The Legacy of the June 4 Incident on the Sydney Chinese Community: A study of the short-term and long-term impacts of the June 4 Incident on the Chinese community of Sydney

By Aliza Chin

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This thesis examines the legacy of the June 4 Incident on the Sydney Chinese community in the immediate aftermath of the event, and in the years that followed. By making the focus of the thesis primary accounts from members of the Sydney Chinese Community themselves, in addition to primary sources from the period, this thesis can be said to be an examination of the impact of the June 4 Incident on the community, and how the variations that exist in regards to the impact demonstrate the variation of existing opinions within the community. Based on the findings, in addition to comparisons and examinations with other studies conducted about the impact of the June 4 Incident on other Chinese communities, this thesis concluded that whilst there was a strong legacy in the immediate aftermath, one of unification and strengthening of pre-existing relationships within the community, this legacy failed to sustain itself in the years following the incident.

Furthermore, an examination of the pre-existing relationships and bonds proved that they played a large role in helping to sustain legacies and the values and traditions within them, and that it was no different in the case of the June 4 Incident, at least in the short-term. In a way, this thesis is an attempt to establish a legacy of sorts in itself, whilst contributing to the research surrounding the history of migrant communities in Australia, by conducting the first study on the impact of the June 4 Incident on the Sydney Chinese community.
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Throughout history, conflict has served as both a unifying and rallying call, and as a fracturing point for communities. In the case of the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre, otherwise known as the June 4 Incident; where protestors occupying Tiananmen Square in support of democratic reform were subjected to government-ordained military force and violence, the event served as a source of unification and strengthening of pre-existing relationships in the Sydney Chinese community (SCC).

What was the legacy of the June 4 Incident in the SCC? The main argument of the thesis answers that the June 4 Incident helped to strengthen relationships that were already apparent within the SCC, and provided a source of unification for previously conflicting groups within the community in the short-term, with long-term strengthening and unification restricted to a few individual cases within the community. Furthermore, this thesis will also argue that traditional familial bonds and relations, and the use of Chinese-language newspapers within the community played a large role in helping to establish short-term strengthening and unification, in addition to indirectly contributing to the lack of a long term legacy. As a result, this thesis will be restricted to a timeline of the weeks immediately preceding the June 4 Incident, to around 1992, when news regarding the Incident had largely died down. Later years, such as that of the 1990s through to the present, will be discussed in passing, when examining the legacy that the June 4 Incident had on the SCC, but will not be a point of focus when discussing the primary sources. As gathered from the title, this thesis will be solely examining the Chinese community in Sydney.

This thesis will be arguing these points through the examination and discussion of the multiple primary sources gathered for this thesis, namely those of local newspapers, and questionnaires completed by SCC members. By examining the newspaper reports of both English-language and Chinese-language media outlets that existed at the time; such as the Australian Chinese Daily (ACD) and the Sydney Morning Herald (SMH), this thesis will look at the ways in which
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the media played an important role in galvanising support for the students and providing information about the June 4 Incident, and the lead-up to the incident. This is of particular importance, due to the fact that the information provided by newspapers was then used to galvanise the community into actions of support for the students. By interviewing SCC members who were in Sydney at the time of the June 4 Incident, first-hand information is gathered and examined regarding the reactions and actions undertaken by the SCC at the time, and the ways in which the community was strengthened and gained a sense of unity as a result. Furthermore, by doing so, in addition to examining the effects of the June 4 Incident on the SCC, this thesis will be directly contributing to the area of study regarding migrant experiences, and the reactions of migrants to incidents in their countries of origin. Seeing as similar studies have been conducted on the Hong Kong (HK) Chinese-diaspora population regarding the impact of the June 4 Incident on such communities, notably the studies of Alvin Y. So and Francis L.F. Lee, it seem remiss that a similar study has not been conducted in one of the world’s largest Chinese diaspora communities. It should be noted that ethics approval was granted for this project, and the use of numbers to identify interviews is due to interviewees wishing to remain anonymous.

This thesis will be divided into three chapters:

The first chapter will be split into three significant sub-sections detailing the SCC before and after the June 4 Incident. The first sub-section will examine the context of the era, specifically the

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role that media and news outlets played in the community, and pre-existing relationships within the community pre-June 4 incident. The second-subsection will examine the three largest community groups within the SCC, and the roles that they played for SCC members, and in helping to strengthen relationships within the community. The third sub-section will document the changes within the community post-June 4 Incident, their reactions and actions, and the ways in which community relations were strengthened as a result.

The second chapter will focus on the responses of SCC members at the time, and their own personal thoughts, feelings, and experiences regarding the June 4 Incident. The chapter will be split into the sub-sections of: Immediate Emotions, Action Undertaken, Centring the Students, Migration to Australia, and Continuity and Change. Additionally, dissenting views and individual cases will be discussed and examined to provide further information about the SCC itself, such as which bonds, ties, and relationships were strengthened or created, and which groups were brought together in a sense of unity as a result of the June 4 Incident.

The final chapter will focus on the legacy of the June 4 Incident on the SCC, and will examine whether or not there was a short-term effect, or if it withstood the test of time. Contributing factors to long-term and short-term strengthening and unification will also be examined in this chapter, in order to determine the reasons why in this case, the June 4 Incident failed to have a strong long-term legacy in Sydney. Additionally, this chapter will also examine the ways in which the SCC was changed as a result of the June 4 Incident, and the impacts that such changes had on the community. Comparisons will also be made regarding the legacy of the June 4 Incident in the SCC, and that of HK’s, in order to highlight the reasons why the impact of the June 4 Incident in Sydney only resulted in short-term changes.
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Following the final chapter, there will be a short reflection on the writing of the thesis and its arguments, and the ways in which it contributes to the area of study, and the legacy of the June 4 Incident on the SCC.

It is the last statement; the legacy, or lack thereof, of the June 4 Incident in the SCC, which makes this thesis a work of importance not just in the academic field of history, but in the SCC as well. Since no such work has ever been undertaken before in the field of history, this thesis would be breaking new ground in allowing the stories of the SCC to be heard for the first time, in their own words, and in doing so, directly examine the impact of the June 4 Incident on the community itself.

Regarding historiography, studies regarding the impact of the June 4 Incident on Hong Kong and China’s communities are in abundance, with examples including Willy Lam, Louisa Lim, and Tu Wei-Ming. However, my thesis will be deviating from these studies, due to the fact that they have all argued the existence of long-term legacies, whilst I will be arguing the existence of only a short-term legacy. Furthermore, my area of focus; the SCC, will also differentiate from the previous historiography, as those studies have focused on: Deng Xiaoping’s legacy, different individual case studies within China, Chinese diaspora relations as a whole, respectively, and examined the impact

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on a global and geopolitical scale, whereas my thesis is a case study of a specific community.

Contrastingly, there isn’t a wide selection of literature regarding the SCC in relation to the June 4 Incident, with previous related studies, such as those of Gao Jia, and Hou Minyue having simply examined the role of Chinese students within Australia, and the impact of the June 4 Incident on human rights relations between Australia and China respectively, rather than the SCC itself.

Whereas pre-existing studies have examined the June 4 Incident in macro, my thesis will focus on the micro, making it one of the first ones to do so. In conclusion, studies in this field have largely avoided the legacy of the June 4 Incident on the SCC, choosing instead to look at the global scale of the event, and what it meant for geopolitics. My thesis aims to examine the June 4 Incident on a local scale, and what it meant for smaller communities, specifically that of the SCC.

Furthermore, by comparing the case of the SCC with other overseas Chinese communities, this thesis would also be contributing to academic studies which examine how events in China can impact or influence its overseas migrant and diaspora communities, and how the June 4 Incident affected overseas Chinese communities worldwide. Additionally, it has been over twenty years since the June 4 Incident; where protestors for democracy in China’s Tiananmen Square were subject to military force sanctioned by the Chinese government on the June 4 1989, resulting in a currently disputed number of deaths and disappearances, and many of the participants who volunteered their time to provide information are now old, and aging. There can be no legacy or means of passing this

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3 Lam, China after Deng Xiaoping, xiii-xv; Lim, The People’s Republic of Amnesia, 4-6; Tu, ‘The Periphery as the Center’, 24-27.

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information on to the next generation unless it is talked about and discussed, and this is what this thesis aims to do for the SCC members who were kind enough to share their experiences and thoughts with me. The SCC has been in Australia since the 1800s, with members coming from China, HK, Vietnam, and many more nations, numbering approximately 488,0005 and the June 4 Incident is another part of its history, one which needs to be told.

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Chapter one: Family, Newspapers and Community; the SCC before June 4

The role of familial bonds and relations, and the role of Chinese news media:

Before examining the SCC in the months prior to the June 4 Incident and the wider context, this thesis will first discuss and examine the role that traditional familial and kinship bonds played within the community, as well as the role of newspapers in helping to establish networks of information, and will argue that they were of utmost importance to the SCC. I will also argue that these factors would come to play an important role in influencing the various responses that SCC members undertook regarding the June 4 Incident.

As has been argued by Paul Chao, familial and kinship relations and bonds are considered to be of the utmost importance within Chinese communities at large. This importance would be even more pronounced in Chinese diaspora communities, where the pressure to maintain these links and bonds is increased, due to issues such as: physical distance from one’s country of origin, which would have effectively made it difficult to remain in contact with family members in a time before time-effective communication devices. The maintenance of such familial and kinship bonds, as well as their culture and cultural selves by members of the Chinese diaspora, were assisted by various methods of communication, but also through the continued practice of traditions and celebrations by members of the Chinese diaspora, which were celebrated during the SCC’s inception and continue presently. Examples of familial and kinship relations and bonds within the Chinese community, and the traditions associated with them, can be particularly seen in the case of ancestor

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worship, and the fact that there are specific holidays; Ching Ming in April and Chung Yeung in October, designated for the caring and maintenance of family and ancestral graves, highlights the important role that such bonds have within the Chinese community. Whilst this practice is less explicit within Australia, due to the fact that the ancestral graves are naturally located in another country, the fact that members of the Chinese diaspora frequently make trips back to their home countries during these two holidays, highlights the central role that familial bonds and relations continue to play within the SCC. Furthermore, the holidays of the Lunar New Year, and the Mid-Autumn Festival, are considered the most important celebrations within the Chinese community, largely due to the role that they play in uniting family members. As can be seen in the celebrations held by the SCC for these two holidays, with state-wide parades and celebrations, collaborations between different organisations and businesses to provide entertainment, such as Lion Dances, sponsorship, and merchandise, official speeches from people of importance, including but not limited to community leaders, such as local religious leaders, and area representatives of parliament, the celebration of these two holidays are considered major events within the SCC, and highlights their importance, as well as the importance of the values that they celebrate; namely that of familial bonds, to said community.

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9 This knowledge is passed down through word of mouth between members of the Chinese community, as common fact, and as such, is not necessarily written down.
10 This knowledge is passed down through word of mouth between members of the Chinese community, as common fact, and as such, is not necessarily written down.
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community leaders such as King Fong, to members of parliament such as Neville Wran, are invited to give speeches or provide messages at such events and celebrations, as mentioned earlier, can be said to provide these holidays with an almost-official statement of their importance\(^\text{12}\). This is due to the fact that, historically, such speeches made by such figures have largely been given at events considered to be of importance to the Australian or Sydney community at large, and the fact that the Lunar New Year, and Mid-Autumn Festival holidays are included in this list speaks of their level of importance. As such, the centring of familial relationships during two of the most important celebrations and holidays of the Chinese community at large, effectively demonstrates the importance of said relations within the Chinese community. Furthermore, given the high amount of involvement between members of the community, such as family outings and group and organisation participation in parades, which occur as a result of the celebrations, it can be said that, in addition to celebrating familial bonds and relations, the events themselves help to strengthen familial bonds and relations between members of the community\(^\text{13}\). However, in order to maintain these important bonds and relations, communication between members is key, and in a time before widely available Internet, SCC members relied on other methods to maintain such relations, namely that of news media.

News media have always played an important role in communities worldwide, from providing news to being a means of opinion expression, and the SCC was no exception. During this

\(^{12}\) King Fong, *Chinatown Message*, 2003, photograph from private collection of King Fong; *Standard Chartered Dragon Boat Races – Sydney 8th April 1984 Sunday*, 1984, programme booklet from private collection of King Fong, 2.

\(^{13}\) *Chinese New Year Parade 2004*, 2004, collection of photographs of the Chinese New Year parade from private collection of King Fong.
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period in time, members of the community relied on local Chinese newspapers, such as the Sing Tao (ST) and the ACD for both local news, and more importantly, news about events happening in their countries of origin, namely that of China and HK in general. Given that the Sydney branches of such newspapers worked in conjunction with the main headquarters of the newspapers overseas to report on events in their countries of origin, by using the reports made by overseas reporters, this suggests a high level of trust within this network of communication\(^\text{14}\). Furthermore, due to the time differences that existed between Sydney and countries such as HK and China, local Chinese newspapers were forced to adapt in order to deliver breaking news from the latter countries, even when the Sydney News Day had technically ended. One such method, was the printing of special edition pamphlets by the Sydney newspaper branches, which were then distributed to local businesses and community hubs, so that the news of importance could be shared directly with the community in the shortest time possible, rather than waiting for the next print day, thereby demonstrating the SCC’s demand for information and news\(^\text{15}\). This is best described in the testimony of participant 001, where the breaking news of Tiananmen Square was shared with SCC members in this manner\(^\text{16}\). This collaboration between the Sydney branches of Chinese-language newspapers, and community businesses and hubs also demonstrates a close working relationship between these three sectors, and that a network of communication existed between these sectors of the community. Furthermore, it can be said that delivering breaking news from the community members’ countries of origin was of importance, due to the fact that such unorthodox methods were employed to share them with the community. As such, it can be deduced that maintaining

\(^{14}\) Oral interview with Participant 001, 28 March 2017.

