

**Two Exhibitions between Two Strikes:
Exhibiting Hong Kong at the British Empire Exhibition
in 1924 and 1925**

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British Empire
Exhibition.
Wembley,
1925.

Preface

My doctoral research focused on the urbanisation of Shanghai in preparation for the Shanghai World Expo 2010. Therefore, I was interested in the history of exhibitions in general. In 2013, when my PhD study was about to complete, Hong Kong's participation at the British Empire Exhibition (BEE) at Wembley in 1924 and 1925 drew my attention. Hong Kong in the 1920s urbanised and industrialised rather rapidly. However, this British colony in the Far East also experienced various kinds of social unrests, due to social inequalities, as well as wars and political mobilisations in Britain, China and Hong Kong. The Seamen's Strike (1922) and the Canton-Hong Kong Strike (1925-1926) severely affected the socioeconomic environment of Hong Kong. I was fascinated by how Hong Kong Section at the BEE was organised between two major strikes.

Over the years, my interest in the BEE grew stronger and stronger. I began to research on and collect artefacts of the BEE, especially materials about Hong Kong Section. This project progressed rather slowly until in 2017 when I received the funding from Lord Wilson Heritage Trust. I would like to take this chance to thank for the generous financial support from Lord Wilson Heritage Trust, so that this research can be completed.

Unless otherwise specified, all images and information are from items I have collected.

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Hong Kong's participation in the British Empire Exhibition is little known in Hong Kong, and has not been well documented or thoroughly reviewed. This book is the first step in recollecting this part of Hong Kong history.

Chapter 1 Introduction

In 1924 and 1925, Britain organised two seasons of the BEE at Wembley, the suburban area of London (now part of London Borough of Brent). Even though the BEE was organised by the private sector, it was still regarded as a national event after the Royal Family and the British Government involved. The British government sponsored half of the expenses, King George V, Edward, the Prince of Wales (the future King Edward VII) and the Prince Albert, the Duke of York (the future King George VI) joined as the patrons and presidents of the BEE. With the participation of nearly all dominions, colonies and dependencies of the British Empire, the BEE aimed to demonstrate national strength, establish economic ties and construct a sense of community among the coloniser and her colonies after the First World War (WWI).

The Exhibition was held at Wembley Park, the exhibition venue. Hong Kong participated with its own Section – the Hong Kong Section. Through the Hong Kong Pavilion a Hong Kong Pavilion (with a combination of traditional Chinese architectural style and a reproduction of a street of Hong Kong), the exhibits (products from the British merchants in Hong Kong, the products produced and/or traded in Hong Kong), and the demonstrations of the manufacturing processes of Chinese-owned industries, the Hong Kong Section displayed this small colony to the British public. Even though it is not the only time of exhibiting Hong Kong in Britain, the Hong Kong Section in Wembley was the only comprehensive exhibition of Hong Kong in Britain during the colonial period. It drew the most attention among the visitors and the English media. The organisational process, the choices of exhibits, the responses in Britain and in Hong Kong at the time illustrate Britain's relationship with her colonies and Hong Kong's relationship with Britain and China in the 1920s.

There is no existing research study that documents the organisation process, details the list of exhibits of Hong Kong Section, and examines its socio-political implications in Hong Kong. This project aims to fill this gap. This is an archival research that draws on historical archives, official catalogues and archival data of other kinds. I have also collected more than 170 items to tell a story of the Hong Kong Section. Unless otherwise specified, all images came from the items that I have collected. In particular, this research project aims to

- investigate how Hong Kong was represented at the BEE at Wembley in 1924 and 1925;
- examine the politics between Hong Kong and London, and between Hong Kong government and local British and Chinese merchants when organising the Hong Kong Section at the BEE;
- examine the Hong Kong-Britain-China relations during the organisations of the pavilion;
- evaluate the impact of the BEE on the construction of an imperial identity among British and Chinese communities in Hong Kong; and
- digitalise artefacts into an online database.

Chapter 2 Imperialism, Nationalism and Exhibition

In 1851, Britain organised the Great Exhibition (also known as International Exposition, World Fair, World Exhibition, *Exposition Universelle*, *Weltausstellung*) in London, which was the first comprehensive exposition of art, industrial advancement and natural resources in Europe and established as a model for later exhibitions. Early exhibitions in Europe and North America were inseparable from imperialism and nationalism. The opening speech of King George V on 23 April 1924 emphasised the British Empire Exhibition inherited the Great Exhibition in 1851. The speech was broadcasted across Britain and some members of the British Empire (not including Hong Kong) through radio (it was also the first live broadcast of the British Broadcasting Corporation).

In terms of territory, the United Kingdom reached its peak in the early 1920s as it received some colonies from Imperial Germany after WWI. But Britain's global dominance in world politics and economy had begun to fall. The British government explored different initiatives to rejuvenate its national power. The BEE was therefore endorsed by the British government to facilitate economic cooperation and foster a collective imperial identity within the British Empire.ⁱ

However, international atmosphere changed drastically after the WWI. By the time when the BEE was organised at Wembley, the 'traditional approach' of publicising imperialism like the early International Exhibitions and colonial exhibitions began to be regarded as old-fashioned, or even criticised with the emergence of anti-colonial consciousness. During the Imperial War Conference of 1917, the representatives from the British dominions already asked for constitutional equality with London. Canada also signed independence agreement with the British government.ⁱⁱ In the early 1920s, the British government needed to handle many challenges like the Ruhr Crisis (1923), the Locarno Pact (1925), the military obligations to the League of Nations under Geneva Protocol of 1924, the non-cooperation movement of the British Raj (1919-1922), the establishment of Irish Free State (1922), as well as deflation and the discontent of working class at home. All these issues brought heavy burden to the declining British Empire.ⁱⁱⁱ The BEE was organised with this historical background when Britain 'must grow or it must decay'.^{iv} This section reviews the background, the organisation process, the achievements and challenges of the BEE.

2.1 The British Empire Exhibition in 1924 and 1925

The idea of organising an Empire exhibition by the British Empire League was the first proposed in 1902. The proposal was shelved by the Liberal Party after it won the general election in 1906.^v The success of Franco-British Exhibition in 1908 boosted the League's confidence to organise an Empire exhibition at White City, and became more attractive to the Royal Family.^{vi} In November 1910, Lord Strathcona Donald Alexander Smith (the Vice-President of Franco-British Exhibition), Imre Kiralfy and Sir Pieter C. Van B. Stewart-Bam brought up the idea of the BEE again during a public meeting.^{vii} The outbreak of WWI disrupted the plan. But individuals like Lord Strathcona were still enthusiastic about it.

In 1916, the British government began to stimulate economic activities within the British Empire with international trade exhibitions and fairs, and established the Department of Overseas Trade in 1918 (which later became responsible for coordinating the BEE).^{viii} After WWI, the idea of the BEE was raised again at a luncheon at the British Empire Club in 1919, which the Premiers and High Commissioners from the members of the British Empire joined.^{ix} British Dominion Exhibition Limited and the London Great Exhibition were incorporated in 1919 with the consent of all members of the British Empire League.^x The two companies then solicited further support from the Department of Overseas Trade to organise an Empire exhibition. On 15 September 1919, the Administration Committee of the BEE received an official recognition from the state.^{xi} The H.M. government joined with the conditions that (1) the government has the rights to approve the choice of the General Manager of the BEE, (2) the membership of the Executive Council of the BEE will be expanded and the Board of Trade has the rights to approve, and (3) all regulations of the BEE (e.g., the entry of exhibitors) will be subjected to the approval of the Exhibitions Division of the Department of Overseas Trade.^{xii}

In 1920, the Act of Parliament was passed that the British government became a joint guarantor and shared half of the £2.2 million production costs.^{xiii} Besides public funding, other donations to the BEE mainly came from industrialists and the respective investors of the Exhibition.^{xiv} Edward, the Prince of Wales agreed to be the president of the BEE on 7 June 1920. The project was officially launched at Mansion House in London on 7 June 1920 and the British Empire Exhibition Incorporation was established on the next day.^{xv} The BEE was originally planned to open in 1923. It was however delayed to 1924 as some participating colonies were not ready. In March 1922, the Executive Council of BEE announced the delay of the event from April 1923 to April 1924.^{xvi}

Role	Member
Patron	King George V
President	Edward, Prince of Wales
Board members	James Stevenson Henry MacMahon James Allen Charles McLeod Travers Clarke Laurence Binyon Mukul Dey William Foster George Ambrose Lloyd Thomas Sturge Moore Samuel Fyzee Rahamin William Rothenstein Abanindranath Tagore

Table 1 Members of the General Committee of the BEE (1924)
Source: Cook and Fox (1924)

The Board of the BEE aimed to create another conceptual and physical legacy with national significance at Wembley, like Crystal Palace of the Great Exhibition in 1851.^{xvii} There were proposals to organise the BEE at Crystal Palace (where the Great Exhibition and British Empire Festival were held there in 1851 and 1911 respectively), White City (where Franco-British Exhibition was held) or Hendon (a newly developed suburban

area). But Wembley was chosen for its proximity to railway and accessibility to Central London.^{xviii} The construction of the exhibition site, Wembley Park, began in 1922. Many critics emphasized that Wembley Park is ten times bigger than Crystal Palace.^{xix}



Image 1 Mansion House in London

Imre Kiralfy had been commissioned to organise the Franco-British Exhibition and Japan-British Exhibition at White City in 1908 and 1910. Imre Kiralfy, a famous producer of exhibitions, intended to construct a fin-de-siècle atmosphere at Wembley Park, by juxtaposing the images of a new era and history, architectures from Europe and British colonies to achieve this purpose.^{xx} He borrowed many ideas from White City to Wembley Park. Wembley was also built with an artificial lake, gardens and an Amusement Park (with entertainment facilities like scenic railway and children's playground).



Image 2 A postcard of the Japan-British Exhibition

The BEE is more than an amusement park. It is also a national and imperial event for facilitating the cooperation within the British Empire. This view affected the design and arrangement of Wembley Park. The Empire Stadium is obviously one of the endeavours to achieve this objective. The Stadium was built on the abandoned site of Watkin's Folly, which is an uncompleted imitation of Eiffel Tower. Alexander Geppert argued that such a choice of location reflected the BEE's ambition to connect to the history of the great exhibition in the 19th century to the new era in 1920s.^{xxi}

Similar to previous British exhibitions, the BEE also displayed arts and industrial products. Pavilions like the Palace of Art, the Palace of Industry and Engineering (renamed to the Palace of Housing and Transport in 1925) and the HM Government Building were built to showcase exhibits from various parts of the British Empire. For instance, the Palace of Art ‘stocktook’ the arts of the British Empire. The HM Government Building included exhibits from the various ministries, the Department of Overseas Trade, the Imperial Institute and the Overseas Settlement Office.^{xxii}



Image 3 Cinderella stamp published by the British Engineers' Association

The BEE attracted more than 17 million visitors in 1924. Artist Frederick Charles Herrick designed the lion logo of the BEE.^{xxiii} The logo was widely printed on official programmes, promotional materials and merchandised souvenirs. There were enthusiastic press reports and the self-congratulatory comments of the exhibition organisers. However, the exhibition in 1924 was a financial disaster. The organiser argued that the unusually long raining season in London had made fewer visitors than expected. After considerable debates, the second season of the BEE opened in May 1925. In 1925, the King and the Prince of Wales agreed to be the patrons, while the Duke of York became the President of the Board of the BEE. The chairperson of the Executive Council is the Duke of Devonshire.

	1924	1925
Duration	23 April – 1 November	9 May – 31 October
No. of visitors	17,403,267	9,699,231

Table 2 Number of visitors of the BEE in 1924 and 1925

Source: Geppert, 2010, pp.146.

In a memorandum submitted by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Department of Overseas Trade looking for funding to support the BEE in 1925, it indicated that the response in 1925 was ‘less satisfactory’.^{xxiv} A deficit of £1,581,905 was recorded over the two seasons of event, which had to be covered by private donations and the guarantee fund. There were suggestions for one more season in 1926, or even organising the BEE as ‘something in the nature of a permanent institution’. But these ideas were soon proven unrealistic.^{xxv}



Image 4 The construction of Wembley Park, with Hong Kong Section found at bottom (1923)
Source: Britain from Above

2.2 The Imperial Cooperation

Even though the BEE was not commercially successful, it was regarded by the historian John Mackenzie as an important national event. It is an important, yet often ignored, in strengthening British nationalism during the Inter-war period.^{xxvi} The Duke of York highlighted the BEE's goal of fostering cooperation within the British Empire:

I count myself very fortunate to have been able to assist in the great Imperial work of the British Empire Exhibition. The Dominions, colonies, protectorate, and mandated territories have shown the vast extent of their economic resources. They have proved that there is little or nothing that we cannot produce within, the Empire. They have given abundant evidence of an earnest desire to co-operate with the Mother Country in the tasks of reconstruction which face the world. This mighty Empire of ours is richly endowed, with the good things of the earth, and we have the good will to use them wisely for our mutual benefit. We are not unduly optimistic if, from these potent factors, we derive great confidence for the future.^{xxvii}

Different from earlier British exhibitions, the primary goal of the BEE was the cooperation within the British Empire. Such a view is again reflected by the construction and the naming of the exhibition site and the events. In early 1924, Rudyard Kipling, the British Nobel laureate in Literature, was commissioned by the Board of the BEE to name the streets and avenues at Wembley Park. Some names like 'King's Way' (Kingsway), 'Unity Bridge', 'Commonwealth Way', 'Dominion Way' and 'Union Approach' were given to symbolise the connection between British Empire and its colonies.^{xxviii} In particular, other options like 'Empire Avenue' or 'King Edward VII Street' were considered. But Kingsway was finally chosen as it showed the connection home and abroad.^{xxix}

The BEE opened on St. George Day on 23 April 1924. A series of events was organised to emphasize the British nation and empire. For instance, the Pageant of Empire was held in 1924, which is a performance featuring various historical events during the expansion

of the British Empire. A Torchlight and Searchlight (entitled *London Defended*), Torchlight Tattoo Scout and Guide Jamboree were organised.^{xxx} The opening speech of King George V in 1924 was the first live radio broadcast of the British Empire.^{xxx1} All of these events served the purpose of creating a sense of community among the members of the British Empire.

Comparing with the Great Exhibition in 1851 (only about 500 of about 14,000 exhibitors came from British colonies), the BEE paid much more attention to the British colonies and dominions.^{xxxii} Except Irish Free State (refused to participate with financial constraint as the reason),^{xxxiii} Ascension, British North Borneo and Gibraltar,^{xxxiv} all other 56 colonies, dominions and protectorates participated in 1924.^{xxxv} Such a difference is obvious as the BEE is a colonial exhibition rather than a great exposition. Even though most visitors of the BEE are locals living in Britain, there were also significant number of visitors coming from the dominions and colonies including Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand and South Africa.

Origin	Number of visitors
Americans	33,000
French	17,000
Australians	16,000
Greeks	12,000
South Africans	11,000
Canadians	10,000
Scandinavians	8,500
Belgians	7,000
Swiss	5,000
Italians	5,000
Indians	5,000
New Zealanders	4,000
Spanish and Portuguese	3,000
Russians	3,500
Poles	2,500
Czechoslovakians	1,200
Japans	1,000
Various	16,000

Table 3 No. of visits in 1924 overseas (by August)

Source: *The Times*^{xxxvi}

The ‘standard pavilion system was implemented at Wembley. It is international exhibitionary system adopted since the 1880s that colonies and dominions established their own sections.^{xxxvii} As I will discuss soon, the architectural designs of different pavilions demonstrate the different views of their respective positions in the British Empire. Even though the Irish Free State refused to join the BEE, the Palace of Industry included the industrial products from Northern Ireland as exhibits.^{xxxviii}

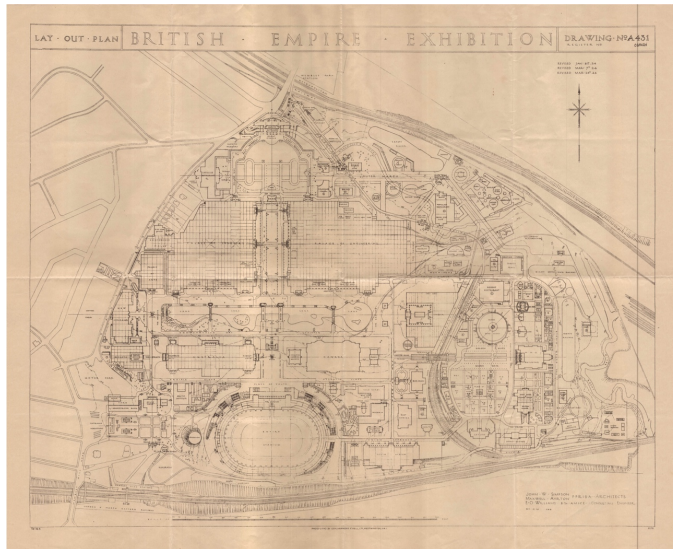


Image 5 The draft layout plan of Wembley Park (1923)

Together with the Great Exhibition in 1851 and the British Empire Festival in 1911, Andrew Thompson argued that the BEE created ‘Britishness’ of the British Empire.^{xxxix} The BEE somehow achieved this goal. Rt. Hon. Amery, the Secretary of State for the Dominions, commented that the overseas pavilions at the BEE gave the British people ‘an entirely new idea of the whole British Empire’. An article on *Evening Post* commented that the BEE ‘had made them realise that the Dominions were no longer mere pioneer countries, but, great modern, progressive nationalities with developing industries, making their contribution not only to the protection of the Empire but to its literature, art, science, and, political development.’^{xl}

Besides the events at Wembley Park, many other efforts were engaged to foster imperial cooperation within the British Empire. For instance, the Fellowship of the British Empire Exhibition (FBEE) was established by the Colonial Secretary to advance the Empire trade and production.^{xli} Before the BEE opened, Major Ernest Belcher headed a world tour in 1922 to promote the BEE. The delegates travelled to the British colonies during the 10 months of tour, including writer Agatha Christie and her husband. Another campaign is the ‘The Big Brother Movement’. It was an organisation that founded by Sir Richard Linton, a businessman and a Parliament member of Victoria of Australia, after the discussion with other business leaders during the preparation for the BEE. The organisation promoted the migration of young people from Britain to Australia since 1925. The adult in Australia (the ‘Big Brother’) would provide support and advice to the ‘Little Brother’ who migrated from Britain. Australia Section included information about this campaign.



