the accusations go unanswered, CCF called a press conference on October 7 presided by Board chairperson George Davis and President J. K. Choy. In the meeting Choy stressed that Joe Yuey expressed his opinion as an individual and not as an officer of the Foundation. Reporter Min Yee, who was president, also pointed out that during his numerous interviews in the Chinese community many had expressed similar views. In a prepared statement Choy stated: “We feel that the Six Companies do not understand that we live in a free society here and that individuals can express themselves openly.” He further reminded the audience that the United States recognizes only single citizenship and an American citizen can be loyal only to the United States, but Taiwan maintains dual citizenship and uses it to control cultural activities of American citizens [of Chinese extraction]. In response to a reporter’s question Choy accused Doon Wong and Foo Hum by name of seeking to take over CCF, and failing that, to destroy it.³⁷ After the press conference Choy received an anonymous letter on Oct. 8 threatening to kill him and Joe Yuey.³⁸

By this time the indefatigable J. K. Choy, who had spearheaded the effort to build a culture center since its inception, was in his late seventies and it was inevitable that he would soon have to pass the leadership to a younger person. Key board members led by Joe Yuey were anxious that the CCF continued to have a leadership that could maintain its status as an independent non-political Chinese American institution. At the time a rising star among the new generation of Chinese American activists

who were ready to change the Chinese community and raise the status of Chinese American activists was a 27-year old attorney named Gordon Lau. Lau had been actively organizing the Chinese in American society around civil rights, housing and unemployment issues. In late 1968 Lau had announced his candidacy seeking a seat on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.³⁹ He had a number of supporters on the CCF board, among those was the influential executive vice-president Joe Yuey, who had been steadily moving toward a close working relationship with the activists. Lau became a CCF board member in 1969. In 1971 he succeeded J. K. Choy as CCF president. Choy co-chaired the board along with Attorney George Davis for one year before he retired from that office in 1972 and was succeeded by Lim P. Lee.⁴⁰

In 1971 Dr. Rolland Lowe, who came from a family that had long supported progressive causes, entered the CCF boards. During the 1960s Lowe had played an active role in a number of Chinatown organizations and social agencies. In 1968-69 he participated actively in the San Francisco Chinese Community Citizens' Survey and Fact Finding Committee that looked into the problems and issues faced by the contemporary San Francisco Chinese community.⁴¹ Another entering the board the same year was activist Ling-chi Wang. Wang had been an outspoken critic of the CCBA and the Kuomintang and active in the "War on Poverty" Program. Around 1969 he was one of the group that supplanted the more conservative faction that had been in control of the influential Chinese American Democratic Club (CADC). In 1971 Wang had just resigned as director of Youth Service Center working on juvenile delinquency prevention and activities.⁴² During the next few years other liberal community activists also became board members. However, although they made important contributions to the development of CCC, their principal focus was on activities outside CCC.

For awhile, it appeared that the Taiwan government ministries had a friendlier attitude than the San Francisco party loyalists toward CCF. As the pedestrian bridge connecting Holiday Inn to Portsmouth Square approached completion, part of the embellishments promised by the Taiwan authorities arrived in mid-1971. The remainder was also loaded at the port of Keelung, Taiwan awaiting the voyage across the Pacific.⁴³ However, San Francisco Kuomintang hard-liner leaders Doon Wong and C. T. Shew soon prevailed when they appealed to Republic of China President Chiang Kai-shek to halt further shipments. No further shipments arrived.⁴⁴ Taking their cue from the CCBA most Chinatown traditional organizations instituted a de facto boycott of the Culture Center. This situation had a profound effect on CCC's course of development for more than a decade and did not change for the better until after the relaxation of tension between Taiwan and the PRC beginning in the late 1980s.⁴⁵

BUILDING THE FACILITY

Following the withdrawal of the CCBA endorsement, a number of Chinatown traditional organizations canceled their donation pledges. Although CCF assured public that it would overcome financial obstacles to finish the project with or without the Chinese Six Companies, by 1972 CCF had raised only about \$120,000, not nearly enough to build the facility. In an attempt to further broaden its base the maximum number of directors became fifty-four that same year. Another significant change was that CCF increasingly began to target Chinese living away from Chinatown, especially in the American-born and western-educated professionals, since they tended to be less involved in Chinese politics. Also

they were more educated and many were of middle class status with the interest to support cultural and artistic activities. Increasingly, new board members were drawn from these quarters. They became the nucleus of volunteers for planning and implementing activities and raising funds.

In mid-summer 1972 CCF proponents received critical support when the San Francisco Board of Supervisors Cultural Activities Committee passed a resolution “Endorsing the Chinese Cultural [sic] Foundation and its efforts to provide a worthy cultural project” and urging the public support for the Center.⁴⁶ Bolstered by the reaffirmation of support, the CCF board, largely through the efforts of J. K. Choy and the others, persuaded three banks -- Hong Kong Bank of California, Bank of the Orient and Bank of America to lend \$150,000, \$50,000 and \$50,000 respectively to complete construction of the Culture Center.⁴⁷ The facility was to include an auditorium, exhibition galleries, library, audio-visual room, meeting room, and offices.

Work on the Chinese Culture Center began on January 27, 1973. Despite being the target of derisive and sarcastic attacks from published articles such as Mike Miller’s “Meanwhile, back in Chinatown, the Inscrutable Chinese Cultural Center -- It’s a Holiday Inn”⁴⁸ and Allan Temko’s “Dr. Fu Manchu’s Plastic Pagoda: San Francisco’s new ‘Chinese Cultural Center’ has given the ‘Inscrutable East’ the Worst Screwing It Has Had in a Century,”⁴⁹ the facility was ready for occupancy by fall 1973.⁵⁰ It had taken almost a decade for the Chinese Culture Center to progress from abstract concept to concrete reality. It was a facility for cultural activities that had no rival in Chinese community of that era, but CCF was also saddled with a heavy construction debt.

OPENING AND OPERATING THE CHINESE CULTURE CENTER

DEFINING A CHINESE CULTURE CENTER

While planning and construction of the facility was progressing, Executive Director William We and the CCF board were also tackling the monumental task of organizing and building programs for the Culture Center and defining the Center’s working objectives. Since this was the first such institution among the Chinese in the United States, there were no prototypes for reference. The fact that Chinese culture itself had so many facets and had gone through many changes rendered the definition of a Chinese Culture Center that much more difficult. Thus even though there was a general consensus on the desirability to establish a Chinese Cultural Center, there were wide variations in conception and objectives.

The older generation in the Chinese community was primarily concerned with the preservation of their own cultural links to the ancestral land: family customs, moral values and traditional culture. For example, at the founding of CCF, Joe Yuey was said to have pledged half of his Chinese art collection for display in the Center. Moreover, the older generation was anxious that the younger generation continue to be literate in Chinese and speak in their ancestral tongue so that at least the generations could communicate. Members of the younger generation, at least the more articulate and vocal, defined their ethnic identity as the totality of their American experience, distinct from mainstream American culture and from the culture imported from the ancestral land. They were eager to create a culture as distinct as the Afro-American culture. In addition, there were non-Chinese who found the idea of a culture center

appealing: an opportunity to relate to Chinese culture but from the standpoint of identity and heritage, but from the aesthetic viewpoint. To them, a Chinese culture center meant access to the richness and variety of Chinese culture that they would like to experience close at hand. Thus it was a coalition with the diverse interests and different outlooks that was working together toward realization of a Chinese Culture Center.

Executive Director Wu eventually developed a set of guiding principles for CCC activities that was generally acceptable to a range of people: To reaffirm the identities of Americans of Chinese ancestry and to develop those areas of Chinese culture that remain meaningful to contemporary and future lifestyles. These had remained that goals of the institution. Up to this point, all discussion had centered on the establishment of a Chinese Cultural and Trade Center. However, as programming objectives became better defined and programs evolved, it became clear that the name “Chinese Culture Center” would be more appropriate for the type of activities envisioned and the change was made around 1972.

With his small staff and a core of dedicated volunteers, Executive Director William Wu implemented a number of innovative ideas, many new to the San Francisco Chinese community. Wu strove to put on non-controversial, non-political cultural programs and be even-handed in the highly sensitive area of dealing with Taiwan and the PRC. One of the earliest CCF programs initiated around 1969 was a folklore workshop that in 1971 developed into weekly story-telling sessions by Kenneth Joe. These sessions continued until the late 1970s and was one of the CCF programs with the greatest longevity. In 1970, CCF organized in-service training workshops on Chinese music and arts and crafts for teachers in the San Francisco Unified School District. There were workshops for music, dance and shadow play in 1971. CCF also organized a moon festival celebration at Portsmouth Square. In 1972 the Foundation co-sponsored performances by the Tung Hua shadow play troupe from Taiwan. In 1973, the first film on recent archaeological finds in the People’s Republic of China was presented at the Palace of Fine Arts. As program activities increased, CCF initiated publication of a newsletter to keep members informed of CCF activities.⁵¹ Executive Director Wu also added Vivian Chiang to the staff as his assistant in 1972.⁵²

During this period CCF began also to play an important role presenting outstanding Chinese artists and talent to the public, especially those who had recently arrived in America. CCF was one of the earliest institutions to introduce dancer Chiang Ching to the followers of Terpsichore in the San Francisco Bay Area. Chiang went on to establish an international reputation as a dancer and choreographer.⁵³ CCF was also instrumental in enabling Chinese pugilism master Lien Ying Kuo and his wife Eing Ru Loo (Simmons L. Kuo) to gain permanent residence in the United States. Master Kuo was one of the earliest teachers who helped popularize tai chi chuan in this country.⁵⁴

MORE POLITICAL CONTROVERSY

Despite these accomplishments, international development during the early 1970s continued to be a negative factor exacerbating CCF relations with the conservative Chinatown establishment. 1972 saw the initiation of “ping pong diplomacy” between the United States and the PRC. Many Chinese Americans had high hopes for better relations between the two nations. In January 1972, a Chinese Americans for Better US-China Relations Committee launched a petition drive aimed at drawing support

for the President's forthcoming trip. Heading the committee was Joe Yuey, Gordon Lau, and Ernest Wong, all CCF board members. Four of the eighteen committee members were also current or former CCF board members. The Kuomintang party organ *Young China* immediately branded the committee as "fellow travelers and dupes" and anyone who signed the petitions as supporters of "Mao's communism."⁵⁵ After the breakthrough in US-PRC relations following Nixon's trip to China, CCF joined with more than a hundred organizations in Northern California to sponsor a reception in April for the visiting PRC to explore the possible cultural changes.⁵⁶ Leading the support for these actions were Joe Yuey and the younger activists who felt that it was time for the Chinese community to get in step with changing US-PRC relations rather than be governed by the dictates of a foreign regime. Some board members, especially certain individuals with close ties to the Chinese community, however, feared that they would further antagonize pro-Taiwan elements and make it even more difficult for CCF to gain support in Chinatown.