\(^{15}\) Oral interview with Participant 001, 28 March 2017.

\(^{16}\) Oral interview with Participant 001, 28 March 2017.
contact, or at the very least, knowledge of events occurring in their countries of origin was of importance to SCC members. Since it has already been established that familial and kinship bonds and relations, and their maintenance by SCC members was also of importance, remaining in contact or knowledgeable about events happening in their countries of origin, and how it would affect their relations there can be said to fall under this umbrella. Of course, collaborations between the three sectors of news media, business, and community hubs were not the only ways in which the local community was involved with the news media, as personal connections and relationships, especially those involving community leaders also played a large role in what was being discussed.

Chinese-language newspapers were first established by the local elites and community leaders of the SCC primarily for business purposes, an aspect which continues to this day\(^\text{17}\). Whilst the focus of Chinese-language newspapers in the early years of their establishment was on the provision of resources, such as shipping timetables for local merchants, local involvement with Chinese newspapers in the present, can be seen in the large number of ads bought by local Chinese businesses in the newspapers\(^\text{18}\). Furthermore several pages of Chinese newspapers were dedicated to announcements for community groups, much like a community board as demonstrated by page 1 of the ACD, which combined articles, advertisements, and announcements\(^\text{19}\). As such, Chinese-language newspapers helped to establish networks of communication between community groups,


\(^{19}\) *Australian Chinese Daily*, 5 June 1989, 1.
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such as local businesses and their audiences, as well as helping to strengthen these networks through the continued use of these newspapers as message boards and resources for the SCC; a legacy and continuation of their origins. As such, Chinese-language newspapers have long been rooted in the SCC, and whilst the original local newspapers established in the early days of the SCC are no longer in print, the relationship between the SCC and Chinese-language newspapers still stands to this day.

While local English-language papers, such as the Sydney Morning Herald (SMH) also reported on international events, Chinese newspapers tended to provide more in-depth and longer articles on said events. An example of this can be shown in the reporting of the initial occupation of Tiananmen Square in May 1989 by protestors to garner attention for their cause of democratisation by the SMH and the ACD; whilst the SMH is only restricted to small segments reported on the dates of May 18, 27, and 30, the ACD instead provided constant updates regarding the evolution of the protests from being largely student-based to encompassing more of the urban population in China, as well as protests of support occurring in neighbouring countries, such as Taiwan and HK. This is possibly due to the fact that SCC members would have paid close attention to international news;


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specifically news that was related to their countries of origin, as there was a larger chance that the events specified in such news would have had a direct impact on their lives. This is because they would have had family members in said countries where the events would affect them, as demonstrated by responses made by participants 005, 009, and 011 just to name a few.21 Additionally, seeing as a majority of the SCC at the time might not have been fluent in English, or understood enough English to confidently decipher English-language newspapers, Chinese-language newspapers served the important role of providing SCC members with information. This is of particular importance, as these Chinese-language newspapers thus served as a means of remaining up to date with current affairs that were happening there, and provided information regarding how such events might affect them and their family.22 Therefore, newspapers were a key part of the network used by SCC members to remain in contact with their countries of origin, and by providing information from sources that came from the countries of origin of the SCC, they essentially guaranteed a means of maintaining contact to their roots for members of said community. Additionally, by keeping up-to-date with current affairs, SCC members were able to engage in private dialogue and debate regarding these events with friends and family members from said country of origin; which helped to keep such cultural bonds, ties, and relationships strong despite distance. Furthermore, the fact that Chinese-language newspapers were printed in Chinese is also of particular importance. While it may appear that I am stating the obvious, reading one’s language, and ensuring that one could continue to read and understand one’s language, was another way of maintaining contact with one’s roots, and maintaining contact, links, and connections with family and loved ones who may not have been able to converse in English. Therefore, the importance of

21 Participant 005, 009, 011, and 013.

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newspapers, specifically Chinese-language newspapers to the SCC, even before the June 4 Incident cannot be understated.

Chinese-language newspapers were especially important during the 1980s, due to the fact that there was an increase in Anti-Chinese feeling. Whilst multiculturalism was supposedly the new frontier in Australia during this time in history, not all members of the wider community were supportive, as shown by the example of historian Geoffrey Blainey publicly voicing concerns about multiculturalism encouraging Asian immigration in 1984, concerns which were then broadcasted and discussed in English-language newspapers, TV programs, and even academic journals. The discussion of such views in mainstream Australian media at large, also resulted in increased overt racism to members of the Asian community, including the SCC, and as such, the 1980s can be said to be a time where there was an a sense of danger for SCC members. Therefore, Chinese-language newspapers would have also allowed SCC members to remain informed about current events and news, without having to be subject to the discussion of Anti-Chinese sentiment, and their communities within Australia, in addition to their regular roles as discussed above. Therefore, given the nature of Chinese-language newspapers as a means of spreading information throughout the community, and working as a community notice board, it can be said that Chinese-language newspapers helped to generate a feeling of safety for its readers during the context of the 1980s, by allowing them to remain in contact and informed about their local community in times of insecurity.

23 Fitzgerald, Red Tape Gold Scissors, 227.

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Before Tiananmen: Relations within the SCC

To say that the SCC was thoroughly united in the years prior to the June 4 Incident would be a gross simplification of the truly diverse community at the time. Totalling approximately 47,000, and spreading across various regions of Sydney, the SCC in the immediate years prior to 1989, was constantly growing under the context of Anti-Chinese feeling in the wider Sydney community, as discussed earlier. As such, SCC community groups, in addition to newspapers, provided a form of stability and safety for members of the community, an argument also made and supported by historians such as Walter Lalich. Community groups were largely based on dialects and home provinces, business, and religion. In the case of groups based upon home provinces, which varied greatly, it can be seen that familial and kinship bonds and relations also served to play a larger role within the community groups themselves, and reflected the culture of the SCC. As such, it can be said that relationships within the SCC, and between its members during this time were largely centred on specific community groups, and were largely limited to individual areas. Furthermore, the development of community groups and organisations within Sydney was gradual; changing from groups and firms primarily based on business interests, such as the Lin Yik Tong, and from tongxiang and huiguan; groups which emphasised the importance of provincial links based on one’s surname, to groups which were made to encompass wider sections of the community regardless of

25 Fitzgerald, Red Tape Gold Scissors, 227; Participant 002.

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background, such as religious groups. That is not to say however that rivalries didn’t exist. The prime example of this would be the creation of local Chinese-language newspapers by business owners, as mentioned earlier, with the newspapers having different political views depending on their owners and their interests, such as the Tung Wah News which reported on international events, and openly supported reformists in 1899 China, contrasted by the Chinese Australian Herald which was not as open in its support, which resulted in an unofficial Newspaper War between the two. However, as the SCC grew, such rivalries took a backseat to community growth, especially with the influx of ethnic Chinese refugees following the Vietnam War in the 1980s, and the restructuring of the SCC to integrate these newcomers, and the opening of China to the rest of the world, which increased business opportunities between the SCC and China. Therefore, community groups provided a form of stability to a community in flux during the 1980s.

The community groups:

Whilst much of the Chinese community had a common shared language, such as Mandarin or Cantonese depending on the country of origin, different dialects also existed within the


28 Kuo, Making Chinese Australia, 80-81, 85.

community, such as Shanghainese. As such, individual community groups that were centred on these dialects and languages, as well as their places of origin, were a means of establishing and strengthening relationships and bonds within the SCC, by allowing people from the same areas of origin to create a network of communication with one another. Additionally, such groups also made it easier for members of these provinces to maintain their cultural roots to their place of origin, specifically their language and dialects, with interactions usually conducted in the dialect of the province of origin. Since language is known to be an important part of one’s culture and heritage, in addition to the practicing of one’s language and dialects, as well as the ability to do so, these groups can be argued to have contributed to the maintenance of cultural ties by SCC members. The existence of such language-based groups is nothing new in the SCC, with tang (last name) groups; groups that were based around one’s clan, operating in the Sydney region since the creation of the SCC in Federation years, that aimed to provide assistance to fellow clan members30. During the 1980s, such tang groups were few and far in between, but the fact that the term remained widely known throughout the SCC, in addition to the fact that contemporary dialect and language groups continued to serve a similar basis, with a focus on dialect rather than clan, this aspect of history can be seen to have been continued. As a further form of continuation, these groups were an active community hub for information and news-sharing, with current events being translated into the spoken dialect, by members who were fluent in both languages, thereby increasing the audience and the spread of information.

Given that the first Chinese migrants to Australia had established themselves as merchants and businesspeople, the most prominent examples being the general and grocery store owners of

30 Fitzgerald, Red Tape, Gold Scissors, 72-73.
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the Gold Rush fields, and the fruit merchants of the early twentieth century, it seems natural that some of the more important community groups were based around business. First recorded in the 1890s, community groups representing the SCC’s business interests helped to provide networks of information and collaboration between the varying businesses that existed, with the Chinese Presbyterian Church focusing on establishing networks between fruit merchants in addition to its religious duties, and later groups such as the Chinese Business Chamber working to create stronger networks between affiliated businesses, and the countries they were doing business with, usually their countries of origin of China and HK\textsuperscript{31}. The networks created by these early business groups continued to be used by SCC business groups in the 1980s\textsuperscript{32}. As such, it can be said that these business networks served as a constant in terms of relationships between the SCC and the countries of China and HK, and that any action undertaken by businesses directly affected these relationships. Additionally, since a lot of local businesses in the SCC during its inception, and in the 1980s were family owned, the networks that existed between them can also be said to be an extension of the familial bonds and relations which were so important in the SCC\textsuperscript{33}. The concept of familial relations can be seen in the fact that many present days business groups use social networks in order to coordinate between workers and business groups\textsuperscript{34}. Whilst pre-existing rivalries took a backseat to

\textsuperscript{31} Kuo, \textit{Making Chinese Australia}, 41, 43-45.

\textsuperscript{32} This knowledge is passed down through word of mouth between members of the Chinese community, as common fact, and as such, is not necessarily written down.

\textsuperscript{33} Kuo, “The Case of the Sydney Chinese Commercial Elite”, 336.

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the economic opportunities provided by the economic opening of China in the 1980s, the fact that there was previously such a blatant expression of differences within the SCC between some of its largest business groups and leaders, as shown in the case of the Unofficial Newspaper War, demonstrates the variety of experiences and opinions within the community regarding its relationships with China, and that negative feelings towards China, and the Chinese government had always existed. Additionally, it demonstrates that divisions within the SCC have existed since its inception. As such, the relationship between business groups and the SCC is a long established one, with the leaders of the former usually holding some form of elite position in the latter, thereby centring the role of business leaders within the community. In conclusion, the SCC has primarily been business-focused rather than ideologically-focused, given the central role that businesses and business owners had within the SCC, with relationships with China being strongest amongst these groups due to business networks.

Religious groups have always been a centre in all communities, and the SCC was no exception. Early community hubs within said community were often based on religion, to help provide new migrants and established residents alike with connections to their countries of origin, as well as a place to worship and to maintain their religious and cultural practices. Additionally, such community hubs would have helped to ward off feelings of homesickness and nostalgia experienced by members of the community, and helped them to establish and strengthen relationships and connections with fellow members who were experiencing a similar plight, effectively creating a form of kinship bond between its members. Whilst there is a large variety in the types of religion practiced by SCC members, the religious groups centred on Buddhism and Christianity will be the main focus, given that they were the two largest religions practiced during the 1980s by the SCC,
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which continues in the present. Even within these two religions, there were still various subgroups and focuses, with some religious groups such as the BLIA Sydney focusing on spreading knowledge about Buddhism in the form of community activities, whilst others such as the Chinese Presbyterian Church focused on providing a place of worship for their practitioners. Places of religious worship, such as Churches and Buddhist temples, also provided a place of community for SCC members, and allowed them to strengthen relationships with fellow practitioners on the basis of Faith, and often helped to provide resources for members. Such examples would include the free English and Chinese language classes which were first taught by the Chinese Presbyterian Church, and by the 1980s, had expanded to all other religious groups, which were offered to members of all ages. By offering such a resource to members of the community, many of whom could not speak English as mentioned earlier, religious groups, amongst others, would have helped SCC members, especially newcomers, feel more at ease in navigating the English-speaking areas of the wider Sydney area, and helped to integrate them into the wider Sydney community at large. Interfaith activities and events also occurred during the 1980s, and helped to strengthen bonds and relations between the different religious groups, and also allowed for interfaith contact and collaboration. As such, religious groups not only helped to strengthen bonds between members within the SCC, but also with people outside of the community as well through interfaith activities, activities that have been occurring since the

37 Buddha’s Birthday & Multicultural Festival Sydney, project leader/ed. Andy Chin (Sydney: No. 1 Print Pty Ltd, 2015), 70.
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establishment of religious groups in Sydney, and were initially for business and social connections\(^{38}\). In turn, this helped to further integrate the SCC, or at the very least, its religious groups, into the deeper fabric of the Sydney community at large, and helped to foster relations and networks between the SCC and the non-Chinese communities. As such, religious community hubs were not only cultural and community centres for the SCC; they also provided access and networking to the wider Sydney community, more so than the other community groups mentioned in this section.

