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AN EXAMPLE OF A BOUNDARY MAINTAINING
VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATION: THE CASE OF THE CHINESE
-CONSOLIDATED BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION OF
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
Harvey Ronald Mohauser
1966

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AN EXAMPLE OF A BOUNDARY MAINTAINING
VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATION: THE CASE OF THE CHINESE-CONSOLIDATED
BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

By

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SOCIOLOGICAL PROBLEM

This paper analyses the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of Chicago, Illinois. (C.C.B.A.) This analysis will concentrate upon the evolution of this ethnic voluntary association from incipience to its contemporary state of development.

The development of this system with regard to effects upon it by the Chinese-American and Chicago environments will be particularly significant. It will be revealed that both of these systems, as well as other consequential systems, such as the superordinate¹ American cultural system are crucial to the organization and the activities of an ethnic voluntary association such as the C.C.B.A.

This analysis relies heavily on Charles Loomis' "master process" of "boundary maintenance." "This is the process whereby the identity of the social system is preserved and the characteristic interaction pattern maintained. The probability of applied boundary maintenance mechanisms increases with the level of solidarity of the social system with the threat of encroachment."² It is my contention that his "Processually Articulated Structural Model" (PASM) is applicable to the voluntary association studied, the C.C.B.A., particularly his master process of boundary maintenance.

¹Talcott Parsons, "Suggestions for a Sociological Approach to the Theory of Organizations," ed. by Amitai Etzioni, Complex Organizations: A Sociological Reader, New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1961, p. 33

²Charles P. Loomis, Social Systems; Essays on Their Persistence and Change, New York: D. Van Nostrand Co., Inc. 1962, p. 31

To operationalize boundary maintenance within an organizational system we have used qualitative indicators, not numerical scales. Perhaps, given the necessary time and resources a more concrete and analytical device could be devised, but under the present conditions this task was impossible.

There are three primary indicators of boundary maintenance with regard to the structure of this ethnic voluntary association, as well as, three primary functional indicators.

Structural indicators:

1. a racially homogeneous membership
2. a disproportional amount of older members socialized and educated according to the norms and values of the Chinese culture
3. the utilization of the Chinese written language and Cantonese spoken dialect, to the exclusion of the superordinate system language, i.e., English

Functional indicators:

1. complete regard concerning issues with pertinence to the racially homogeneous community, i.e., issues regarding cultural survival or social welfare
2. relatively few active younger members (twenty-one to forty) who have been socialized and educated according to the norms and values of the American culture
3. disregard concerning issues external to the needs of racially homogeneous community

The primary social relationship to be examined is that between the Chinese-American community of Chicago and the C.C.B.A. Of relevance will be the effects and purposes of the Chinese-American population to this organization. Extremely pertinent to this topic is the differentiation of informal community norms and values from the formal organizational

norms and values of the C.C.B.A. This pattern will be presented in a developmental fashion from 1906, when the C.C.B.A. was founded, to its contemporary state.

This paper proposes to analyze the relationships prevalent in the community and organization when they are mutually concerned with issues of internal and external threats to each with regards to needs and social identity. Our hypothesis is that as long as these threats do exist and involve both the organization and the community they will tend to unify in action and centralize in attempts to eliminate these threats (Boundary Maintenance Hypothesis). And conversely, as these threats are alleviated the community and ethnic organization will reverse their previously harmonious actions and tend to disunite with regard to these issues.

This examination was possible because of the relative size of the population considered, and because of the local framework that was utilized. By this we are referring to the fact that the analysis did not exceed the time or resources of the researcher, nor preclude the application of specific methodological tools.

The significance of such a study varied. First, this endeavor is of extreme timeliness. This fact is in reference to the racial minority status of the Chinese-American and the present status relegated to the Civil Rights Movement. Therefore, this analysis should be of central concern to other minority groups, and especially their voluntary organizations. This is especially true to those organizations that function on a local plane.

Second, because of the similarity in social problems confronting all racial minorities in this country: (1) recency of arrival; (2) cultural dissimilarity; (3) concentration of population; and (4) physiognomic differences,³ it will be of benefit to these groups to analyze the findings presented in this paper.

Finally, this study in itself relates to a population of political and economic influence. This factor is verified in a study conducted by Calvin F. Schmid and Charles E. Nobbe in the American Sociological Review of December, 1965.⁴ They analyzed census materials to derive the educational, occupational, and economic status⁵ of non-white races in America in comparison to the white race. This study revealed:

- (1) the American male of Chinese ancestry has accumulated four years of college, and over, at a proportional rate of 19% of the total population, compared to the white male at 10.3%
- (2) the American female of Chinese ancestry, in this same category, is 14.3% as compared to the white female at 6.9%
- (3) the Chinese-American male is represented at 50.7%, as of 1960, in the occupational category of "white collar", compared to the white American at 42.1%
- (4) of this classification the Chinese-American includes 20.3% in the professional-technical grouping as compared to 12.5% for the white American

³Raymond Mack, Race, Class and Power, New York: American Book Co., 1963, pp. 200-201

⁴Calvin F. Schmid and Charles E. Nobbe, "Socioeconomic Differentials among Non-white Races," American Sociological Review, 30, (1965), pp. 909-922

⁵According to Schmid and Nobbe, in 1959 the median income for Chinese males was \$3,239 and for white males \$4,338. While these figures are correct it also needs to be mentioned that the majority of Chinese males are employed in service industries which makes it easier to conceal actual wages.