To allay these apprehensions the CCF annual meeting on November 14, 1972 passed a resolution affirming that CCF was a non-profit, non-political organization and that its objectives were promoting culture and working for the public welfare. Members participating in political activities should do so as individuals unaffiliated with CCF.⁵⁷ It was probably the same line of reasoning that led CCF board to change the official Chinese name of Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco from *Sanfanshi Zhongguo Wenhua Zhongxin* to *Jiujinshan Zhonghua Wenhua Zhongxin*. The more generic term *Zhonghua*, pertaining generally to people of Chinese descent, was used rather than *Zhongguo*, referring to China the national state, to emphasize that CCF's focus was on Chinese culture regardless of political boundaries. The organizations also chose to use *Jiujinshan*, (old gold mountain), the widely used Chinese term for San Francisco, rather than the more local Cantonese transliteration *Sanfanshi* as an indication that CCF intended CCC to be more than merely a local institution.⁵⁸

However, fine legal distinctions meant little to the pro-Taiwan camp who saw CCF as intending to create a PRC beachhead in San Francisco Chinatown. It continued to exert unremitting pressure on CCF. At the annual conference of the Kuomintang held in San Francisco in August 1973 members of the San Francisco and Oakland party branches presented a resolution charging that CCF was "an organ used by Maoist communists to build a united front." The resolution requested central party headquarters on Taiwan "not to donate any cultural objects to the Chinese Culture Center without the agreement of the General Branch in America."⁵⁹

These attacks did not cease when the Chinese Culture Center formally opened in October 18, 1973 and celebrated the occasion with a village fair, an idyllic re-creation out of 12th century China. This was an approach to Chinese culture fresh to America with the emphasis on folk arts and crafts, music and dances and almost 10,000 people attended. But a reporter for the pro-Taiwan *Chinese Times* sneered at the cultural presentations, branding them "disappointing" and remarking that "if these were the representatives of Chinese culture than they missed by a thousand miles." At this point Executive Director William Wu, having reached a milestone, announced his resignation, effective Dec. 31, 1973, in order to devote more time to research. Vivian Chiang became acting executive director until the board appointed a permanent executive director. Wu continued to be a valued advisor and from 1981 through 1986 served on the board of directors.

In an attempt to mute the criticism that the CCF was pro-PRC, the CCF board elected Lim P. Lee president in 1974. Lee had been long active in the Chinese American community and had numerous contacts in the traditionalist power structure. He had worked closely with the CCBA especially during the 1950s when the Federal Government was investigating Chinese immigration fraud. Lee was also actively participated in mainstream politics and was identified with the more conservative faction in the Chinese American Democratic Club that the younger generation had displaced around 1969.

Lee and other directors with close connections to the traditional associations tried to pour oil on the stormy waters. However, when board director Dennis Wong stated the case for CCF to the editor of the influential Chinese Times, the response was an editorial ridiculing CCF's claims of non-involvement in politics and accusing it of "displaying a ram's head while in reality selling dog meat." CCF's weak response was an advertisement in the Chinese newspapers reaffirming its non-profit, non-political status. This only resulted in a second round of calumny and accusations from the right. These exchanges became the stimulus for a rash of articles in the Chinese press attacking and defending CCF's viewpoint on Chinese culture.⁶⁰

CCF's foes tried in other ways to undermine CCF programs. When CCF invited taichi master Kuo Lien-yin and his pupils to demonstrate the martial arts at a fundraising banquet in 1974, Kuo received an unsigned letter asking: "Are you not a delegate from Suiyuan Province to the National Assembly? Are you not a citizen of the Republic of China?... [By accepting the invitation] you simply are dishonoring your character and performing a disservice to the nation [meaning Republic of China] and all your fellow Chinese. What a pity!" Kuo ignored the letter and the performance went on as scheduled.⁶¹ However, political pressure Republic of China Consul-General Y. S. Lee allegedly exerted on Katherine Wang, Peking opera performer from Taiwan, resulted in her withdrawal from a scheduled CCF-sponsored performance.⁶²

At these events were unfolding the CCF Board took time out on May 15 to choose a new executive director. The strongest candidate for the position was Shirley Sun. The Shanghai-born Sun was raised in Taiwan. She matriculated at Stanford University receiving a bachelor's degree in Asian literature and an M.A. and Ph.D in Asian Studies and East Asian art history. She was a curator of a Chinese American historical exhibition *Three Generations of Chinese - East and West* that was shown in the Oakland Museum from October 2 to 28, 1973. The exhibit was then augmented with the artifacts on loan from the Chinese Historical Society of America and became the first exhibit in the new CCC facility from December 15, 1973 to February 17, 1974. Thus the board was very familiar with Sun's qualifications. However, in 1971 Sun had been among the first Chinese Americans invited to visit the PRC after the US had lifted the ban on travel to mainland China, and she was known to support better US-PRC relations. The decision on her candidacy split the board with President Lim P. Lee leading the opposition to her appointment. After a heated discussing the board voted 17 to 10 in her favor over two other finalists.⁶³

After Shirley Sun became the new Executive Director on June 1, 1974, CCF continued with a bit of unfinished business and called a press conference on June 26, 1974, to answer its Chinatown critics. Several CCF board members attended the meeting, including Dianne Feinstein, then president of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, who was there to demonstrate CCF ties to mainstream political figures. During the conference Co-Chairperson Davis accused the Taiwan Consulate-General and the Chinese Six

Companies of interference in the affairs of the CCF. He further charged: "We have found sufficient evidence that the consulate-general of Taiwan is following the dictate of its government to take over organizations that are capable of being taken over, and this is one of those organizations." Davis complained that CCF had been blackballed by the Chinese Six Companies and that word had been sent out through newspaper editorials in the Chinese press that described the members of the CCF as Communists. Davis, referring to the conflicts on the board, also denounced unnamed Peking-oriented individuals that had tried to pack meetings to take over the board; however, his principal target was the actions of the pro-Taiwan group.

Subsequently, Supervisor Feinstein introduced a resolution that the Board of Supervisors passed on July 8 reaffirming "its unqualified support of the Chinese Culture Center and the sponsoring Chinese Culture Foundation" and urged "all people to support the Chinese Culture Center." The resolution read in part that "the Center is devoted strictly to the presentation of Chinese art, music, and literature regardless of origin and is devoid of political consideration; and...

"Unfounded chargers and rumors that the Center is dominated or influenced by Nationalists or Communists are harmful, even if absurd; and...

"Political interference in the growth and well-being of the Chinese Culture Center is unwarranted under any circumstances..."⁶⁵

This strong reaction and endorsement from the City authorities had the desired effect of silencing CCF's Chinatown critics for the moment, but the CCBA and traditionalist associations continue to maintain their boycott of CCF-sponsored events. The political controversy continued the division within the CCF boards as to whether the institution should continue to try to placate the right or to disregard them and move ahead on an independent course.

EXPANSION OF ACTIVITIES

Newly appointed CCF executive director Shirley Sun was an aggressive, hard-driving, strongwilled and astute individual. She quickly perceived that there was an intense growing interest in American society concerning mainland China and she was eager to capitalize on the situation to help develop programs at CCC. However, President Lim P. Lee, affected by the pervasive Cold war mentality, feared that too close a relationship with the PRC will be detrimental for the CCF's image and put obstacles in many of her proposed actions in this direction. The result was a frustrating stalemate. Soon after Sun took office, the Wushu Troupe from the PRC offered a benefit performance for CCF. In order to avoid a bitter debate at the board level, some board members and friends organized Friends of the Chinese Culture Foundation to sponsor the event.

Sun was determined to change this situation. She recruited sufficient new members into CCF who at the end of 1974 voted to help elect directors more receptive to her ideas. President Lim P. Lee and co-chairperson Davis were among the directors deposed.⁶⁶ Sun now had firm control of CCC's destiny. The newly constituted CCF board was by no means radical, but it exhibited a more open attitude toward programs emanating from the PRC. This change marked the beginning of a new phase in the development

of CCF. One by one directors with ties to SFGCCSA and Chinatown retired from the scene, and CCF's destiny was increasingly in the hands of directors who had fewer ties to the Chinatown community. Dr. Rolland Lowe became president in 1975 and held the office until 1978. He successfully rallied different factions on the board to support Executive Director Sun in defining the newly opened CCC.

During the last year of William Wu's tenure as executive director, Shiley Sun, who was already actively seeking the position, had learned that revenue sharing funds were available from the City. She persuaded eleven community cultural groups, including the Chinese Culture Foundation, to form a loose group known as the Chinatown Council for the Performing and Visual Arts (CCPVA) in July 1973, with the announced objective of dealing with current and future issues pertaining to arts and culture of the Chinese community.⁶⁷ By August, CCPVA had gone before the San Francisco Art Commission and successfully lobbied for a grant from the funds.⁶⁸

After protracted negotiations, CCF executed a sublease with the City on May 21, 1975. Under its terms the City-run Neighborhood Arts Program (NAP), through CCPVA, was to have full usage of the audio-visual room (renamed the Community Room), one-third usage of the auditorium, and 24% usage of the lobby for 15 years, starting June 15, 1975, in return for a one-time rental payment of \$125,00 plus \$25,000 for utilities. \$60,000 of this amount went toward discharging part of the \$250,000 construction debt incurred to build the Culture Center.

The board soon found that even the reduced debt figure was still a heavy burden. The lion's share of CCF's annual fund raising went toward payment of interest on the bank loans with little surplus left for retirement of principal. In 1976 the CCF board was able to negotiate agreements with the banks to retire the principal first and paying the interest at the end.⁶⁹ However, the situation remained such that little money was left for facility improvement and program development. The fact that there was no income generating profit center nor endowments to provide a financial buffer led to chronic tight budgets. A legacy of this state of affairs was that a major share of the energy of the CCF board each year was devoted to solving budgetary issues. It is to the dedicated core of volunteers who planned and implemented fund-raising events as well as those who attended these events and donated generously that credit is due for enabling CCF to continue to develop despite these daunting problems.