Image 6 The poster of the Big Brother Movement

The BEE was commercially unsuccessful.^{xlii} The organiser of the BEE suffered from a loss of £60,000 in total after carrying out two seasons. However, the BEE turned out to be rather profitable to the colonies and dominions. For instance, Australia covered the production cost of its section by the sales of sample. Gold Coast increased the sales of cocoa after the BEE.^{xliii} In this regard, the BEE had somehow achieved its objective to facilitate economic activities within the British Empire. Britain began to lose the overseas markets during WWI. After the war, Britain also faced problems like high unemployment rate, labour unrest, gender conflict, the decline of international influence, etc.^{xliv} Therefore, the British government began to regard it as more important to have the trade with colonies and for their natural resources.^{xlv} As such, Wembley also became the 'first and foremost a stocktaking of imperial resources, the purpose being to increase public awareness about colonial production and thereby maximize intra-imperial trade'.^{xlvi}

2.3 Labour Strike and Class War at Wembley

In 1919, the Prince of Wales agreed to be President of the organising committee of the BEE, with the primary objective 'to enable all who owe allegiance to the British flag to meet on common ground and learn to know each other'. He commented that

I am convinced that it is only by a general revival of trade that we may hope to reduce the amount of unemployment in this country and bring happiness and prosperity to the homes of thousands of our fellow countrymen who have been passing through a long-drawn period of depression and distress.^{xlvii}

However, the BEE failed to address the growing labour discontent in Britain in the 1920s. Rather than bringing happiness at home, several labour strikes were organised at the BEE. In 1924, a three-day strike took place at Wembley. The government deployed 500 policemen to protect the workers who are not going to on strike.^{xlviii} A bus and tram strike was also organised on and before the opening of the BEE in 1924. Due to the strike of electricians, Hong Kong Section was lighted up by candles in May 1924.^{xlix}

There was no major campaign against the BEE, except the sarcastic ‘WGTW (Won’t Go To Wembley) Society’ on *Punch*.ⁱ However, the BEE also impacted class politics in Britain. On 22 January 1924, the Labour Party won its first general election. The first season of the BEE took place during the office the Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald, before he finished his first but brief ministry in November 1924. The cabinet of MacDonald refused to send as many ministers to attend the BEE as possible, though the King requested.^{li} However, the BEE also divided the working class politics between the Labour Party, and the British communists and Fabien. The latter tended to dismiss the BEE.^{lii} Ramsay MacDonald originally opposed to the BEE and accused it as ‘only the grabbings of millionaires of the hunt’. But he finally supported the BEE. He even appreciated the BEE as presenting the British Empire ‘not as a warlike institution, but as a mighty instrument in the peace and economy of the world. *Workers’ Weekly* declared that it is the class war, instead of the British Empire, being displayed at Wembley.^{liii}

2.4 Reactions from the Colonial Peripheries

Before the BEE, colonial exhibition (organised in Britain or in the colonies) had a long history and purpose of promoting cooperation between the coloniser and among the colonies. For instance, many tours and events were organised during the Indian and Australian exhibitions to establish economic cooperation.^{liv} London also intended to speed up imperial cooperation through the BEE. However, WWI had ended the peak of imperialism. Expansionism was over and regarded as Prussianism.^{lv} Some British colonies also began to organise anti-colonialism movements. With this background of new politics between London and the British colonies, Anne Clendinning argued that the BEE presented ‘a distinct national identity in pursuit of greater autonomy from Britain’ as well as ‘a forum in which to critique racial discrimination within the empire’.^{lvi}

The first major resistance came from India Section. Mahatma Ghadhi launched ‘non-cooperation’ campaign in 1920s, which included the boycott of election and the choice of local products over imported ones. Though the non-cooperation movement had cooled down by 1922, Ghadhi’s campaign received growing supports from various states in the British Raj and alerted the shaky rule of the British Government there.^{lvii} Indian authorities encountered significant obstacles to gather their participation at the BEE. It was only after a controversial debate that the Indian Legislative Assembly decided on 25 March 1922 that India should be present at Wembley with an official pavilion, on condition that a preliminary exhibition be held in Calcutta and that the Indian section in Wembley would, for the first time ever, be organised by the government of India, in cooperation with the numerous provincial governments, rather than by the India Office in London.^{lviii} In 1923, the Devonshire White paper declared that the same rights of White settlers would not be granted to the Indian settlers in Kenya. Rather than brotherhood among colonies, the Indian settlers there began to concern racial discrimination and question the idea of equality in the British Empire. Some states of India launched a boycott of the BEE.^{lix}

Among all, 'Races in Residence', or the native village, was the most controversy aspect of the BEE. The official guidebook in 1924 introduced that some sections including Hong Kong had 'representatives of their local inhabitants at work in local conditions':

Two hundred seventy three non-white colonized people from Malaya, Burma, Hong Kong, West Africa and Palestine lived on the exhibition grounds for the duration of the event. For example, the West African walled compound housed seventy African men, women and children in a village setting. The Hong Kong exhibit was temporary home to one hundred seventy five Chinese occupants, who were recruited to London for the exhibition to run the Hong Kong shops and work as cooks, waiters and musicians at the exhibition's Chinese food café.

By viewing the 'races in residence,' visitors saw the wide spectrum of peoples and cultures contained within the British empire and in this respect the Wembley exhibition resembled the late Victorian and Edwardian colonial fairs with their well-publicized displays of foreign peoples.^{lx}

In 1886, Britain organised the first large-scale colonial exhibition (the Colonial and Indian Exhibition). But the *Exposition Universelle* in Paris in 1867 was for the first-time including natives to the exhibition site.^{lxi} The organiser constructed specific pavilions and 'native villages' (Village Indigène) to display 400 natives from the French colonies France (including Indochina, Senegal and Tahiti).^{lxii} At the Great Exhibitions at Brussels in 1897 and Marseilles in 1906, 'indigenous buildings were altered in scale and their elements were adapted in function by European architects' and music and dance were performed to fit into "the formats of variety shows, nightclub acts, and civic pageants".^{lxiii} Such an disgraceful aspect of exhibitions was organised in the name of the showcase of anthropological observation.

At Wembley Park, the architectural designs of the pavilions clearly illustrate unequal positions of dominions and colonies. All dominion pavilions except South Africa was built with neoclassical style, which share the same architectural style with the HM Government Building, the Palace of Industry and the Palace of Art. However, the pavilions of the colonies were built by appropriating the respective architectural style there.^{lxiv}

The 'Races in Residence' at Wembley differed from the previous exhibitions before WWI, in a way that the natives stationed in the respective pavilions rather than a separate section. The native village was not built as a separate section for entertainment purpose. At the native villages at the respective sections, it was mainly the everyday life of the natives shown as display to the visitors. However, the arrangement of native village was still problematic. For instance, famous artists were invited from West Africa to create artwork at Wembley Park. The organisers emphasized that they would be treated as guests. In practice, the freedom of movement and the choice of dress of these artists were restricted.



Image 7 A postcard showing the native village at Sierra Leone Section



Image 8 Natives of Nigerian at work at 'the Walled City of West Africa' (1924)
Source: BnF

At the native villages, the Board of the BEE also highlighted the modern image of imperialism, i.e. the importance of development and productivity rather than the Victorian version of conquest and control. However, the native villages 'still underscored existing racial and cultural hierarchies that validated the colonial system'.^{lxv} Britain during the Victoria era was predominantly white, the 'coloured' and the natives were regarded as 'the other' in Britain.^{lxvi} However, the 'colonial peripheries' had begun to exert their political influence in Britain during the BEE.^{lxvii} The Native Village in the Walled City of West Africa ignited controversies and, ironically, stimulated anti-colonial, anti-imperial consciousness. The West African workers protested against being photographed by visitors at the pavilions. The problematic representation of West Africa at Wembley was central to the formation of the West African Students' Union (WASU) in London in the 1920s. WASU organised actions against the exploitation and mistreatment of especially West Africans in Britain.

Because of criticisms, the subheading 'races in residence' was taken out from the official guidebook of the 1925 season.^{lxviii} However, Deborah Hughes argued that the BEE was 'more than a cultural spectacle' but kicked off the Commonwealth politics.^{lxix} When North East Coast Exhibition was organised in Newcastle in 1929, they hoped to copy the idea of "African Village" from the BEE. But the idea was challenged by Anti-Slavery and Aboriginal Protection Society (ASAPS) and the League Against Imperialism, with the changing view of anthropology and the growing concern of anti-colonial, anti-racist activities as their justification.^{lxx} In conclusion, the BEE created new opportunities to the British Empire, but also consolidated the Empire's challenges at the Wembley Park.

Chapter 3 Hong Kong in the early 1920s

The BEE is regarded as ‘a triumph of peace’.^{lxxi} This comment represents the desire of peace in Europe after the WWI. But the social environment in Hong Kong was getting comparatively volatile in the 1920s. Hong Kong was under the tensions between two energetic countries, i.e. Britain and China, in the 1920s.^{lxxii} The Xinhai Revolution in 1911 abdicated the Great Qing. The Republic of China was then established. But The central government in Beijing (Beiyang Government) was unable to control the whole territory. The warlords (military cliques) essentially divided China into different regions. In 1921, the Communist Party of China was established with the support from Comintern (Communist International; the Soviet Union’s international agent advocating communism worldwide), which brought further uncertainties to China. In particular, the political powers in Guangdong (more commonly known as Canton at the time; to the north of Hong Kong) supported two major strikes in Hong Kong in the 1930s to confront British imperialism. As I have illustrated above, Britain attempted to rejuvenate the national strength and economy after the WWI through ‘imperial cooperation’ within the British Empire. The BEE was given this objective when the idea was tabled again after WWI. However, anti-colonial and anti-imperial consciousness continued to develop in British colonies and dominions. Such a consciousness was relatively weak in Hong Kong until the two major strikes took place in the 1920s.

Hong Kong took part in a colonial exhibition when Chinese nationalism and communism began to develop and challenge British imperialism in this small colony. However, Hong Kong Section did not result in the similar resistance movements like West Africa Section. Albeit among Chinese labourers concerned with their representations at Wembley, Hong Kong Section generally highlighted the role of Hong Kong’s Chinese merchants to the British rule in Hong Kong and role to Sino-British relations (though such an importance was in a decline since 1924). What were the stances of Chinese merchants on imperialism and nationalism? Where did the labourers begin to develop working class consciousness? Why did the labourer concern with the representations of Hong Kong in Wembley? What were the roles of Chinese merchants when the conflicts between Britain and China intensified in the 1920s? This section briefly introduces the historical background of the organisation of Hong Kong Section in the early 1920s before answering these questions.

3.1 British Imperialism in Hong Kong

By 1924, Hong Kong had been colonised by Britain for more than 80 years. Compared with other colonies, Hong Kong was still relatively unimportant to Britain and in a marginal role in the British Empire.^{lxxiii} However, this small colony in the Far East had experienced many changes. Hong Kong was no longer a small fishing village and gradually developed as a modern city. The Census in 1921 indicates that Hong Kong housed 625,166 residents.^{lxxiv} Hong Kong government therefore carried out infrastructure development projects to meet the demands from the growing number of residents. For instance, Kai Tak reclamation was carried out in 1920 for the construction of the first large-scale residential development project in Kowloon. In 1921, the Praya East Reclamation Scheme finally began construction after Sir Paul Chater advocating for

more than two decades.^{lxxv} In 1923, Hong Kong government began to plan the construction of Shing Mun Reservoir to ensure stable water supply from Kowloon to Hong Kong Island.^{lxxvi} In 1924, Stubbs Road was completed to connect Happy Valley to the Peak. All examples above illustrate the modernisation of Hong Kong in the 1920s.



Image 9 City of Victoria, Victoria Peak and Victoria Harbour as viewed from Kowloon (c. the early 1920s)

Geographically, the Britain Empire was at its peak in the 1920s. The royal visit of the Prince of Wales to Hong Kong in 1922 and the opening of the Cenotaph at Statue Square in 1923 symbolised the strong presence of British imperialism in this colony. Anti-imperialism campaign also began to emerge in China. In January 1920, the boycott of Japanese products in Hong Kong finally ended. The anti-imperialist idea of May Fourth Movement was also successfully contained in Hong Kong. But it has signalled the arrival of Chinese nationalism in Hong Kong in the 1920s.

When Britain began to take control of the New Territories, Sir James Stewart Lockhart, the Colonial Secretary in Hong Kong, instituted a system of ‘maintaining contact with the local Chinese population through the elites’.^{lxxvii} However, such an indirect rule system began to be insufficient in handling new challenges when Sino-British relations were reshaped and the new Chinese elite class emerged in Hong Kong in the 1920s. In general, Hong Kong government was unable to handle political crises. New policies like the regulation for the employment of children, the abolition of *mui tsai* system and rent control were initiated by London or the local British or Chinese elites in Hong Kong (e.g., members of the Sanitary Board).^{lxxviii}

Sir Reginald Edward Stubbs was the Governor of Hong Kong from September 1919 to November 1925. Hong Kong Section was organised during his term. After the WWI, there was a decline of the ‘ethical correctness/justice’ of imperial power and the growth of nationalism of colonies. For instance, he faced resistances from the Chinese communities in the New Territories when carrying out infrastructure projects there. Having said that, Stubbs also noted the importance of maintaining a good relationship with local Chinese community. He was the first Governor in Hong Kong who adopted a Chinese-style name. Before anti-imperialism movement broke out in Shanghai, he also returned the Iron Gate of Kat Hing Wai to the Tang clan in May 1925 (the gate was dismantled by British soldiers when the Tang resisted the lease of the New Territories to Britain in 1898) for getting the support from the Chinese community.^{lxxix}

3.2 Chinese Nationalism in Hong Kong

Nationalism developed in China when Hong Kong was a British colony. The special position of Chinese in Hong Kong, particularly the Chinese merchants, therefore upheld a rather different view to nationalism. Chinese nationalism emerged when the Empire of Japan issued the ‘Twenty-One Demands’ to the Republican government in 1915, which reassured Japanese’s control in Manchuria and Shandong (in northeast China; part of it was borrowed to the German Empire 1898 and occupied by Japan in 1914).^{lxxx} In 1919, the Paris Peace Conference confirmed Japan’s continuous control of Shandong. May Fourth Movement broke out. In Hong Kong, some Chinese residents, mainly students and teachers, called for the boycott of Japanese products and demonstrated on street. However, the scale was incomparable to that in China and gradually ended in January 1920. Amid the patriotic fervour, most Chinese merchants were reluctant to join the boycott and supported Hong Kong government.^{lxxxi} Department stores like The Sincere and Wing On (both of them came from Shanghai and joined the BEE) began to promote Chinese products only after receiving criticisms from the protestors and the decision from the CCU.^{lxxxii} As I will discuss later, it does not mean that the Chinese merchants in Hong Kong were unpatriotic, but upheld a pragmatic view to nationalism and capitalism.