- (5) that as of 1960 the Chinese-American has 60.3% of its population employed in more prestigious areas compared to the white American who has 60.1%

Chart 1. Reproduction of Schmid and Nobbe

Major Occupational Groupings	White			Chinese		
	1960	1950	1940	1960	1950	1940
White Collar'.....	42.1	39.2	39.1	50.7	41.5	35.3
Professional and Technical..	12.3	9.3	7.6	20.3	6.6	2.5
Proprietors, Managers, and Officials.....	13.2	13.7	13.6	16.8	23.2	22.3
Clerical and Sales.....	16.5	16.2	17.9	13.6	11.7	10.5
Manual Workers'.....	57.9	60.9	61.0	49.3	38.4	64.7
Craftsmen and Foremen.....	23.3	23.3	30.1	5.1	3.5	1.4
Operatives.....	22.2	23.6	24.3	14.2	17.1	23.1
Service Workers.....	6.0	6.2	6.9	28.5	35.8	38.4
Laborers, except Farm.....	6.4	7.3	9.7	1.5	2.0	1.8
Farms'.....	5.3	14.5	21.3	1.3	2.9	4.2
Farmers and Farm Mgrs.....	5.9	10.3	14.2	.8	1.4	1.4
Farm Laborers.....	2.4	4.3	7.1	.5	1.5	2.8

The methodological approach in this study was a combination of various organizational and community techniques. The organizational framework is a derivative of three sources. The first, is an analytical discussion of organizations by Talcott Parsons, "Suggestions for a Sociological Approach to the Theory of Organizations."⁶ The second, an approach developed by Amatai Etzioni in Complex Organizations.⁷ And the third reference applied was "The Key Informant Technique: a Non-ethnographic Application,"⁸ by Marc Adelard Tremblay. Our reference to community analysis

⁶Parsons, Idem in Etzioni

⁷Amatai Etzioni, Modern Organizations, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1964

⁸Marc-Adelard Tremblay, "The Key Informant Technique: A Nonethnographic Application," American Anthropologist, Vol. 59, No. 4, August, 1957, pp. 688-701

can be qualified by a tradition of community studies, of which the following were included: Middletown, Street Corner Society, and The Urban Villagers. The actual techniques for gathering data included: (1) participant observation⁹ (2) interviews and a questionnaire, and (3) secondary sources.

The majority of data utilized for this study were the product of primary sources. The reason for this was an obvious lack of pertinent literature in this specific area. An interpreter was utilized to aid in interviews with Cantonese speaking subjects, and to translate documents written in Chinese. Her duties also included library research in the area of Chinese documents and newspapers.

Other secondary resources included analysis of other ethnic voluntary associations, formal organizations, and various data involving "Hua-ch'ao" or overseas Chinese immigrants. In addition, various demographic resources were utilized, e.g., United States Census, The Chicago Community Fact Books, and Donald Bogue's, The Population of the United States.

The questionnaire was eight pages in length and contained approximately thirty-five topics.¹⁰ It was presented to fifteen "key informants" within the Chinese-American community and C.C.B.A. The object of this approach was to obtain the most information over the shortest period of

⁹Herbert J. Gans, The Urban Villagers, New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1965.

¹⁰Unfortunately a great deal of the information gathered by the questionnaire was not utilized in this particular study. It did influence the analysis; but its variety would have been too broad for the study intended.

time, for the least amount of money. The informants were selected so as to eliminate possible bias by certain groups of subjects. Therefore, respondents represented eight clans, eleven District Associations, various occupations and ages.

Chart 11. Families Represented

Mei family	9
Li family	4
Yuan family	1
Wu family	3
Chen family	5
Huang family	4
Fang family	2
Tsao family	2

Others: Yun, Chou, Chang, Chiang, Lin, Wang, Tan, Mi,
Ou-yang, Ching, Tang, Kuang, Hsueh, Fu, Hu.

Chart 111. District Associations Represented

Hsieh-sheng
Huang-chiang & Hsia-yuan-san
Shao-lun
Lung-kang
So-yuan
Lin-hsi
San-i
Wu-hsu-san
Hai-yen
Kuang-hai
Chung-shan

Respondents were notified by a letter of our concern with the C.C.B.A. and that they would be contacted by telephone on a specific day. The result of this phone call was an appointment for interviewing. At the bottom of this letter were the names of several influential persons in the community who had consented to my use of their names for this purpose. This method proved extremely helpful, and many of my interviews would not have

materialized were it not for the acknowledgement of these men. Many individuals proved to be much more insightful and informative than expected, therefore, these persons were interviewed several times regarding specific issues.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The place of boundary maintenance in this study is central. It is my major hypothesis that needs arising within the community and outside of it tend to be instrumental to the formation of such an institution as the C.C.B.A. And as these needs are intensified by social pressures the organization is inclined towards a greater degree of boundary maintenance.