Interactions and collaborations between these community groups also occurred during important cultural events, and demonstrated the groups’ abilities to share information and communicate with one another. This is due to the fact that such events required cooperation between members of the community, and community groups, as a result of the large scale of the celebrations which increased with every year, as demonstrated by their promotion pamphlets, and which often spanned across different regions of Sydney, and occurred simultaneously, thereby requiring a great deal of logistical support between groups that were involved, to ensure that all the celebrations could occur without delay\(^{39}\). As such, it can be said that in addition to contributing to

\(^{38}\) Kuo, *Making Chinese Australia*, 63.

\(^{39}\) 2000 Year of the Dragon (pamphlet published by the City of Sydney, 2000); 2002 Chinese New Year Festival (pamphlet published by the City of Sydney, 2002), 12-23; 2003 Year of the Goat Chinese New Year Festival (pamphlet published by the City of Sydney, 2003), 12-14, 17-23; Year of the Monkey Chinese New Year Festival (pamphlet published by the City of Sydney, 2004), 14-27; 05 Year of the Rooster Chinese New Year Festival (pamphlet published by the City of Sydney, 2005), 10-20; CNY 15: Chinese New Year Festival (pamphlet published by the City of Sydney, 2015), 11, 19-22, 24, 26-59, 61; CNY 16: Chinese New Year Festival (pamphlet published by the City of Sydney, 2016), 13, 15-23, 25-27, 29-33, 35, 37-47, 49, 51, 53, 59, 65-67; Chinese New
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the maintenance of cultural and traditional ties to their members’ countries of origin, celebrations within the SCC also helped to cement relations between its groups. Additionally, the common use of Chinese-language newspapers to advertise and broadcast their activities, with different newspapers such as the ST and the ACD providing different options for members of the community with regards to whether they preferred news from their countries or local news respectively, also meant that all the major community groups of the SCC shared a common information network, one that made it easier for all the groups, as well as SCC members to contact, and remain in contact with one another, be it for future activities, or for events where collaboration was necessary.

To conclude, much of the SCC’s communal actions in the 1980s almost always involved the groups discussed above, due to the fact that they were the largest information and communication networks, and audiences and members within the community. Furthermore, all three groups involved some type of familial or kinship relation, which further highlights the importance of such relationships within the SCC. Additionally, the leaders of these communities were held in high esteem, not only by the members of the groups that they were part of, but also from the other organisations and people of the community that they had collaborated and worked with. An example would be King Fong, who was widely respected by SCC members, and was able to create networks of communication between members of different organisations solely, with his involvement in all the groups being the common factor, a fact which demonstrates that personal networks and connections also helped to create connections between SCC members. The role that


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these groups played, and the power that they represented in the SCC would come to play a large role in the months leading up to the June 4 Incident.

Reactions to Tiananmen Square: Before and After June 4

Prior to the events of the June 4 Incident, protests had been organised by university students in the Beijing area, following the death of Hu Yaobang, the former general secretary of the CCP, and a popular figure in student circles for his role as a political and economic reformer, in April of 1989, eventually leading to an occupation of Tiananmen Square in May 198941. The protests expressed the students’ concerns regarding government corruption in a time of social inequality and economic instability within China, the latter two factors being a major factor as to why the student movement eventually grew to include more of the urban community42. Furthermore, the fact that Mikhail Gorbachev was on a state visit in China in May of 1989, signalling the first such meeting between Russia and China in three decades, when the U.S. was also attempting to conduct business with China, during a time of tensions between the then-USSR and U.S., meant that there was a great deal of international press there, whose attention and broadcasts inevitably turned towards the efforts of the students, resulting in a sense of national shame and embarrassment for the Chinese government43. The fact that there had been student protests in the past regarding Hu Yaobang, such as in the years 1986 and 1987 when he was dismissed from service, demonstrates that there was


43 Segura, ‘Consequences in the Chinese Australian Literature, 67.
already feelings of dissent towards the Chinese government prior to 1989, specifically amongst the student populations in the Northern areas near Beijing. Additionally, during this period, there was hope of democratisation and political liberalisation within China following the death of Mao, and the opening up of China to the international community, with people from HK especially concerned, due to the fact that HK was due to be returned as a territory to China in 1997, and talks between the Chinese and British governments regarding this handover were coming to a close. Therefore, the protests in Tiananmen Square leading up to the June 4 Incident occurred at a time of uncertain geopolitical negotiations and tensions, was subject to wide media scrutiny, in addition to being broadcast to an international audience.

As such, the June 4 Incident was not an event which simply occurred overnight; protests against government corruption had been happening since May of the same year, and there had been student protests against the Chinese government in 1986 and 1987, which were widely covered by the Chinese-language press, including those read by the SCC. This is demonstrated by the ST reporting on the protests occurring in Tiananmen Square began as early as the 20th and 21st of May of the same year, and whilst they were not front page news at the time, they were still reported upon, and the information spread to SCC members. Simultaneously, the events were also reported on by English-language newspapers, which helped to widen the awareness of the issue around the Sydney community at large, even if such coverage was sporadic. It was around this time, that

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protests held by SCC members in support of the protestors began to simultaneously occur in the Sydney region, most often in the city areas. Whilst little records of these protests exist, as I only knew about them from participant interviews, it is known by SCC members, that they were held to show solidarity with the protestors, with an emphasis on the students, and that they were apparently organised by members of student groups which were geared towards Chinese students studying in Australia, or by Chinese students themselves, all of whom were seen as newcomers.48 This is supported by the fact that there was a petition organised by Sydney University students to support the Chinese democracy movement, the assembly of 3,000 Chinese students at Town Hall in solidarity with the Chinese Democracy Movement, and Chinese students as a united group in Australia appealing to support the Democratic Movement in China, during May.49 Furthermore, the fact that the groups that helped to organise these protests and demonstrations of support were also affiliated in some way with Chinese students, it can be said that they shared similar worldviews with the protestors, who used the language and symbols of freedom and democracy in their demonstrations50. As such, SCC members, particularly those who were affiliated with Chinese students, were supportive of the protestors’ efforts during this time. This may be due to the fact that at this point in time, it was mainly students that made up much of the initial protesting group at

48 Participant 006 and 020.


50 “Student groups defy bid to end democracy sit-in”, Sydney Morning Herald, 30 May 1989, 13.
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Tiananmen, and fellow students in Sydney felt a sense of solidarity with them. It should also be mentioned that some visiting students were able to become integrated into the wider SCC through their interactions with community welfare groups where they sought advice for living in Australia, or through a shared language and background, as was the case with students from Southern Chinese provinces and the dialect of Cantonese. Furthermore, Chinese students often had their own communities, and as such, were not as heavily integrated into the SCC at the time prior to the June 4 Incident. After the events that had occurred at June 4 were made known to the SCC, the biggest change can be seen in the increased turnouts to candlelight vigils, protests, and similar actions which also took a more political stance, condemning the Chinese government for their actions at Tiananmen Square, mirroring those in HK.

Contrastingly, more established SCC members, such as permanent residents, tended to be more neutral, due to a lack of coherent information about the events happening at Tiananmen Square. However, these members, along with visiting students, and people who were from the same provinces as the protestors; who shared an important sense of provincial kinship with the students, did support the efforts of the protestors at Tiananmen Square, and kept themselves updated with news regarding the events there. In the case of the latter group, an important distinction to make, is the fact that at the time, a majority of the Tiananmen Square protestors and the Chinese students in Sydney, were from the Northern Chinese provinces, whereas a majority of

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the established SCC were from the Southern Chinese provinces. As such, familial and kinship relations can be seen to play a role at the individual level, with SCC members who came from the same provinces and areas as the protestors, being more willing to support them, as demonstrated by the students. This distinction would also help to provide an explanation as to why members of the established SCC, who often came from the Southern Chinese provinces, were more neutral in their opinions regarding the protestors at Tiananmen Square; due to having no personal relationship with the protestors themselves, or familial and kinship relations with them. However, since it has been mentioned that some students from China had become integrated with the SCC, it can therefore be said that familial relations and kinship bonds did play a role in how people reacted to the initial protests occurring at Tiananmen Square.

Following the June 4 Incident, the largest change within SCC members who were also from China, can be seen in the behaviour of visiting overseas students from these regions. Whilst organisations built to provide support for this particular group had previously focused on issues such as working in Australia while studying, and other international student-related issues, in the aftermath, they worked to provide advice and resources on helping students remain in Australia, and petitioning the Australian government for protection in the form of permanent and extended visas. As argued by Jia, students and student groups took an active role, engaging in “activism of a different kind”: the right of foreign students to remain in another country.

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57 Jia, *Chinese Activism of a Different Kind*, 163, 165-169.

58 Jia, *Chinese Activism of a Different Kind*, 2.
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Additionally, given that people found out about the initial protests through some form of news media, such as TV/radio, and newspapers, it can be established that the Chinese-language news media played a large role in bringing the events of Tiananmen Square to the attention of the SCC at large. This can be seen in the reports made by widely-read Chinese-language newspapers such as the ST, which published almost daily reports on the events occurring at Tiananmen Square, and kept readers informed on the events occurring in China in the aftermath, with reports such as “At One am on 4 June, the massacre was commenced after a flare was launched.” While not everyone who was aware of the Tiananmen Square protests went to a protest in Sydney to show their overt support, SCC members were at least aware that this was occurring in what was for some, their country of origin, and for others, a country whose actions would have massive effects on their own country of origin, namely that of HK.

The fact that HK was nearing the end of its lease as a territory to the British government, and was due to be returned to China, was another contributing factor as to why there was such a great deal of attention on these protests from SCC members, due to the fact that a majority of the population was made up of HK immigrants during this time. Since the language of democratic

59 See Appendix B.

60 “At One am on 4 June, the massacre was commenced after a flare was launched. Students witnessed the army cleaning the square. Audio recording was taken to record the whole process of massacre”, Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition), 12 June 1989, 1; “There was a ‘black list’ and searching and arresting of the protesting people, it may involve a few million people. In Shanghai, a group so called the Chinese Youth Democracy Party was broken up by the government”, Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition), 13 June 1989, 1; “Tanks drove through the tents with fire burner to burn down the tents. Injured people cannot escape and were burnt”, Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition), 13 June 1989, 1.
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freedom was widely utilised by the protestors in Tiananmen Square, there was a great deal of concern over how China’s reactions to these protestors would mean for HK, which had a democratic political system in comparison to China, and what that might mean for said system and its citizens when HK was returned as a territory to China. Since it has already been established that maintaining familial bonds and relations with family still in their home countries was of great importance to SCC members, it would therefore make sense that a great deal of attention was paid to the events occurring in Tiananmen Square by SCC members, especially those who came from HK, and who maintained contact with their familial relations there. The Australian census during this period did not provide different categories for the exact countries of origin for SCC members, instead grouping them together, thereby making it difficult to find accurate numbers regarding the home countries of different members of the community, as demonstrated by the 1986 census. However, according to testimony from SCC members themselves, the community was comprised largely of immigrants from Hong Kong during this time period. As such, the important context of the handover of HK to China also played a large role in garnering attention from SCC members towards the events occurring in Tiananmen Square. The fact that there were protests in HK following the June 4 Incident, which served to unite the population there, supports the argument that the actions of the Chinese government would directly affect its relationship with HK. Additionally, these protests, as well as the ones occurring there pre-June 4 Incident, received extensive coverage from Chinese-language newspapers read by SCC members, and as such, would eventually come to play a role in the actions

63 “After the blood washing in Beijing, Hong Kong people have to unite together for the difficult time”, Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition), 14 June 1989, 2.
undertaken by the community, which will be discussed in the next chapter⁶⁴. Furthermore, continued coverage of these events meant that there was a constant narrative running regarding the protests, the importance of which will also be examined in later chapters.

To conclude, there was already a great deal of attention being paid towards the events happening in Tiananmen Square long before the events of June 4, courtesy of both Chinese-language and English-language newspapers reporting on the events occurring there, with vigils and protests in support of the protestors being held by Chinese students, who at this point, were semi-integrated with SCC members through their interactions with community welfare groups. While these events did not garner a high number of participants, especially when compared with later events, they, along with daily updates and reports in Chinese-language newspapers, did demonstrate that there was an acute amount of knowledge regarding the incidents occurring at Tiananmen Square during this period being spread throughout the community, and that there was initial support for them on an individual basis. To further expand on this point, familial and kinship relations can also be seen to play a role, at least on the individual level, with SCC members who were from the same provinces and areas as the Tiananmen Square protestors being more willing to support them.