Some scholars regarded 1924 and 1925, i.e., when Hong Kong joined the BEE in Wembley, as the more critical years for the formation of Chinese nationalism. Chinese bourgeoisie quickly developed from 1912 to 1923.^{lxxxiii} Nevertheless, the newly emerged market economy and urban culture were concluded by the civil wars between warlords. In September 1924, the Second Fengtian War (between Beiyang Government in Beijing and the clique of Zhang Zuolin in Manchuria) began. Though it ended within two months with coup d’état in Beijing, the war (and other related wars like Jiangsu Zhejiang War) already created the most chaotic situation after the abdication of the Great Qing in 1910. The central government in Beijing went bankrupt. Economic expansion and industrialisation were forced to stop.^{lxxxiv} The lives of merchants, students, workers and intellectuals in urban areas were severely affected. As a result, the wars between warlords had drastically altered the political, military, economic and intellectual environment in China. Arthur Waldron argued that the devastating wars in 1924 created the historical backdrop for the development of Chinese nationalism and widened the support for the ideas of the revolutionary left, i.e. the emergence of communism, since the mid 1920s.^{lxxxv}

Hong Kong and Sino-British relations were not immune to the political instability in China and the arrival of communism. In the early 1920s, Hong Kong was under the influence of Republicanism, warlordism and communism from China.^{lxxxvi} But the Chinese population in Hong Kong generally lacked the interest in radical movements. The instability of Hong Kong mainly came from Canton (Guangdong). In 1919, Sun Yat Sen established the Nationalist Party (KMT) and moved to Canton as his base. In November 1920, he became the Extraordinary President of the newly established Nationalist Government in Canton and ordered Chen Jiongming (whom had worked with him) to move from Fujian to Canton to become the Governor of Canton.^{lxxxvii} Sun supported Northern Expedition (i.e. war with other warlords) while Chen advocated ‘Canton for the Cantonese’ (i.e. focusing on Canton’s local development). It quickly resulted a split between them.^{lxxxviii} In 1921, Chen Jiongming sought the help from Lau

Chu Pak and Sir Chow Shouson (the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of Bao'an Chamber of Commerce and members of LegCo respectively) to communicate with Reginald Stubbs. Chen Jiongming proposed to establish an advisory committee, which is similar to Executive Council (ExCo) in Hong Kong, for the Canton Government and invite Hong Kong government to send representatives to the committee to advise on civil and aviation matters as well as provide financial support. Stubbs relayed Chen's proposal to Colonial Office (CO), British Consul-General in Canton and the British Minister in Beijing.^{lxxxix} After the Seamen's Strike broke out, the Governor of Hong Kong, the Consul-General in Canton and Shanghai supported Chen's proposal and looked for his help to stop the Nationalist government from organising the Strike.^{xc} However, Sun Yat Sen dismissed Chen Jiongming in 1922. Chen fled to Hong Kong after being defeated by Sun in 1923.^{xcj}

The British government began to be very suspicious of Sun Yat Sen, especially after his announcement of cooperating with Comintern and the Communist Party of China (CCP) in January 1923.^{xcii} With the support from Comintern, the Chinese nationalist movement radicalised and militarised. The development of the market economy in Canton was concluded in 1923. The political instability, anti-imperial ideas and the emergence of communism in Canton brought about the instability in Hong Kong during the two strikes and changed the attitude of the Chinese merchants in Hong Kong, i.e. getting closer to Hong Kong government. Both Governors Reginald Stubbs and Cecil Clementi were also actively involved to handle the relationship with Canton. The two strikes below further illustrate the development of Chinese nationalism and working class consciousness in Hong Kong, as well as the role of Hong Kong to Sino-British relations during the Inter-war years.

3.3 The Two Major General Strikes

A number of labour strikes were organised in Hong Kong from the 1900s to the late 1920s. Only between 1920 and 1922, there were 42 labour strikes organised to demand for salary increase.^{xciii} However, their scales were not comparable to Seamen's strike in 1922 and Canton-Hong Kong Strike in 1925-1926. The natures of both strikes also differed. But both strikes challenged British imperialism in Hong Kong and involved the KMT and the CCP in Canton at different levels.

The immediate cause of the Seamen's Strike is a labour action. The seamen employed by British companies in Hong Kong demanded for a higher salary, to a level that is comparable to non-Chinese employees. Their demands were declined. The Chinese Seamen's Union decided to strike.

The Seamen's Strike lasted from 22 January to 8 March 1922, which was the largest scale of labour strike in China at that time.^{xciv} The Seamen's Strike opened a new page of anti-imperialism campaign in China. Under the leadership of Sun Yat Sen and their delegates in Hong Kong, the Seamen's strike was supported by the Nationalist Government in Canton. Some Chinese workers moved to Canton. The city was paralysed and 'like a ghost town'.^{xcv} Some local Chinese business elites including Sir Robert Hotung represented Hong Kong government to negotiate with the seamen. But the negotiation

failed. In February 1922, the notorious Emergency Regulation Ordinance was passed. The seamen associations were then immediately declared as illegal. But the situation continued to worsen. In March 1922, Stubbs closed the border between Hong Kong and Canton after the seamen threatened to call for a general strike. On 3 March 1922, 11 Chinese workers were shot dead and injured by policemen and soldiers when they intended to cross the border.

The Seamen's Strike proved that Hong Kong was never immune from Chinese politics and Sino-British relations.^{x cvi} The problematic Sino-British relations inevitably affected the stability of Hong Kong and its distinctive role to regional trade. Besides, the Strike also signalled the emergence of working class as a political power and the arrival of communism in Hong Kong. After the Seamen's strike, Hong Kong government established the Housing Commission in 1923 and for the first time considered to finance public housing. This initiative aimed to contain the dissatisfaction of Chinese labourer in Hong Kong. At the end, the British representatives in Canton resolved the issue with the government of Canton directly.

Chan Lau Kit-ching argued that 1921 to 1934 marked the period of communist movement in Canton.^{x cvii} Though the involvement of the CCP in the Seamen's Strike is questionable, it is rather certain that Seamen's Strike germinated the Canton-Hong Kong Strike, which had heavier participation of the CCP. For instance, the key leaders Su Zhaozheng and Lin Weimin joined the CCP after the Seamen's Strike.



Image 10 A postcard showing Shakee

Both the KMT and the CCP were involved in the Canton-Hong Kong General Strike. Sensing a loss of opportunity during the Seamen's Strike, Comintern believed the CCP should have supported the strikers more actively. CCP was much heavily involved in the general strike in 1925-1926. The Strike was spilled over from the May Thirtieth Incident in Shanghai. The immediate cause of the Incident was the protestors being shot dead by British policemen. It quickly escalated to an anti-imperialism campaign in China and Hong Kong. On 23 June 1925, a protest was held in Canton against British imperialism. It resulted Shakee Massacre that over 200 casualties were shot dead by British and French forces there. Some Chinese workers in Hong Kong also began to strike. Similar to the Seamen's strike, some of them left Hong Kong. Around 250,000 Chinese moved from to Canton during the strike.^{x cviii} The Canton-Hong Kong Strike caused much more destructive consequences of the economy of Hong Kong. For instance, the banknotes

issued in Hong Kong was originally circulated in China. However, Hong Kong banknotes began to stop circulate in China and the business of HSBC (an issuing bank) in Shanghai began to shrink after 1925.

In October 1925, Hong Kong government received £3,000,000 from London to relief the economic crisis.^{xcix} Stubbs suggested to take a hard line against the Strike but he was stopped by London. In response to the Strike, a proposed speech of FO at the House of Lords declared that '[t]here is no hope in the traditional policy of bullying'.^c The outcome of the confrontation of British Imperialism is Britain's retreat in China.^{ci} The Strike ended gradually after the KMT began to prepare for the Northern Expedition.

Since the beginning of the Strike, the CCP regarded it more than a nationalist outburst, but an anti-imperial action to expand its influence in Canton.^{cii} London and Hong Kong governments found it pressing to collaborate with local Chinese to avoid more anti-colonial, anti-imperial campaigns and further spreading of communism in Hong Kong. Hong Kong Government carried out series of cooperation with the local Chinese community after Cecil Clementi was appointed as the Governor of Hong Kong in November 1925. During the strike, Governor Clementi experienced the rise of Chinese nationalism and the CCP.^{ciii} After assuming office, the government supported to establish Department of Chinese in the University of Hong Kong in 1927 and actively promote Confucian, so as to showcase the government's commitment to Chinese culture and provide legitimacy of its colonial rule in Hong Kong.^{civ} Hong Kong government also collaborated with the KMT to suppress the CCP between 1927 and 1936.^{cv}

3.4 Bourgeoisie Nationalism in Hong Kong

The BEE ironically triggered the anti-colonial consciousness among West African students and Indian visitors in London. As I will discuss later, the controversies at Hong Kong did not escalate to become an anti-imperialism campaign. Hong Kong government organised Hong Kong Section with the coordination from the Chinese merchants in Hong Kong. Hong Kong Section is another important showcase of their major role in mediating the different interests of between Britain, China and Hong Kong in the 1920s.

As illustrated above, before WWI, the colonial government indirectly ruled the Chinese communities through the Chinese elites. However, the government saw the growing need to work much more closely with the local Chinese merchants since the late 1910s. Hong Kong government relied on the Chinese merchants, with their personal network in China, to communicate with the government in Canton. For instance, Reginald Stubbs thought of providing subsidy to Chen Jiong-ming. The communications between Stubbs and Chen were relayed by Lau Chu Pak. During Canton-Hong Kong Strike, CCU also spent lots of effort to liaise with different parties in Hong Kong and Canton. The Chinese merchants played a rather crucial role to Sino-British relations in the late 1910s and early 1920s.

The Chinese elites (most of them are compradors and/or merchants) in Hong Kong manipulated its distinctive position in Hong Kong to exert the greatest political power in Hong Kong and Canton. They are the collaborators of Hong Kong government. But they also supported the development of Chinese nationalism and contemplated their own

economic interest. As discussed above, WWI started the long process of the decline of the Britain Empire. Nigel Cameron observed that the Chinese elites in Hong Kong began to question the power of Britain as a global leader.^{cv} Daniel Stephen argued that ‘imperial relations were increasingly likely to be influenced by forces located in colonial peripheries’.^{cvii} The situation of Hong Kong was more complicated as Hong Kong was positioned under Sino-British relations. The Chinese merchants were not the most interested in the domestic politics in Britain. Because of the weak government in Hong Kong, the ‘developed a national orientation in politics outside of the colony’, i.e. China.^{cviii}

From the late 1910s to the early 1920s, the Chinese business elites in Hong Kong were generally sympathetic to the Nationalist Government and provided support to the political powers in Canton. The period between 1919 and 1927 was the described as the golden era of Chinese bourgeoisie.^{cix} Besides the capitalists in China, overseas Chinese bourgeoisie class in Hong Kong and Singapore also actively supported or even involved in the nationalist movement in China. Chinese bourgeois nationalism consolidated in Hong Kong though their concerns did not totally concur with the capitalists in China. By 1918, a functional government in Canton was basically ‘non-existence’. The merchants in Guangdong organised among themselves to handle many social issues (e.g., purchasing rice from Anhui Province to alleviate rice shortage).^{cx}

Before 1924, Hong Kong government relied on Lau Chu Pak (who had close relationship with Chen Jiongming) and Ng Hon Tsz to liaise with the government of Guangdong. But both local Chinese leaders passed away in 1922 and 1923 respectively. The colonial government then turned the eyes to Sir Robert Hotung, a Hong Kong-born Eurasian. Hotung accompanied Reginald Stubbs to visit Wu Peifu in Beijing in 1922.^{cx}

Nationalism and economic interest did not always concur. As discussed above, the Chinese merchants in Hong Kong boycotted Japanese products during May Fourth Movement only after the growing pressure from protestors. The merchants explained their action by stating reiterating the benefits of maintaining good business relationship with Japan. However, such an explanation no longer sounds convincing when both the KMT and CCP appropriated anti-imperialism campaign to create greater political power in China. The year 1924 also saw the decline of the Chinese merchants’ importance to the political powers in Canton. Soviet Russian had replaced the Chinese businessmen in Hong Kong (e.g., Lau Chu Pak) as the major income source of Sun Yat Sen.^{cxii} After Whampoa Military Academy was established in 1924 (i.e., the militarisation of the KMT), the rich families coming from Po On County in Hong Kong also began to retreat in the politics in China.^{cxiii} Canton government also began to criticise merchants.^{cxiv} Fighting against heavy taxation and with the worries of the spread of communism (amid the cooperation between the KMT and the CCP), the Canton Merchants’ Corps organised an armed uprising between Aug and Oct 1924. It ended with the brutal suppression by Sun Yat Sen.^{cxv} Some merchants including Chen Lianbo fled to Hong Kong.

Chapter 4 Organising the Hong Kong Section

On 2 January 1920, SCMP reprinted a news report from *The Daily Mail* on the proposal of the BEE, with the objective “to give Britain domination in the world’s markets”.^{cxvi} SCMP reported the news of BEE again around half a year later. The news report emphasized that the BEE would showcase “the industries and resources of the British Empire”.^{cxvii} The colonial government of Hong Kong confirmed its participation until 1923. What exhibits should to be included to demonstrate Hong Kong’s ‘industries and resources’? Should the participation at the BEE focus on exhibition or developing business network in Europe? During the planning and execution stages, the governments in Hong Kong and London, the local British and Chinese merchants held rather views on the choices of exhibits at Hong Kong Section. There were also disputes with the sharing of expenses and duties, as well as, more fundamentally, the objectives of joining the BEE. This section outlines the organisational process, the events and happenings in Wembley and Hong Kong, as well as examines the interaction between the government, British and Chinese merchants in Hong Kong.

4.1 The Hong Kong Committee and the London Committee

On 20 July 1920, the Colonial Secretary Office of the Hong Kong Government forwarded two circulars from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce (HKGCC). The first circular from Downing Street was, indeed, dated 14 October 1919. The circular stated that the BEE was planned to be held in London in 1921 without the government’s official participation of and financial assistance. Another circular dated 20 May 1920 reverted this decision. The British government would provide guarantee and King George V and the Prince of Wales would join as the patrons. D.K. Blair, the acting Secretary of the HKGCC showed their support after receiving these circulars.^{cxviii}

On 19 October 1920, Sir Claud Severn, the Colonial Secretary of Hong Kong, shared another batch of information of the BEE with the HKGCC.^{cxix} However, Hong Kong government and the British business community in Hong Kong remained rather quiet towards the participation. It was until November 1921 that the Hong Kong government began to discuss the arrangement of joining the BEE with the HKGCC and the Chinese Commercial Union (CCU; now the Chinese Chamber of Commerce).^{cxx} On 1 December 1921, the government sent another batch of information to the HKGCC.^{cxxi} On 28 November 1922, *The China Express and Telegraph* reported that Hong Kong would join the BEE.^{cxxii}

On 16 November 1921, the CCU organised a meeting to discuss the potential participation in the BEE. Lau Chu Pak presented the information of BEE to other attendees. The meeting confirmed the participation and the plan of shipping exhibits from Hong Kong to Britain by post in 1923.^{cxxiii} On 27 May 1922, A.G.M. Fletcher, the assistant Colonial Secretary of Hong Kong, officially invited the HKGCC to support the BEE.^{cxxiv} On 21 July 1922, the Hong Kong government formally approached both Chambers ‘with a request that they will co-operate in an endeavour to make the Hongkong section a

success'.^{cxxv} A Joint Committee, also referred to as 'Joint Chambers' or 'the Hong Kong Committee', was then established by the government to organise the Hong Kong Section together. CCU also established its own Exhibition Committee.

Since then, both Chambers began to have more detailed planning for the Hong Kong Section. In August and September 1922, two meetings between the Hong Kong government (represented by Edwin Hallifax, the Secretary for Chinese Affairs), the CCU (represented by Robert Kotewall and Chau Tsun-nin) and the HKGCC were held.^{cxxvi} By August 1922, the HKGCC confirmed to prepare and deliver a model of Hong Kong Island and Kowloon Peninsula and a small model of the whole colony to Wembley.^{cxxvii} Since the early September 1922, the HKGCC advertised on SCMP to invite local companies to join the BEE, with a deadline by 18 September 1922. CCU also prepared the Chinese version of the advertisement to look for the participation from the Chinese mercantile community in Hong Kong.^{cxxviii}

Besides the Hong Kong Committee, the Hong Kong government also established a 'London Committee'. Sir Newton Stabb and Gershom Stewart were appointed as Hong Kong's representatives on the Far Eastern Group Committee of the General Committee of the BEE.^{cxxix} Both of them had lived in Hong Kong before moving to London.

Role	Member	Remarks
Member	Sir Newton Stabb	Chief manager of the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation. became the manager in the London branch in 1920 after this retirement. ^{cxxx}
Member	Mr. W. Chatham	Old resident of Hong Kong ^{cxxxi}
Member	Herbert Bird	Architect of Hong Kong Pavilion
Member	Stanley Hudson Dodwell	Past unofficial member of LegCo Dodwell & Co.
Member	L.N. Leefe	Past member of Canton Insurance Office in Hong Kong
Member	R.M. Dyer	Chief manager of Whampoa Dock ^{cxxxii}
Member	H.W. Robertson	
Honorary Secretary	C.H.P. Hay	

Table 4 Membership of the London Committee of the Hong Kong Section
Source: HKGCC^{cxxxiii}

4.2 The Negotiation between Hong Kong and London

The Hong Kong government hesitated to join the BEE at the beginning. First, the government concerned about the financial burden of the Hong Kong Section, as London required local colonial governments to handle its own expenses.^{cxxxiv} The Secretary of State had once promised to sponsor £1,700 to the Hong Kong Section. But the subsidy was never undelivered.^{cxxxv} Second, the Hong Kong government, local British and Chinese merchants were all concerned about the requirements of the exhibits. As written in the official guidebook of the BEE in 1924, the exhibition was 'designed to display the Natural Resources of various countries within the Empire, and the activities, industrial and social, of their peoples'.^{cxxxvi} The Board of the BEE required the participating dominions and colonies to exhibit only the products being produced in the British Empire. The natural resources in Hong Kong was limited, what could be displayed at the Hong

Kong Section? Such a requirement constrained the participation of local merchants considered as trading was one of the major economic activities in Hong Kong.