Members of a social system tend to respond to internal or external threats by an increased evaluation of the process of boundary maintenance and of the activities devoted to it . . . Increased boundary maintenance may be achieved, for example, by assigning higher primacy or evaluation to the activities characteristic of the external pattern, such as the pursuit of a broadened economic goal. . . As ambiguities attached to ends are removed, as the identities and responsibilities of power figures are clarified, and as ranks consonant with the total operation are established, integration and solidarity are heightened.¹¹

And conversely, as these needs decrease the boundary maintaining functions of the organization tend to be lessened in demand, and therefore, the organization displays a proclivity towards new demands presented by its members and the larger social order. If it does not meet these demands its support should diminish.

¹¹Loomis, Idem.

HISTORICAL REFERENCES

The C.C.B.A. is an institution whose cultural roots can be traced to the Fifteenth Century on the Chinese Mainland.¹² It has, assuredly, altered with the passage of time, the events of history, and the evolution of technology, but its purposes and primary objectives can still be recognized in the Twentieth Century C.C.B.A. of Chicago, Illinois.

This particular organization had its derivation from a formal social structure of five centuries past on the Chinese Mainland. Yet, it cannot be denied that the emigration of Chinese to a new country, i.e.; the United States of America, had definite consequences upon the previous state of the organization.

There are Chinese Benevolent Associations in every major city in the United States which has a relatively substantial Chinese-American population.¹³ Our primary interest lies in the Benevolent Association particular to Chicago, Illinois; its evolution and present status in the community. The "Chung-wah Kung-sow" (Chinese Consolidated or United Association) of Chicago, was founded in 1906.¹⁴ It was one of twelve Chinese organizations of Chicago at that time.¹⁵ Its membership theoretically consisted of all Chinese and Chinese Americans in

¹²Ping-ti Ho, An Historical Survey Of Landsmannschaften, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966, p. 1

¹³Rose Hum Lee, "The Decline of Chinatown in the United States," The American Journal of Sociology, 54, (1949), p. 424

¹⁴J. S. Tow, The Real Chinese In America, New York: The Academy Press, 1923, p. 101

¹⁵Ting-Chie Fan, Chinese Residents In Chicago, unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Chicago, 1926, p. 28

the Chicago area.

While the Benevolent Association is a locally autonomous organizational body, it is not peculiar to Chicago. There are thirty-four such associations throughout the United States.¹⁶ The origin of the organization in the United States was in 1850, in San Francisco, California.¹⁷ The reasons for its formation are numerous: (1) to settle disputes between families (clans); (2) assist in the hiring of Chinese laborers; (3) to handle differences between trade guilds; (4) to aid the destitute, until they could get employment.¹⁸

It is a tradition of the Chinese people to govern themselves, no matter what station of life they may be in . . . If a Chinese is in need, he naturally goes first to the society of the same name as his . . . If he cannot find one, he can go to the society of the district whence he has come. If he still finds none, he may resort to the consolidated or united benevolent associations . . . They are above all other organization's educational, religious, trade, and political.¹⁹

In addition to the functions mentioned above Mr. Tow includes the following: (1) protest to the Chinese Minister and consul for protection if the treaty rights of Chinese citizens are violated; (2) to certify documents and witness deeds.

The original name of this organization in American was the "Chinese

¹⁶Shien Woo King, Chinese In American Life: Some Aspects of Their History, Status, Problems and Contributions, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962, p. 220

¹⁷William Hoy, The Chinese Six Companies, San Francisco: Published by Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of California, 1942, p. 9

¹⁸Charles Caldwell Dobie, San Francisco's Chinatown, New York: D. Appleton-Centry Co., Inc., 1936, pp. 119-138

¹⁹Tow, Ibid., pp. 99-100

Six Companies."²⁰ The reason for this title is obvious when we discover that the majority of Chinese immigrants to America came from six districts of Kwangtung Province in Southeast China.²¹

To the Chinese the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association and the Chinese Six Companies are the same organization. In fact, the term Six Companies was bestowed on the organization by Americans probably because of its convenience in reading or remembering. In reality the proper name should be the Seven Companies.²²

The six original members or districts of the Six Companies were: Ning Yeung, Sam Yup, Kung Chow, Yeong Wo, Shew Hing, and Hip Wo. Eventually, a seventh district joined the organization, Yan Wo.²³ The reason for the retention of the title Six Companies is unknown.

The officers of the Six Companies were men from the Chinese Mainland referred to as "literati." These men had passed several civil exams and had attained both prestige and status in the bureaucratic structure of China.²⁴ They were brought to America to serve short terms in the organization, and went back to the mainland in a few years.