CCF's tight fiscal situation forced it to develop a high degree of dependence on private and public foundations and corporations for funding its major programs. At that time such funding was fairly readily available, especially for exhibitions. When record crowds visited the *Exhibition of Archaeological Finds of the People's Republic of China* in the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco during the summer of 1975, CCF initiated highly popular coordinating programs to enhance this event. In 1976 CCC presented *Front-runners in Modern Chinese Painting*, an exhibition of works by modern Hong Kong and Taiwan artists, after which came *Eastern Streams*, an Asian multimedia presentation. In 1977 the Center became the first gallery on the West Coast to exhibit the *Han and Tang Murals* from the People's Republic of China. Other major exhibitions were *Hu Xian Peasant Paintings* (1978) and *Chinese Woodcuts* (1979). In this manner CCC attended national prominence and recognition for the quality of its programs within a few years. Unfortunately the upscale tone set by many of the programs gave an impression of elite snobbishness. It also offered to the outside world an appearance of affluence that the organization did not possess.

In the meantime those features and embellishments expected of a functional public facility had to be added. Soon after the CCC opening, a logo was adopted by CCF. It was designed in 1973 by architect Ted Wu based on the concept *wai fang nei yang* (“square on the exterior and round in the interior”).⁷⁰ In 1975 a donors’ plaque installed in the CCC lobby.⁷¹ A canopy with the CCC name and logo was designed by architect Worley Wong and constructed and installed by contractor Bob Yick in 1976. The name of the Chinese Culture Center in Chinese characters was rendered by artist C. C. Wang. Facsimiles of the calligraphy were used on the canopy and at the elevator entrance.⁷² In 1977 a founders’ plaque was added as well as a security system for the facility.⁷³

Jack T. Quan, as head of the CCF board Building Committee during the 1970s and early 1980s, spearheaded many of these efforts to upgrade the facility. Soon after the CCC opened it was discovered that severe noise and vibrations were occurring in the facility as well as malfunctioning of the air conditioning system. It was Quan and naval architect Lawrence Jue who worked out acceptable engineering solution in 1975 to minimize the effects.⁷⁴ Later during the early 1980s Quan also headed a project to expand the exhibition space in the CCC’s north gallery.

Thus during the 1970s each of the features visualized for a functioning CCC came into being except for one component that failed to materialize. During the design phase a reading library opened to the public had always been intended as part of the facility. Indeed, in 1976 the CCF board had solicited and received donations of publications to formed the start of a collection.⁷⁵ However, due to the shortage of staff and available space as well as lack of operation funds the establishment of a public reading library was postponed indefinitely.

Shirley Sun ran CCC with a firm hand and was quick to discourage and board attempts to infringe upon what she considered the Executive Director’s prerogatives. Under Sun’s direction, activities burgeoned to use the new facility to its fullest advantage. The staff organized Mandarin language classes, shadow play, painting and calligraphy, and Chinese dance workshops, as well as martial arts, culture, arts and crafts workshops for youth. A Chinese-American youth orchestra was organized in 1974 that performed both Chinese and western musical compositions. The same year also saw the establishment of a docents program and the inaugural of Heritage Culinary Walks in which docents gave guided tours in San Francisco Chinatown. A gallery shop was established in 1975 to sell quality publications and art objects. (At first it was named Zhaohua Zhai (Studio of flowers in the morning) Shop, but the name never gained general acceptance.) The walks and the gallery shop preformed important functions as media for introducing Chinese and Chinese American culture and society to the public. In the process they also brought in revenue to supplement the CCF budget. With all these cultural activities CCF was becoming known as a leader in promoting Chinese culture in the American context. In 1975, the Ninth Annual Festival of America Folklife in Washington D.C. sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution invited CCC to participate as the first Chinese American group to be represented in this event.

Director Sun encouraged community organizations to use the CCC facility. During this period the Hop Jok Fair (1974) and Chinese Spring Festival (1975) saw their beginnings as annual community activities. For about a year beginnings with March 1976, CCF sponsored a series of membership nights in which community groups presented skits, musical performances, and dance programs. Periodically

classes and workshops for learning Mandarin, Chinese calligraphy painting, Chinese dance, folk crafts, martial arts and other aspects of Chinese culture were offered to adult and youth.

Periodically CCF sponsored well-received public lectures on different aspects of Chinese art and culture. The lectures included experts in their respective fields such as Prof. Wei-ming Tu (1974), Prof. Ming-yueh Liang (1975), William Wu (1975, 1976), Prof. Wen-chung Chou (1976). Due to the popular interest in China after the relaxation of tensions between the United States and the PRC during the 1970s, CCC offered lectures and travelogues on the region. Speakers at these popular sessions that helped better the understanding of a region that had been cut off from contacts with America for more than two decades included Prof. John K. Fairbank (1973), Jack Chen (1975, 1978), Prof. Chien-ning Yang (1975), Prof. Chang-lin Tien (1979), John S. Service (1979), as well as other recent visitors to China. When PRC Premier Zhou Enlai passed away in 1976, CCF co-sponsored with five other organizations a symposium *Chou En-lai: His Time and Impact*. In 1980 CCF co-sponsored a lecture series, Impact of Foreign Trade on China at the World Affairs Council. Most of the CCF-sponsored lectures and symposia were delivered in the English language.

CCF was also successful in obtaining grants from some research projects. In 1975 CCF received funding to document and record Chinese folklore. Another grant was for production of instructional materials on Chinese history, art, music and food for high school teachers. Director Sun also became interested in films and film making. In 1978 CCF co-sponsored with the San Francisco International Film Festival the West Coast premiere of the cartoon made in the PRC *Monkey Makes Havoc in Heaven*. The same year CCF received a grant for a Chinese Cinema research project in 1978 to gather historical information and to write synopses of a film produced in China between 1905 and 1949. In 1949 the CCF co-sponsored with Pacific Films Archives of the University of California, Berkeley, and Center for East Asian studies of Stanford University the showing off of a series of five PRC films. Sun also received a grant to film three cities in China - Beijing, Xi'an and Suzhou. This series co-produced with Sue Yong Li became one of her first major works.

During this period, due to the refusal of the Taiwan authorities to deal with the CCF, many CCC activities and exhibitions by default were connected with the PRC. But CCF at all times strove to maintain a non-political, non-partisan stance. In 1975 the CCF board passed a resolution affirming that the CCC facility cannot be used for overt political purposes and meeting.⁷⁶ Users also had to agree not to display foreign flags. However, most Chinatown traditional association leaders, following the lead of the great majority of the board members were increasingly westernized and English speaking often lacking fluency in Chinese, created a barrier to communications between CCF and the Chinese speaking members in decision making capabilities were unable to understand or unwilling to communicate in Chinatown in the prevalent Cantonese dialect.

CONFLICT WITH COMMUNITY ACTIVISTS

The adverse conditions CCF faced in Chinatown led the organization to look to the more liberal activists elements in the Chinese American community for support. However, this proved to be an uneasy relationship. Activists and their organizations tended to have egalitarian outlooks and were suspicious of what they considered elitist tendencies in CCC's approach to programming. This was accentuated by the

fact that some CCF events, such as exhibition opening receptions and fund-raising dinners were targeted toward the more affluent upper middle class from which the organization received much of its financial support. By 1978 these differences had given birth to a controversy over community usage of the facility.

CCF's agreement with the City allowed community cultural organization access to the facility, and provided the refurbishing of the auditorium. It also bought a number of NAP-sponsored programs, greatly diversifying programming at the center. Programming and space usage became the responsibility of a part time coordinator working for the City. In the beginning it was Jim Yee, who was succeeded by Andy Chan.

CCPVA applied the NAP guidelines for community use of CCC space rather than loosely. As activities and the demand for usage increased, CCF felt that there was a need for more coordinated and orderly scheduling as well as more stringent adherence to the NAP requirements. In 1977 the CCF board had appointed a committee to draft a master plan for long range development of CCC that included upgrading exhibition space and programming.⁷⁷ In order to clear the way for implementing the plan CCC Executive Director Shirley Sun met with Director Martin Snipper of the San Francisco Art Commission in 1978, bypassing CCPVA, and reached agreement to clarify certain provisions of the sub-lease with the City.⁷⁸ Some changes were reasonable and necessary while some others were subject to further negotiations. The tactless manner in which the proposed changes were handled, however, led CCPVA to greatly distrust CCF's motives. Interpreting CCF's proposal as the first steps in restricting community usage of CCC, CCPVA led by Russell Lowe of Chinese Media Committee raised strenuous objections and called upon the Chinese American community activists for support. Community meetings were convened; feelings ran high; the CCF board became split on the issue. Editorials appeared in concerned Chinese community newspaper appealing to two sides to resolve their differences CCF president Rosalyn Koo, who had just succeeded Rolland Lowe, was caught in a maelstrom not of her making. After several months of negotiations, CCF finally reached agreement with the CCPVA.

Community activists had focused much of their ire on the Executive Director Sun. Also, by this time her increasing interest in films had increasingly exacerbated the conflict between her personal growth and execution of her professional duties as a executive director. Sun resigned as Executive Director in 1979 to become Deputy Director of Public Program for the National Endowment for the Humanities and also to devote more time to film making.⁷⁹ Vivian Chiang once again became acting as executive director while a search committee recruited a new head for CCC. At that time CCF had received a grant for a *The Chinese of America: 1784-1980* exhibition that was intended to be the most comprehensive presentation on Chinese American history and society to date. Plans for this exhibition and the accompanying Second National Conference on Chinese American Studies were only partially completed when Sun resigned. The Board of Directors appointed Him Mark Lai to oversee these projects which were completed in 1980. (The exhibition subsequently traveled to St. Louis, Chicago, Knoxville, Minneapolis, Boston, and Oakland. In 1985 CCF donated it to the Returned Overseas Chinese Association of Beijing for exhibition and for its possible inclusion in a proposed Overseas Chinese Museum.) In the meantime Rolland Lowe assumed the presidency to mend the cracks in a badly fractured board.

INCREASING COMMUNITY OUTREACH

ADJUSTMENT TO NEW REALITIES

On January 1, 1981, Lucy Lim assumed the position of Executive Director. Lim was born in the Philippines and received her B.A. in English Literature from University of Michigan, her M.A. in Art History from University of California at Los Angeles, and was a Ph.D. candidate in Chinese art history at New York University. She was greatly respected by colleagues for her expertise in Chinese art. However, Lim had little administrative experience. A loner who preferred to concentrate her efforts on organizing and planning art exhibitions, she delegated the administrative duties into the hands of Vivian Chiang. Chiang also became responsible for CCF-sponsored community programs. Due to Lim's disinterest in management the board played an increasingly stronger participatory role and exercised more supervisory oversight on CCC staff.