⁶⁴ “After the blood washing in Beijing, Hong Kong people have to unite together for the difficult time”, Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition), 14 June 1989, 2; “Response to the Global Chinese Democracy Movement in Hong Kong: 5 million people participate”, Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition), 30 May 1989, 3.
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Chapter two: Responses of the SCC and the Rise of the Chinese students

The SCC is not a monolith, and one person’s views do not represent that of their whole demographic. As stated by Gary Emanuel, oral history is a production of history itself, and a form of communication between members of the community themselves, which is why I have elected to use oral history for this thesis, because what better method to learn about the history of the SCC than through communication with its own members? Given the fact that this chapter will be focused on examining the accounts given by SCC members about their experiences regarding the June 4 Incident, and will contain individual cases, I would like to provide a brief background on the collection of this information. Based on these responses, I will argue that there appeared to be a short-term legacy of unification and strengthening within the SCC in the immediate aftermath of the June 4 Incident, and that changes did occur. Also, to reiterate, I will argue that Chinese-language newspapers played a large role in helping to establish this short-term legacy.

Questionnaires were completed by fifty-two SCC members, all of whom had been in Sydney prior to the events of the June 4 Incident, with ages ranging from 40-80, and countries of origin including: China, HK, Fiji, and Vietnam. Additionally, six individuals gave oral interviews expanding on their answers. All participants completed the questionnaires voluntarily, receiving no form of payment. In terms of demographics, the participant pool was varied in terms of age, gender, time spent living in Sydney, as well as places of residence, both currently, and during the 1989. The details provided by participants will be identified with numbers instead of names, due to privacy issues, and the fact that most participants did not wish to be identified. For reference, the questions asked will

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be provided in Appendix A, statistics of participants’ responses to questions four to eight will be provided in Appendix B, and examples of advertisements, notices, and political cartoons will be provided in Appendix C. Translations of newspaper article content will be provided in the footnotes, in the form of quotes, as requested by Mark McKenna.

Immediate emotions:

According to a study conducted by Sandra C. Pavio and Antonio Pascual-Leone, which examined the reactions of trauma survivors within a communal setting, immediate feelings and emotions after the event are often complex66. Whilst participants did not directly experience the violence of the June 4 Incident themselves, their immediate feelings largely matched those experienced by the participants in the study, with an overwhelming amount of responses stating their initial feelings were those of sadness and concern, in addition to simultaneous feelings such as, but not limited to, compassion and anger67. According to several participants, the feeling of concern was collectively experienced by the SCC68. This may be due to the fact that much of the SCC had been following, and were aware of the protests that had been happening in Tiananmen Square since May of the same year, courtesy of daily newspaper reports, as discussed earlier, which coincidentally, was also how a majority of the community initially found out about the event69. Whilst SCC members, or rather, those who were


67 See Appendix B.

68 Participant 020 and 021.

69 See Appendix B.
more established in the Sydney region, had been neutral in their responses to the protests occurring in Tiananmen Square due to conflicting reports, the fact that they still felt compassion and concern for protestors demonstrates that a personal, or familial relationship, or a lack thereof, did not appear to be a contributing factor in this community-wide feeling, which may have contributed to a sense of Chinese-ness that was felt by the community at the time, due to the context of Anti-Chinese feeling as mentioned in the previous chapter. Additionally, some participants also expressed feelings of anger and compassion, but the experiencing of such emotions did not appear to play a role in whether or not participants took part in any actions held in protest of the Chinese government’s actions at Tiananmen Square. Rather, it appeared that it was a participant’s own personal background which influenced whether or not they took part in any action whatsoever, a statement which was reiterated by participant 020. In an interesting case where personal background ended up playing a large role, participants who reported feeling fear in the aftermath of the June 4 Incident, were: students from China studying in Australia at the time, had family still in China or HK, or had had personally experienced or were exposed to any form of Communist governance, as demonstrated by participants 024, 025, and 027, just to name a few. This could be due to the fact that there had been student involvement in Australian events of solidarity with the protestors at the Tiananmen Square prior to the June 4 Incident, as well as the fact that many of the protestors at Tiananmen Square, and who were affected by the June 4 Incident, were also students.

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70 Participant 021.

71 See Appendix B.


73 Participants 024, 025, 027, 029, 034, 044, and 050.
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themselves. As such, it could be said that being a student from China, and seeing the acts committed against fellow students during the June 4 Incident was a contributing factor to feelings of fear felt by participants in the immediate aftermath of the June 4 Incident. Furthermore, several participants reported that as a result of the June 4 Incident, that they could no longer trust the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), or people who were Communists, when they had previously been neutral before. While only a minority of participants reported this feeling of distrust, it demonstrates that the actions undertaken by the Chinese government during the June 4 Incident had a direct effect on how they were perceived by members of overseas Chinese communities, including that of the SCC. Additionally, one participant, who had grown up in China under Communist rule stated that the events of the June 4 Incident were only a confirmation of their fears about the CCP. This demonstrates that these feelings of distrust had existed within the SCC long before the protests at Tiananmen Square and the June 4 Incident, and that the context of growing up under Communist rule appeared to have an effect on people’s reactions to the June 4 Incident, at least in this particular case. Incidentally, the fact that participants who gave such statements all came from a background of having grown up, or having directly experienced life under some form of Communist government, and therefore had some form of relationship with Communists, further supports this statement, as seen by participants 034, and 035. The fact that newspapers reporting on the June 4 Incident and its aftermath, such as the ACD and ST, as well as notices and statements made by community groups in said newspapers, also specified the Communist aspect of the Chinese

74 Lim, The People’s Republic of Amnesia, 32-36.

75 Participants 001, 005, 030, 034, and 038.

76 Participant 037.

77 Participant 034 and 035.
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government demonstrates that the feeling of mistrust was community-wide and connected specifically to the governing party in China during this point in time. This is of particular importance given prior to the June 4 Incident, the HK-based ST had a pro-British government stance, and the Sydney-based ACD served to strengthen relations between China and Australia. The fact that even the ACD took to criticising China during this period, in direct contrast to its publication values demonstrates the mistrust generated by the June 4 Incident regarding the CCP in the SCC.

Additionally, it should be noted that other participants from similar backgrounds gave differing statements, and expressed different opinions. As stated before, the SCC is not a monolith, and the exploration of the reasons behind differences in beliefs relating to the June 4 Incident is important to discussion regarding the effects of this event on the SCC. On closer examination, it can be seen that all the participants who listed a feeling of distrust in Communist governments, listed a confirmation of their distrust, or became concerned about China, came from a wide variety of backgrounds. Furthermore, as seen in the response of participant 035, who moved to Australia after growing up under a Communist government in a time of conflict, in this case, that of China, their concern and distrust of Communist governments were directly related to their personal experiences, and concern for their family and their livelihood. This can be seen in the fact that they listed “their family’s safety and wellbeing” as a reason for moving from their home country; which


79 Participant 023, 030, 033, 034, 035, 039, 051, and 052.

80 Participant 035.
was still under the governance of a Communist government, to Australia, which may help to explain why the June 4 Incident had such a deep negative impact on this participant; given that they already held negative views of Communist governments, the actions of the Chinese government during the June 4 Incident would have simply been a confirmation of these views. Alternatively, as seen in the responses of people who came from similar backgrounds and countries, but did not provide similar responses, highlights the fact that there was no monolithic feeling regarding the Chinese Communist Government in the years following the June 4 Incident. This can be best seen in the responses of participant 006 and 045, both of whom stated that they still “had hope for China”, and the CCP.81

As can be seen in this breakdown between the various responses to the June 4 Incident, this gives support to the statement that relationships and personal experiences only played a role in the individual level, and that any collective action regarding the June 4 Incident was not affected by them. This is due to the fact that, despite relatively similar backgrounds between several of the participants, instead of a community-wide general opinion, there was instead a variety of responses, which suggests that on an individual level, personal experiences and relationships played a relatively heavy role. Therefore, the variety of responses establishes the fact that the SCC was not a monolith of responses regarding the June 4 Incident, and had never had a monolithic reaction or response regarding the June 4 Incident, or how the Chinese government’s actions and how it affected the SCC as a whole. However, despite all of this, there was a general feeling of sadness and concern in relation to the June 4 Incident, one that was also shared by the Australian community at large, which demonstrates that a personal or familial bond or relation was not necessary for the generation of these specific emotions.

81 Participant 006 and 045.
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**Action Undertaken:**

Like their counterparts in HK, which received plentiful coverage by international media given its close proximity to China, and the fact that it was still a British territory, SCC members helped to organise protests and vigils in support of the students post-June 4 Incident in the style of the ones in HK. The styling of these protests after those in HK may be due to Chinese-language newspapers reporting on events in HK, in addition to local events surrounding the aftermath of the June 4 Incident, as demonstrated by the ACD, thereby providing information and models of protests to the SCC. As such, the protests in HK, and their newspaper coverage can be said to have played a role in influencing those in Australia. Additionally, protests and vigils held prior to the June 4 Incident itself, as discussed earlier, may have been another source of inspiration. Whilst a majority of participants stated that they did not attend any protests, vigils, or similar community actions regarding the June 4 Incident, possibly due to a lack of familial or kinship bond and relation to the protestors at Tiananmen Square, hundreds, perhaps thousands of others did, and these events were reported upon by Chinese-language newspapers, or advertised in them. An example would be page 1 of the 5 June 1989 ACD, with a notice informing its readers about a candlelight vigil. Furthermore, members of the local press, as stated in the oral interview of Participant 001, also helped to spread.

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82 “Please attend the memorial service at 2pm today at Town Hall Square”, *Australian Chinese Daily*, 6 June 1989, 1; “The memorial activities were lead in the capital cities of Australia”, *Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition)*, 5 July 1989, 1.

83 “A Million people in Hong Kong assemble at the Happy Valley Race Course for memorial services”, *Australian Chinese Daily*, 6 June 1989, 15.

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information and report on local events happening in the SCC in response to the June 4 Incident. As such, it can be said that local Chinese-language newspapers, and their reporters, helped to provide information about events occurring in the SCC regarding the June 4 Incident, as well as information regarding the aftermath of the June 4 Incident, and thus, played an important role as the centre of the SCC network. In contrast to earlier protests and vigils held prior to the June 4 Incident, these protests and vigils took a more political tone; criticising the actions of the Chinese government, whereas before, they had merely been to show solidarity with the protestors’ actions. Such examples include: a staged walk-out of 10,000 students in protest of the Chinese government, and a week-long strike by Chinese students. Additionally, such actions of solidarity were not solely linked to the SCC, with members of the wider Sydney community taking part, such as the examples of: Bob Hawke writing a letter to the Chinese Prime Minister asking him to stop the killing, and the Australian Student Union “pledging their support for Chinese students”. Furthermore, it should be noted that over 2,000 people placed advertisements in the ACD and ST condemning the actions at

86 “The memorial activities were held in the capital cities of Australia. The torch resembling democracy flamed people’s spirit. The force to oppose Communist Party becomes stronger”, Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition), 5 July 1989, 1.
Tiananmen Square within ten days, with examples including that of the ad placed by Yong Jun Hai and Li Ring, amongst many others\textsuperscript{89}. Therefore, it can be said that the demonstration of solidarity with the protestors at Tiananmen Square, as well as Chinese students in Sydney, was an act that was shared by the entire national community, and therefore, can be said to have united them in the immediate aftermath.

As mentioned earlier, a majority of participants did not attend any demonstrations, vigils, or rallies, nor were these demonstrations, vigils, and rallies officially organised by community groups discussed earlier. Given that the participation of community groups, organisations, and leaders; particularly the three largest groups as defined in the previous chapter, was a sign of communal participation and action, it can be said that the lack of such participation indicated a lack of overall group action in the SCC in relation to the June 4 Incident. This is due to the fact that these groups, and their leaders, were a unifying force within the SCC, and the Sydney community at large, and therefore, were highly influential not just in regards to official business affairs, but also in helping to shape public opinion, much like newspapers. While some of their members may have participated in actions following the June 4 Incident, the fact that these community groups did not get officially involved, can be said to be an indication of a lack of official endorsement for the actions. However, as demonstrated by the joint statement made by several community groups in the SCC, including the NSW Chinese Chamber of Commerce, and MPs in the ACD, such as Phung Ngo, which “condemn[ed]...

\textsuperscript{89} “More than 2,000 people put their advertising to condemn within 10 days”, \textit{Australian Chinese Daily}, 15 June 1989, 2.; “Condemn Beijing government’s use of army in Tiananmen Square to massacre the people.”, \textit{Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition)}, 14 June 1989, 18.; “Protest the Massacre”, \textit{Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition)}, 26 June 1989, 12; See Appendix C.
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the actions Chinese Communist government...hope[d] Australian Chinese unite to fulfil full democratic freedom in New China... strongly urge[ed] Minister Bob Hawke...to stop Chinese Communist violence”, it can be said that community groups participated in other forms of action to condemn the actions committed by the Chinese Communist Government during the June 4 Incident90. The fact that a variety of groups signed this joint statement in a widely read Chinese-language newspaper, showed that community groups at large did show support for those affected by the June 4 Incident. Additionally, the collective language used in this joint statement also spoke of unity within the SCC, demonstrating that there was a belief that unity was important, and was a goal, at least in the short-term91. As such, given the involvement of community groups, community leaders, and local MPs in at least condemning the actions of the Chinese Communist government, it can be said that while there was no collective action in terms of protests and the like, there was an

90 “We [Community groups] condemn the actions of the Chinese government on the 3rd of June and hope people around the world, especially Chinese, stop Chinese Communist Party fascist violence, and hope Australian Chinese unite to fulfil peaceful democratic freedom in new China, and work hard for this cause. We strongly request Bob Hawke to urge leaders of all other countries to stop Chinese Communist violence. If Chinese Communist government continues their massacre of their citizens, we request the Australian government enact sanctions on Chinese communist government.” Australian Chinese Daily, 6 June 1989, 7.
91 “We [Community groups] condemn the actions of the Chinese government on the 3rd of June and hope people around the world, especially Chinese, stop Chinese Communist Party fascist violence, and hope Australian Chinese unite to fulfil peaceful democratic freedom in new China, and work hard for this cause. We strongly request Bob Hawke to urge leaders of all other countries to stop Chinese Communist violence. If Chinese Communist government continues their massacre of their citizens, we request the Australian government enact sanctions on Chinese communist government.” Australian Chinese Daily, 6 June 1989, 7.
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official collective condemnation. This is due to the fact that the participation of figures of importance and community leaders and businesses helped to grant an official status to events, as demonstrated by the example of the New Year festivals last chapter. Additionally, some groups, such as the Sydney Chinese Methodist Church, and the University of Sydney did hold prayers and ceremonies for the victims of the June 4 Incident, which shows that different groups may have shown their support in different ways, that did not include participating in protests or similar activities. The fact that some religious groups held ceremonies for the victims can even be said to be a continuation of previous times, with religious groups providing spiritual guidance, rather than taking part in actions such as protests and rallies.