The Six Companies functioned as a legal tribunal within the Chinese community. It was not only concerned with local issues, it was also involved with such key issues as "exclusion."

²⁰Kung, Ibid., pp. 76-77

²¹Kung, Idem., states that 99% came from Kwangtung, and of this total only 15% of Kwangtung's 72 districts were involved.

²²Kung, Ibid., p. 323

²³Hoy, Ibid., pp. 14-15. This list disagrees with the one presented by Kung, Ibid., p. 27. Hoy states that the Yan Wo Co. was the 7th member, while Kung states that the Shew Hing Co. was number 7.

²⁴Max Weber, "The Chinese Literati," From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, ed. by H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, New York: Oxford University Press, 1958, pp. 416-441. Kung, Ibid., p.77

Chart IV. Laws Enacted Affecting Chinese Nationals 1944-1956

78th Congress, 2nd session:
380

80th Congress, 2nd session:
316, 318, 334, 336

81st Congress, 1st session:
3, 147, 166, 266, HR 6386*

81st Congress, 2nd session:
667, 1067, 529, 1081, 708, 1039, 1028, 375, 786, 572,
587, 982, 766, 658, 602, 801, 593, 757, 935

82nd Congress, 1st session:
150, 155, 200, 282, 34, 169, 131, 92, 354

82nd Congress, 2nd session:
455, 642, 647, 863, 587, 942, 527, 427, 461, 500, 926,
599, 702, 946, 494, 628, 445, 510, 483, 485, 979, 429,
449, 918, 745, 950, 601, 980, 993, 432, 560, 681, 526,
953, 459, 832, 561, 682, 941, 958

83rd Congress, 1st session:
256, 685, 343, 735, 352, 862, 663, 969, 479, 736, 327,
382, 341, 672, 658, 517, 876, 783

84th Congress, 1st session:
373, 167, 14, 171, 176, 90, 53, 333, 199, 200, 434, 4601

84th Congress, 2nd session:
620, 855, 542, 533, 553, 557, 694, 535, 793, 513, 587,
497, 580, 849, 613, 541, 508

This factor is interesting, for today's C.C.B.A. of Chicago has no formal interest in legal mechanisms whatsoever.

In 1870, the first recorded Chinese resident arrived in Chicago.²⁵ By 1900, there were 1,179 Chinese in Chicago.²⁶ (Chart V)

In 1906, the first C.C.B.A. was developed. There were four reasons for this: (1) to assuage covert internal threats, i.e., tong wars; (2) to cope with racial discrimination and prejudice from the dominant white population; (3) to educate the younger members of the community in the Chinese language and culture; and (4) to aid those Chinese-Americans in Chicago who were destitute or in dire need of assistance.

²⁵Fan, Ibid., p.22

²⁶Fan, Ibid., p. 128

Rank of 10 States According to the Chinese Population in the United States 1880-1960

Rank	<u>1880</u>	<u>1890</u>	<u>1900</u>	<u>1910</u>	<u>1920</u>	<u>1930</u>	<u>1940</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960*</u>
1	Calif. 75,132	Calif. 72,472	Calif. 45,753	Calif. 36,248	Calif. 28,812	Calif. 37,361	Calif. 39,556	Calif. 58,324	Calif. 95,600
2	Oregon 9,510	Oregon 9,540	Oregon 10,397	Oregon 7,363	New York 5,793	New York 9,665	New York 13,731	New York 20,171	New York 37,573
3	Nevada 5,416	Wash. 3,260	New York 7,170	New York 5,266	Oregon 3,090	Illinois 3,192	Mass. 2,513	Illinois 4,207	Illinois 7,047
4	Idaho 3,379	New York 2,935	Wash. 3,629	Wash. 2,709	Illinois 2,776	Mass. 2,973	Illinois 2,456	Mass. 3,627	Mass. 6,745
5	Wash. 3,186	Nevada 2,833	Mass. 2,968	Mass. 2,582	Mass. 2,544	Penn. 2,557	Wash. 2,345	Wash. 3,408	Wash. 5,491
6	Montana 1,765	Montana 2,532	Penn. 1,927	Illinois 2,103	Wash. 2,363	Wash. 2,195	Oregon 2,086	Texas 2,435	Texas 4,172
7	Arizona 1,630	Idaho 2,007	Montana 1,739	Penn. 1,784	Penn. 1,829	Oregon 2,075	Penn. 1,477	Penn. 2,258	New Jersey 3,813
8	Wyoming 914	Colorado 1,398	Illinois 1,503	Arizona 1,305	New Jersey 1,190	New Jersey 1,783	Arizona 1,449	Oregon 2,102	Penn. 3,741
9	New York 909	Arizona 1,170	Idaho 1,467	Montana 1,285	Arizona 1,137	Ohio 1,425	New Jersey 1,200	Arizona 1,951	Michigan 3,234
10	Colorado 612	Penn. 1,146	Arizona 1,419	New Jersey 1,139	Ohio 941	Arizona 1,110	Texas 1,031	District of Columbia 1,825	Oregon 2,995

* Hawaii with 36,197 (1960) should rank second.