The 1980s was the beginning of a period of reduced federal funding, reflecting a downturn in the national economy. Many funding sources dried up and competition for resources became fierce. CCC presented more exhibitions packaged by other institutions; however, the policy of presenting quality programs was maintained under the Executive Director Lim. Chinese American arts and crafts were well covered by the exhibitions *Not on the Menu* and *A/P: Posters About People* in 1981 and *Made in America* in 1982.

In 1982 the Foundation co-sponsored an exhibition and conference to observe the centennial of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 as well as a presentation of the Chinese American drama *Paper Angels*. Following on the heels of *Chinese of America* exhibit, the first exhibition of Chinese women in America opened on August 20, 1983. Other major presentations at the Center included: Eve Arnold's *In China* (1981), *Daily Life in the Shanghai Region* (1982).

Him Mark Lai served as president for one year in 1982. During the year the Foundation joined with organizations in six other US and Canadian cities to sponsor the first North American tour of the Guangdong Yue Opera since the founding of the PRC.⁸⁰ The troupe was led by the famous prima donna Hongxiannü and actor Chen Xiaofeng. This event, which required complex coordination and involved more than a hundred volunteers, raised \$90,000 for CCF, the high water mark in fundraising events up to that point. Part of the funds raised was expended in 1983 on an expansion of the exhibition space in the north gallery, a project headed by CCF board member Jack Quan. The first major show in the enlarged space was an exhibition of contemporary Chinese paintings from the People's Republic of China (1983 - 84).

The visit of the Yue opera troupe established new standards for such presentations in North America and opened the door for visits by other PRC Yue opera troupes; however, similar to the situation that had developed in China and Hong Kong, the audience for the opera was largely those who were middle-aged or older. The novelty soon wore off and a second tour in 1985 without Hongxiannü, even though the troupe was more evenly balanced talent-wise, only netted \$3,000 for CCF.

As US-PRC cultural exchanges and the number of Chinese artists in this country increased, CCC would from time to time sponsor public performances by these artists. CCC was one of the institutions

sponsoring concerts for *zheng* performer Wei-shan Liu when she first arrived in America in 1982. These performances inspired many to take up this instrument and led to the founding of the San Francisco Gu-zheng Music Society in 1983. CCF staged special programs such as a lecture by visiting Chinese composer Chen Gang (1981), a performance by Yen-lu Wong and her dance troupe (1981), a book party for and a talk by author Han Suyin (1985), a retrospective of eight films by noted director Xie Jin (1985). Periodically CCF would also sponsor performances by community traditional instrumental ensembles, choruses, Cantonese opera clubs and Chinese folk dance groups.

Thrusts in new directions were made. In the crafts, micro-carver Yang Zhou came from China to demonstrate his skills at the 1983 Chinese Spring Festival. The Center was instrumental in organizing the well-received Chinese kite exhibition in June 1983 entitled *Flights of Fancy* that also featured workshops conducted by kite master Ha Yiqi from the People's Republic of China. This event culminated an International Kite Festival on the Marina Green in collaboration with the American Kite fliers Association. In October 1984 CCF and the Shanghai-San Francisco Friendship Committee were joint hosts to the Shanghai Puppeteers Troupe. During the group's half-month sojourn it gave twenty-three lectures and demonstrations, reaching over 6,000 school children.⁸¹

Up to this point much of the funding for large scale activities at CCC had come from the public sector. Due to drastic cutbacks in government funds beginning in early 1980s, a heavier burden was placed upon the private sector. Increasingly CCF had to depend on fundraising in the private sector against heavy competition. It also had to rent out the auditorium for use by non-cultural groups and to Holiday Inn clients in order to help finance the CCC operating budget. The tight fiscal situations also caused CCF to be unable to repay its construction loans in full. Finally the banks wrote off the unpaid interest and remaining principal of \$35,000 as bad debts around 1987.

In light of the new fiscal realities CCF also reexamined its operations for greater efficiency and effectiveness. Still trying to broaden its base of support, the maximum number on the board of directors was increased to sixty in 1980. It did not take long to discover that so large a number was unwieldy and an obstacle to the organizational effectiveness and responsiveness. Under the leadership of Dr. Rolland Lowe, who occupied the office of president again from 1983 to 1985, the board in a December 1983 retreat concluded that the size should be reduced. In 1985 the board amended bylaws to pare the number of directors to forty-five by the 1986 CCF annual meeting.

In 1983 Julie Cheung became NAP coordinator after succession of coordinators -Dennis Dun, Jim Dong, and Wilma Pang, had each served a short time in the position. The bilingual Cheung was highly motivated to reach out to the Chinese community. Under her direction NAP community programming greatly expanded to complement CCF programs at CCC. With the efforts made by Vivian Chiang and Julie Cheung, the next few years marked the development of more harmonious and fruitful relationships with the Chinese community.

FOCUS ON EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

During the 1980s the CCF board began to hold annual one-day retreats to review past activities and project future plans. Since the opening of CCC in 1973 a major focus had been on exhibitions, since

funding sources were readily available for such activities. However, many on the CCF board saw exhibitions as being a passive medium that was inherently ineffective in implementing the guiding principles of the organization; i.e. to reaffirm the identities of Americans of Chinese ancestry and to develop those areas of Chinese culture that remain meaningful to contemporary and future lifestyles. In an early 1984 retreat the CCF board reexamined CCF's principal purpose and mission and concluded that its chief focus should be on educational activities.

Emory Lee assumed the office of president in 1986 and served for three years. With the increasing interest among American businesses in doing business with the PRC, CCF hoped to make an impression on the business world as an institution offering expertise that could facilitate such ventures. In 1986 it co-sponsored a business seminar with the Monterey Institute of International Studies, *China Business for Profit: Managing Key Cultural Issues*. Although the event was well attended, CCF failed to make the impact it had hoped for. The event did not generate much momentum for follow-up activities and proved to be a dead end. A more successful program was the *Summer Youth Program on Chinese Culture and Heritage* that was initiated by staff in cooperation with Community Education Services in 1988. This popular program was continued annually until 1994.

In 1989 there appeared to be a possible partial solution to CCF's fiscal needs when the Thomas Fong Enterprises proposed to establish a Museum of Chinese American History on the premises. But after intense negotiations and planning for a year and a half the project was scrapped due to limited available space at CCC for the museum and some negative publicity based on misconceptions.⁸² When the 15-year lease with the City's Neighborhood Arts Program expired on May 31, 1990, President Lee led negotiations for CCF to continue the mutually beneficial relationship. At the end of the year CCF received donations totaling in \$200,000 from Eva and Rolland Lowe to establish the Lawrence and Eva Choy Lowe Endowment Fund. Since then, however, progress in building the endowment had been slow.

In 1989, the Chinese Historical Society of America initiated and co-sponsored with Chinese Culture Foundation and Cheng Family Association of America to hold a Chinese American Family History/Genealogy Symposium -- the first such event held in the San Francisco Bay Area. Just as planning was being finalized, the Loma Prieta earthquake shook the San Francisco Bay Area and caused extensive damage. In spite of this disturbance, however, the event was well attended. Following this favorable response, CCF received a \$10,000 grant from Dr. Richard and Tatwina Lee that was implemented in a pilot program *In Search of Roots*, co-sponsored with the Chinese Historical Society of America, the Community Education Services (dropped out in 1994), and the Guangdong Province Office of Overseas Chinese Affairs. With the successful conclusion of the pilot program, *In Search of Roots* became an established annual program. Ten youths between the ages of sixteen through twenty-five wishing to trace their ancestries to the Pearl River Delta region in Guangdong Province were selected to be interns. Given basic background information on Chinese American history as well as Chinese geography and history, the interns researched their family histories under guidance, visited their ancestral villages, and contributed their family trees and family histories towards an exhibition at CCC. This program has proven to be effective in giving the participants increased awareness of their heritage and their Chinese American identity.

President Emory Lee continues the ongoing reassessment of CCC operations, and in 1987 the bylaws were amended once again to cut the number of directors to thirty as of the 1989 annual meeting. The same year the CCF board reaffirmed the mission enunciated at the 1984 meeting that the CCF's chief focus should be on educational activities. The board appointed a strategic planning task force to develop a clear definition of goals and objectives and a plan of action. The board also reexamined and reorganized the facility for greater effectiveness. The position of executive director was redefined, giving it responsibility for administrative and budgetary tasks. It was further recommended that curatorial duties be delegated to separate staff member.⁸³

The implementation of the changes mandated by the 1987 CCF board proved to be more complex and slower than anticipated. Tatwina Lee, who served as president from 1989 through 1991, continued implementation of these changes. As the CCF board carried out the reorganization of CCC, relations between the Executive Director and the board became strained. This was exacerbated by personality conflicts between Lim and key board members. After lengthy negotiations Lucy Lim submitted her resignation to then President Tatwina Lee effective December 31, 1990, thus culminating the process of changes that had been initiated during the term of President Emory Lee in 1988!

Despite tense relations with the board during the latter part of the 1980s Executive Director Lim had continued organizing major exhibitions on Chinese art and culture that drew favorable reviews. These included *Stories from China's Past: Han Dynasty Pictorial Tomb Reliefs and Related Archaeological Objects from Sichuan Province, People's Republic of China* (1987) and *Wu Guanzhong, A Contemporary Artist* (1989), both of which also went on international tours after their premieres at the CCC. Exhibits related to Chinese American history, art and culture included *Myriad Worlds: 200 Years of the Chinese in Hawaii* (1990). After Lim's departure her influence was still evident in later exhibitions that she had been in the process of organizing when she resigned. A major exhibit was *Six Contemporary Chinese Women Artists* (1991-1992). Another was an exhibit of the works of a Chinese American artist, *Weyman Lew: Of People and Places* (1991). Another exhibit she initiated was *Symbol and Adornment: Traditional Costumes and Jewelry of China's Minorities* (1991-92). In this particular case, however, she enlisted the help of CCC's first executive director William Wu as curator. Symposia and lectures by experts in the field also were coordinated with many of these exhibitions to educate the public.

An important development in 1990 occurred when the Lowe family through Rolland Lowe donated to CCF \$200,000 from its share from capital gains from the sale of the building housing the World Theater which was sold in 1990 to a Hong Kong group, rumored to be the Ching Chung Taoist Association. Another \$200,000 was donated to Chinese for Affirmative Action. The major part of the Lowe's family share, however, was used to set up a Lawrence Lowe Memorial Foundation, which set up an endowment fund to progressive Chinese American cultural activities. CCF used the donation to set up an endowment fund to help finance future activities.