On 5 October 1922, Charles E. Musgrave, the Secretary of The British Imperial Council of Commerce replied to the HKGCC and reaffirms the requirement of exhibits

The object of the British Empire Exhibition is to make the different lands of the Empire mutually better known; to show the resources of each, and the possibilities of development which these resources hold. It will remind Britons that to buy an Imperial article means that the profit of both buyer and seller remains at home to benefit the Empire as a whole.^{cxxxvii}

D.K. Blair replied to Musgrave on 20 November 1922 to reiterate the difficulty of meeting the requirements of the BEE. He stated that the 'locally handled' products is as important as the 'locally produced' items in representing the typical Chinese products and manufactures in Hong Kong.^{cxxxviii}

The Joint Committee asserted that Hong Kong was a 'non-producing Colony', where natural resources and manufacturing activities were limited. But Hong Kong is 'an entrepot on one of the world's great trade routes and the storehouse of South China' with its economy heavily dependent on trading activities with China.^{cxxxix} Therefore, the members of the Joint Committee had the concern that Hong Kong neither has any natural resources nor locally produced products for display. Therefore, the Joint Committee suggested to request for a relaxation of the requirement of the origin of the goods from the Board of the BEE. In that way, goods being shipped from other parts of China to Hong Kong could be displayed and sold at Wembley. Besides, the Committee also came up with an idea of running a Chinese Restaurant in the Hong Kong Pavilion to generate income to cover the operation cost.

On 12 February 1923, Governor Reginald Stubbs wrote to the Secretary of State for the Colonies (more commonly known as Colonial Secretary) to elaborate the above concerns and provide suggestions. Stubbs held a rather strong stance, i.e. threatening to withdraw from the BEE if the request was declined:

[I] will be glad to know as soon as possible whether goods handled in Hong Kong but not produced in British territory could be exhibited and sold also whether a Chinese Restaurant would be allowed to be run as part of Hong Kong section. Unless the reply is in the affirmative to both questions prospects of Chinese participation are practically nil.^{cxl}

The Management Committee of the BEE discussed Stubbs' request on the following week. The Colonial Office (CO) and General Committee of BEE tended to accept Stubbs' request. Sir James Stevenson (also a member of the General Committee) agreed to Stubbs' concern. 'As Hong Kong produces next to nothing except ships, sugar, or cement, other manufactured goods, but owes its immense trade (had) to its position as a distributing centre for south and Central China', wrote Stevenson, 'Hong Kong will be adequately represented unless non-British goods could be exhibited'.^{cxli} However, he was still uncertain with the requirement of 'empire product' and suggested to forward Stubbs' request for the consideration by the Far East Committee of CO. Sir Gilbert Grindle, the head of the Colonies and Protectorates Division at CO,^{cxlii} concurred. He also supported the idea of running a Chinese Restaurant as 'Hong Kong is full of these'^{cxliii} The

Management Committee finally concluded that the Hong Kong Section should ‘at least’ include the Chinese Restaurant.^{cxliv}

The reservation of the General Committee of the BEE on displaying non-British products was not unreasonable. After WWI, the economy and military strength of Britain declined. Anti-colonisation movements also began to develop in some colonies. Britain emphasized ‘Empire produce’ in face of these threats.^{cxlv} The BEE was organised exactly under this backdrop. On 22 February 1923, Gilbert Grindle forwarded Stubb’s request for the comments of Sir F. Swettenham, Sir Newton Stabb, W. Chatham and J.I. Scott of the Far East Committee. The Committee discussed it briefly and was supportive to Hong Kong’s proposal. In the correspondences, Grindle emphasized that the role of Hong Kong as a trading port should be demonstrated at Wembley:

I think we must accept his view that Hong Kong should not exhibit goods handled in H. Kong [Hong Kong] but not produced on British territory. Otherwise other big distributing countries such as Singapore may put in calories to show foreign goods which they distribute.

It is a pity as an exhibit this limited will give a false impression of the importance of Hong Kong and its value to the Empire. The committee should do their (this) best to counteract this false impression by showing graphically the volume of trade and the shipping statistics of the port?^{cxlvi}

However, the Far East Committee did not come to a conclusion. They decided to forward Stubbs’ request to Sir Travers Clarke, who was just appointed as the Chief Administrator of the BEE Incorporation on 16 March 1923. Grindle wrote to Clarke on 23 March 1923. Clarke acknowledged the receipt of Grindle’s telegram on 26 March 1923. Separately, Stubbs sent another telegram to CO on 13 March to urge for a feedback within 14 days. Stubbs wrote bluntly that ‘Hong Kong must withdraw entirely’ if a favourable reply was not received by this deadline.^{cxlvii} Hong Kong government neither receive any confirmation from London in the coming two weeks, nor decided to withdraw.

The HKGCC acknowledged that the concern of Hong Kong had been reported by the newspaper in Britain.^{cxlviii} On 10 March 1923, the Australia newspaper *The Newcastle Sun* published an article titled ‘Hong Kong’s Grievance’:

There is little doubt now the Exhibition’s intention to confine the exhibits to Empire goods, for which principle Australia fought so strenuously. Hong Kong’s intended display was a typical Chinese street, but as it would have been necessary to stock the shops with Chinese wares not manufactured in the Empire, the management [of the BEE] decided this afternoon to refuse its sanction to the admittedly picturesque and distinctive display. Hong Kong threatened that if this is not permitted it would withdraw from the exhibition.^{cxlix}

It took a month for both the General Committee of the BEE and Hong Kong to hear the final decision from the Chief Administrator. Travers Clarke made the following confirmation with Grindle on 24 April 1923:

I suggest a cable be sent to the Governor of Hong Kong on lines of attached draft. There is no doubt in my mind that some misapprehension exists. Even if only the tiniest amount is produced in Hong Kong any nature of goods can be

exhibited. I know Silverware is produced there - I have had some made - I know ivory and wood is carved there - I know camphor is prepared and packed (although not grown), I know Ginger is or was packed there. I know furniture of sorts is made, and lots of other things. It does not matter if only 1% of any line of goods is produced in Hong Kong, or prepared in Hong Kong and the remaining 99% produced or prepared in Canton – this line can be exhibited.

Some misapprehension seems to have arisen over the manufactures of Hong Kong. Although merchanting is the primary industry of Hong Kong yet some production takes place of Silver-ware, embroidering of Silks, Ivory and wood carving, furniture and similar trades. Camphor too is prepared and packed in Hong Kong – some Ginger also. Any such wares, even if only a small proportion is produced in Hong Kong, are admissible as exhibits. Restaurant also desirable and on above lines is I think perfectly feasible.

If there are goods forming a staple item of the merchanting industry not produced even on the smallest scale at Hong Kong question of their admissibility will be considered if list of such goods is wired.^{cl}

The concern of ‘Empire product’ was settled after Downing Street issued a letter to the Hong Kong government on 25 April 1923 to accept to include exhibits with some production taking place in Hong Kong (e.g., silks, ivory and wood carving, furniture, camphor) and the idea of the Chinese Restaurant.^{cli}

Clarke criticised that ‘[t]he consciences of the authorities at Hong Kong and their imagination appear too acute and too blunted repacking.’^{clii} Whatsoever, his approval was crucial to the Hong Kong Section. As we will discuss in the next section, the relaxation the requirement of exhibits meant that the traded goods from other regions of China (especially Guangdong Province) were allowed to display at the Hong Kong Section. It affects how Hong Kong was represented in Britain. This policy was also much more beneficial to the local Chinese merchants than British merchants in Hong Kong, as the former had much more extensive network with the Chinese merchants in China. Messrs. Lyons & Co. was appointed as the only catering company at Wembley Park.^{cliii} The Chinese Restaurant broke the monopoly, and became a good income source for both the Hong Kong government and the exhibitors.

4.3 Further Planning and the Negotiation in Hong Kong

After receiving the confirmation from the Board of the BEE on the requirements of the exhibits, The Hong Kong government and both chambers began to have more detailed planning of Hong Kong Section. However, the negotiation did not end here. A new report on 23 August 1923 indicated that the proposal of Chinese Restaurant was rejected by London.^{cliv} The report of SCMP told us some clues of why the suggestion of the Chinese restaurant was declined by London:^{clv}

The scheme of running a typical Chinese restaurant has not been abandoned though the restaurant keepers, whom the Exhibition Committee approached, declined to take it up. A new syndicate is being formed to consider the scheme and there is every likelihood that it will be carried out.

In a meeting of the Exhibition Committee on 30 July 1923, CCU considered the restaurant plan as dropped after hearing the reply from the meeting of the Joint Committee.^{clvi} Fortunately to Hong Kong government and Committee members, the Chinese Restaurant was finally accepted and became where most social activities were organised.

The participation of HKGCC and CCU represented the interest from local merchants from British (and other European) and local Chinese communities. The major concerns of the Chinese merchants came from the sharing of cost and the appointment of associate commissioners. During the meeting on 16 November 1921, members of CCU already showed the concern of the 'enormous sum of money' that costed by the exhibition.^{clvii} In May 1923, CCU held several meetings to discuss the financial arrangement of the participation of Chinese exhibitors at Hong Kong Section. Robert Kotewall and Chau Tsin-nin represented CCU to meet with HKGCC while Ip Lan Chuen was appointed as the CCU's manager for organising the BEE.^{clviii} A finance committee was appointed to assist Chinese exhibitors among the Exhibition Committee of the CGCC. Members included Sir Robert Hotung, Li Po-kwai, To Sze-tuen, Li Wing kwong, Id Yik-mui, Li Yau-chuen, Fung Ping-Shan, Ho Wan tong, Lo Churg-kue and Ho Kwong.^{clix} The committee discussed the size of exhibition space allocated to the Chinese exhibitors and the government's guarantee of loss compensation.^{clx} Robert Kotewall emphasized that this exhibition is a form of advertisement to the exhibitors. No income would be received during exhibition.^{clxi}

On 29 May 1923, it is reported that Hong Kong government agreed to reserved HK\$100,000 to cover the (potential) loss of the exhibitors if CCU pooled in another \$50,000. The government would also pay for the costs of the freight, passage and living expense of the exhibitors (HK\$122,000) and bear the expense of buildings the houses for the exhibitors (HK\$400,000).

On 20 June 1923, Chan Tsun Nin reported to the resolution of the Joint Committee to the members of CCU. The meeting confirmed that the Governor promised to provide HK\$100,000 for any possible loss to Chinese exhibitors, with a condition that CCU set aside \$50,000 for the same purpose. However, CCU still demanded to reconfirm the arrangement with the government.^{clxii} Hong Kong government considered that there was misunderstanding with CCU. By the mid July 1923, CCU finally received the confirmation from the Hong Kong government that the financial support from the government would only benefit the Chinese exhibitors, and the guarantee fund (HK\$50,000) from CCU would not to be used until the financial support from the government (HK\$100, 000) was exhausted.^{clxiii}

CCU successfully created the best interest for the Chinese exhibitors by securing the financial support from the government. Besides, CCU also asked for two more commissioners.^{clxiv} On 27 June 1922, CCU was requested by the office of Colonial Secretary to nominate representatives to join the Joint Committee.^{clxv} During the meeting on 30 July 1923, CCU presented the reply from the Colonial Secretary on appointing Robert Hotung and Robert Kotewall as the two Associate Commissioners.^{clxvi} However, on 3 January 1924, which was only around three months before BEE opened, Hong Kong government finally gazetted the appointments of Sir Chow Shouson and Sir Robert Hotung as the Honorary Associate Commissioners. Edward Hallifax and Percy Hobson

Holyoak were appointed as the Exhibition Commissioner and the Chairperson of the Committee respectively. On 4 May 1923, the Colonial Secretary of Hong Kong looked for the Secretary of State to include at least three Chinese members.^{clxvii}

Role	Member	Capacity
Chairperson	Percy Hobson Holyoak	HKGCC
Commissioner	Edwin Richard Hallifax	HK Government
Honorary Associate Commissioner	Chow Shouson	CCU
Honorary Associate Commissioner	Robert Hotung	CCU
Member	Robert Kotewall	CCU
Member	E. Cook	HKGCC
Member	William Nicholson	HKGCC
Organising Secretary	C.H.P. Hay	HK Government
Joint Honorary Secretary	Chau Tsin-nin	CCU
Joint Honorary Secretary	D.K. Blair	HKGCC
Joint Honorary Secretary	M.F. Key	HKGCC

Table 5 Membership of Hong Kong Committee
Source: HKGCC (1925)

The local Chinese community to strength their economic and political power. On 11 February 1924, CCU established its own representative committee of Hong Kong Section. The committee was composed of local Chinese businessmen and elites.^{clxviii}

No duty would be levied on exhibits, except those to be sold at the exhibition.^{clxix} The shops were allocated to the Chinese exhibitors only It gave golden opportunities exhibits for the Chinese exhibitors generate income and expanded their business network. As I will illustrative soon, the Chinese exhibitors shipped many products from South China and even represented the merchants from China at Hong Kong Section. The major disputes between CCU and HKGCC was the choice of exhibits. On 26 May 1923 SCMP made a point that the fair should be an exhibition of ‘Hong Kong product’, but not of ‘Canton product’.^{clxx} The British merchants were also concerned about the government’s favourable treatment.

Before the arrangement of the government’s financial support was confirmed, Ip Lan Chuen urged to roll out advertisement as soon as possible. The inventory of goods should be given to the CCU and number of attendants should be confirmed by 15 August 1923. Further conditions below:^{clxxi}

- All exhibits must arrive by 15 January 1924
- No rent of the shops will be charged on the Chinese exhibitors
- 18 shops will be used for business purpose while 6 will be used for the demonstration of industrial processes (24 shops in total)
- Freight expenses will be covered by Hong Kong government
- Third class fares to England will be covered by Hong Kong government
- Wages for attendants undecided
- Amount of goods to be sent undecided
- Exemption of import duty on all goods except tea, wine and tobacco

This meeting also confirmed to send 125 men and 25 women to London.^{clxxii} In order to stimulate participation, all freight and wages were charged by the Hong Kong government. Individual exhibitors were also supply, set price and have income from their own products (after returning a certain percentage to the government).^{clxxiii} Both Chambers met on 24

August 1923. Tsin-nin Chau reported that he had already read the application and found that more than 20 buildings would be necessary.^{clxxiv} Finally, 20 shophouses were allocated to the Chinese exhibitors, where the demonstration of work and the sales of products took place. The remaining four rooms were occupied by the exhibits from Hong Kong government and HKGCC.

4.4 The Hong Kong Section at Wembley in 1924

The Hong Kong Section was located at the southeast end of Wembley Park. Opposite to the Hong Kong Section were the Sections for West Indies, Falkland Islands, British Guiana and British Honduras (renamed to the British Guiana Section and the West Indies Section in 1925). On the southern side of the Hong Kong Section was the railway of London & North Eastern Railway (LNER). The only two entrances were located at the northern side facing the British Guiana Section. The west of the Hong Kong Section was the Ceylon Section. The north to the Ceylon Section was the Horticultural Section (a garden).

The Hong Kong Section occupied 56,700 square feet of area.^{clxxv} The total expenditure of the Hong Kong Section was estimated as £35,000 in 1924.^{clxxvi}



Image 11 Panoramic sketch of Wembley Park
Source: Philip Grant

Besides the two Honorary Associate Commissioners, there were also other delegates from the CCU visiting Wembley. For instance, Fung Ping Shan and Kan Tong Po visited the BEE in 1924. They travelled on S.S. Australian Queen.^{clxxvii}

The Hong Kong Committee was assumed the duty of arranging exhibitors from Hong Kong to Wembley. On 13 February 1924, some members of the Joint Committee departed Hong Kong at Blake Pier with the Chinese workers at the Hong Kong Section. They travelled with SS Fushimi Maru of Nippon Yusen Kaisha (N.Y.K.) Line. Dr. Wong Cheong-lam accompanied the delegates as a medical officer.^{clxxviii} There were another 109 Chinese workers travelled to London by SS Agapenor. According to the memory of from Ip Lan Chuen, it took 25 days to travel from Hong Kong to London.^{clxxix}



Image 12 A postcard showing SS Fushimi Maru

The Annual Report of the HKGCC reads that the ‘centre of gravity’ was shifted to the London Committee after the exhibition commenced.^{clxxx} No further information was provided on the exact duties of the London Committee from the annual reports of the HKGCC. The Financial Report of the Hong Kong Section confirmed that the London Committee was responsible for handling the Hong Kong Section upon the arrival of everything from Hong Kong, and handling the ‘complicated interests involved in the Exhibition’.^{clxxxi} The London Committee had also begun their work before the arrivals of the items and the delegates from Hong Kong. For instance, C.H.P. Hay handled ‘the details of the lease, building contracts, general organisation and the diplomatic dealing’ in Spring 1924.^{clxxxii}

4.5 The Exhibitors

The Joint Chambers coordinated Chinese exhibitors and European merchants (with the majority of British merchants) respectively. In 1922, the Joint Chambers confirmed that the principal European exhibitors included the Hongkong and Whampoa Dock Co., Ltd., the Taikoo Dockyard and Engineering Co., Ltd., the Green Island Cement Co., and the Hongkong Rope Manufacturing Co., Ltd.^{clxxxiii} It is certain that the number of British exhibitors was not comparable to the Chinese exhibitors at Wembley.