Specifically, the three largest community groups focused their efforts on assisting Chinese students who were studying in Australia at the time with the provision of advice and resources, which will be discussed later. Therefore, it can be stated that those who did attend the rallies, demonstrations, and vigils for the protestors at Tiananmen Square were those who had individual kinship and familial relations to them; such as being from the same area or province, or students, who directly empathised with their plight and who came from similar backgrounds. Additionally, what strengthening and unification that did occur within the SCC as a result of the June 4 Incident during this time period, would have been borne out of the collective efforts of community groups and members to assist Chinese students in staying in Australia, and integrating into the community, all of which was assisted by the Australian Government taking “special measures”, and eventually

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passing legislation granting visa extensions to the students. This is due to the fact that assisting Chinese students appeared to be the sole activity in relation to the June 4 Incident which involved primary action from a majority of the community groups, and SCC members.

A total number of 11 participants took any action after the events of the June 4 Incident, and I would like to focus on the activities that they undertook, and how their actions highlighted the fact that they were based on individual choices. In contrast, when I will be discussing community actions at large, I will be demonstrating that they were not based on individual choices. In the number of participants that did take action, it can be seen that a majority of them participated in “Other Actions”, rather than say, attending a protest, rally or demonstration to condemn the actions of the Chinese government there.

Regarding protests, vigils, and rallies, a point of debate that appeared in the statements of participants, was their exact number. According to participant 006’s oral interview, such activities were plentiful and widely covered by news media, with many SCC members attending them to show their support. The fact that there were notices in popular Chinese-language newspapers, such as the ACD, providing information about these activities provides support to this statement. Additionally, participant 006 also mentioned attending a memorial service by SCC members for the victims of the June 4 Incident at Sydney Town Hall, an event that was reported on by the ACD and


94 Oral interview with Participants 005 and 006, 4 June 2017.
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ST, thus showing that such events did occur and received wide coverage\(^95\). Furthermore, fundraising activities were also listed by participants as ways in which SCC members could show their support, without having to participate in any physical action such as a march\(^96\). However, there were contrasting statements, such as that of participant 041, who stated that such actions were few and far in between, and were only organised by a small group of Chinese students, who used these protests, rallies, and marches to raise awareness about their situation and desire to remain in Australia\(^97\). Additionally, such statements also stated that these protests, rallies, and marches ended after the granting of visas, and visa extensions to Chinese students by Prime Minister Hawke, a statement which is supported by Jia, who studied the aftermath of the June 4 Incident in regards to the Chinese students studying in Australia\(^98\). In light of these contrasting statements however, it should once again be emphasised that a majority of participants did not take part in any action, and therefore, may have been unaware of the true magnitude of the protests, rallies, and marches that did occur. Additionally, both statements are supported by evidence, from contemporary newspapers, to peer-reviewed studies, which suggests that both are true to certain extents. As such, I would like to suggest that both statements were true in different times, with the first statement about a large number of protests, rallies, and marches, with wide coverage, being true in the immediate aftermath of the June 4 Incident, and the latter statement being true following the focus

\(^95\) "Chinese living in Sydney will have an assembly at 2pm today for memorial service held at Town Hall Square", *Australian Chinese Daily*, 7 June 1989, 16.; "Photos taken at the memorial service", *Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition)*, 7 June 1989, 3.

\(^96\) Participant 022.


\(^98\) Jia, *Chinese Activism of a Different Kind*, p. 163, 207.
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of the June 4 Incident shifting from the events that occurred there, to the plight and experiences of Chinese students studying in Australia.

To conclude, whilst a majority of participants stated that they did not take any action following the June 4 Incident, this was to be expected, as previous protests and actions undertaken by the SCC at large, were when they, or those they had familial and kinship bonds and relations with, were directly affected. An example of this would be the Boycott of Japanese products during World War II, when much of China and its territories was being occupied by, and when Australia was under threat from Japanese forces; in this case, the SCC, and their family and relations in China, as well as their national pride were being directly threatened. However, given the fact that protests, rallies, and marches did occur despite the lack of familial bonds and relations, and were attended by SCC members, in addition to fundraising efforts, it can be said that there was concern regarding the June 4 Incident amongst SCC members. This is further strengthened by the official statements of condemnation made in joint statements by several community groups and leaders. Furthermore, it can also be argued that there was a short-term strengthening and unification between these members, given the fact that aforementioned official statements, joint statements, and


100 “We strongly condemn the Chinese government’s usage of troops to press the student movement and resulted in bloodshed. We strongly call upon the Chinese leaders to deal with the Democracy Movement peacefully and stop the massacre of students”, Australian Chinese Daily, 6 June 1989, 8.
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advertisements highlighted unity within the SCC as important in regards to condemning the actions of the Chinese Communist Government at Tiananmen Square.\(^{101}\)

**Centring the Students:**

At the time of the June 4 Incident, there were approximately 20,000-27,000 Chinese students studying in Australia on temporary visas, and it was on them that the spotlight eventually shone.\(^{102}\)

As seen in the newspaper articles of the time, much of the focus regarding Tiananmen Square in Australia, was based around the plight and fate of the students already studying here, and the efforts of the SCC, and eventually, the Australian government, to provide assistance to those affected by the June 4 Incident were no different.\(^{103}\) While community groups remained largely neutral in their official stances, by not attending rallies, demonstrations, or vigils as a collective, they instead provided welfare services, resources, and assistance to Chinese students looking to remain in Australia, or wrote notices in newspapers.\(^{104}\) Groups that did so often had a pre-existing reputation for providing such services, and included organisations such as the Chinese Migrant Welfare Association, and the Chinese Australian Services Society (CASS), all of which provided aid to

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\(^{103}\) “Australian government allow students to extend their stay”, *Australian Chinese Daily*, 15 June 1989, 1.

\(^{104}\) Participant 020.
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The efforts of the SCC in assisting the students, was also a sentiment shared by the wider Sydney community, and a continuation of the previous acts of religious groups which provided aid to members of the community, as demonstrated by the newspaper articles, which focused on the plight of the Chinese students studying in Australia, and ways to assist them, as discussed earlier, as well as the issues they faced from the wider Sydney community, namely claims of “special treatment” by other ethnic groups. Furthermore, as discussed by Jia, it was in newspapers, both Chinese-language and English-language, that conversations regarding the plight of the Chinese students took place, and where their efforts, and those of the SCC were most visible. As such, the role of newspapers acting as a source of information for the entire Sydney community, in addition to the SCC cannot be understated in this case. In addition to providing information about protests, vigils, and rallies, as demonstrated by participant 001, as well as reports regarding events happening in China as a result of the June 4 Incident, Chinese-language newspapers also worked to provide information about potential resources for Chinese students, as can be demonstrated in the ads conveniently situated next to articles regarding the June 4 Incident, such as the example of the


106 “The Head of Department of Immigration said the special treatment of Chinese citizens attracts the other ethnic communities’ jealousy”, *Australian Chinese Daily*, 1 and 2 July 1989, 12; “Kurdish people protest due to Australian Government giving special treatment to Chinese students. They said that they were waiting for two years, but the Government still didn’t give approval for their refugee status”, *Australian Chinese Daily*, 21 June 1989, 12; “Immigration Department said there were 10,000 people asking for application forms”, *Australian Chinese Daily*, 20 June 1989, 1.

107 Jia, *Chinese Activism of a Different Kind*, 151.
immigration lawyer, and scholarships for students in the ACD\textsuperscript{108}. This is significant due to the fact that the ACD was the newspaper that was most widely read by Chinese students, and demonstrates that the ACD knew who their audience was, and how to best assist them after the June 4 Incident\textsuperscript{109}. As such, even ads served a role in the immediate aftermath of the June 4 Incident, by helping to spread word about resources to SCC members. The fact that political cartoons were drawn in issues of the ACD, also allowed an outlet for artists to criticise the actions of the Chinese government during the June 4 Incident, featuring prominent images taken at Tiananmen Square, namely that of tanks and soldiers, although it is unknown if the artists were local\textsuperscript{110}. Contrastingy, English-language newspapers tended to dramatise the events, and focused on the impact of these events on international politics, rather than offering assistance\textsuperscript{111}.

It is interesting to note that the protection and assistance of students in the SCC took on the language of humanity and being humane, rather than that of a political stance or a stance based upon familial and kinship bonds, in contrast to the statements which condemned the actions of the Chinese government at Tiananmen Square\textsuperscript{112}. As such, it can be said that familial bonds and relations did not appear to play as large a role in this specific example, which was unexpected from a

\textsuperscript{108} Australian Chinese Daily, 12 June 1989, 3; Australian Chinese Daily, 22 June 1989, 11.

\textsuperscript{109} Jia, Chinese Activism of a Different Kind, 30.


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community that was built on familial bonds and relations, as has been discussed repeatedly. However, given the fact that much of the established SCC, and coincidentally, the leaders of the community groups which played a role in assisting students, did not share a familial relation or bond with them, it is perhaps understandable that they went with a humanitarian approach, rather than a bond that did not exist between themselves and the students. This is largely due to the fact that, as mentioned in the previous chapter, much of the SCC that did originally come from China, were from the Southern China provinces, as opposed to the students, both in Tiananmen Square, and in Australia, who tended to come from the Northern areas. To put it shortly, while some Chinese students integrated into the community through earlier interactions with SCC members, such as a shared language, or using services offered by community groups, the vast majority did not become widely integrated with the community until after the June 4 Incident, where they worked together with community groups which provided welfare, resources, and services to them. Conversations on providing assistance and welfare to students, as well as discussions between the leaders of the SCC and the Department of Immigration on how to best allow them to stay, often focused on: granting safety to students, and the risks that students faced if they returned to China, due to the fact that some of them had attended pre-June 4 Incident protests and demonstrations in support of the protestors. Furthermore, the Australian Government put special emphasis on the fact that it was Chinese students being affected by the June 4 Incident, by pointing out that the termination of their

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studies in Australia would make it difficult for visa extensions to be granted to them\textsuperscript{116}. Additionally, forums were also organised by community groups to help provide information to students, and to keep them updated in regards to their visa status in Australia\textsuperscript{117}. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the actions of community leaders helped to influence public opinion, due to the fact that they were held in high esteem by all SCC members, and this was the case here. The fact that community leaders, and community group leaders were specifically contacted by members of the Department of Immigration about their thoughts in assisting the students, demonstrates the fact that at this point in time; after the June 4 Incident, Chinese students were considered part of the SCC, and that the SCC in turn, cared enough for their well-being to send their community leaders to discuss their welfare on their behalf\textsuperscript{118}. As such, given the fact that multiple community groups and organisations were involved in providing assistance, welfare, resources, and support to people who were seen to be affected by the June 4 Incident, relationships and bonds between these organisations, and the people involved in these organisations were strengthened. The fact that SCC members, and the students also shared a communications network courtesy of Chinese-language newspapers, also helped to strengthen these bonds and relationships during this period. Given that intergroup and inter-organisation teamwork and cooperation had helped to strengthen relations between community groups prior to the June 4 Incident, it would be safe to assume, that intergroup

\textsuperscript{116} "Australian Government’s Department of Immigration remind Chinese students if they give up their studies, they will be difficult to set the extension of stay", \textit{Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition)}, 28 June 1989, 1.

\textsuperscript{117} "More than 1,000 people attend the forum held at Australian Chinese Community Association", \textit{Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition)}, 14 June 1989, 20.

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and inter-organisation teamwork and cooperation after the June 4 Incident would have the same effect as well.