After Lucy Lim's resignation President Tatwina Lee and Executive Vice-President Julie Chu filled in as interim co-executive directors until the board appointed Beijing-born Kathleen Guan to the position on May 1, 1991.⁸⁴ Guan had received her B.A. in English and Psychology from Southwestern University and her M.A. in Education from Texas Wesleyan College. At the time of her appointment she was Asian American community liaison for California State Senator Milton Marks.

Guan was the first CCC executive director who did not have expertise of either Chinese art or Chinese culture. She had a pleasant personality that enabled her to work well with people. From the beginning, however, she was frustrated by her inability to raise much program money. She was soon overwhelmed by the demands of the position and was unable to exert strong leadership to implement the board-mandated changes.

In 1992 Theodore Kao succeeded Tatwina Lee as president. Kao was re-elected in 1993. Under leadership of the board, CCC planned and launched the first Dragon Boat Festival in San Francisco. This 1992 event, held in Chinatown's Portsmouth Square, was attended by thousands. Unfortunately, construction in the park during the succeeding year stymied a repeat of this promising new program.

During this period, there were great changes in the international arena. The Cold War ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union. In Taiwan, martial law ended and many restrictions on trade and travel between Taiwan and Mainland China were gradually lifted beginning in the late 1980s. This easing of tensions in the Taiwan Straits soon reflected in Chinatown politics. In the 1990s the boycott by traditional associations had begun to relax. In June, 1992 Charity Culture Services Center, an agency affiliated with the Chinese Six Companies, co-sponsored with CCF to hold the Chinatown outstanding father award program at the CCC on Father's Day. In 1993-1994 CCC was host to the first exhibition from Taiwan -- *Tradition and Innovation: The Art of Au Ho-Nien*. It appeared that CCF may finally be emerging from the shadows of political controversy and constraints to do what it does best; namely, to promote Chinese culture and Chinese American culture.

In 1993, Kathleen Guan was absent from her post for a total of six months on vacation and then on maternity leave. During her absence Manni Liu, CCC's curator, served as acting executive director. The Hong Kong-born Chinese-speaking Liu was raised in Ecuador. She received her B.A. in Art History from the University of California at Los Angeles and her M.A. in Art History and Museum Studies from University of Southern California. CCC had hired her as assistant curator soon after she had received her M.A. in 1991. Despite her lack of administrative experience, Liu demonstrated a leadership that earned her respect of the CCC staff and board.

Mei Lam succeeded Theodore Kao to the presidency in 1994. Soon afterward Kathleen Guan went on leave due to illness in the family and then vacated the executive director position on April 5, 1994. Manni Liu filled in again as acting executive director. She also continued her capacity as curator. A major exhibition, *Shiwan Ceramics: Beauty, Color and Passion* which she had planned and organized opened at CCC. This was the first exhibition on this subject mounted in the United States.

After a search, the CCF board appointed John Seto to fill the post of Executive Director effective December 5, 1994. Seto was born in Guangzhou (Canton), China and raised in Sacramento, California. He received his B.A. in Art and Far Eastern Humanities from California State University, Sacramento, and his Master of Philosophy in Art and Archaeology of China from the University of London. He also attended the College of Chinese Culture and worked at the National Palace Museum in Taiwan. At the time he took CCC position Seto was Director of the Ohio Arts Council. He was fluent in English, Cantonese and Mandarin. There are great expectations as the new Executive Director assumed his duties

with CCC to implement the board-mandated changes, hopefully free at last from the political baggage and encumbrances of the Cold War and the Chinese Civil War. However, Seto proved unable to solve the chronic fiscal difficulties. Albert Cheng became president in 1996. Early that year Chinese Culture Center joined the hyperspace information age by establishing a website at <http://www.c-c-c.org> and an email address at info @c-c-c.org. In April the Center presented a successful demonstration of a dying Cantonese folk art, the *muk-yu* or wooden fish songs. In October of that year CCF sponsored a symposium *Chinese Culture within the American Context* with the collaboration of the Chinese Historical Society of America (CHSA), media support from *Asian Week* and endorsements from six regional California universities. Prof. Lorraine Dong of San Francisco State University and CHSA became the symposium coordinator. The great interest shown in the subject matter covered by the symposium, first of its kind, led to optimistic hopes that it can be an annual or at least periodic event to explore various cultural issues affecting Chinese Americans; however, a second symposium never materialized.

During Seto's tenure CCC hosted such exhibitions as *Paintings by the Artist Chiang Ming-shyan: An Exhibition of Chinese Ink Paintings from Taiwan* (1995), *Stone Carvings and Paintings* by Lu Huan and An Lu (1996); *Ready to Explode: Chinese Firecracker Art* by James McNulty (1997), *Tibetan Rugs and Furniture* (1997), and *Emblems of Ethereal Grace: Adornments* by Pat Tseng (1997). A special photographic exhibition *Hong Kong: Past and Present* was held on June 28, 1999 in conjunction with the return of Hong Kong to China.

Seto resigned in July 1997 and Manni Liu again became acting executive director and also concurrent curator. She was appointed permanent executive director on January 1, 1999 in preparation to face the challenges of the approaching new millennium; however, in July 2000 she resigned to take a position at United Savings Bank.⁸⁵ She held the distinction as being the only executive director who continued to be involved with CCC activities after her departure. Al Cheng was succeeded by Gloria Tai as president in 1999. The inaugural *Harmony and Bliss* winetasting event was held to raise funds. The format proved to be so successful that it was followed the succeeding years.

Hon Seng Cheng was appointed executive director on November 1, 2000. Cheng was a graduate of Nanyang University of Singapore. He claimed to a businessman in America. Later it was discovered that he was also a minister. After settling in Vacaville, California, he became active in Chinese cultural activities in that community. Cheng had ambitions to increase programming at CCC. He energetically cleared space to provide another exhibition gallery on the south wing and also added several programs. Under his management there were frequent changes in office staff. It was during the second term of Mei Lam, who had become president in 2001, that the board discovered in mid-2002 that CCC was in the red by tens of thousands of dollars, largely due to lax fiscal controls. As the deficit worsened, Cheng resigned by mutual consent, effective February 2003. In 2003 Jonas Miller became the first non-Chinese to become CCF president.

After a brief search Frances Lai an alumnus of Chinese University of Hong Kong became Executive Director; however she became the Executive Director for the shortest tenure when she resigned in 2003 for personal reasons. Gloria Tai then resigned from the board to become interim Executive Director and assumed leadership on an interim basis in April 2004. During this time it was discovered that the center's antiquated air conditioning equipment needed to be replaced. Just at this time Justice

Enterprise replaced Holiday Inn with the Hilton to operate the facility and the CCC conducted negotiations with the new hotel operator. Negotiations were completed in early 2005 in which the hotel agreed to bear the cost of replacing the air conditioning and ventilating equipment, bridging the light well in the lobby with a floor, and generally renovating the facility, in return for control of the usage schedule of the auditorium. At the same time there was talk of sharing a curator with the Pacific Heritage Museum that was part of the Canton Bank (now United Commercial Bank) Building around June so that the remodeling can proceed, with a reopening of the remodeled facility tentatively scheduled for February 2006. In the meantime the board launched a capital campaign for \$500,000 to refurbish the new facility as well as \$4 million endowment for a new beginning. Center operations moved back to remodeled facilities on schedule in early 2006, with Tzu-Chen Lee as president. In the remodeling CCC gave up management of the new grand ballroom, which includes the remodeled auditorium as well as the former community room and south wing on the third floor, to the Hilton Hotel but was allowed free use of the facility for a number of pre-scheduled days. American-born of Taiwanese ancestry Sabina Chen, who had been connected previously with Chinese for Affirmative Action and Kearny Street Workshop, joined CCC as executive director in August, 2006. Abby Chen, a P.R.C. immigrant, was hired as program director. Sabina Chen resigned the executive directorship in July 2008⁸⁶ and Albert Cheng became interim acting executive director while search committee looked for a new director. Mabel Teng who was elected assessor a few years ago in San Francisco was hired in April 2009 as executive director.

CONCLUSIONS

America's economic prosperity during the post-war decades fostered rapid growth of a Chinese American middle class of businesspersons, professionals, and technical personnel with interests firmly rooted in this country. In their desire to be treated as equal partners in American society, they developed a group of solidarity expressed by a heightened sense of ethnic awareness and kindred feelings of community. Increasing awareness among ethnic minorities in America during the Civil Rights Movements in the 1960s forced mainstream American society to grudgingly accept the idea of a multi-ethnic society. This development paved the way for members of the Chinese American middle class interested in preserving their heritage to form a coalition with non-Chinese who are interested in promoting Chinese culture. Those two groups coalesced three decades ago to found Chinese Culture Foundation, which in turn gave birth to the CCC.

At the time the founders had little precedent to follow and had only vague ideas as to what form the final institution would take.⁸⁷ With the passage of time, CCC eventually evolved into a cultural institution with distinctive characteristics and a Chinese American orientation. However, as it developed, the direction and pace was very much influenced by contemporary political, economical and social factors.

The founders were able to take advantage of the increased sensitivity toward ethnic institutions at the time to successfully lobby and pressure politicians and bureaucrats for approval and support of the construction project. A more difficult obstacle was encountered in the Chinese community when the organization was involuntarily drawn into the struggle between Mainland China and Taiwan; the CCC was attacked by Taiwan supporters in Chinatown as being pro-PRC. Despite the dominating influence of pro-Taiwan forces in the Chinese community, CCC managed to survive using to advantage its

connections to mainstream political institutions and influential personalities to deflect and soften the effects of their attacks. However, hostility from the Taiwan quatern plus Cold War psychology, influenced community's perception of CCF as left-leaning, and created a gap of understanding between CCF and a large part of the Chinese community.

The situation was exacerbated by the fact that during CCC's first two decades its executive directors were trained in the fine arts. Many major activities were organized in these areas since it was the path of least resistance, especially for raising funds. This led many in the Chinese community to perceive that CCF assigned a higher priority to the elite arts than to community activities. The fact that the interest of many directors on the board also leaned toward supporting the fine arts only reinforced that perception. Another factor was that increasingly since the early 1970s most of the board and staff lacked the language fluency to communicate with the Chinatown's basically Cantonese-speaking community. Many did not live in Chinatown area and were unfamiliar with its politics. Also a significant number of CCF-sponsored events, programs, and exhibitions were designed primarily for CCF supporters who generally were American-born and western-educated Chinese with greater English than Chinese proficiency, as well as non-Chinese of the larger society. (This had also led CCF activities to be in those areas of Chinese culture requiring sensory appreciation, but not fluency in the language.)