By the mid of July in 1923, it is reported ‘only a small number of applications for space has been received’. But Ip Lan-Chuen was confident that all shops would be occupied soon after he resumed office.^{clxxxiv} During the meeting of CCU on 19 July 1923, it is reported that the shops (which was reduced to 22 shops) would probably be inadequate. By 27 July 1923, there were 41 exhibitors. As the number of shophouses was then insufficient, some exhibitors agreed to share the shops.^{clxxxv}

The lists of exhibitors were shown in the publications *Hongkong Section, British Empire Exhibition, 1924*, *The Chinese Street* and *The British Colony of Hong Kong (1841-1924): Handbook of Export Trade*. However, after checking with the information from the annual reports of the HKGCC, the Commissioner’s report, news reports and the photos taken at Hong Kong Section, it is found that the final list of exhibitors differed from the printed materials. For instance, the department stores from Shanghai, The Sincere and

Wing On, were not included in these two publications.^{clxxxvi} The table below lists out the Chinese exhibitors as identified from various sources:

There were in total 74 Chinese exhibitors identified from these sources. Most of them came from Hong Kong. Some of them also represented some other Chinese merchants in Hong Kong and South China.

Alex. Ross & Co. (China), Ltd.
Aruhhold & Co., Ltd.
Bradley & Co., Ltd.
Canton Insurance Office, Ltd.
Chartered Bank of India, Australia & China
Bonuelly & Whyte
Dodwell & Co., Ltd.
Gibb, Livingston & Co., Ltd.
Gilman & Co., Ltd.
Green Island Cement Co., Ltd.
Hannibal & Co., W.A.
Holyoak, Massey & Co., Ltd.
Hongkong Fire Insurance Co., Ltd.
Hongkong & Shanghai Banking Corporation
Hongkong & Shanghai Hotels, Ltd.
Hongkong & Whampoa Dock Co., Ltd.
Hongkong Rope Manufacturing Co., Ltd.
Humphreys & Co., W.G.
Hutchison, Co., John D.
Jardine Engineering Corporation, Ltd., The
Jardine, Matheson & Co., Ltd.
Loxley & Co., W.R.
Merchantile Bank of India, Ltd.
P. & O. Banking Corporation, Ltd.
Pittendrigh & Co.
Rudolf Wolff and Kew, Ltd.
Sasson & Co., Ltd., David
Sasson & Co., Ltd., E.D.
Shewan Tomes & Co.
Taikoo Dockyard and Engineering Company of Hongkong, Ltd.
Union Insurance Society of Canton, Ltd.
Wicking & Co., Harry

Table 6 List of European Exhibitors (1924)

Source: *The British Colony of Hong Kong (1841-1924): Handbook of Export Trade*

4.6 The ‘Official Representative’ from China

As discussed above, the involvement of the Hong Kong Section in Wembley was regarded by the organiser as an incorporation of China into Britain. Besides exhibits and the presence of Chinese merchants and workers, how to showcase the presence of ‘China’ in Wembley? The most direct answer is the participation of the government officials from China. The former Premier of the Republic of China, Liang Shiyi, was invited by Reginald Stubbs to join the BEE in 1924.^{clxxxvii}

With his close relationship with Yuan Shikai and the support from Zhang Zuolin, Liang Shiyi was appointed as the Premier in December 1921. He retired in January 1922 under

the political pressure from the warlord Wu Peifu. He fled to Hong Kong with Ye Gongchao when the First Zhili-Fengtian War took place in China.

Liang Shiyi had a good relationship with the Chinese merchants and several Governors of Hong Kong (e.g., Stubbs and Clementi). As early as in the 1900s, he had represented the Qing Court to discuss the Kowloon-Canton Railway with the Hong Kong government (which commenced operation in 1910). Amid the rice shortage in 1919, the Chinese merchants in Hong Kong had also looked for his help to purchase rice from Auhui.^{clxxxviii} Thus, Liang Shiyi became the perfect the 'official representative' presenting China in the BEE. On 14 February 1924, a news report mentioned that Liang Shiyi would visit Britain for the opening of the BEE:^{clxxxix}

After stepping down from the Prime Minister, Liang Shiyi is living freely in Hong Kong, and not involved in politics. As the British Empire Exhibition is going to open soon, [Liang] earnestly wants to go sightseeing, by the way to visit various places in Europe. It is reported that [he] has decided to set off the journey on 15th January of the Lunar Calendar (i.e. 19 February 1924). The important persons of Communications Clique in the province will come to Hong Kong around 13th [January] to see him off.^{exc}

Liang finally departed from Hong Kong to Europe on 5 March 1924.^{excⁱ} Liang visited Europe with his son (Liang Ting Kai) and secretary.^{excⁱⁱ} He visited various political figures and Chinese leaders on the way to Europe. After arriving London in early April 1924, he had an interview with Reuter. He recommended the Chinese government to build the railways and provide people with better transportation, give favourable treatment to Chinese produces, and not object the import of labourers from overseas.^{excⁱⁱⁱ} Liang joined the opening ceremony of the BEE on 23 April. He visited Wembley Park again on 26 April, and treated the friends from China and the West at the Chinese Restaurant at the Hong Kong Section.^{exc^{iv}}

On 21 April 1924, Liang attended a reception to Chinese Legation (i.e. Embassy of China) that organised by Chu Chao-hsin, Charge d'Affaires in the Chinese Legation.^{exc^v} On 27 April, he met with Sir John Newell Jordan, who served as Britain's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to China from 1906 to 1920. They discussed some diplomatic issues.^{exc^{vi}} He stayed in Britain for six weeks.^{exc^{vii}} Before returning to Hong Kong, he revisited France, Belgium Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Canada and the United States. The Second Fengtian War broke out a few months after Liang returned to Hong Kong. He left Hong Kong on 25 February 1925 and returned to Chinese politics.^{exc^{viii}}

4.7 Events and Happenings

The participation of Hong Kong at the BEE was mainly confined to the Hong Kong Section. The BEE organised some major events like the Pageant of the Empire and Torchlight & Searchlight Tattoo to highlight the connection among different members of the British Empire. There is no record showing any active participation from Hong Kong in these event, with a few exceptions. Two Chinese boy scouts from Hong Kong joined the Imperial Jamboree at Empire Stadium. In January 1922, it was reported that some boy scouts in Hong Kong might visit the BEE.^{exc^{ix}} At the end, Reverend George Turner

Waldegrave, C.H. Blason and two Chinese boys scouts from Hong Kong participated.^{cc} *Dunstan Times* reads that the Jamboree ‘has brought the Bahamas, Kenya, and Hong Kong to clasp hands with the British Isles, one yesterday heard the yells of the African forest mingling with Australian and New Zealand cries’.^{cci} Besides, Lance-Corporal Chen, the first Chinese member of Boy’s Brigade, travelled from Swatow (located at Southern China) to Wembley. He handled one of the exhibits in the Chinese Street.^{ccii}

Most events and social activities took place at the Hong Kong Section. As mentioned above, Liang Shiyi organised a dinner at the Chinese Restaurant during his stay in London. The Commissioner and the Honorary Associate Commissioners organised a gathering on 8 July 1924 to for the ‘folks’ from Hong Kong and China.^{cciii} The former Governor of Hong Kong, Sir Frederick Lugard also visited the Hong Kong Section several times.

Among all, the visits of the royal families drew the most attention from the organiser. On 14 May 1924, King George V and Queen Mary, together with King and Queen of Rumania, visited Wembley Park including the Hong Kong Section. Edwin Hallifax conducted them to the Chinese restaurant, presented with the orchestra (i.e. possibly performed by the musicians coming from Hong Kong). Robert Hotung showcased the process of silk spinning. *Hawera & Normanby Star* recorded the visits of the kings and queens in detail:

In the street of Hong Kong the King of Rumania saw an earthenware pot and was curious to know what it contained. He was told that it was ginger, and immediately afterwards a sample was offered to him. He tasted it, and immediately let it be known that he liked it immensely.

I like it so much,” he said, “that I would like to have a pot.” King Ferdinand turned round to acquaint the other members of the Royal party of his discovery, but found they had gone on. Ho hurried to them, and they returned, and the incident ended in each member of the party, ordering a jar of ginger.

The Royal party walked through the famous Chinese restaurant, where music in the original tempo of the celestial country was being dispensed, and watched the silk spinners at work 111 a shop near by. Souvenirs of the visit, in the shape of a silk shawl for Queen Marie, a jade pendant for the Queen, and a model in silver of a temple and a sampan for King George and King Ferdinand were graciously accepted.^{cciv}

Queen Mary purchased two porcelain figures at Wun Man and a silver pagoda at Wang Hing. Queen Mary tried lychees and found them excellent. The Queen of Rumania appreciated that the beautifully arranged restaurant.^{ccv} King George V said that the Hong Kong Section reminded his visit to Hong Kong as the Duke of York.^{ccvi} In 1925, Queen Mary visited the Hong Kong Section several times.^{ccvii}



Image 13 King George V (top left), Queen Mary (bottom right), the King and Queen of Rumania leaving the Chinese Restaurant

Source: Public Records Office, Hong Kong

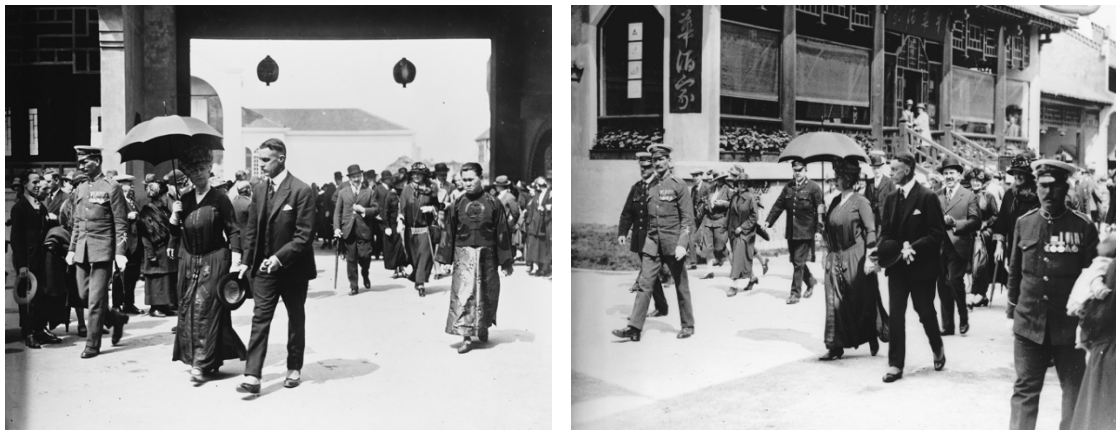


Image 14 The visit of Queen Mary at Hong Kong Section, accompanied by Edwin Hallifax

Source: Public Records Office, Hong Kong

4.8 Events in Hong Kong

Only a few events about the Hong Kong Section and the BEE were held in Hong Kong. Before the model of Kowloon Docks was shipped to Wembley, it was exhibited at its dockyard in Hunghom to the general public in January 1924.^{ccviii} In November 1924, Herbert Bird held a lecture at the Helena May Institute in Hong Kong Island to share his encounters at Wembley. The Helena May Institute also held several screenings of the film shown in Hong Kong Section.^{ccix} The film was produced by China Sun Motion Picture

under the supervision of the Joint Committee. The film was screened from 5 to 8 May 1924 (once a day) at HK\$1.00 for adults and HK\$0.5 for children.^{ccx}

According to the advertisement on *The Chinese Mail*, *The Truth of the British Empire Exhibition*, another film by China Sun, was shown in some cinemas in Hong Kong in June and July 1924.^{ccxi}

Two more events in Hong Kong were proposed. The models of Hongkong was planned to be displayed in Hong Kong before being shipped to Britain. The proposed was not realised as the models were ready after the scheduled deadline. It was also proposed that CCU would organise a supporting exhibition in at Repulse Bay in Hong Kong.^{ccxii} But no record of this proposed event could be found.

Event	Date	Location	Remarks
The exhibition of the models of Whampoa Dock	16-23 January 1924	Kowloon Dock	The models were exhibited to the general public. ^{ccxiii}
Film screening	5-8 May 1924	The Helena May Institute	The film <i>The Port of Hongkong</i> was screened once a day. ^{ccxiv}
Lecture of Herbert Bird	11 November 1924	The Helena May Institute	Herbert Bird shared his encounters at Wembley Park. ^{ccxv}
Film screening	16, 21 June, 7-12 July 1924	New Bijou Theatre, Hong Kong Theatre, The World Theatre	The film of China Sun Motion Picture, <i>The Truth of the British Empire Exhibition</i> was shown.
Hip Son	1-31 December 1925	The shop of Hip Son at 37 Queen's Road Central	Shen Shoa An's lacquered wares and other best work was exhibited at the shop of Hip Son. ^{ccxvi}

Table 7 Events about the BEE being held in Hong Kong



Image 15 Queen's Road Central (1920s)
Source: National Archives, UK

4.9 The 1925 Season

The Hong Kong Section in 1924 was commercially quite successful (generated the sales at HK\$500,000).^{ccxvii} However, the Exhibition Incorporation of the BEE recorded significant loss in 1924. The General Committee of the BEE therefore decided to rerun another season in 1925.^{ccxviii} In December 1924, it was reported that Hong Kong was

‘probably to take part’ in it.^{ccxix} On 20 January 1925, Hong Kong confirmed its participation.^{ccxx}

The negotiations with both Chambers then began. At the end of January 1925, the government accepted the Joint Chambers’ recommendations of the following composition of the Hong Kong Committee. The membership was similar to that in 1924.

Role	1924	1925
Chairperson	Percy Hobson Holyoak	Percy Hobson Holyoak
Commissioner	Edwin Richard Hallifax	Edwin Richard Hallifax
Honorary Associate Commissioner	Chow Shouson Robert Hotung	Chow Shouson Robert Hotung
Member	Robert Kotewall E. Cook William Nicholson	Herbert Bird R.M. Dyer O. Eager Capt. A. Maclay Chau Tsin-nin W. Ironside Fleming
Organising Secretary	C.H.P. Hay	/
Joint Honorary Secretary	Chau Tsin-nin D.K. Blair M.F. Key	M.F. Key

Table 8 Membership of the Joint Committee
Source: HKGCC

On 26 January 1925, Hallifax met with both Chambers on the government’s proposed arrangement for 1925, i.e. the government would be responsible for all incomes and expenses in relation to the exhibition of individual exhibitors. Workers at the Hong Kong Section would be paid with fixed salary from the government. The exhibits would be similar to that in 1924, and the exhibits would be provided by relevant exhibitors.^{ccxxi}

Partly because of that, both Chambers were not eager to join the second season. In February 1925, both Chambers met again. The CCU replied that the Chinese merchants would join only if the arrangement remained the same with the first season. But Percy Holyoak reaffirmed that the Hong Kong Section would be operated by the Hong Kong government.^{ccxxii}

At the end, the Joint Committee finally confirmed their participations in the second season. But they also commented that their participation was ‘not in the hope of immediate benefit to the Colony, but on Imperial grounds’.^{ccxxiii} The annual report of the HKGCC noted that:

Nevertheless, experience at Wembley clearly indicated that Hongkong, as a non-producing Colony, an entrepot on one of the world’s great trade routes and the storehouse of South China, entirely dependent for its degree of prosperity or adversity upon conditions in the vast country on whose borders she stands, can derive slight benefit for herself from participation in a great Empire demonstration of this kind. Imperial considerations, however, are all important, and the co-operation of every part of the British Empire was essential to realisation of the project, essentially an Empire advertisement to the rest of the world, rather than to the component parts of the British Commonwealth. Serious gaps in the ranks in 1925 would be most regrettable.^{ccxxiv}

Both Chambers recommended the government to grant HK\$200,000 for working expenses, with a further HK \$100,000 for financing the stock, which would be recoverable by sales, any profit being available to reduce the working expenses.^{ccxxv}

The second season officially opened on 6 June 1925.^{ccxxvi} Percy Holyoak left Hong Kong on 2 March 1925^{ccxxvii} while the workers departed on 16 March 1925.^{ccxxviii} Thomas Cook has issued an exhibition folder for the distribution in Hong Kong in 1924.^{ccxxix} In 1925, Thomas Cook was the agent for taking the 84 participants to Europe in 1925 and was responsible for all sightseeing activities in Europe during the trip.^{ccxxx} The list of exhibits and exhibitors at the Hong Kong Section did not deviate a lot from 1924.^{ccxxxi} As I will introduce soon, more exhibits like the historical painting collection of Sir Paul Chater and an additional model of Hong Kong were included in 1925. In terms of attracting visitors, the Hong Kong Section in 1925 was rather successful:

The Hong Kong section at the Wembley Exhibition closed on 10 October 1925, and the public queued for a great auction of lacquerware, furniture, ivory, embroideries, mah-jong sets, tea and ginger. Mah-jong evenings, a huge craze in the United States, were now reported 'a successful novelty for hostesses', replacing bridge parties across the capital.^{ccxxxii}

The official guidebook in 1925 reads that '[a]n entirely new personnel of more than 150 British Chinese, who will actually live in the Exhibition throughout this season, occupy Hong Kong Pavilion this year' and 'new cooks from Hong Kong have brought additional recipes with them'.^{ccxxxiii} This description was not quite accurate. First, the Chinese Restaurant was no longer managed by Y.T. Lum from Hong Kong.^{ccxxxiv} The Hong Kong government employed Cheung Tsoi, from a Chinese restaurant located at Oxford Street of London, as the head chef at the Hong Kong Section.^{ccxxxv} Besides, there were only 84 workers joining the second season. The figure was around half of the size of delegate in 1924.^{ccxxxvi} Third, as I will discuss in much more detail soon, the participants from Hong Kong did not live in the Hong Kong Pavilion.