Certainly, relations and bonds between the Chinese students and organisations within the SCC grew stronger during this time period, and was based largely on the fact that said organisations were assisting them in staying in Australia as a result of the June 4 Incident. Therefore, it can be said that their entire relationship was premised on the Chinese students staying in Australia as a result of the June 4 Incident, rather than reacting to the June 4 Incident itself. That is not to say that the aftermath of the June 4 Incident did not colour some of the actions of the students, only that much of their efforts were based around them trying to stay in Australia, and gaining resources, advice, and media attention from the SCC to do so. However, it should be noted that Chinese students who worked with the SCC in order to stay in Australia; indeed all of the Chinese students in Australia during the time of the June 4 Incident, were given a specific term by members the SCC, *si nian lin ju*, which translates roughly into four year temporary stayers. This term and reference for the students was a direct reference to the fact that their visa extensions had been collectively increased for four years, and signalled the rise of a new group within the SCC, as well as the students’ integration into the community. By creating a new term for the students, one that was based entirely on the June 4 Incident, the SCC inevitably tied their identity to the June 4 Incident. The fact that Chinese students were given a specific identity by SCC members, one which continues to be used by SCC members today, is evidence of a semi-successful integration of the students into the

119 Jia, *Chinese Activism of a Different Kind*, 207.

120 This knowledge is passed down through word of mouth between members of the Chinese community, as common fact, and as such, is not necessarily written down.
community; one that was not based on overall familial relations and bonds. Furthermore, the fact that this was the survival narrative and focus of newspapers, both English and Chinese-language newspapers alike shows that the plight of the students was considered the most important in the eyes of Australia, and the SCC.

**Migration to Australia:**

Of the fifty-two people who participated, a majority of thirty-five stated that they did not apply for their family or for their relatives to migrate to Australia in the aftermath of the June 4 Incident. While this may seem odd at first, given the importance of familial bonds and relations within the Chinese community at large, and the fact that thirteen participants listed their country of origin as China, where the June 4 Incident took place, there are multiple reasons for this. The same participants who had answered no to the question of whether or not they applied for their families to migrate to Australia, answered as such, due to the fact that their relatives were already in Australia at the time of the June 4 Incident\(^\text{121}\). Furthermore, just because the SCC members who participated in this study stated that they did not apply for their families to migrate to Australia, did not mean that there was no migration whatsoever to Australia in the aftermath of the June 4 Incident. This can be seen in articles published in ST, which states that a large number of HK residents applied to migrate to overseas countries, namely Canada and Australia, because of concerns borne out of the June 4 Incident, and what that would mean for HK when it was returned as a territory to China in 1997, and is further backed up by the historian Ian Burnley\(^\text{122}\). As such,

\(^{121}\) Participants 017 and 018.

\(^{122}\) “The June 4 Incident pushes Hong Kong residents’ urgent desire for migration. Australian government has to send three more officials to help the Australian Counsel to handle the application”, *Sing Tao Jih Pao*
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while a majority of participants did not apply for their relatives to migrate to Australia, mass migration to Australia did occur as a result of the June 4 Incident, and the insecurities it raised regarding HK’s fate as a territory, as demonstrated by a rise by 163.4% in the HK-born Sydney population

Additionally, the fact that so few of the participants did apply for their families to migrate to Australia following the June 4 Incident, warrants a closer examination of the reasons why people did so. As demonstrated by participants 023 and 034, it appears that the main reason behind applications for familial migration were family reunions. Since the participants in these examples came from Vietnam, a country not directly affected by the June 4 Incident, it could be said that it was simply a matter of timing, with the applications being made and finalised coincidentally at the same time as the June 4 Incident. However in the case of participant 035, the June 4 Incident, and subsequent fear for the safety of their relatives, was listed as the main reason as to why they applied for their family to migrate to Australia. The fact that this participant had also experienced life in China under the Communist government, in a manner that was largely negative, may have also had


124 Participants 023 and 034.

125 Participant 035.

126 Participant 035.
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an impact on their decision. Another point of interest, is the fact that Chinese students who participated in this study said that they did not apply for their family or their relatives to migrate to Australia following the June 4 Incident, despite listing fear as one of the emotions that they experienced following the events. However, this may be due to the fact that at the time, they were not eligible to apply for family members immediately following the June 4 Incident, as they were not permanent residents in Australia, a fact remedied the eventual conditions set by the Hawke and Keating government for students which allowed them to apply for permanent residency after five years\textsuperscript{127}. Therefore, bureaucratic red tape may have actually played a role in whether or not people migrated, or could apply for migration for their families and relatives in the first place, and should be considered carefully when examining the fact that many Chinese students did not apply for their families to migrate in the immediate years following the June 4 Incident. This is supported by the fact that participants who had already gained Australian citizenship had little issue applying for family members to migrate to Australia following the events of the June 4 Incident, and even before the event, as demonstrated by participants 035\textsuperscript{128}. Another interesting fact raised by participant 030, were the marriages of convenience held between Chinese students and SCC members in order to gain Australian citizenship and have a better chance of remaining in Australia\textsuperscript{129}. According to this participant, rather than strengthening or creating bonds and relations between the wider SCC and the students, and within the community itself, it instead served to break up and weaken


\textsuperscript{128} Participant 002, 003, and 035.

\textsuperscript{129} Participant 030.
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relationships at large, due to the dismantling of previous relationships to significant others, at least on the students’ side, caused by these marriages\textsuperscript{130}. This is due to the fact that students who did engage in such marriages would have likely left their own significant others in China, for the chance to remain in Australia, thereby disrupting and destroying pre-existing familial bonds and relations in the process. Furthermore, participant 030 also stated that these marriages disrupted local relationships as well, due to the fact that members of the local SCC may have also been in relationships of their own, which were then threatened or weakened by their marriages to students\textsuperscript{131}. However, given the fact that this argument is only stated by participant 030, and is not supported by others, it is highly unlikely that these marriages took place to the extent that the participant was claiming them to be, with other sources such as Jia stating that students instead took a proactive role in ensuring their collective right to remain in Australia after the June 4 Incident\textsuperscript{132}.

As demonstrated here, pre-existing conditions, such as whether or not family members were already in Australia seemed to have played the largest role in whether or not participants applied for relatives to migrate to Australia or not. Additionally, the fact that bureaucratic measures and rules played a role in applying for family members to migrate is a factor that should be carefully considered in future studies which also examine the role of migration. Of course, in the later years following the June 4 Incident, particularly in the years leading up to the return of HK as a territory to China in 1997, which coincided with Chinese students being able to apply for their family to migrate,

\textsuperscript{130} Participant 030.

\textsuperscript{131} Participant 030.

\textsuperscript{132} Jia, Chinese Activism of a Different Kind, 23-24.
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there was an increase in migration to Australia, the effects of which will be discussed in Chapter three.

**Continuity and Change:**

In addition to the increased integration of Chinese students into the SCC, other continuations and changes also occurred in the immediate aftermath of the June 4 Incident. In the case of the June 4 Incident, much of the continuity, and the change that did occur was rooted in the role that newspapers, or rather, news media, and familial bonds and relations played.

On a community level, the continuation of the important role that newspapers played in providing information to the community at large was especially highlighted. This has been a key point that has been highlighted throughout this thesis, and I would like to further expand on it here. Given that finding out about the events that had happened in Tiananmen Square due to newspaper coverage, was the second highest ranked method by participants in terms of numbers, of first hearing about the June 4 Incident, it can be said that said coverage helped to make the events known in the first place\(^{133}\). Furthermore, given that the highest ranked method by participants in terms of numbers, of first hearing about the June 4 Incident, was via television, the role of new technology can be said to have played a role as well, and was a change from the previous method of obtaining information directly from their home countries\(^{134}\). This is due to the fact that news programs on televisions did not have the disadvantage of having to wait until the next print day to publish full stories about the events that had occurred, and as such, was a change from how important events were previously reported upon by news media, in this case newspapers. The

\(^{133}\) See Appendix B.

\(^{134}\) See Appendix B.
context of Gorbachev’s visit to China also inevitably ensured that news about the events at
Tiananmen Square would be broadcast to the world, thanks to the large number of international
news networks at the scene at the time leading up to the June 4 Incident, and its immediate
aftermath. In comparison to previous events which had sparked actions in the SCC, the role of
new technology such as television can be seen as both a continuation and a change. This is due to
the fact that new technology has consistently played a role throughout history as a whole, in
creating a larger audience, as well as allowing for the faster spread of news and information to the
masses. In terms of change from previous incidents, the fact that satellite television, and live
reporting and broadcasts were being used to report on the incidents happening in Tiananmen
Square, meant that the SCC were able to see live, the events occurring in for what was for many,
their homeland. In light of the actions that did occur in the immediate days following the June 4
Incident, it can be said that the rapid spread of information about the events that had occurred,
meant that SCC members became aware of the June 4 Incident quicker, and thus were able to
organise and participate in actions relating to the June 4 Incident faster as well, rather than having to
wait for a delay to receive the information.

Familial bonds, or rather the lack of familial bonds between the majority of the SCC and the
protestors at Tiananmen Square also meant that personal feelings that were driven by these bonds,
such as the feeling of needing to provide assistance to family members, only existed on an individual
level rather than a communal one. Additionally, the fact that the June 4 Incident was a largely
internal conflict between the protestors at Tiananmen Square and the Chinese government, rather
than one that involved external forces, which meant that any action undertaken would have been

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135 Segura, ‘Consequences in the Chinese Australian Literature, 67.
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aimed at the government of many members’ homeland. When compared to previous protests staged by the wider Chinese diaspora, such as the case of the May Fourth Movement, which was another internal conflict, nationalism played a role, which was not the case in the actions that were undertaken by SCC members here. Because of the lack of overall familial bonds and relations between a majority of the SCC and the protestors at Tiananmen Square during the June 4 Incident, as well as the lack of a nationalistic approach, the ways in which they took action, or rather did not take action, can be seen to be a large change from previous events. Additionally, the assumed lack of a nationalistic outlook should also be further explored, given the fact that some participants described their country of origin as their “motherland”. Therefore, it can be assumed that while some nationalistic feelings did exist for some participants, and therefore, some SCC members, these feelings did not appear to play a role in influencing communal action, a change from previous events. This is in all likelihood due to a different context, where the need to prove one’s loyalty to their country of origin during the time of the May 4 \textsuperscript{th} Revolution in 1919 was no longer necessary within the contemporary SCC. Furthermore, the demographics of the SCC at this time could have also played a role, given that a majority of the SCC who had come from China, mainly came from the Southern provinces, and had familial bonds and relations attached to those areas. Whilst the lack of action from SCC members on a communal level, such as the lack of official organisation participation


137 Participant 032 and 045.
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...in protests, has already been discussed in this chapter, the effects of this lack of communal action on the lack of a long-term legacy, will also be discussed at length in the next chapter.

**Conclusions:**

Whilst only representing a small proportion of the SCC, the participants’ answers highlight patterns of behaviour and beliefs during the aftermath of the June 4 Incident. Whilst a majority of them did not take any action in regards to the June 4 Incident, we do know that such actions did exist, and that they were focused primarily around the experiences of Chinese students in Sydney. As such, it can be said that there were examples of short term strengthening and unification within the SCC during this time, especially regarding its relationships with Chinese students who were looking to remain in Australia following the events of the June 4 Incident. However, there were also examples where the presence of the Chinese students supposedly disrupted and weakened pre-existing relationships and bonds within the SCC, as seen by the example of Participant 030. The fact that the plight of Chinese students played such a large, if not the only role, in actions and conversations regarding the June 4 Incident in the SCC, was a factor that would come to haunt any long-term legacy in the SCC as a result of the June 4 Incident.
Chapter three: Legacy, or planting the seeds in a garden which may never bear fruit

The June 4 Incident was an event that was broadcast to the global community, and was one that raised dilemmas of sanctions, democracy, and the right to protest, especially in members of the Chinese diaspora. Furthermore, the fact that this occurred in the midst of negotiations between China and Great Britain for the impending return of HK as a territory to the former, meant that international politics were involved throughout its aftermath. Given that Australia, specifically Sydney, had one of the largest Chinese diaspora and migrant populations worldwide, it would be expected that there would be a long-lasting legacy, especially given the actions that the community and the Australian government had undertaken to assist Chinese students studying in Australia at the time, and the fact that a majority of the community came from, and used protest tactics from HK; which itself was engaged in political action regarding the June 4 Incident at Tiananmen Square. However, I will argue that the June 4 Incident only had a short-term legacy in the SCC, with the long-term legacy being seen in the physical aspects of the community itself, namely demographic change, rather than political change. Furthermore, I will argue that familial bonds and relations and newspapers also played a role in the lack of a long-term legacy. This lack of a long-term legacy can be seen to directly contrast with that of the example of HK, and demonstrates the importance of context, in this case; the sole focus on providing assistance to Chinese students in Australia, and the lack of familial bonds and relations, in helping to establish legacies within communities in the wake of traumatic events. The lack of a legacy can even be seen to be a

138 “A Marathon concert was held at Happy Valley from 10am until 10pm without pause, and attended by an audience of 400,000 More than HK $12 million has been raised for the democracy movement”, Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition), 8,9
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confirmation of the strengthening of China’s security against political liberalisation and democratisation. In the words of Deng Xiaoping, the then chairman of the Central Military Commission, “From now on, we should pay attention when handling such problems. As soon as a trend emerges, we should not allow it to spread.”

To begin with, even the term “June 4 Incident”, the term used by a majority of the present SCC to describe this event; and the reason as to why this thesis uses this term to describe and discuss said event, can be said to be largely apolitical. On closer examination, the term “June 4 Incident” originates from the Chinese government itself, and the fact that it was this term that was widely adopted by SCC members, rather than terms such as “Tiananmen Square Protests” is quite telling of the lack of a long-term political legacy within the said community. Given the fact that this term is widely used by people from China, when it is used at all, and that Mainland Chinese make up the largest portion of the present SCC, changed demographics could be one of many contributing factor to the lack of a long-term legacy within the SCC. Additionally, this term is still a far cry from the constant use of the word “massacre” by the newspapers and joint statements and advertisements issued by members and community groups of the SCC in the immediate aftermath of the June 4 Incident, which indicates that the sense and the need to unite as a result, was only short-term.