Since CCC was on the edge of Chinatown with a large Chinese speaking population, it offered a number of activities targeted at this audience. Although such events were well attended but due to the aforementioned limitations of the institution, it proved difficult to develop channels of communication. For this reason, few in the Chinese speaking community were persuaded that they should be other than passive recipients, and participate actively in CCF. While the relaxation in tension between the PRC and Taiwan in the recent years had led to improved relations with the Chinese speaking community, it is still a major task facing the CCF to find a way to work with this community and mobilize its considerable resources and talent to better fulfill its mission of administering to the cultural and educational needs of the Chinese American community.

During the three decades since the founding of CCF and two decades since the opening of CCF, the Chinese population in North America has greatly increased. A number of Chinese culture centers and facilities have also sprung up to serve the various Chinese communities. In Canada the government's multi-cultural policy has led to the establishment of a number of community-based Chinese cultural and community centers. The first one, Chinese Cultural Center of Vancouver, was organized in 1973 and its facility completed in 1980.⁸⁸ These facilities offered activities similar to that offered in the San Francisco's CCC. In the United States a large network of cultural and community centers in major Chinese communities was established and funded by the Taiwan Commissions of Overseas Chinese Affairs. The earliest of these opened in San Francisco Chinatown in 1985.⁸⁹ These offer space to use for classes, cultural and social events; some have small libraries and reading rooms. The Kuomintang also operate another network of community centers on a smaller scale in many of the same Chinese communities. Another category of community centers are those established by Taiwanese (the descendants of Chinese who settled on Taiwan before World War II) to promote Taiwanese language and culture. One of the earliest is the Taiwan Center (established 1986) in Flushing, New York.⁹⁰ There also is the Taiwan Community Center in Houston (opened in 1992).⁹¹ There are cultural and community centers such as Boston's Chinese Cultural Institute,⁹² San Francisco American Cultural Center (established

1986),⁹³ Visalia's Central California Chinese Cultural Center (established 1990),⁹⁴ and similar institutions in cities such as Dallas, Washington, DC, and Atlanta (established 1989).⁹⁵ In the 1990s visiting scholars from the PRC, concerned that their American-born offspring retain some of their Chinese heritage, established a Chinese cultural center in Cambridge, Massachusetts.⁹⁶ Some centers organize full programs of cultural activities while others offer mainly a facility for events.

The basic objective of all of these institutions was to promote Chinese heritage in an overseas setting, but there are great differences in the constituencies as well as the focus. This only serves to demonstrate that Chinese culture covers a wide range of subjects with many possibilities for variations in emphasis. Among all these cultural facilities the Chinese Culture Foundation occupies a unique position in that, unlike most of the cultural institutions that focus exclusively on the Chinese community, its target audience includes both Chinese and non-Chinese. It particularly deserves special recognition as a trailblazer in introducing Chinese American art and culture to Chinese Americans and mainstream America. It also played an important role introducing modern developments in Chinese culture to the American public at a critical juncture in history. Today the Chinese Culture Center as operated by the Chinese Culture Foundation is a recognized and respected leader in the cultural field for its innovative quality programs. In spite of its chronic fiscal problems and operational weaknesses and mistakes, it has established itself as a major non-political, non-partisan, multi-functional, community based facility.

As we review the history of the Chinese Culture Foundation and the Chinese Culture Center, a striking fact is that many individuals, institutions and businesses within and outside the Chinese community have contributed time, money and talent to its evolution. It was only through their collective dedication, perseverance and faith that the dream of a culture center was finally realized and its continued development sustained. Today Chinese Americans and non-Chinese on the CCF board and the staff continue to work together to ensure that the institution reaches out to both the Chinese and the larger community to promote greater awareness and understanding of Chinese and Chinese American culture. CCC continues to occupy a unique respected position as one of the few ethnic cultural centers that consciously wedded the goals of heritage, identity, community relations to the meaning of arts and culture. The institution has met and overcome many obstacles to achieve its present status, but challenges still lie ahead in its role to help American society to achieve a fuller understanding of Chinese and Chinese American culture and to ensure that the Chinese heritage can continue to develop and flourish in Chinese America as an integral part of a multi-cultural America. At the beginning of the 21st century, there is a question as to whether the mission statements for the organization that were inspired by conditions in Chinese America of the 1960s should be reexamined for applicability to contemporary conditions.

NOTES

¹ *San Francisco Examiner*, Aug. 14 to 18, 1967.

² Ken Wong, "Fact Finding Committee's Report: Six Companies' White Paper Statement on Chinatown Progress," *East/West*, Oct. 11 1967.

³ *A Manifesto by the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association with regard to the Chinatown Youth Program* (Sept. 1, 1968).

⁴ L. Ling-chi Wang, "Chinatown in Translation," Mar. 7, 1969.

⁵ J.K. Choy (1892-1981) was born in Hawaii in 1892. Inspired by the Chinese Revolution he departed for the ancestral land at the age of twenty after graduating from high school. Shortly afterward, the Guangdong provincial government sent him back to the United States to study law and political science at the Columbia University. After graduation Choy returned to China in 1916, and where he subsequently served in various governmental posts. Choy came back permanently to the United States after World War II. Still very interested in participation in social service and political and financial activities, he became involved in the promotion of the One World organization for international peace shortly after he landed. While on a visit to San Francisco in 1949, he was invited by editor Dai Ming Lee of the *Chinese World* to participate in the organization of an English edition of the newspaper, making it the first bilingual daily Chinese newspaper. Choy became a director of the newspaper from 1953 to 1955. From 1952 to 1953 he was general manager of the Wo Kee Company, then the oldest Chinese importing firm in San Francisco Chinatown, and helped to reorganize the business. At the time the United States had imposed an embargo on trade with the People's Republic of China (PRC). Choy went to Hong Kong to successfully negotiate with the British and American trade representatives on the issuance of comprehensive "certificate of origin" to indicated that the merchandise did not come from the PRC. After his retirement at sixty-five from Wo Kee, he and his wife settled down in San Francisco.

In 1954-55 Choy became the first executive director of the anti-Chiang Kai-shek, anti-Communist Crusade for Free Democratic China, Inc. He also became assistant vice-president at San Francisco Savings and Loans Association. Recognizing the potential for deposits from the thrifty Chinese in the Chinatown community, Choy began planning in 1956 the first branch to be established by a savings and loans association in Chinatown. The branch opened operations in 1957 and was an instant success. By the time Choy retired in 1971, deposits at the branch reached \$70 million dollars, to top all Chinatown financial institutions. Ref. Jun Ke Choy, *My China Year: Practical Politics in China after the 1911 Revolution* (San Francisco: East/West, 1974); *Chinese Times*, Jan. 1, 1972.

⁶ *Chinese World*, June 22, 1960; *San Francisco Examiner*, June 26, 1960.

⁷ *Chinese World*, Feb. 26, 1963. Joe Yuey (1906-) was born in Kaiping County, China and emigrated to the United States in 1923. From humble beginnings in Central Valley towns he rose up to become a prominent leader in San Francisco Chinatown. In 1937 during the Sino-Japanese War he was the one of three Chinese in America that purchased \$10,000 worth of Republic of China National Salvation Bonds. In 1939 he joined in the formation of and became board chairman of a corporation formed by a group of Chinatown merchants to participate in the Golden Gate International Exposition held on Treasure Island in San Francisco Bay. When he was thirty-four he became the

youngest person elected to serve as president of the Suey Sing Labor and Merchants Association, a secret society headquartered in San Francisco. He served the organization as president and vice-president for more than twenty terms. During the late 1940s after World War II Joe Yuey was the owner of the restaurant On On. In the early 1960s this became the site of Imperial Palace, one of the earliest upscale Chinese restaurants catering to the middle class. In the late 1949 Joe Yuey was one of a group that purchased the Chinese newspaper *Chung Sai Yat Po* which became the first San Francisco Chinese newspaper voicing support for the newly established People's Republic of China (PRC). The paper ceased publication a year later when PRC armed forces came to succor of North Korea during the Korean War and engaged in hostilities with troops under the command of US General MacArthur. Joe Yuey also was a well-known collector of Chinese art. (Ref: *San Francisco Journal*, Aug. 12, 1983.)

⁸ *Chinese Times*, Apr. 6, 7, 1963; *Sun Yat-sen News*, Mar. 12, 1976; *Amerasian Business*, Oct. 31; Nov. 7, 1987. China-born Samuel Wong (1897-1987) was a teacher in his native Taishan. In 1924 he entered the US as a secretary to the Chinese Consul-General in San Francisco. Moving to Quincy, Illinois in 1927 he spent the next thirty-one years as a restaurateur, grocer, and farmer at various times and also made a small fortune through stock investments. Around 1958 Wong moved to San Francisco where he became wealthy through investments in real estate during a period of appreciating values. Wong passed away by his own hands after a prolonged illness.

⁹ Announcement by City and County of San Francisco Director of Property Philip L. Rezos, "Sale of City Land," dated Mar. 12, 13, 14, 1963; letter, Director of Property Philip L. Rezos to Mayor John H. Shelley, Mar. 30, 1964; letter, Chief Administrative Officer Sherman P. Duckel to Leo A. Isaeff, President, United Nationalities of San Francisco, Apr. 1, 1964; *Chinese Times*, April 2, 1964. Mike Miller, "Meanwhile, Back in Chinatown the Inscrutable Chinese Cultural Center -- It's a Holiday Inn," *Bay Guardian*, Mar. 28, 1972.

¹⁰ Letter of agreement, J. Francis Ward and SFGCCSA, Apr. 7, 1964.

¹¹ Letter from Irving J. Kahn, President, San Francisco Redevelopers, Inc., May 15, 1964.

¹² Other members of the cultural committee included Joe Yuey, Irving Kriegsfeld, Rev. Kei Tin Wong, James K. M. Hsieh, Prof. Joseph Esherick, Yvon d'Argence, Mrs. Katherine Field Caldwell, Prof. Shih-hsiang Chen, Wellington L. Chew, Thomas W. Chinn, Ching Wah Lee, Nellie T. Quock, and H. K. Wong.