Through organising the Section on its own, the government targeted to increase the profit and minimise production cost.^{ccxxxvii} However, the situation in both Hong Kong and Wembley changed rather drastically. The second season attracted much less visitors than expected. The visitors at Wembley Park dropped significantly.^{ccxxxviii} The figures dropped from 17,403,267 in 1924 to 9,699,231 in 1925.^{ccxxxix} The scale of some pavilions was incomparable to that in the previous season. For instance, the British Isles Exhibitors removed their exhibits before the Board of the BEE decided to rerun the Exhibition. The Palace of Industry showcased less exhibits. The Burma Section was closed. The states of India refused to participate (though the Indian Section continued to open).^{ccxli}

The Hong Kong government considered no immediate economic return to join the second season. The Canton-Hong Kong General Strike also made it difficult to replenish the stocks from Hong Kong to Wembley.^{ccxli} Besides, the inflexibility of government's operation also made the Hong Kong Section in 1925 a commercial failure. For instance, a marital arts group proposed to organise an exhibition tour to Wembley. The idea was withdrawn as the Hong Kong government asked for £600 to build a house and another £100 as rent, as well as sharing 50% of the profit.^{ccxlii}

The Hong Kong Section was the only section that closed before the official schedule.^{ccxliii} In November 1925, the Chinese workers began to travel back to Hong Kong.^{ccxliv} The workers were paid upon their arrival at Hong Kong. The financial account was audited by Messrs. Lowe, Bingham and Matthews. In 1925, this accountancy firm was also responsible for duties beyond treasury, e.g., arranging transport and storage charges, checking supplies.^{ccxlv}

Indeed, the report of Hong Kong Colonial Secretary identified several reasons. The smaller scale of the second season and lack of interest of visitors were the major reason. The lack of support from the organiser was the major problem. As the sales of the Chinese exhibits at the Chinese Street became the business of the government, the workers there were paid with fixed salary without incentive to stimulate sales.^{ccxlvi} In 1928, the statement of accounts for the Hong Kong Section at 1924 and 1925 was finally ready. The Commissioner's report was signed by Chow Shouson and Robert Hotung.



Image 16 An invitation letter from Hallifax for the 1925 season
Source: Daily Herald^{ccxlvii}

4.10 The Involvements of Robert Hotung

Among other prominent Chinese elites like Chow Shouson and Fung Ping Shan, Robert Hotung was the most active in London and had drawn the most attention. Therefore, it is worth noting his activities in Europe. Robert Hotung is a Eurasian who was born in Hong Kong. He had worked at the Chinese Maritime Customs Service in Guangzhou and later became a comprador of Jardine. By 1924, he had established his own business and made himself as one of the leaders of the local Chinese community in Hong Kong.^{ccxlviii}

At Wembley, first, he was busy to showcase the Hong Kong Section (as an Honorary Associate Commissioner) and his business (the silk manufacturing process) to visitors.

For instance, together with Edwin Hallifax, Robert Hotung accompanied Queen Mary to visit the Hong Kong Section on 20 May 1925. His wife showcased the silk production process.



Image 17 Edwin Hallifax and Robert Hotung accompanied Queen Mary to leave the Chinese Restaurant
Source: Public Records Office, Hong Kong

Besides, Robert Hotung actively participated in the Exhibition and met with various key officials in Britain to strengthen its connection Britain and other colonies.^{cclxix} He visited Downing Street.^{ccli} On 2 July 1924, he attended the lecture by Sir Frederick Lugard at Dominions and Colonies Section of the Royal Society of Arts in London, where he also met King's Levee, the Secretary of State of India.^{ccli}

He was regarded the one introducing the cultivation of the mulberry tree for silk industry in Hong Kong.^{cclii} On 25 June 1924, Robert Hotung visited the Prince of Wales at St. James Palace. The Hon. George Hoadley, the Minister of Agriculture of Alberta, Canada.^{ccliii}

Hotung also visited other places beyond London. He had a family tour to Scotland in 1924, with Lady Hotung and his son Eddie Hotung.^{ccliv} He also brought the attention of her son (Ho Si Man) and daughter (Mary Hotung) to the English media.^{cclv} As I will discuss in the next section, the high profile social activities of the Hotung family helped introduce a new image of Hong Kong to Britain.

Robert Hotung was obviously ambitious in the Chinese politics. While staying in Britain, he was very aggressive to represent himself as a leader of the Chinese community in Hong Kong and China. As introduced above, the British government was wary of the potential chaos in Hong Kong that the Warlords in China would cause. In 1923, Robert Hotung had already accompanied Reginald Stubbs to meet Wu Peifu in Peking. In July 1923,

Hotung began to call for a ‘Round Table Conference’ among the warlords. He toured around China from November 1923 to the early 1924. He did not receive any positive feedback.^{cclvi}

Hotung returned to Hong Kong from Shanghai on 7 January 1924, and then departed for Wembley.^{cclvii} He continued to advocate his initiative after arriving London.^{cclviii} In the interview with *The Times* on 20 May 1924, he promoted the ‘Round Table Conference’ idea again, i.e., the disbandment of the superfluous troops by the ‘four to five’ leaders in China for the reunification of the Chinese Empire.^{cclix} His idea was not realised. But his active participations in the social activities and media in London had already strengthened his position as a Chinese leader in Hong Kong and even Britain. *The China Express and Telegraph* appreciated that ‘no one in England probably can give a more informed opinion in Chinese affairs’ than him.^{cclx} He left Wembley on 26 September 1924, which was earlier as planned, because of the political instability in China.^{cclxi}

Chapter 5 The Pavilion, the Exhibits and the Demonstrations of Work

Not without challenges, Britain's political presence in China peaked during the Inter-war period. With this historical backdrop, Robert Bickers argued that the Hong Kong Section at the BEE was 'to advertise not Hong Kong but the incorporation of Chinese into the British empire'.^{ccxii} How would the BEE be designed to fit the British visitors' imagination of China and Chinese culture? How would the Hong Kong government demonstrate the achievements of after British colonised Hong Kong? As Chinese merchants also took part in the preparation stage and joined as the exhibitors, how did they select the exhibits? How would they present the images of Chinese at Wembley amid the clash between British imperialism and Chinese nationalism?

The Hong Kong Section is composed of the Hong Kong Pavilion (the rectangular building with 'the Chinese Restaurant', two gate towers, 22 shops and four exhibition halls), 'the Chinese Street' (the open space within Hong Kong) and 'the Praya' (the open space on the northern side of Hong Kong Section). This chapter introduces the architectural design of the Hong Kong Pavilion, the content of the exhibits, the demonstrations of work in the shops and some related printed materials. The debate on 'Races in Residence' will also be introduced. I will evaluate the representation of Hong Kong at the Hong Kong Section in the next chapter.

	Description of the building / space
The Hong Kong Pavilion	The rectangular verandah building with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'the Chinese Restaurant' - 2 gate towers (i.e. east and west entrances) - 22 shops (rented by the Chinese merchants) - 4 exhibition halls (also known as European Exporters' Room) - 2 kitchens / storerooms (next 'to the Chinese Restaurant')
The Chinese Street	The open space within the Hong Kong Pavilion
The 'Praya'	The open space on the northern side of the Hong Kong Pavilion

Table 9 The composition of the Hong Kong Section

5.1 The Hong Kong Pavilion

Northern Whig, a regional newspaper in Northern Ireland, described the BEE as 'the World's Eighth Wonder'.^{ccxiii} Such a description is, of course, exaggerating. However, it is rather fair to argue that the BEE had brought strong visual impacts to the visitors in Wembley. The pavilions of the colonies and dominions were built with different architectural styles to showcase the famous built heritage there. These pavilions provided first-hand experience to the visitors when mass tourism was incomparable to today.

Pavilion	Architectural style or reference
Bermuda	An actual old house at Walsingham
Burma	A bridge-house of the gates of Arakan Pagoda at Mandalay
Ceylon	The Temple of the Tooth in Kandy
India	Masjid (Mosque) in Delhi and the Taj Mahal in Agra
Malaya	Moorish-Arabesque
Sarawak	A small-scale Rajah's Palace; construction materials come from Sarawak

Table 10 Architectural styles of pavilions of some colonial sections

Source: Cook and Fox (1924)

The Hong Kong Pavilion was designed for the same purpose too. The Dictionary of Scottish Architects indicates that the architect Maxwell Ayrton designed all pavilions of Wembley Park. It is probably not true. The Hong Kong Pavilion was designed by Herbert William Bird, the partner of the architectural firm Palmer & Bird (now Palmer & Turner) and occasionally an unofficial member of the Legislative Council of Hong Kong from the late 1910s to the mid 1920s. Bird made revisions of the design based on the comments from London, possibly including the comments from Ayrton.^{cclxiv} It is uncertain about the degree of freedom that Bird and Hong Kong government enjoyed when designing the Hong Kong Section. By October 1923 when the final plan of the Hong Kong Section was released on SCMP, Bird had already arrived London to prepare for the BEE.^{cclxv} We can thus believe that the current design had adopted the comments from London.

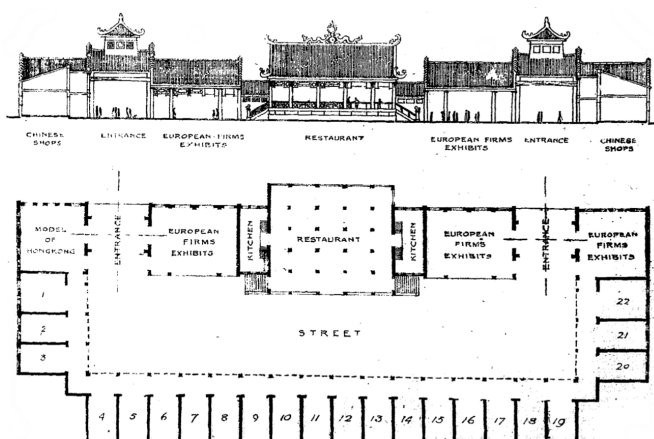


Image 18 The floor plan of Hong Kong Pavilion
Source: SCMP

Unfortunately, all written records of Palmer and Turner Group before Second World War were lost or destroyed during the war.^{cclxvi} The detailed layout plan the Pavilion and the interior design of the Chinese Restaurant are now unavailable. Bird's draft layout plan and artistic impression, photographs, postcards, illustrations are the limited sources that record the architectural style of this building.



Image 19 The construction of Wembley Park. The Hong Kong Section is found at bottom (1923)
Source: Britain from Above

The plan of the Hong Kong Section was amended for several times. In March 1923, it was reported that the Hong Kong government's original proposal included 'a typical Chinese village, with Chinese restaurants'. Yet, the plan was rejected by London^{cclxvii} With the unavailability of original documents, no detail of the proposed Chinese village could be identified so far. Having said that, it is clear that the colonial government and the organiser aimed to demonstrate the Chinese culture through the Pavilion. As reported below, the proposal of the Chinese village was probably replaced by the idea of the Chinese Street

The buildings are the type used by the Chinese population. The site is rectangular, 300 feet by 200 feet in extend, the centre being an open street 50 feet wide. The shops are on the South, East and West sides, and the more ornate buildings on the North. Two storied, with an open colonnade on the ground floor which forms a above, exactly as in Hongkong, the shops are 24 in number. The pillars bear Chinese characters, indicating the names of the respective shopkeepers and the nature of their work, while hanging signboards add to the realism of the general scheme. Two buildings on the North side of the street comprise a Chinese restaurant, and in four others, in native style, are displayed the exhibits sent to Wembley by the great British firms of Hongkong. The roofs of these buildings are probably unique in England. A close copy of Chinese construction, they are covered with an imitation of the Chinese roll tile. The rolls are laid over the joints of the tiling, their ends at the eaves being finished with green enamelled plaques specially imported from Hongkong. The ridge of the roof of the restaurant, a leading feature of the Section, is most elaborately adorned with relief panels in the enamelled earthenware for which China is famed for.^{cclxviii}

According to Bird's recollection of his visit at Wembley, the Hong Kong Pavilion stood out from other pavilions as most of other pavilions are white in colour.^{cclxix} As most existing images are black and white only, it is rather difficult to confirm the concise colours of the buildings. The image below is a postcard by Valentine & Sons provides a rare reference of the colours of the Hong Kong Section. The photograph on this postcard was originally black and white. The colours were added when this postcard was printed with lithographic technology.^{cclxx} The photograph was taken from the open space in front of the British Guiana Pavilion, capturing the northeast side of the Hong Kong Pavilion. It clearly shows that the roof of the Pavilion is built with green tiles, and the tower gate was built with red bricks. The ridges were also red in colour.



Image 20 A postcard photo showing the eastern entrance of Hong Kong Pavilion

5.2 The Chinese Street

The open space in the Hong Kong Pavilion is named as ‘the Chinese Street’, sometimes known as ‘Hong Kong Chinese Street’ or ‘Hong Kong Street’.^{cclxxi} The street is U-shaped with 90-degree curves at both ends, which lead to the east and west entrances (i.e., the gate towers) on the northern side of the Pavilion. The verandah structure is a two-storey high, where all the shops are located. The dimension of the shops was 16 feet by 22 feet.^{cclxxii} The doors of the shops are facing the open space. The official catalogue of the Hong Kong Section, which is titled as *The Chinese Street*, declares that the Hong Kong Section includes a reproduction of ‘a street and typical shops of Hongkong’.^{cclxxiii}

The Hong Kong section as a whole reproduces a typical Chinese street, with the old, gay shops, strange signs, bright-coloured wares and all the chatter and “busyness” characteristic of life in the Far EastStepping off the main road of the Section – which Rudyard Kipling has named the “Praya” after the fine sea-front promenade in Hong Kong – the visitor finds himself really in China.^{cclxxiv}

The verandah building at the Chinese Street was presented as a replica of Queen’s Road at City of Victoria. The Chinese Street received well comments, Herbert Bird cited a news report from *The Illustrated London News* that ‘walk in a real Chinese street among real Chinese carrying on their usual business in their usual way; there is no “fake” about Hongkong at Wembley’.^{cclxxv} He said that the Hong Kong Section is more than the replica of the façade of the buildings. He visited Wembley Park and praised the fineness of the teakwood-made entrance of the Burma Pavilion, but ‘the native touch is lost’ after entering the pavilion. He said that Hong Kong and South Africa Pavilions successfully gave a native touch to visitors.^{cclxxvi}



Image 21 The visit of King George V, Queen Mary and the King and Queen of Rumania
Source: Public Records Office, Hong Kong



Image 22 The Chinese Street, looking to the eastern side

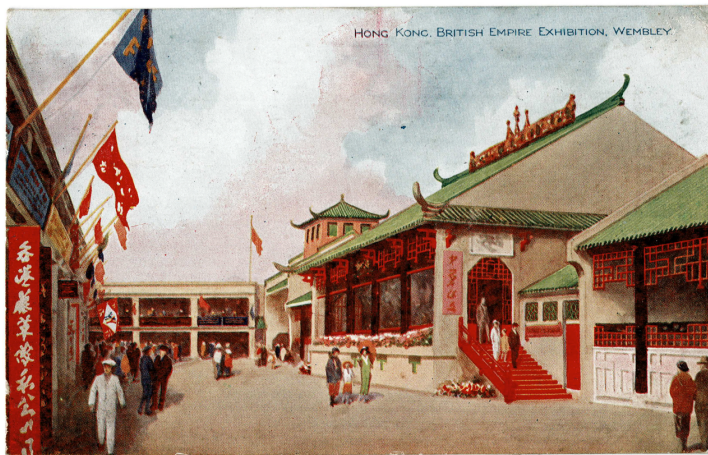


Image 23 A postcard showing the Chinese Street, looking to the western side

5.3 The Chinese Restaurant

The Chinese Restaurant is the highlight of Hong Kong Section. The restaurant is part of the Pavilion that located at the northern side between two gate towers. Hong Kong government and the Joint Committee organised many luncheons, dinners and gathering there. Sir Evelyn Wrench^{celxxvii} commented on *The Spectator* that ‘Hong Kong’s green-roofed building is very charming, and the Chinese restaurant inside most attractive’.^{celxxviii}

The Building

As the layout plan was lost, Herbert Bird artistic impression shows the original design of the Chinese Restaurant, as viewed from the Chinese Street. The Chinese Restaurant was connected to two side halls (used as kitchen and storage). There were four columns between two side walls, as well as two stairs leading from the building. Herbert’s artistic impression does not deviate a lot from the completed building. It is also noticeable that glass wall was installed between the columns and side walls. The ornaments on the ridges seem to be more complicated than Bird’s design. Another major discrepancy is the installation of the plate, showing the Chinese characters of Chinese Restaurant, below the roof.