A year after the June 4 Incident, it appeared that Sydney would follow in the footsteps of HK of having a legacy created by the event, as demonstrated by a protest held at Town Hall Square


140 Lim, The People’s Republic of Amnesia, 24-25.
attended by 10,000 people on the one year anniversary, and a memorial service attended by 20,000\textsuperscript{141}.

However, the legacy of the June 4 Incident can be seen most in the changed demographics of the SCC, with people migrating from both HK and China alike\textsuperscript{142}. Notably, this is acknowledged by several members of the community as the largest change in the SCC after the June 4 Incident, rather than any changes in the political sphere\textsuperscript{143}. In the case of the latter group, many of them were relatives of the Chinese students, who after having been granted permanent residency visas or Australian citizenship, applied for their families to migrate to Australia on their visas, or who were wealthy enough to leave the country and migrate\textsuperscript{144}. This resulted in a mass influx of immigrants from China and HK in the years following both the June 4 Incident, and Bob Hawke’s granting of visa extensions to Chinese students studying in Australia. As the numbers of HK migrants to Australia did not match those of Chinese migrants, the demographics of the SCC were forever changed, with the majority of its members being from China as opposed to HK, as it had been before the June 4

\textsuperscript{141} “There were close to 20,000 people assembled for memorial service for first year of massacre. There were 10,000 people gathered at Town Hall Square to protest”, \textit{Australian Chinese Daily}, 4 June 1990, 1; “Tiananmen remembered”, \textit{Sydney Morning Herald}, 3 June 1990, 3.

\textsuperscript{142} Oral interview with Participant 001, 28 March 2017.

\textsuperscript{143} Participant 001, 002, 003, 010, 014, 015, 030, 051, 052; Oral interview with Participant 001, 28 March 2017, and Participant 020, 25 July 2017.

\textsuperscript{144} Oral interview with Participant 001, 28 March 2017; “Australian Embassy in Beijing have recorded 30,000 applications for visa. Lots of Chinese youth are going abroad for study”, \textit{Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition)}, 6 July 1989, 1.
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Incident\textsuperscript{145}. Given that it has been acknowledged throughout this thesis, that HK and Chinese SCC members held different views regarding the June 4 Incident, the fact that the latter group of people became the majority group after the events could play a role in why there was no long-term strengthening between groups in the community as a result of the June 4 Incident. According to the personal testimonies, newly arrived migrants from China seemed more ready to forgive China’s actions as time passed, in light of its new position as an economic power in the world, and that enough time had passed to move on, a trend shared with people in China\textsuperscript{146}. On the other hand, migrants from HK were less likely to do so, possibly due to the fact that the June 4 Incident, and the upcoming return of HK, which followed a democratic system of governance, as a territory to China, were listed as one of the main reasons for migration, and the fact that said incident remains a large source of discontent in HK\textsuperscript{147}.

Of course, not all SCC members who were members of these two groups subscribed to these views, but the fact that these appeared to be the pre-dominant views, as voiced by SCC members themselves, seems to indicate that it was a well accepted stereotype within the community itself. Given the change in demographics following the June 4 Incident, with Chinese being the majority of the SCC, it could be said that this view of moving on from the June 4 Incident, and dealing with China as a business entity, was held by a majority of the SCC itself. Since the SCC has its roots and origins in trade and business, as detailed in Chapter One, it can be said that business took precedence over ideology. Additionally, the view that the Chinese government should be forgiven for their actions

\textsuperscript{145} Oral interview with Participant 001, 28 March 2017.

\textsuperscript{146} Oral interview with Participant 001, 28 March 2017.

\textsuperscript{147} Oral interview with Participant 001, 28 March 2017.
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was also indirectly endorsed by the Australian government, which in the year 1991, began to interact economically with China by lifting sanctions previously imposed on them, and strengthening their relationship with China on regional and multilateral issues, such as APEC, after having condemned the Chinese government for their actions at Tiananmen Square, and having participated in economic sanctions against them. Additionally, the fact that the Australian government’s actions regarding the SCC, had been centred on working with its members to provide visa extensions and visas to the Chinese students studying in Australia, as discussed earlier, the granting of these visas may have been seen as many as the completion of the government’s role in helping students who were affected by the June 4 Incident. As such, given that the majority view regarding the June 4 Incident in the long term held by the Australian community seemed to be one that had forgotten the actions undertaken against the protestors, and had since moved on from the events that had occurred, long-term strengthening between groups as a result of the June 4 Incident may have failed to occur due to the community not seeing it as relevant in the years following the incident. In fact, as stated by Sung Yee Fung, there was also a recorded difference in political socialisation and involvement between the two groups that had arrived in Australia pre and post-June 4 Incident, which supports the argument that there was little long-term unification and strengthening in the SCC in response to the June 4 Incident due to demographic changes. Furthermore, the fact the


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students who remained in Australia, also wished to move on from the June 4 Incident, could have also contributed to a lack of inter-generational discussion of the June 4 Incident, and offers a reason as to why it is no longer seen to be relevant today, and why there is no long lasting legacy of unification and strengthening in the community. This can be seen in the response of participant 045, who stated that they still had a form of love for their “motherland”, China, despite the June 4 Incident, which signifies that despite the feelings of doubt that they had experienced at the time, they have since moved on\(^\text{150}\). It also appears that this view is shared by members of the established SCC as well, regardless of background, with several participants stating that they believed that enough time had passed since the June 4 Incident, and that it was no longer of relevance to the SCC at large, and that as such, there was no further collective discussion of the incident in the present\(^\text{151}\). Therefore, the June 4 Incident no longer being seen as relevant by a vast majority of the SCC, as well as an overall wish to move on from the events that had occurred, may provide an explanation as to why there was no long-term legacy borne from the June 4 Incident.

To provide further support for this view, since survival narratives have been argued by Judith Landau to help assist in collective healing, the fact that there is a lack of survival narratives regarding the June 4 Incident in the SCC would suggest that its members have seemingly recovered from the events, and no longer see it as relevant, which would help to explain the lack of a long-term legacy borne from the June 4 Incident\(^\text{152}\). Contrastingly, in HK, survival narratives which are explicit in their

\(^{150}\) Participant 045.


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relation to the June 4 Incident continue on to this day, with a vigil continuing to be held for the victims of the June 4 Incident on its anniversary, and the ethnic identity of post-1997 HK being explicitly tied to its citizens’ protests and rallies against the actions of the Chinese government in the June 4 Incident, which differentiated between a HK identity, and a Chinese identity. Additionally, Chinese politics and policies directly affect HK due to it being a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China, which helps to ensure that political action regarding China remains relevant, as opposed to Australia, where any government policies of China are unlikely to have a direct effect on the population. As such, a combination of continued relevance and survival narratives as a direct result of the June 4 Incident in HK helped to create long-term strengthening and unification between members of its community, as opposed to Australia, and Sydney in particular. The fact that there had never been a monolithic response or reaction to the June 4 Incident in the SCC specifically discussing the actions of the Chinese government on their community as a whole, also made the creation of a survival narrative difficult.

Continuing on from the talk of relevance to the community, it is important to once again bring up the fact that much of the SCC’s actions post-June 4 Incident, were focused upon helping Chinese students on temporary visas to stay in Australia, lest they encounter danger upon their return to China. Given that this goal can be seen to be accomplished with Bob Hawke’s granting of a three year extension to all Chinese students in Australia, which was extensively covered by Chinese-language newspapers with the chance to become permanent residents and citizens after five, it can

153 So, Hong Kong’s Embattled Democracy, 158-161.

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be said that the SCC, and its community groups had succeeded in their efforts. After its success in helping to grant Chinese students a means of remaining in Australia, as well as providing resources to help them become better integrated into the SCC, the role of community groups in participating in June 4 incident-related events was seen to be over, since all of their work had been focused solely on assisting Chinese students. As such, the idea that their duties to assist those affected by the June 4 Incident; in this case, students from China, had been completed meant that community groups, and their leaders, saw their role in providing assistance to those affected by the June 4 Incident to be over, and as such, saw no need to provide further assistance, or to further explore what they could do regarding the June 4 Incident. Given that more established SCC members, and the community groups that they helped to lead and establish, were previously neutral on the issue of the protests occurring at Tiananmen Square, and had no collective personal or familial relationship bonds with the protestors there, it can be argued that said incident appeared to be of no further relevance to the SCC, once the safety of students; who had already integrated into the community and were seen to be members of it, was ensured. Furthermore, as discussed earlier in this chapter, the events that had occurred during the June 4 Incident began to grow less relevant within the SCC as a whole, as time passed, and there was no continued conversation regarding the incident, or its effects on members of the community. Since conversation would have helped to preserve what bonds and unifications were strengthened during the community’s actions in assisting the Chinese students in staying by prompting discussion, the lack thereof would have eventually

155 “Immigration Department said they won’t expel the Chinese students until the situation is clear”, Australian Chinese Daily, 22 June 1989, 1.; “The Chinese who came from China asking for political asylum will be referred to UNHCR”, Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition), 26 & 27 August, 1989, 22.

156 Jia, Chinese Activism of a Different Kind, p. 131.
resulted in these bonds and unifications being lost, or being weakened. Therefore, it can be seen that familial and kinship relations, or rather, a lack of them, contributed to the lack of a long-term legacy of strengthening and unification within the SCC.

Another factor that I would also like to explore, is the taskscape of the SCC prior to the events of the June 4 Incident. Defined by Tim Ingold as the series of activities within a landscape, and the relationship that exists between the landscape of a community and the experiences of the individuals who carry out activities within that landscape, a taskscape effectively demonstrates the daily experiences of a community through their activities. Prior to the June 4 Incident, before the protests themselves, the SCC was one that was built on, and largely characterised by networks based on familial bonds and relations, as well as community engagement by its members, and had its origins and roots in trade and business, rather than ideology as discussed in Chapter One. Given the fact that familial bonds and relations played a central role within the SCC, it would make sense that all efforts to help and prompt recovery and action after the June 4 Incident would revolve around these bonds and relations. This came to light in the focus on assisting Chinese students, who had at this point in time, become integrated with the community itself through their engagement with its community groups and services, a fact which has also been repeatedly discussed. Even though the aim of assisting the students by the SCC took a humanitarian angle, by working to provide assistance for those affected by the June 4 Incident, pre-June 4 taskscapes of community engagement, and assisting based on networks built on relations and interaction were still evoked, which would have explained why there was short-term strengthening and unification between members and groups of the SCC as a result of the June 4 Incident. Furthermore, a lack of previous involvement in

demonstrations supporting the protesters prior to the June 4 Incident by established members of the community, due to the community not being built on ideological principles, meant that there was a lack of community engagement in activities which actively criticised the Chinese government; a task that would have continued for longer than the task of assisting and helping the Chinese students adjust to life in Australia, given its ongoing and constant nature. Therefore, it can be said that protests, vigils, and rallies were not a part of the SCC taskscape, and would have instead relied on individuals, rather than the community, a fact which would have ensured its failure in the long-term without some form of community-wide support, or a continued community narrative. As such, it can be said that the pre-existing taskscape of the SCC effectively supported the community’s actions in assisting the Chinese students, a task which ultimately took little time to be seen as completed, and was also seen as the main survival narrative of the SCC regarding the June 4 Incident. This effectively meant that tasks not supported by the pre-existing taskscape; continued conversations and criticisms of the Chinese government, would have found little to no standing within the SCC in the long-term. Since continued conversations are important in order to keep a set of beliefs alive within a community, the fact that pre-existing tasksapes did not support this, coupled with the fact that the June 4 Incident itself was no longer seen as relevant, meant that there was little chance of community-wide long-term strengthening and unification as a result of the June 4 Incident.¹⁵⁸

The peak time of reporting events in regards to the June 4 Incident in Chinese-language news media appeared to be from May 1989 to June 1990, one that was shared by English-language

newspapers, as demonstrated by the fact that no mentions of Tiananmen Square appear in newspapers after June 1990. Following the decrease and eventual end of reporting on the events of the June 4 Incident and its aftermath, community action began to die down as well. This can be seen in the decreasing number of advertisements and notices in Chinese-language newspapers such as ACD informing their audiences about protests and vigils held in protest of the Chinese government’s actions over the period of time\textsuperscript{159}. As noted by Bar-Tal, in order for a set of beliefs to become well established within a community, the set of beliefs must be continuously shared and reinforced between its members\textsuperscript{160}. The fact that the June 4 Incident was not one of those sets of beliefs shared widely by the SCC in the years that followed, meant that it eventually faded with time into irrelevance, and that younger members of the community failed to see its relevance in their lives. Given that Chinese-language newspapers also acted as a community noticeboard, as discussed in Chapter One, the fact that said noticeboard eventually stopped publishing articles or pieces about the June 4 Incident in the following years, and community groups eventually stopped advertising events related to the June 4 Incident in the same time period, demonstrates that the June 4 Incident was not a story that continued to be shared throughout the SCC. As discussed above, a survival narrative was also crucial to the continuation of the June 4 Incident remaining relevant to the SCC, and Chinese-language newspapers were integral to its success. To further expand on this point, the publishing of reports and articles about the June 4 Incident by Chinese-language newspapers; the main source of community networking, can be seen to be the publishing and sharing of a survival narrative of sorts for the SCC, with the focus being the plight and experiences of the Chinese

\textsuperscript{159} “More than 2,000 people put their advertising to condemn within 10 days”, \textit{Australian Chinese Daily}, 15 June 1989, 2.