¹³ *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 17, 19, 1964; *Chinese Times*, June 4, 1964; *Agreement for Preliminary Architectural Services*, San Francisco Redevelopers (working with San Francisco Greater Chinatown Association) and Campbell and Wong & Associates, Chan-Rader & Associates, July 15, 1964; letter, J. K. Choy for SFGCCSA to Norman R. Smith, Vice President of San Francisco Redevelopers, Inc., Dec 24, 1964; letter, J. K. Choy for SFGCCSA to Mayor John F. Shelley, Jan 20, 1965. More detailed architectural plans were drawn up by Campbell & Wong & Associates, and Chan-Rader & Associates.

¹⁴ San Francisco Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 124-65, Mar. 1, 1965; *Chinese World*, Mar. 3, 1965; letter, Justin Herman, Executive Director, San Francisco Redevelopment Agency to San Francisco Board of Supervisors, June 15, 1965.

¹⁵ *San Francisco Chronicle*, Dec. 1, 1965; *Chinese Pacific Weekly*, Sept. 10, 1970; Mike Miller, "Meanwhile, Back in Chinatown the Inscrutable Chinese Cultural Center -- It's a Holiday Inn," *Bay Guardian*, Mar. 28, 1972. The leading spirit of Justice Enterprises was Harold Moose, founder and head of Western Business Fund, a small business investment company founded in 1959. In 1965 Harold Moose and a few associates, using Western Business Fund as their financier, created Justice Enterprises in order to bid for the Chinatown hotel project. When the Redevelopment Agency rejected Justice's original bid, it reshuffled the corporation to allow Clement Chen to buy 40 percent of the stock with Justice retaining a 60 percent controlling interest. Chen then sold half of his interest to

Alexander D. Calhoun. The group also created Justice Investors, into which was brought in twenty-two investors, in order to draw in more capital without losing control. The only Chinese investor among the limited partners was Fong and Tong, an accounting firm which was represented on the board in 1967 by George Fong. In 1970 Chinese American investors were said to have owned about 15 percent share in the enterprise.

Chen's design originally called for a forty story skyscraper.

¹⁶ *Articles of Incorporation of Chinese Culture Foundation of San Francisco*, Oct. 15, 1965.

¹⁷ *Special Edition: Chinese Culture Center Tenth Anniversary* (San Francisco: Chinese Culture Foundation, 1968). The founders in the order listed in the articles of incorporation were Jun Key Choy, Joe Yuey, Lim P. Lee, Joseph Quan, Paul Louie, James K. M. Hsieh, C. C. Huang, Guey Hong, Clarence Poon, Wu Taam, Salvatore Reina, Howard W. L. Choy, John D. LaPlante, Samuel Wong, Nellie Quock, Irving M. Kriegsfeld, Ronald C. Won, Fook Hong Ng, Man Faye Leong, Ching Wah Lee, Kim J. Ng, Foon Lim, Sang Der, Philip H. Fong, Sung Young, Howard Seeto, Paul F. Wu, Lorna Logan, Alan S. Wong, James Chuck, Stanely S. Tom, Larry Jack Wong, Quailand Tom and James R. Frolik who processed the new corporation's legal papers.

¹⁸ Lease Agreement, Justice Investors and Chinese Culture Foundation, Nov. 21, 1967; press release from San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, Nov. 21, 1967.

¹⁹ M. Justin Hermann, *Report on Support and Involvement by Public and Private Interests in the Republic of China for the Chinese Cultural and Trade Center in San Francisco*, Aug. 12, 1968; *East-West*, Dec. 11, 1968; *Chinese Times*, Dec. 12, 1968.

²⁰ *East-West*, Aug. 28, 1968.

²¹ *East-West*, Jan. 24, 1968.

²² L. Ling-chi Wang, "A History of CCA," 3,4 in *Chinese for Affirmative Action 1982* (San Francisco: Chinese for Affirmative Action, 1982); L. Ling-chi Wang, "Holiday Inn Jobs Still Uncertain," *East-West*, Aug. 5, 1970.

²³ *East-West*, January 20, 1971.

²⁴ Agreement, San Francisco Savings and Loans Association and Chinese Cultural Foundation, Oct. 1, 1968.

²⁵ Interview with Vivian Chiang, Sept. 6, 1995.

²⁶ Resolution passed at CCF annual meeting, Apr. 29, 1969.

²⁷ Letter, J. K. Choy to William Wu, Feb. 3, 1969; letter, William Wu to J. K. Choy, Feb. 12, 1969. Wu was from Hong Kong. Wu received his A.B. in Art and Archaeology, all from Princeton University.

²⁸ *Chinese Times*, Nov. 20, 1971.

²⁹ *Chinese World*, Sept. 6, 1969; *East-West*, Sept. 30, 1970.

³⁰ *United Journal*, Spet. 9, 1970. In that same meeting San Francisco's Doon Wong also made a presentation asking for support for fund-raising to remodel the Chinese Six Companies and to construct two *pailou* gates. He also received the board's approval in principle.

³¹ *Chinese Times*, Sept. 25, 1970; L. Ling-chi Wang, "Six Companies Withdraw Backing for Culture Foundation," *East/West*, Sept. 30, Oct. 7, 1970.

³² *Chinese Times*, Oct. 12, 13, 14, 1966. The Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco which guaranteed the deposits had to run advertisements in Chinatown on Oct. 13, 14 to assure depositors that their money was safe.

³³ *Chinese Times*, Apr. 4, 1969.

³⁴ *Mon War Weekly*, Aug. 13, 1971.

³⁵ Don Canter, "Chinese Culture Finds a Home -- Finally," *San Francisco Examiner*, Jan 28, 1973.

³⁶ Ken Wong, "Culture Meeting a Puzzle," *East/West*, Aug. 26, 1970; *Chinese Pacific Weekly*, Aug. 27, 1970; "Sanfanshi Zhongguo Wenhua Jijinhui wei Zhonghua Zong Huiguan chexiao qian yijue zanzhu'an jinggao qiaobao shu (Chinese Culture Foundation of San Francisco, "Open letter to the Chinese community on the Chinese Six Companies revocation of its previously passed resolution of support"), Oct. 7, 1970.

³⁷ Chinese Culture Foundation of San Francisco, "Open letter to the Chinese community on the Chinese Six Companies revocation of its previously passed resolution of support," Oct. 7, 1970; *Chinese Times*, Oct. 8, 1970; *Chinese Pacific Weekly*, Oct. 8, 1970. Doon Wong or Wong Yen Doon was a dominant figure in the Nationalist Party of China in the United States. He was one of the founders and served several terms as president of the Chinese Anti-Communist League in America. At various times he headed the Bing Kung Tong, the Wong Family Association and other Chinatown traditional associations. He also appointed a member of the central committee of the National Assembly and member on the Chinese Nationalist Party. He was also member of the presidium of the National Assembly and member of the Committee on Overseas Chinese Affairs of the Legislative Yuan in Taiwan as well as Advisor on National Policy to the Presidency. (Ref.: Huang Renjun (Doon Wong), *88 zishu* (An account in his own words at age of eighty-eight). Foo Hum was a Chinatown merchant who played a leading role in anti-Communist, pro-Taiwan activities during this period.

³⁸ *East/West*, Nov. 4, 1970.

³⁹ *East/West*, Dec. 18, 1968; July 30, Aug. 20, 27, 1969; Corrie M. Anders, "Gordon Lau Know Bias, But It's Getting Better Now," *San Francisco Examiner*, Dec. 7, 1977. In 1969 candidate Lau called Chinatown a gilded slum with numerous social problems and proposed a multi-purposed information center in Chinatown to provide council and social services to the unemployed, the elderly, and the juvenile job seeker. That same year he also became counsel for the Golden Gate Neighborhood Grocers Association, formed to pressure the city to provide more police protection for Chinese grocers. He also spoke out against a proposal backed by the union to zone out garment factories in Chinatown. Lau was one of the young Chinese Americans who took over the reins of leadership in the Chinese American Democratic Club during the late sixties. He became its president in 1970.

⁴⁰ *Chinese Times*, Jan. 1, 1972.

⁴¹ Due to Chinatown issues and problems that were surfacing with great frequency in the press at the time, a few leaders in the Chinese community prevailed upon San Francisco Mayor Joseph Alioto to appoint a fact-finding committee in mid-1968. The co-chairs were Lim P. Lee, Albert Lim, and H. K. Wong; Project Coordinator was Alessandro Baccari. The 67-member committee, which eventually expanded to more than 300 persons as committee and sub-committee members or advisors, were predominantly western-educated English-speaking professionals and businesspersons. It commenced work on June 12, 1968 and submitted an 834-paged report on April 21, 1969. The report was abridged and published on Aug, 15, 1969 as *A Report of the San Francisco Chinese Community Citizens'*

Survey and Fact Finding Committee (Abridged Edition). Although most of the recommendations in the report were never implemented the investigations help achieve better understanding of the contemporary San Francisco Chinese community.

⁴² After the 1969 the activist faction controlled CADC. In 1969 the president was Alan Wong and in 1970, Gordon Lau, followed by Gimmy Park Li and Lambert T. Choy in 1971 and 1972 respectively. Ling-chi Wang was vice president in 1970 and president in 1974 to 1976. James Hsieh was Chinese secretary in 1969 and 1970 while Joe Yuey filled the position in 1971. All these members at one time or another were CCF board members.

⁴³ *Mon War Weekly*, Aug. 13, 1971.

⁴⁴ *East-West*, Oct. 2, Nov. 20, 27, 1968; John Burke, "Chinatown's Bridge of 1000 Controversies," *San Francisco Examiner*, July 27, 1971.

⁴⁵ Fook Chong Hong Friendly Society, Ning Yung Benevolent Association, Sam Yup Benevolent Association, Young Wo Association, Hip Sing Association, Suey Sing Association, Ying On Association were the only traditional associations that donated to the CCF. Even as late as the early 1990s Chinese Culture Center was not included among Chinatown organizations listed in a major publication *San Francisco Chinatown Etiquette* (San Francisco: San Francisco Chinatown Etiquette Committee, 1991) that was distributed to Chinatown associations.

⁴⁶ *East/West*, May 31, August 9, 1972.

⁴⁷ CCF resolution authorizing borrowing money from Hong Kong Bank of California, Oct. 18, 1972; CCF resolution authorizing borrowing of money from Bank of the Orient, Oct. 18, 1972; *Chinese Times*, Jan. 12, 1973, item announcing loan from Bank of America.

⁴⁸ *Bay Guardian*, May 28, 1972.

⁴⁹ *San Francisco Magazine*, July 1972.