It is evident that these factors placed a strain upon the community. A solution was essential for these problems; one which would benefit the Chinese-American community, as well as the City of Chicago. As we are told by Loomis: "Members of a social system tend to respond to internal and external threats by an increased evaluation of the process of boundary maintenance and of activities devoted to it."²⁷ It is obvious that the Chicago community, for various reasons could not or would not become involved with this social system and its difficulties. Therefore, the solution to these problems had to come from within the Chinese-American community.

As postulated by Loomis the community did respond to these threats in a manner conducive to an increased evaluation of boundary maintenance. They assigned a higher primacy to activities characteristic of the external pattern. For example, the community integrated in purpose and solidified in attempts to cope with these problems. They organized in such a manner that they represented their own legal and administrative bodies. Consequently, the community became a socially cohesive body for three major reasons: (1) to obliterate the salient in-group conflicts; (2) to mitigate the social pressures from without resulting in a cohesiveness of Chinese-Americans due to their racial and cultural similarities; and (3) a desire to reeducate the young.²⁸

This reaction on the part of the community displays a definite boundary maintaining inclination in the social realm. Of crucial significance

²⁷Loomis, Ibid., p. 31

²⁸Robert K. Merton, Social Theory And Social Structure, New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963, p. 316

is the development of the C.C.B.A. as the primary administrative body.

The first problem was solved in a gradual manner. The various factions eventually mediated their differences with the aid of the C.C.B.A. It is interesting to note that all previous studies of the Chinese-Americans of Chicago have mentioned the fact that in 1905, the Chinese lived in the "Loop Area," e.g., Clark Street between Van Buren and Harrison. And that during this year the landlords raised their rents.²⁹ It therefore became necessary for these inhabitants to move, if they wished to survive economically. And, yet it was revealed to me by means of personal interviews³⁰ that the effects of the tong wars upon innocent persons caused this massive shift in location to the South Side of Chicago, e.g., Twenty-second Street and Wentworth and Princeton Avenues. (This area today is regarded as Chicago's Chinatown.) Consequently, both the feuds and discrimination (increase in rent) were primary factors in the formation of Chicago's C.C.B.A.

These factors do not detract from our boundary maintaining hypothesis for three valid reasons. First, the Chinese-American community did not disperse; it remained intact in a new location within the city. Second, the C.C.B.A. did not dissolve, its importance became more pronounced after the move. Third, in fact the C.C.B.A. and Chinese-American community did resolve this internal threat. (Perhaps it should be noted

²⁹Chiang-Chao Wu, Chinatown: A Study of Symbiosis and Assimilation, unpublished Ph D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1928, p. 20

³⁰The presentation of facts relating to the C.C.B.A. and its relationships with the community are almost totally derived from interviews and the questionnaire, therefore, I do not deem it necessary to footnote each evidence of primary data.

that as long as the Chinese-Americans retained a community of geographical proportions the term "internal threat" does not have to apply to a threat which is located inside a physical boundary, but it may pertain to a threat of social significance as well.) Also, due to the ex post facto nature of this study one cannot be certain as to the primary reason for this shift. Perhaps the increase in rent was the more important variable of the two.

With the formal establishment of this voluntary association we notice that the original constitution is highly indicative of the four major areas of responsibility:

- (1) an aid to the old and destitute Chinese of Chicago
- (2) the responsibility of maintaining a cemetery
- (3) to keep poor Chinese of Chicago off of the rolls of American charity organizations
- (4) to arbitrate disputes; both commercial and private
- (5) to certify documents and witness deeds
- (6) to maintain order within the Chinese community
- (7) to uphold the rights of Chinese citizens in Chicago, and take protests to the Chinese minister or Chinese consul³¹

It now becomes evident that the Chinese-American community had developed an inclination toward boundary maintenance. This inclination was no longer an informal mechanism, but one with formal characteristics. As we are told, "the C.C.B.A. of Chicago was the highest Chinese organization in the City."³² Its membership consisted of the vast majority of Chinese speaking people in Chicago. (Approximately 95%-

³¹Fan, Ibid., pp. 133-134

³²Wu, Ibid., p. 16

99% of all Chinese-Americans migrated to America from Kwangtung Province. This area is also known as Canton. Therefore, my reference to "Chinese speaking" people is directed to this vast majority who spoke a Cantonese dialect, not those who speak Mandarin.)³³ This lingual factor further enhanced the solidarity of this ethnic group.

The C.C.B.A. of this era did not have a permanent meeting place, and they did not have a paid clerical staff. The officers were elected by the entire community to prevent discrimination by clans or tongs. The organizational hierarchy from 1906 until 1954 consisted of: a president, whose term of office was indefinite; an English-Chinese secretary; a treasurer; an accountant; and a Board of Directors. This Board was selected in two ways: (1) appointment by the president and (2) automatic appointment if they were leaders of other local Chinese organizations. The typical Board was composed of thirty to fifty members.