Image 24 The exterior of Chinese Restaurant, as viewed from the Chinese Street
Source: V&A

The interior design of the dining hall

Bird's original plan included a small theatre in Chinese Restaurant.^{cclxxix} The plan was however not implemented. The rare photos that taken inside of Chinese Restaurant record the interior design of the dining hall.

Lanterns were hung for decoration or lighting. The columns were built with traditional Chinese architectural style that the bracket (dougong) was included. On the columns were the Chinese paintings and calligraphy displayed. Wooden tables and chair were used, which some of them were auctioned after the exhibition ended.



Image 25 Interior of Chinese Restaurant
Source: V&A



Image 26 Interior of the Chinese Restaurant
Source: V&A

The Menu

The Sphere, an illustrated newspaper in London, reported that the idea of operating a Chinese restaurant at Wembley was proposed by a Chinese restaurateur, who was the former chef of Wu Tu Feng.^{cclxxx} According to *Hong Kong Chinese Street*, the Chinese Restaurant was handled by Y.T. Lum (or Y.G. Lum) in 1924. He owned 5 and 8 restaurants in Hong Kong and Guangdong respectively. He came with 30 cooks and waiters.^{cclxxxi}


The Chinese Restaurant

HONGKONG SECTION

BRITISH EMPIRE EXHIBITION

1924

All Food supplied specially imported from Hongkong and prepared and served in Chinese style by Chinese waiters who all speak English and can advise customers as to dishes which will meet their requirements.



Mr. LUM.

Parties specially catered for at rates to suit every purse.

A Chinese Orchestra plays Chinese music on Chinese Instruments during regular meal hours.

The furniture and fixtures of the Restaurant have been specially imported from Hongkong and should be seen by every visitor to the Exhibition. The Restaurant is managed by Mr. Y. T. Lum, a well-known restaurateur of Hongkong, and his cooks formerly served in the Imperial Kitchens of China.

Image 27 Advertisement of Chinese Restaurant
Source: *Hong Kong Chinese Street*

A set lunch includes shark's fin with chicken in soup, boiled bamboo pith, stewed chicken rolls, fried yam and chow rice, and tea.^{cclxxxii} The table below shows the menu of the deluxe dinner, costing £40 for 10 persons^{cclxxxiii}.

1. Peking birds' nest soup
2. Kwon-Chow (stewed sharks' fin)
3. Kiang-Nan (steamed chicken with glutinous rice)
4. Manchurian stewed lichens
5. Soochow stewed Awabi (fish)
6. Yunnan steamed duck, with ham
7. Yang Chow maize custard in soup
8. Tibet Lo-Han Maigra (a vegetable dish)
9. Shanghai stewed fledgling pigeon
10. Pei-Kang stewed mushrooms
11. Fancy pastry, noodles, dessert, fruits (4 varieties), and candied fruits

Table 11 The menu of the deluxe dinner at Chinese Restaurant

The deluxe dinner was named as 'Prince of Wales Menu',^{cclxxxiv} probably because a similar menu was served to the Prince of Wales during his visit to Hong Kong in 1922.^{cclxxxv} Besides food, the Chinese Restaurant also served the Chinese wine Dew of Roses.^{cclxxxvi} This dinner had to be ordered at least 12 hours in advance.^{cclxxxvii} It is also reported that it took the chefs five days to prepare the dishes.^{cclxxxviii} The Chinese Restaurant had attracted much attention. The Australian newspaper *Chronicle* reported that there was a visitor 'come back six times for further adventures in the realm of Chinese culinary art'.^{cclxxxix} Y.T. Lum said that Birds' Nest is their best dish.^{ccxc}

As I have introduced above, the government took over the operation of the Chinese Restaurant in 1925. Y.T. Lum was replaced. A chef from Oxford Street in London was employed to handle the restaurant.

Music performance

Besides food and wine, music performances were organised at the Chinese Restaurant. The musicians included Sung Yuk Man 宋郁文 and Sung Wan Shu 宋雲舒, whom have performed in front of the Prince of Wales during his visit to Hong Kong.^{ccxci} The illustration of Steven Spurrier showed that the Chinese musicians put on suits and ties. It seems that they played with Chinese musical instruments. No record indicates exactly what music they have played. But some travelogues recorded that they have played Chinese music^{ccxcii} and jazz.^{ccxciii}

5.4 The 'Praya'

The passage between the sections of Hong Kong and British Guiana was named as 'Praya'.^{ccxciv} This name is not strange to the English-speaking community in Hong Kong. 'Praya' originates from a Portuguese word meaning promenade. Rudyard Kipling visited Hong Kong in 1888 and named the seaside road of Hong Kong Island alongside the Victoria Harbour as 'Praya'. He also wrote a poem titled *The Song of the Cities - Hong Kong*

Hail, Mother! Hold me fast; my Praya sleeps
Under innumerable keels to-day.
Yet guard (and landward) or to-morrow sweeps
Thy warships down the bay.

The naming of ‘The Praya’ probably highlights Hong Kong’s role as a trading port in the Far East. No record warship model was displayed at the ‘Praya’. But the models of the ships built in Hong Kong and a Chinese junk were displayed in the Pavilion.

Diagonally opposite to the Hong Kong Section is while the Horticultural Section while the Ceylon Section is located at the western side. The Ceylon Pavilion mimicked the Temple of the Tooth in Kandy in roof tiles with wooden colour. The western end leads to Union Approach, which could view the Empire Stadium from a distance. It is where the best view of the Hong Kong Section presenting to the visitors. Most photographs about the Hong Kong Section provide a view from the angle of the ‘Praya’.






Photograph / Postcard	Remarks
	This postcard photo shows the west entrance. The Chinese Restaurant is located at the left-hand side of the photo. It was at the junction between Hong Kong Section, Ceylon Section and Horticultural Section.
	The photo of this postcard was taken around a similar location with the above photos. The Chinese Restaurant was found at the right-hand side of the photo while the East Entrance was found on the left end.
	This photo was taken at almost the same angle with the photo above. Image Source: Getty Images
	This postcard shows a wide angle of the northern side of Hong Kong Pavilion. From left to right are the exhibition hall, ‘city gate’ (i.e. east entrance, exhibition hall, kitchen, Chinese Restaurant, kitchen, exhibition hall, ‘city gate’ (i.e. west entrance) and exhibition hall. Ceylon Pavilion is also shown on the far right.
	This photo was taken at the ‘Praya’, looking at the western side of Wembley Park. From left to right: Hong Kong Pavilion and Ceylon Pavilion, the Praya (the road at the middle), the Empire Stadium (the blurry image with twin towers) and Horticultural Section

Table 12 Photographs and postcard photographs taken from the ‘Praya’

5.5 The Exhibits at European Exporters' Rooms

Besides the design of pavilion, the choice of exhibits is probably the most crucial to any exhibition. Shortly after the Joint Committee was established, the committee members of the CCU and the HKGCC met in September 1922 to discuss the themes of the exhibits.^{ccxcv}

There were two types of exhibits, i.e., the exhibits at the European Exporters' Rooms, and the exhibits at the shops. The latter category was indeed the items for sale. The British members of the Association of Exporters and Dealers of Hongkong were responsible for collecting 'a representative exhibit of samples of China produce which, it is expected, will have considerable educational and commercial value' for the exhibition at the Exporters' Room.^{ccxcvi}

Similar to other sections, the Hong Kong Section included the models showing the culture, geography and economic activities of Hong Kong. The proposed list of exhibits can be classified into three types, (1) the models of Hong Kong territory that commissioned by the Hong Kong government, (2) exhibits about the contribution of British culture in Hong Kong, (3) exhibits about business activities of local British and European companies^{ccxcvii}, and (4) exhibits about Chinese culture. The plan was submitted to the Hong Kong government on 4 October 1922. This list does not deviate much from the final one.^{ccxcviii}

Type	Exhibit
Models of Hong Kong territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A large model of Hong Kong and Kowloon - A smaller model showing all islands in the neighbourhood and the New Territories
Exhibits about the contribution of British culture in Hong Kong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Silver model of the Main Building of the University of Hong Kong, which was presented by the University of Hong Kong to Frederick Lugard in 1912.^{ccxcix} - The models of the stage of Walter Sinclair^{ccc}
Models about business activities of local foreign companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A replica of Hongkong Hotel lounge - Shipbuilding exhibits of Kowloon Docks and Taikoo Docks - Specimens of ant-proof railway sleeper, which was submitted by R. Baker, the engineer of the Kowloon Canton Railway^{ccci}
Exhibits and goods about Chinese culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A typical Chinese street - Chinese exhibits (for display) - Curios and various Oriental articles (for sale) - A Chinese restaurant possibly with a theatre - Rickshaws (excluded in the final list) - Chair coolies (excluded in the final list)

Table 13 Proposed features of the Hong Kong Section in 1922 (by type)

Source: HKGCC; SCMP

As discussed earlier, the Joint Committee concluded Hong Kong as a 'non-producing Colony' being reliance on the trade with China. The choices above appeared to be ideal in presenting Hong Kong as British colony with limited manufacturing activities. The local foreign companies and Chinese merchants, however, held rather different views on the purpose of BEE. The local foreign businessmen intended to showcase its contribution to trade and industrial (e.g., rope manufacturing and ship building). The exhibits from the local foreign companies were mainly composed of models related to the manufacturing

process. On the other hand, the Chinese merchants regarded BEE as an opportunity to sell their products in London for income. Their exhibits were mainly consumer items available for sale at their shops at Hong Kong Pavilion, including manufactured products of local Chinese community (e.g., rattan furniture, ivory product and silk production). CCU even included Chinese goods that imported from Guangdong Province. Both Chambers also debated on display of rickshaws and sedan chair coolies inside the Pavilion. The final list of exhibits did not show significant difference from the original proposal in 1922. But the variations demonstrate the different views on the presentation of Hong Kong among Chinese and foreign communities in Hong Kong. The list of model displays is shown below:

Model	Organised by	Remarks
A model of the Colony of Hongkong, including Hongkong by night	The Hong Kong Section	Produced by George Duncan
Exhibits of samples of the principal South China products exported through Hongkong merchants	Association of Exporters and Dealers of Hongkong	/
A reproduction of the proposed factory, office and staff quarters at Gin Drinker's Bay	Green Island Cement Co.	Exhibited in 1925 ^{ccci}
Not specified	Hongkong Rope Manufacturing Co.	/
A reproduction of the dockyard at Hunghom	Hongkong & Whampoa Dock	/
A reproduction of the dockyard at Quarry Bay	Taikoo Dockyard and Engineering Company of Hongkong	/
Exhibition of model stage-sets (Chinese and others)	Unknown	Produced by Walter Sinclair
Ship models	Hongkong & Whampoa Dock and Taikoo Dockyard	/
Chinese junk	Unknown	Displayed at the Chinese Street

Table 14 Models displayed at the Hong Kong Section

Source: SCMP; Cook and Fox (1924), Lawrence (1925) and others^{ccci}

SCMP's floor plan shows that the Pavilion reserved three exhibition halls for 'European firms exhibits'. ^{ccci}The remaining one was reserved for 'Model of Hongkong'. With the information available, it is rather difficult to identify where these models were exactly displayed. From the photos and news reports, it is only certain that a Chinese junk was displayed outdoor while the rest were probably displayed in the four exhibition halls. The models of docks and the colony were also installed in different rooms.^{cccv}

Models of Hong Kong

The idea of preparing the models of Hong Kong was proposed at the very early stage of the organisation process.^{ccvi} Two models of territory of Hong Kong were finally displayed at Wembley, i.e. a large-scale model of Hong Kong Island and a model on a smaller scale of the whole colony. SCMP's floor plan indicates that the model was displayed in the exhibition hall at the northwest corner of the Pavilion (at the western gate tower). A photography recorded that the model including the New Territories was located next to the opposite the Chinese Restaurant. Possibly more space was required, the models were finally displayed in two separate rooms.

The China Express and Telegraph reported that the models stood on ‘artificial water’.^{cccvii} However, no living record of the full details could be identified so far. The photograph recorded that Edwin Hallifax (second left) was showing a model Hong Kong to guests. This is probably the smaller model displaying the whole colony. As we can tell from the photograph, the three-dimensional model displays the geographical features of Hong Kong Island, Kowloon Peninsula, Lantau Island and other outlying islands. The wires between the model and the railing possibly indicate the locations of major attractions in Hong Kong.



Image 28 The model of Hongkong
Source: Public Records Office, Hong Kong

Hongkong by Night and Hongkong by Day

Another major feature that next to the model of Hong Kong is ‘Hongkong by Night’, which is a model providing a panorama view of Hong Kong Island and Victoria Harbour. As the model did not survive, no photography nor plan of the model could be identified, it is impossible to know what ‘Hongkong by Night’ exactly looks like.

According to SCMP, ‘Hongkong by Night’ was model that built upon the model of Hong Kong. It had ‘illuminating innumerable pinholes’ in the model of Hong Kong. Visitors would look inside the pinholes. There was also ‘a light within’ to present a ‘realistic impression’ of Hong Kong at night. The model resembles ‘the real thing’ that local residents of Hong Kong ‘see every evening’.^{cccviii}

The model attracted positive attention from the British media, which somehow recorded of what the models looked like. *The Sphere* reported that ‘Hongkong by Night’ is ‘one of the most beautiful models to be seen in the Exhibition’.^{cccix} Another news report of *The Times*, titled ‘The Lights of Hong-Kong’ also illustrates the attractiveness of the model

We are over the water in Kowloon and it is night. The junks glide slowly by like shapeless phantoms. Their sails cross over, blot out-and release again the starlit slopes of Hong-kong. Steamboats, tugs, and fussy motor craft have long since gone to their night berths. This I have seen many times-ships lit up in the dead black night approach like regimental fire-flies or luminous beetles to merge and blur, and, as they slow up at their moorings, be finally lost amid the electric resplendences of the water front and the twinkling glow of our terraced

city. Then the anchor plunges and sets the phosphorus leaping while the running cable echoes over the glistening waters. But the port is asleep to-night; there are 80 or more ocean-going steamers at their moorings, still but alive. They are, indeed, the Colony's "life-blood." Half came in to-day, as many will leave tomorrow; and those that wear the Red Ensign swing with slow motion to the tide between the Dutchman and the Danc.