⁵⁰ *San Francisco Examiner*, Jan. 28, 1973; *San Francisco Chronicle*, Sept. 19, 1973.

⁵¹ *Chinese Culture Foundation of San Francisco Newsletter*, Vol. I (Sept. 1971).

⁵² The Shanghai-born Chiang was a music major at Beijing's Yanjing University.

⁵³ Chiang Ching was trained in the Beijing Dance Academy from 1956 to 1961. She left for Hong Kong in 1962. For the next few years she was an actress in Hong Kong and Taiwan films. In 1970 she immigrated into the US and established her own dance troupe in New York three years afterward. In 1980 Chiang was invited to visit the PRC to give a modern dance demonstration program. In 1989 she emigrated with her family to the United States to Sweden. Ref. Chiang Ching, *Wangshi, wangshi, wangshi* (Bygone times, past events, reminiscences) (Hong Kong: Cosmos Books Ltd., 1992), *passim*.

⁵⁴ Letter, Attorney Jack Wasserman to J. K. Choy, May 17, 1971. Lien Ying Kuo entered the US as a visitor from Taiwan in 1966. While in this country he demonstrated and instructed art of tai chi chuan to many groups. He also established a School of Chinese Pugilism at 11 Brenham (Walter U. Lum) Place in San Francisco. After his visa expired CCF helped him and his family to gain permanent residence in this country.

Tai chi chuan was first introduced to the United States by Choy Hock Pang in 1939 and gradually became popular in the Chinese American community. But for many years mainstream America was still unfamiliar with the

exercise. It was Kuo and another master Zheng Manqing who popularized tai chi chuan in American mainstream society in the late 1960s. Ref. Cai Ce, "Taijiquan de shijie (The world of tai chi chuan)," *Zhongyang ribao*, Jan. 4-6, 1968.

⁵⁵ *East/West*, January 19, Feb. 2, 1972.

⁵⁶ CCF, *Report to the San Francisco Foundation of Our Cultural Activities from November 30, 1971 to November 30, 1972*.

⁵⁷ *Chinese Times*, Nov. 17, 1972; *East/West*, Nov. 22, 1972.

⁵⁸ *Chinese Pacific Weekly*, Mar. 1, 1973. It was alleged that the board was split regarding the proper Chinese term to use for San Francisco. Many Chinese American board members preferred the more familiar local term *Sanfanshi* while Executive Director Wu and others pushed for *Jiujinshan*, Caucasian board members became the swing votes deciding upon the more universally used latter term.

⁵⁹ Resolution No 16, Annual Kuomintang Conference, Aug. 1973.

⁶⁰ Advertisement, *Chinese Times*, Mar. 20, 1974; advertisement, *Sing Tao Daily*, Apr. 3, 1974.

Following are some articles attacking the CCF and CCC: Nong, "Tantan Zhonghua Wenhua Jijinhui (A discussion on the Chinese Culture Foundation) A discussion on the Chinese Culture Foundation)," *Chinese Times*, Mar. 12, 1974; Zhang Benli, "An open letter to Dennis Wong [one of the CCF board of directors]," *Young China*, Mar. 23, 25, 1974; Huang Xi, "After reading 'A discussion on the Chinese Culture Foundation,'" *Chinese Times*, Apr. 10, 1974; Gongsun Mou, "Ram's Head; Dog Meat," *Cathay Times*, Apr. 3, 1974; Huang Zhuofen, "Du Jiujinshan Zhonghua Wenhua Jijinhui zhengzhi falü lichang qishi yihou (After reading the CCF of San Francisco announcement about its political and legal status)," *Young China*, Apr. 12, 1974; Nong, "Zaitan Zhonghua Wenhua Jiujinshan Zhonghua Wenhua Jijinhui tantan Zhonghua wenhua (A discussion on Chinese culture with CCF of San Francisco)," *Chinese Times*, Apr. 23 to 25, 1974; Yu Jifu, "Ye tan Zhonghua Wenhua Zhongxin (Also a discussion on CCC)," *Chinese Times*, Apr. 26 to 30, 1974.

Some newspaper articles defending CCF are as follows: Editorial, "What Constitutes Chinese culture?" *East/West*, Mar. 20, 1974; Jingnan, "Suibi (Informal essay)," *Chinese Pacific Weekly*, Apr. 11, 1974; Li Hanling, "Zhonghua Wenhua Zhongxin yu Zhonghua wenhua (CCF and Chinese culture), *San Francisco Journal*, Apr. 24, 1974.

⁶¹ *Chinese Pacific Weekly*, May 2, 1974.

⁶² Letter, Katherine Wang to William Wu, May 6, 1974; *San Francisco Weekly*, July 3, 1974.

⁶³ *San Francisco Journal*, May 22, 1974.

⁶⁴ Richard Springer, "Culture Center: Attorney Davis Charges Political Interference," *East/West*, July 3, 1974; Nong, "Zhonghua Wenhua Zhongxin zhi zhikong (CCF's accusations)," *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 27, 1974; *Chinese Times*, June 27, July 2, 1974.

⁶⁵ *Chinese Pacific Weekly*, July 11, 1974; *East/West*, July 17, 1974.

⁶⁶ *Chinese Times*, Dec. 5, 1974, Jan. 1, 2, 1975.

⁶⁷ Chinatown Council for the Performing and Visual Arts brochure (n.d.). The founding organizations were Asian Living Theater, Bay Area Chinese Art Club, Chinese Classical Music Club, Chinese Culture Foundation, Chinese Folk Dance Association, Chinese Media Committee, Flowing Streams Ensemble, Kearny Street Workshop, Mandarin Photographic Club, Chinese Community Chamber Orchestra, and Chinatown Photographic Society.

⁶⁸ *East/West*, Aug. 8, 1973.

⁶⁹ CCF Board Meeting Minutes, Feb. 25, 1976.

⁷⁰ Interview with Vivian Chiang, Sept. 6, 1995.

⁷¹ CCF Board Meeting Minutes, Dec. 10, 1975; May 26, 1976.

⁷² CCF Executive Committee Meeting Minutes, Apr. 28, June 23, 1976; CCF Board Meeting Minutes, May 26, 1976; interview with Vivian Chiang, Sept. 6, 1995.

⁷³ CCF Board Meeting Minutes, Dec. 1, 1977.

⁷⁴ CCF Board Meeting Minutes, Dec. 10, 1975; Lawrence Jue, *My Memoirs* (manuscript, 1995).

⁷⁵ CCF Board Meeting Minutes, May 26, August 25, 1976.

⁷⁶ CCF Board Meeting Minutes, Sept. 24, 1975.

⁷⁷ Master Plan Committee Draft (Summer, 1977).

⁷⁸ Letters, Rosalyn Koo, to Martin Snipper, Feb. 1, 1978, Mar. 1, 1978.

⁷⁹ *Chinese Culture Center Newsletter*, winter 1979, summer 1980.

⁸⁰ The cities were San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New York in the US; Vancouver, Edmonton, Toronto, and Montreal in Canada.

⁸¹ CCF Board Meeting Minutes, Oct. 31, 1984.

⁸² Letter, Thomas and Ronald Fong to Tatwina Lee, CCF President, May 9, 1994. A letter to the editor from E. Chann attacking the proposed museum was published in *Asian Week*, May 4, 1990.

⁸³ Attachment C, "Strategic Planning Task Force, CCF board meeting minutes, May 27, 1987.

⁸⁴ Guan was a student from Beijing in the PRC. She received her B.A. in English and Psychology from Southwestern University and her M.A. in Education from Texas Wesleyan College.

⁸⁵ *Chinese Culture Center Newsletter*, vol. 14, no. 3 (Summer, 1997); Memorandum: Gloria Tai and Albert Cheng to members of the Chinese Culture Foundation Board, Feb. 18, 1999. Liu received her B.A. in art history from U.C.L.A. and her M.A. in art history from U.S.C. She also interned at the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco.

⁸⁶ Email Sabina Chen to H. M. Lai, July 24, 2008.

⁸⁷ China Institute (established in 1926) of New York City was a similar existing. The original objectives of the institute was to promote better understanding of China through education, service and exchanges. For many years the principal targets of the institution's activities were members of mainstream society and Chinese students and scholars from abroad. After World War II, especially since the 1970s, the institute also targeted the Chinese American community in its programs. When J. K. Choy came to the US from China he lived in New York City, where his sons and two daughters were attending universities, from 1945 to 1949. Thus whether the work of the institute played a role in inspiring the founding of the CCF is an interesting question. Certainly there are many similarities in the objectives and the activities of the two institutions.

⁸⁸ "1973-1988 Major Events," *Chinese Cultural Centre 15th Anniversary* (Vancouver, BC: Chinese Cultural Centre of Vancouver, 1988), 14-29. In other communities, the Edmonton of Chinatown Multi-Cultural Centre was completed in 1987; the Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre Association was founded in 1982 and the facility completed in 1992.

⁸⁹ "Sanfa fuwu guang yu re (Spreading out the light and warmth of service," *Haihua Zazhi*, No. 86 (Mar. 1992), 8-21; Gao Shufen, "Zhonghua wenhua de bozhongzhe: huaqiao wenjiao fuwu zhongxin (Facilities that sow the seeds of Chinese culture: the overseas Chinese cultural and educational services centers," *Haihua Zazhi*, July 1988, 29-39. This network is worldwide. The first was founded in Bangkok, Thailand in 1984. Centers in the US are in Los Angeles (facility in Chinatown established 1985; a second facility in El Monte in the suburbs serving chiefly immigrants from Taiwan opened in 1992), Flushing (1986), Houston (1987), Sunnyvale in the San Francisco Bay Area (1988), Chicago (1989), Boston (1991). Besides this there are similar facilities in Sydney, Australia (1984); Manila, Philippines (1986); Paris, France (1988) and Melbourne, Australia (1988).

⁹⁰ *Centre Daily News*, June 27, 1986.

⁹¹ *Taiwanren shequ gaikuang* (Survey of the Taiwanese community [in Houston]) (Houston: Taiwanese Association of America, Houston Chapter, 1993).

⁹² Christopher Kenneally, "Boston Institute: A Center for Chinese Arts," *Chinatown News*, Oct. 3, 1985.

⁹³ *Centre Daily News*, Feb. 20, 1986.

⁹⁴ *The Central California Chinese Cultural Center* (Visalia: Central California Chinese Culture Center, 1990).

⁹⁵ *Haihua zazhi*, June 22, 1994.

⁹⁶ *Sampan*, Nov. 18, 1994.