A further boundary maintaining factor to be considered is that the C.C.B.A., especially today, has been an organization whose leaders are not selected for merit alone (achieved status) but are selected moreso for their age ranking in the community (ascribed status). Therefore, the C.C.B.A. has always been directed and actively maintained by older Chinese-Americans. This point is of importance for these men were educated either on the Chinese Mainland or in Chinese schools on the West Coast. They are socialized in Oriental values and norms to a greater degree than American ones. They read Chinese newspapers, eat Chinese foods, and tend to segregate themselves in densely populated

³³Francis J. Brown and Joseph S. Roucek, One America, The History, Contribution, and Present Problem of Our Racial and National Minorities, New York: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1948, p. 319

Chinese areas. During my research I discovered informal activity regarding decisions and activities displayed by the C.C.B.A. of Chicago.

There are three reasons for this:

- (1) The members of this organization live in an area within the City of Chicago commonly referred to as "Chinatown." This residential propinquity affords officers and members a possibility for interaction which is uncommon to most organizations.
- (2) Due to the cultural value attached to age and the additional factor that the younger more assimilated residents move to the suburbs; a disproportional number of older male citizens are in daily contact with one another.³⁴
- (3) In addition, this area, "Chinatown" is not strictly a residential center, but also a commercial one. Therefore, the older citizens who work or own stores in the area have the advantage of increased interaction.

These three factors have a pronounced effect upon the organizational structure and its functions. Consequently, they lead to an increase in informal activity. Their overt consequences are noticed in membership cliques committees, and official positions within the C.C.B.A.

We now notice a new emergent trend with regards to the community and C.C.B.A. With the mitigation of external and internal threats the two social bodies are diverging with regards to the place of the C.C.B.A. in the Chicago, Chinese-American community. The causative factors enhancing boundary maintenance have dissipated.

In 1954 a "purge" took place within the organization. This "purge" was a reaction on the part of the community representing an overt dissatisfaction with the C.C.B.A. They felt a need to reorganize and modernize both the formal structure and functions of the association due to the mitigation of previous social pressures; the "tong-wars"

³⁴Ridgely Hunt, "Chicago's Vanishing Chinatown," Chicago Tribune Sunday Magazine, 2/6/66. pp. 26-29

were now a thing of the past; Chinese-Americans could get employment and housing freely; racial prejudice was no longer overt; and few Chinese-Americans were in dire need of financial assistance.

A candidate was presented to oppose the current president, who had held his position in the organization for seventeen years. The old president was defeated and the new president posted a majority of seven hundred votes cast.

There were additional reasons for this "purge." Various social and economic factors also precipitated this action. After World War II, and during it, the labor market was badly in need of skilled talents. As indicated in a study by Calvin F. Schmid and Charles Nobbe, the Chinese-American was educated at a superior level.³⁵ It was also during this year that the Supreme Court made its monumental decision regarding the case of Plessy versus Ferguson. It was this social climate which enabled the Chinese-American citizen to acquire those social, educational, economic, and occupational rights which he deserved and had struggled for. The American of Chinese ancestry was no longer a social alien, but a participant in the American social system. His trial period had terminated and he was acquiring and advancing in the areas he had trained and studied for, for over five decades.

It is this era of the C.C.B.A. which we shall call the "Productive Period." From 1954 to 1958, the organization became involved in broad programs of revitalization. By this I am referring to the reaction on the part of the community in response to new social conditions. Conditions whose origins were represented by a liberal social climate and the abatement of previous internal and external threats to the community.

³⁵Schmid and Nobbe, Ibid., pp. 913-915

It was during this period that the association built a community center which symbolized the achievements of Chinese-Americans throughout the nation.³⁶ They raised money in enormous quantities and established outstanding credit references. This project attracted the attention of people throughout the Chicago area and elsewhere in the United States. Their community center became a symbol of the initiative and affluence of members of the Chinese-American community.

The community center became the new headquarters for the C.C.B.A. it also functioned as a school. This school was and is used to instruct their children in Chinese language and culture; to prepare new immigrants for citizenship; and most importantly it is the meeting place for neighborhood social, cultural, and educational activities. These larger functions are carried on in the five hundred seat auditorium.³⁷

In the early 1960's, the organization revamped its formal structure: dues were raised from two dollars to five dollars per year, and those not paying their back dues could no longer vote in the elections; the President could now serve only two consecutive terms; the Board of Directors was still selected as the past manner, but the President could only appoint twenty members, while the remaining twenty-five represented other organizations in the community, a mechanism which controls the absolute powers of the President. New positions within the hierarchy included: a Chinese secretary, an English secretary, two treasurers, two supervisors, and a public relations officer.