\textsuperscript{160} Bar-Tal, \textit{Shared Beliefs in a Society}, 2-5.
students in Australia, and the actions of the community and the Australian government to assist them. Once this narrative reached a conclusion with the successful granting of visas and visa extensions to the students, there was no need for further coverage, which ultimately put an end to any chance of a continued survival narrative regarding June 4 in the SCC, and any long-term legacy as a direct result of the June 4 Incident.

As such, it can be argued that since much of the SCC’s efforts to assist those affected by the June 4 Incident were focused on a more local and national level; helping Chinese students studying in Australia to gain residence and visa extensions, the perceived completion of its chosen task effectively meant that, in the eyes of the SCC, the June 4 Incident was no longer seen as relevant, and prevented any long-term legacy, based around these events from occurring. Furthermore, a vast change in demographic, as well as a change in the views held by a majority of the SCC regarding the June 4 Incident, were also major contributing factors as to why the June 4 Incident was no longer seen as relevant in the wider community. The lack of relevance is important, as for a communal set of beliefs to be passed down to the next generation, and for information regarding a specific event to be shared, the event referenced must be first seen to be relevant and of importance to the wider community. The fact that the June 4 Incident failed to be seen as an incident that needed to be shared and discussed, in the years following 1989, and the granting of visa extensions and permanent residency to Chinese students in Australia, shows that it was no longer seen to be of importance and relevant to the SCC at large. Furthermore, the fact that pre-existing taskscapes prioritised community engagement, and networks built on familial relations and bonds meant that activities that were not supported by such taskscapes; such as actively criticising the actions of a government, specifically the government of what was for many in the SCC their country of origin, would have failed to gain community-wide support. The fact that the pre-existing taskscapes instead
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supported another important but shorter-lived activity, may have also contributed to a lack of a long-term legacy based upon the June 4 Incident. Because of the lack of discussion of the June 4 Incident, inter-generational contact and interest was not facilitated, which also helped to contribute to a lack of long-term unification and strengthening based around this event. Given the prominence of business groups and their relations with China in the 1980s and 1990s, it can be said that the SCC settled back into “business as usual” after the short-term strengthening and unification.

That is not to say however, that there were no individual cases of long-term unification or strengthening between SCC members as a result of the June 4 Incident. Throughout this thesis, the role of familial bonds and relations within the SCC has been emphasised, and this remains true in the case of reactions to the June 4 Incident. As discussed in earlier chapters, familial bonds and relations played a role in influencing individual actions and reactions to the June 4 Incident, including but not limited to: generating a feeling of mistrust towards the Communist Party, and an “increased awareness of politics within China”\(^{161}\). Additionally, it is important to note that individuals listed these reactions as ways in which they, as individuals, had changed as a result of the June 4 Incident. Therefore, this provides support to the statement that changes only occurred on the individual level. The fact that individuals who shared these feelings of mistrust, or who were directly affected by the June 4 Incident, tended to form their own communities in certain suburbs, in order to provide support for one another can therefore be said to be a case of long-term strengthening and unification\(^{162}\). Furthermore, the fact that this change in living demographics was generated partially due to familial bonds and relations, it can be said that familial bonds and relations did play a role

\(^{161}\) Participant 030, 031, 032, and 034.

\(^{162}\) Participant 032.
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here, given that it has been established that those who were directly affected by the June 4 Incident usually had some form of relationship to the protestors. Communities and suburbs which can be said to be examples of this phenomenon include Ashfield, which saw its entire demographic change following the influx of migration following the June 4 Incident\textsuperscript{163}. Whilst it is unknown, if these feelings of distrust continue, or if the groups created as a means of providing support remain within these suburbs, the fact remains that there was a long-term change in living demographics as a direct result of the June 4 Incident. This demonstrates that these bonds played a role in generating: short-term unification, a lack of collective long-term, and individual cases of long-term unification and strengthening within the SCC. As such, the existence of small suburban pockets, and remaining feelings of mistrust in certain SCC members show that there are individual cases of long-term strengthening and unification within said community. Even though such cases of strengthening and unification are rare in the present day, according to different participants, the fact remains that others deemed the feelings of mistrust borne out of the June 4 Incident important enough to list as reasons as to how they had been changed as individuals, thereby demonstrating that individuals are still affected by the events, just not the community as a whole.

In light of the lack of a long-term legacy of the June 4 Incident in the SCC, it can thus also be said that there was no long-term legacy within the community. While small pockets of communities and suburbs created by initial bonds and relationships borne out of short-term strengthening and unification did exist, and could arguably be considered a form of long-term strengthening and unification, the fact remains that such communities were in the minority. Additionally, it is unknown

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if such communities and suburbs continue to provide a community for those who were directly affected by the June 4 Incident. As such, even though individual feelings regarding the June 4 Incident vary greatly, it appears that there was no long-term legacy overall in the SCC.

Reflections:

In searching for SCC members willing to share their experiences with the aftermath of the June 4 Incident, I noticed that there was a phenomenon where certain participants were happy to write their experiences on paper, but were reluctant to give oral interviews. Whilst some of these responses may be said to be due to personal preferences or time commitments, I found that certain members seemed nervous when asked about giving an oral interview and expansion of their written responses, whilst other eligible members of the community declined to submit written responses entirely, when learning of the contents of the questionnaire, and the details of the study. Specifically, people became reluctant to provide information, and also tended to become nervous on learning that the study was to be based around the events of the June 4 Incident. Submissions of questionnaires also showed that some participants chose to leave sections blank in response to questions 11 and 12. Given the fact that several members of the community, and participants seemed nervous or reluctant to answer questions, or discuss the matter of the June 4 Incident, there is also a slight chance some details of their actions and experiences in their responses may have been omitted, when they believed that their sense of safety was compromised, which could mean that omitted information might have changed the overall conclusions drawn from the examination of the questionnaires. I emphasise safety, due to the fact that several participants, and potential participants appeared to be concerned about their well-being and safety, as well as the possibility of

164 See Appendix B.
being identified, when asking for more information regarding the study. The fact that so many participants chose the option of remaining anonymous in regards to being referenced in this thesis, also appears to indicate that there was a feeling of unease, and belief that discussions, and contributions to the topic of the June 4 Incident in the SCC, would threaten one’s safety. Of course, given the fact that many SCC members now conduct business with China presently, remaining anonymous may have been a precaution for work-related reasons, rather than personal safety, and demonstrates the “business-as-usual” mindset\textsuperscript{165}. However, the feeling of unease and nervousness is still a factor that I feel should be addressed, or at least noted in this thesis.

Furthermore, there were cases where participants chose to use their adopted, or English names when signing forms, rather than their given Chinese names; the latter of which, was used more widely in everyday life and for identification purposes. By choosing to identify themselves using their lesser used or known names, it can be said that participants still remained wary of being identified, despite understanding that the anonymity of the study. Silence and a reluctance to answer is an answer of its own, and the fact that I encountered so many of these responses in the collection of primary data, seems to indicate that the June 4 Incident remains a difficult topic of discussion within the SCC today. As stated by Bar-Tal, in order for shared beliefs to continue within a community, and remain relevant and of importance, they must be continuously repeated and shared with an audience, and the fact that some SCC members declined to participate on finding out about the subject matter, demonstrates the fact that said community in the present, is no longer united in

\textsuperscript{165} Oral interview with Participant 020, 25 July 2017.
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its beliefs regarding the June 4 Incident, and given the variety of opinions as demonstrated by the questionnaire responses, was never united in the first place.\(^{166}\)

I also want to take note of the fact that many of the participants, when writing in length, and when providing detailed answers did so in Chinese rather than in English, possibly due to having a larger vocabulary. However, I would also like to suggest an additional reason; given that Chinese would have been the first written language for much of the participants, and therefore the language closest to their hearts, that they felt more comfortable discussing their personal experiences using Chinese for this reason. This is significant as studies such as Viorica Marian and Margarita Kaushanskaya’s support this argument by demonstrating that people are more likely to express emotion in their native language.\(^{167}\) The fact that those who shared more information about their personal lives used Chinese demonstrates that the events of the June 4 Incident left a deep meaningful impact on them. However, this hypothesis is hampered by the fact that some participants who stated that they felt as though the events of the June 4 Incident did not have any impact on their lives also did so in Chinese, and that as a result, the use of Chinese was due to familiarity. That being said though, the specific written language used for people’s answers to questions about their personal experiences in similar events could be a future area of study in this field, and provide valuable information on how language use and personal emotions and connections regarding a specific event are related. Future studies should also examine the emotional expression of people discussing the June 4 Incident when speaking in their first language, or a

\(^{166}\) Bar-Tal, *Shared Beliefs in a Society*, 2-5

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different one altogether, given that Marian and Kaushanskaya have also found that language had an effect on how people expressed their emotions. Given the multilingual nature of the present SCC, such studies would prove enlightening to the field of study surrounding migrant experiences.

Furthermore, while I only made references earlier in this thesis, the treatment of the students by the Australian Government in the aftermath of the June 4 Incident also drew ire from other ethnic communities, specifically the Kurdish community for supposed special treatment. I believe that the relationship between the SCC, the students, and other ethnic communities should be examined in future studies, to provide further information on how the aftermath of the June 4 Incident affected the Sydney community, specifically its ethnic communities, as a result. Such studies would also contribute to the literature regarding the relationships that existed and change between the ethnic communities of Sydney, and literature regarding migrant communities and their relationships with one another.

In a way, this thesis is the establishment of a legacy itself, of the people who volunteered their time and memories, and shared their own experiences, so that others would know their story; the story of how the June 4 Incident touched their lives, and the lives of those around them. It is true that the June 4 Incident failed to galvanise a long-term legacy borne from these events throughout the SCC as a whole, as opposed to HK. However, this failure opens up a new chapter for investigation and further study, specifically regarding the three camps that exist presently amongst those who were part of the SCC then; those who have not forgotten about the incident or forgiven it for reasons of their own, and those who remember it but have forgiven it for various reasons. It is interesting to see the ways in which ethnicity appears to tie into these decisions, as discussed in the third chapter, and further study and examination of this specific topic; the divisions that exist in the SCC today regarding the June 4 Incident, should be conducted in order to examine the ways in which
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an incident which once strengthened and united a community, can divide it in the future. Additionally, future studies should also enlist the answers of a larger sample of SCC members, as there are too many variations in responses to be determined by only fifty people. To continue on from this sentiment, while this thesis only examined this lightly in chapter three, a future detailed analysis between the responses and the lack of a long-term legacy as a result of the June 4 Incident in the SCC, and Chinese communities in other areas that did have a long-term legacy as a result of the June 4 Incident, should also be conducted. By doing so, the similarities and differences between these two communities could be examined and provide further information on what factors help to establish a long-term legacy regarding such events, and the role that differing contexts play in their establishment. Will this thesis be a legacy of its own? Only time will tell.
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“A Million people in Hong Kong assemble at the Happy Valley Race Course for memorial services”.

Australian Chinese Daily. 6 June 1989: 15.

“After the blood washing in Beijing, Hong Kong people have to unite together for the difficult time”.


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“At One am on 4 June, the massacre was commenced after a flare was launched. Students witnessed the army cleaning the square. Audio recording was taken to record the whole process of massacre”. Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition). 12 June 1989: 1.


“Australian Embassy in Beijing have recorded 30,000 applications for visa. Lots of Chinese youth are going abroad for study”. Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition). 6 July 1989: 1.


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“Chinese living in Sydney will have an assembly at 2pm today for memorial service held at Town Hall Square”. Australian Chinese Daily. 7 June 1989: 16.


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“Concert held to support the Democracy Movement. 400,000 in attendance, and $1,300,000 raised”, Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition), 29 May, 1989, 12.


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“Tanks drove through the tents with fire burner to burn down the tents. Injured people cannot escape and were burnt”. Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition). 13 June 1989: 1.


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“The June 4 Incident pushes Hong Kong residents’ urgent desire for migration. Australian government has to send three more officials to help the Australian Counsel to handle the application”. Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition). 26 July 1989: 1.


“There was a ‘black list’ and searching and arresting of the protesting people, it may involve a few million people. In Shanghai, a group so called the Chinese Youth Democracy Party was broken up by the government”. Sing Tao Jih Pao (Australian Edition). 13 June 1989: 1.

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“We [Community groups] condemn the actions of the Chinese government on the 3rd of June and hope people around the world, especially Chinese, stop Chinese Communist Party fascist violence, and hope Australian Chinese unite to fulfil peaceful democratic freedom in new China, and work hard for this cause. We strongly request Bob Hawke to urge leaders of all other countries to stop Chinese Communist violence. If Chinese
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Communist government continues their massacre of their citizens, we request the Australian government enact sanctions on Chinese communist government”.


“We strongly condemn the Chinese government’s usage of troops to press the student movement and resulted in bloodshed. We strongly call upon the Chinese leaders to deal with the Democracy Movement peacefully and stop the massacre of students”. *Australian Chinese Daily*. 6 June 1989: 8.

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