³⁶Kung, Ibid., p. 319. He states that on October 8, 1958, the C.C.B.A. dedicated its new \$300,000 Community Center. Also, The Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of Chicago. Pamphlet published by C.C.B.A. of Chicago, 1958.

³⁷The Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, pp. 3-4

Stated purposes for the organization are:

- (1) To improve the condition of the needy Chinese in and about the City of Chicago and the State of Illinois.
- (2) To aid the sick and destitute Chinese in and about the City of Chicago and the State of Illinois.
- (3) To give advice and pecuniary assistance as required to reputable and deserving Chinese in and about the City of Chicago and the State of Illinois.
- (4) To aid and help all worthy Chinese who may be found to be in need of assistance.
- (5) To furnish educational facilities for children and adults of Chinese extraction.
- (6) To manage a charitable cemetery for the Chinese-American community.
- (7) Nothing herein above shall be deemed to authorize the corporation to receive a child for care of placement apart from its parent or guardian, nor to pay sick or death benefits, nor to conduct a vocational or post secondary school.³⁸

As we can see the organization has altered its original purposes. It is no longer involved in arbitration or mediation; for the tong wars are a factor of the past. It still manages the Chinese cemetery, but this is because it is desired by the people, not because of legal codes which deprive them of burial in a public cemetery.

It is evident that the two predominant functions of the organization today are: (1) care of the destitute and invalid; and (2) education of Chinese-Americans in their cultural heritage. As we see, the two overt threats of "tong wars" and discrimination are no longer the concern of this organization. Obviously, the organization does not deem it necessary to handle these areas due to their lack of importance to the community.

³⁸Written document stating "purposes" of C.C.B.A. of Chicago

Within the Chinese-American community today, we see direct evidence of a shift in values from boundary maintenance. With the elimination of social obstacles, due to racial and cultural differences, the Chinese-American is assimilating into the superordinate American social system. He is utilizing the English language to a much greater degree; he is eating foods other than strictly Oriental in nature; his children are being socialized in American institutions, e.g., schools and churches; he is dressing in Western styled fashions; he is developing Western styled organizations e.g., the Chinese-American Civic Council (conducts meetings in English, has younger active members, allows membership to other racial groups, retains documents in English, and etc.)³⁹ and most importantly he is leaving the ghetto to live in integrated areas of the city and suburbs.⁴⁰

This hypothesis of separation of community and C.C.B.A. is based upon these presented factors which indicate a transference of community values. By this I am referring to the primary aspect of boundary maintenance as elaborated by Charles Loomis: "Members of a social system tend to respond to internal and external threats by an increased evaluation of the process of boundary maintenance and of the activities devoted to it."⁴¹ With the mitigation of these internal and external threats (tong wars, discrimination, prejudice, and care of the destitute) the community no longer places a high value upon the need for the process of boundary

³⁹Chinese American Progress, Chicago: Chinese American Civic Council of Chicago, 15, (1965). Also, Constitution And By-Laws Of The Chinese American Civic Council of Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A., Jan., 1954

⁴⁰Ridgely Hunt. Ibid. pp. 26-29

⁴¹Loomis. Ibid. pp. 32-33

maintenance. And, yet, the C.C.B.A. has not altered despite a purge which had this as its primary interest. (At least on the part of the membership, and supposedly the newly elected officials.)

One further consideration should be taken into account. One cannot entirely divorce the individual from both social systems, C.C.B.A. and Chinese-American community. Therefore, the members will be influenced by the changes occurring to him as a member of this assimilating group. What we do uncover in our research is a tendency for members of the organization to act out two roles: the Chinese and the Chinese-American and characteristics peculiar to both.

The obvious changes within the Chinese-American community should effect the C.C.B.A. and yet it is still inclined towards boundary maintenance. Due to this conflict between the community and organization one either expects a reorganization or decline in importance of the C.C.B.A. This last factor is the predominant case. In the last election only one hundred and fifty votes were cast despite an increase in the population of Chinese-Americans in Chicago.⁴² Therefore, the organization is losing support within the community. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that the active membership of the organization is in the vast majority from the Chinatown area, and the C.C.B.A. has very little active membership from the suburbs. This factor is extremely significant to the

⁴²There are several ways to substantiate the increase of Chinese and Chinese-Americans in Chicago, Illinois. (1) The Local Community Fact Book For Chicago, 1938, 1940, 1950. This is a publication produced by the University of Chicago, which breaks down the city of Chicago into 75 "community areas." (2) Census Data Of The City Of Chicago, 1920 and 1930, edited by Burgess and Newcomb. (3) An excellent reference is presented in table form by Kung, Ibid., Table XI, "Rank Of Ten States According To The Chinese Population In The United States, 1880 - 1960," This chart is a compilation of United States Census calculations from 1880 - 1960.

organization for approximately 83% of the Chinese-American population of Chicago live outside of Chinatown.

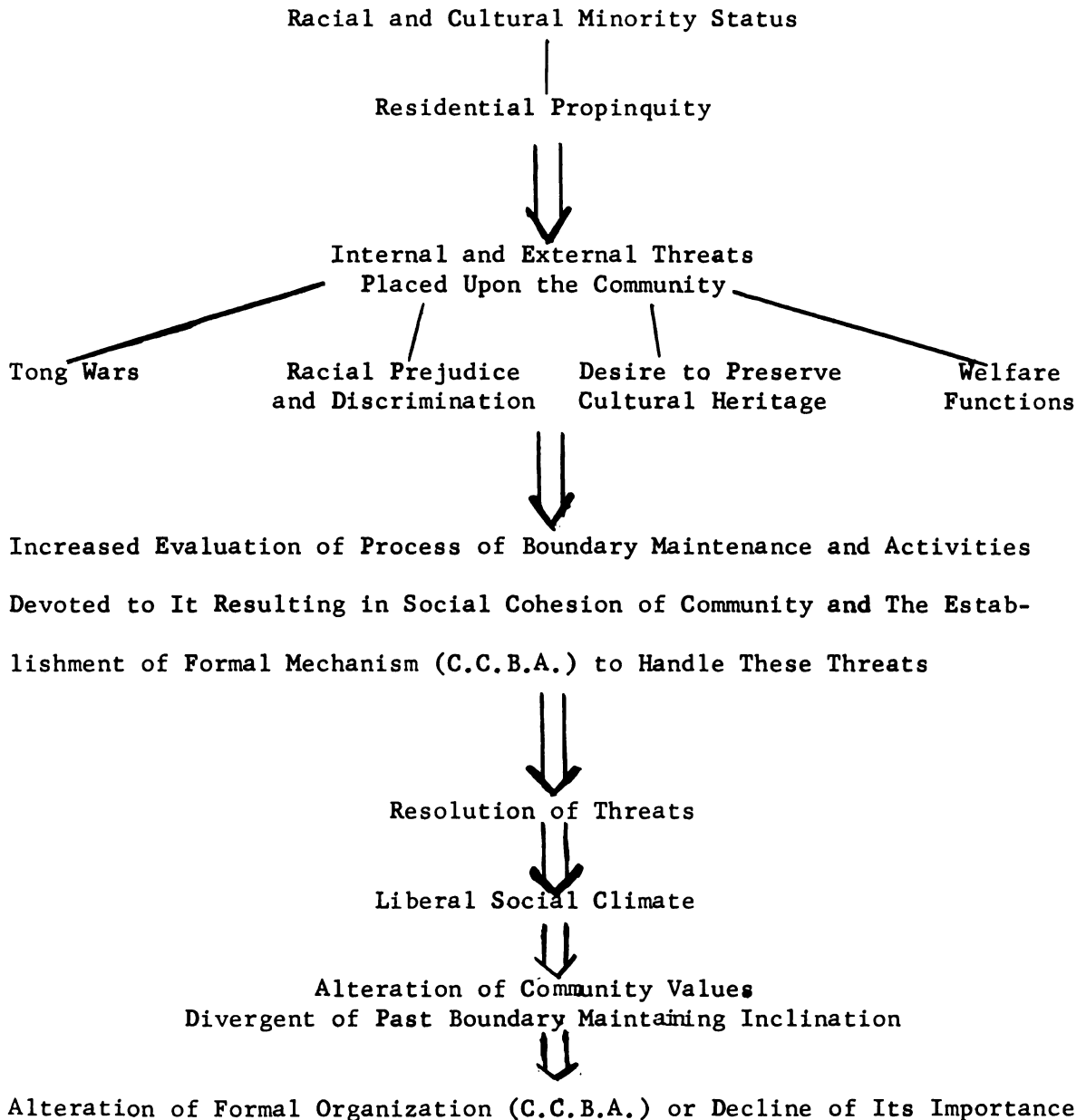
Consequently, the organization has narrowed the areas of functioning to include a minority of Chinese-Americans in Chicago: the young (education in Chinese culture and language); the destitute and invalid (welfare); and recent migrants (citizenship courses). Both external and internal threats have been eliminated to a great extent, and the organization maintains its inclination toward boundary maintenance despite the absence of those causes which influenced its development.

SUMMARY

It was my objective to analyze the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of Chicago with regard to the place of this organization in the community. I viewed racial and cultural minority status as a previous condition. Residential propinquity and internal and external threats place upon the community were crucial as independent variables which affected the community and brought about an increased evaluation of boundary maintenance and those activities devoted to it. This process (boundary maintenance) resulted in a social cohesiveness of the community and the eventual establishment of the C.C.B.A. a formal mechanism whose purpose was to handle these threats to the community.

With the resolution of these threats it was shown that with the additional presence of a liberal social climate the community tends to alter its previous evaluation of boundary maintenance and the functions expected of the C.C.B.A. This alteration of community values had a pronounced effect upon the organization in that pressure was brought to bear upon it and the desire for modification was evident. Since the organization failed to modify there was a noticable decline in the importance and relations between the organization and the community.

SCHEMA



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