I wanted to see the models for Wembley before they were packed up, and particularly the reproduction of "Hong-kong at Night." Many ships were under repair, the bare ribs of the builder's unfinished product pointed aloft. The noise of machine shops and forges told me as plain as words that they had no time to waste. Some thousands of grimy Chinese artisans slanted their eyes but hustled and "hi-ya'd" at varied tasks. The alert attention of highly skilled British foremen from the Clyde, the Tyne, the Thames, and Belfast was not diverted. A friend in waiting conducted me to a great hall near by-the pattern loft, it is called -and there I saw a set of models with which, I think, Hong-kong may face Wembley in pride. A relief map of Hongkong and its territories, showing all the leading features, lay on the floor. Surrounding it were the models.^{cccxi}

The model was prepared George Duncan in Hong Kong and shipped to Wembley in January 1924. The model was not exhibited in Hong Kong.^{cccxi} Based on the original one in 1924, the model in 1925 was 'a fresh setting'. 'Hongkong by Day' was added in the second season, which showed 'the harbour, and Kowloon as seen from Hongkong half-way up the Peak'.^{cccxi}

Models of the businesses of British and European merchants

After the negotiation with London, the Joint Committee confirmed to ignore natural resources but focus on the manufactured products that produced in Hong Kong and imported from China. Chinese merchants paid much more attention to the sales at their shops. As the products of the industrial production by the British and European merchants were nearly unsuitable for retail sales, their exhibits mainly included the models showing their industrial plants and factories in Hong Kong. Among all, the models of the docks of Taikoo and Whampoa drew the most attention. The model of Whampoa was smaller than that of Taikoo.^{cccxi} It was produced by E. Docherty.^{cccxi}



Image 29 The model of Taikoo Docks
Source: Swire HK Archive Service

Models of Ship and Sampan

There were two types of ship being exhibited at Hong Kong Section, the models of the ships manufactured by the both dockyards and the Chinese junk, which show different aspects of Hong Kong's maritime activities. According to the news report by *The Sphere* in 1924, the exhibition hall included the ship models:

The pictures of the cruises of Taikoo was shown at the top of the display box of the models of dockyard. Existing information about the numbers and sizes of ship models displayed was unavailable. But it is certain that the model of SS Tailee (Tai Lee) of Whampoa was displayed at Wembley. SS Tailee was pirated, on its way from Kongmoon to Hong Kong on 13 April.^{cccxv} Wembley opened in late April. The ship model of Tailee was still exhibited at Hong Kong Section.^{cccxvi}

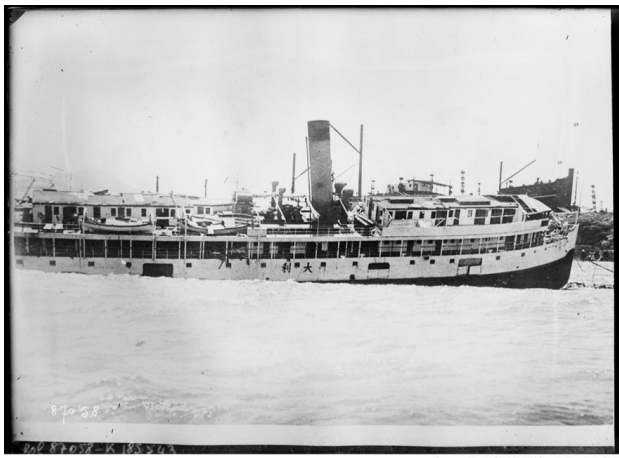


Image 30 SS Tailee
Source: BnF

Besides ship models, at least one actual sampan was displayed at the Chinese Street. The photograph below shows that a Chinese junk, probably of similar size to a real sampan, was displayed outside of the Chinese Restaurant in the Chinese Street. The plank can be clearly seen. Another postcard shows the Chinese Street taken inside Hong Kong Pavilion facing west. At the centre of the photo is a Chinese junk. This Chinese junk was displayed at the different position. However, it is still uncertain if both photos refer to the same sampan or not.



Image 31 A Chinese junk displayed at the Chinese Street

Film screening

A film about Hong Kong was shown at Hong Kong Section. It is not included in the original plan. The film has two titles: 'The Port of Hongkong' and 'A British Colony since 1841 and the base of Britain's Trade with China'. It is a four-reel film that depicted the colony to visitors. There was also planned that the film will be shown outside the British Empire, which the second title will be used.^{cccxvii} Existing source did not indicate the location of film screening at Hong Kong Section. Two copies were made: one was shipped to Wembley while another one was kept in Hong Kong (and screened at The Helena May Institute).

Based on the written record by SCMP and *The China Mail*, the film includes the panoramas of Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and Victoria Harbours, some scenes of the city, scenes of shipping activities and other scenes of the social activities in Hong Kong. The detailed of the film is illustrated below

The film was produced by China Sun Motion, a company based in Hong Kong. According to *The China Mail*, the film was produced by China Sun Motion Picture with M.F. Key, the acting secretary of the Joint Committee, as the supervisor of the filming process. It is reported that the film arrived Wembley after the BEE began because of bad weather and technical constraint.^{cccxviii} However, SCMP gave us more clues about such a delay. Besides the two factors mentioned above, SCMP reported that 'the first set of pictures was taken by camera men not conversant with the purpose for which they were to be used'. Therefore, M.F. Key asked to crew to take additional and new scenes.^{cccxix}

Even the final cut was heavily criticised. After the screening at The Helena May Institute, an article published on SCMP criticised the technical incompetence of the film even though the author acknowledged that film should not be compared with Hollywood and Wardour Street standard. For instance, some scenes had no subtitle, some scenes had 'rather indifferent photography and careless sub-titling', as well as some panoramic views had 'lost in distance and bad focus'. But the author also praised some scenes like 'hillsides and of the roads and houses in the higher levels', unloading cargo at Kennedy Town and at the Kowloon Wharf, the view of the Sulphur Channel and ships anchored there, the Chinese streets and maritime transport. Among all, the best scene is 'native life and coolie labour at work'.^{cccxx}

As no surviving copy could be identified so far, it is impossible to determine if the comments above are justified or not. But the owners of the production house should be highlighted. China Sun Motion Picture was established by Lai Man Wai and Lai Pak Hoi in Hong Kong in 1923. Both of them were the pioneers of Chinese movies who produced one of the earliest Chinese movies *Chuang Tzu Tests His Wife* in 1914. Lai Man Wai is also regarded as the father of Hong Kong film. In 1926, China Sun Motion Picture moved to Shanghai as Hong Kong was no longer favourable for film production during Canton-Hong Kong Strike. Lai Man Wai followed Sun Yat Sen and produced documentary about his Northern Expedition. Even if the film for Hong Kong Section was really not up to Key's standard, the involvement of China Sun Motion Picture still demonstrates Hong Kong government's notice of them, as well as Hong Kong's role in movie development in the Greater China.

Photographs and paintings

Though the BEE focused on manufactured products, artworks were also included. What kind of arts should be displayed at Hong Kong Section? With the information available, it is certain that the photographs of William Nicholson and Chater Collection were displayed.

William Nicholson took a series of photographs at the destruction in Hong Kong during the typhoon in 1906. The photographs were displayed at Hong Kong Section in 1924.^{cccxxi}

The collection of Sir Paul Chater was included to Hong Kong Section in 1925. Chater was a tycoon and unofficial member of ExCo. His rich collection of paintings later became part of Colonial Museum for Hong Kong, albeit many were destroyed during WWII. The collection includes 430 oil paintings, watercolour etchings and engravings, as well as 54 books.^{cccxxii}

According James Orange's catalogue that published in 1924, the Chater collection included historical paintings about China, Hong Kong and Macao from 1655 to 1860. The collection included some famous paintings like the paintings of Auguste Borget (drawn before British colonisation of Hong Kong), T. Fielding's *Waterfall at Water Fall Bay*, some portraits of Chinese Mandarin of the Qing Court, Governors and British businessmen in Hong Kong, panoramic drawings of Hong Kong Island (as view from Victoria Harbour or Kowloon), as well as the view from East Point to Victoria City. James Orange recorded that some of the paintings had been exhibited at Wembley in 1924^{cccxxiii} SCMP reported that paintings of Chinese Mandarin were exhibited.^{cccxxiv} However, the list of paintings displayed at Hong Kong Section remains uncertain.



Image 32 The painting of Auguste Borget
Source: Hong Kong University Libraries The New York Public Library

Stage-set Models by Walter Sinclair

The Hong Kong Section also attempted to demonstrate the influence of British culture and cultural exchanges with China in Hong Kong through the exhibits. The stage-set models that designed by Walter Sinclair were displayed at one of the exhibition halls at Hong Kong Section.^{cccxxv} According to the advertisement on *The Stage*, the stage sets

included ‘Shakespearean and Chinese models’ were exhibited.^{cccxxvi} However, no record shows that the models were included to The Palace of Arts.

Walter Sinclair led the Amateur Dramatic Club of Hong Kong since 1912. During his office, he introduced British literature and theatre play to Hong Kong. For instance, he directed Lord Dunsany’s *The Gods of the Mountains* and *The Tents of the Arabs* at Theatre Royal of the City Hall in 1920,^{cccxxvii} *St. Joan* of Bernard Shaw in 1925.^{cccxxviii} In 1913, together with Hong Kong Mummies, Sinclair directed *Twelve Nights*, which was the first amateur production of Shakespearean play in the Far East.^{cccxxix}

The stage play of Walter Sinclair also shows the cultural exchanges between foreign communities and locals in the colony. Sinclair trained a cast of Chinese undergraduates from the University of Hong Kong, who were regarded as the most appropriate cast and striking interpreters of Lord Dunsany’s plays.

5.6 The Exhibits at the Shops

Chinese arts and crafts were also exhibited in the exporters’ room (i.e. the exhibition halls). Below is the list of Chinese arts and crafts as mentioned by *Hong Kong Chinese Street*. The full list exhibits at the exhibition halls remained unknown.

-	Brassware
-	Chinaware
-	Cigarettes
-	Grasscloth
-	Ivory and ivoryware
-	Jadestone
-	Lacquerware
-	Lichees
-	Rattan
-	Silk
-	Vermillion

Table 15 The list of exhibits of Chinese arts and crafts at the Hong Kong Section

However, it is the Chinese ‘exhibits’ at the shops on the Chinese Street forming themselves a rather different category of exhibits at Hong Kong Section. As outlined above, Hong Kong government threatened to withdraw from the BEE if the Chinese goods (manufactured products imported from China and traded in Hong Kong) could not be exhibited. The Board of the BEE finally accepted Hong Kong’s request. Many shops at the Chinese Street exhibited the products that were not produced in Hong Kong. Some exhibitors even represented their business partners from Guangdong. More importantly, the ‘exhibits’ were more than window display, they also available for sale at the shops. The choice of exhibits therefore highlighted Hong Kong’s connection to the Chinese economy.

For instance, *lichee* is a kind of fruit from Southern China, which is unreasonable to be counted as arts and crafts. However, it did not really matter to the Chinese merchants there. Retail sales and expansion of their business network in Europe were their focuses.

5.7 The ‘Chinese Quarters’

As discussed above, the ‘Races in Residence’ was the most controversial aspect of the BEE. A newspaper article in 1923 also reported that Hong Kong would be included to the plan:

There are going to be communities of Eastern and African natives living according to their own customs. There will be Chinese families in a compound of their own, and a replica of a street in Hong Kong, with everything Chinese about it. There will be blacks from Nigeria living in little round huts, and doubtless doing their beds to keep warm. The most complete and interesting of these strange foreign villages will be that inhabited by the Burmese, where we are promised the sight of native miners washing rubies in a stream.^{ccccxx}

Strictly speaking, however, the idea of ‘Race in Residence’ was not implemented at Hong Kong Section. As discussed above, the idea of Chinese village was rejected by the Board of the BEE.^{ccccxxi} It was probably replaced by the idea of the Chinese Street, i.e. reproducing Queen’s Road with the shops operated by the Chinese merchants. Such an idea did not provoke any resistance from CCU. On the contrary, the Chinese merchants welcomed it for income generation.

Besides, the participants from Hong Kong also did not live in Hong Kong Pavilion. Sir John W. Simpson and Sir Maxwell Ayrton were the main architects of Wembley Park. Sir Owen Williams was appointed as the principal engineer. As shown by the layout plan of Sir John W. Simpson and Sir Maxwell Ayrton, ‘Chinese Quarters’ were designated at the southeast end of Wembley Park next to the railway station and staples. The quarter was built with sleeping huts, two lavatories and a kitchen. No photo of the Chinese Quarters is identified so far. The Quarter was built with sleeping huts, two lavatories and a kitchen. The location of the Chinese Quarters on J.C. Betts’ map is marked by several blocks of small buildings. Probably most participants from Hong Kong lived there during their stay in Britain. It is reported that the male and female participants lived in separate compounds.^{ccccxxii} The exhibitors described the ‘Chinese Quarters’ as ‘stables’. They were dissatisfied with the quality of the wooden buildings and afraid of fire. By July 1924, they had already moved out from these buildings^{ccccxxiii}

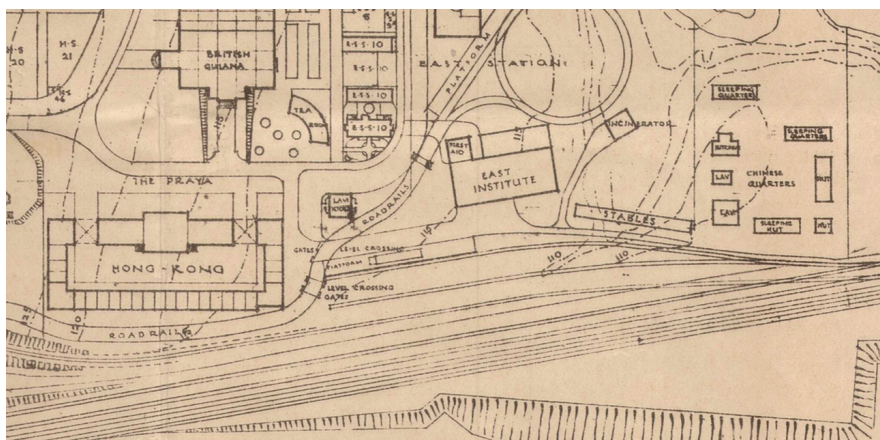


Image 33 Location of Hong Kong Section and the Chinese Quarters
Source: Layout plan by Simpson and Ayrton

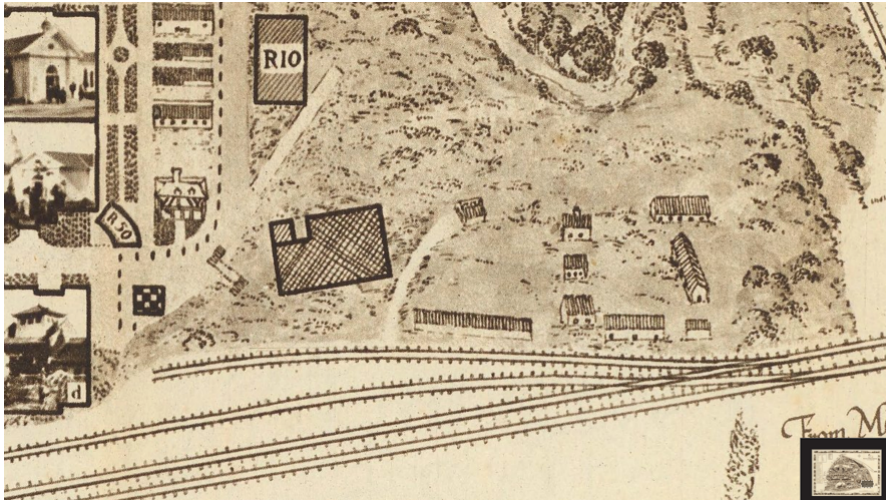


Image 34 Location of Hong Kong Section and 'Chinese Quarters'
Source: Map of British Empire Exhibition (1925; designed by J.C. Betts)^{cccxxxiv}

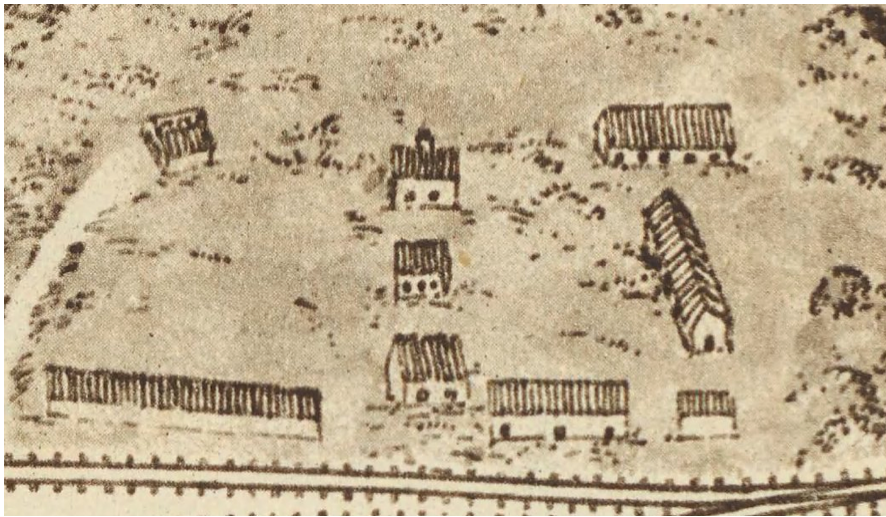


Image 35 Pictorial representation of 'Chinese Quarters'
Source: Map of British Empire Exhibition (1925; designed by J.C. Betts)

5.8 The Demonstrations of Work

The participants from Hong Kong did not live in Hong Kong Section. The everyday life of the participants was not exhibited for an entertainment purpose. Instead, the manufacturing processes of the businesses of the Chinese merchants were demonstrated at the shops during opening hours. Some participants demonstrated traditional Chinese craftsmanship and manufacturing to visitors. The plan of the demonstrations of work came after the idea of the Chinese village was declined:

Actual demonstrations will be given of Chinese weaving, spinning and dyeing, kingfisher work, black-wood carpentry, ivory carving, basket making, pewter and other processes such as are to be seen at Kowloon City. The manufacture of silk from the rearing of the silkworms, to the first stage of manufacture will also be exhibited.^{cccxxxv}

The demonstrations at least included rattan making, match making, doll making and silk production in 1924. The demonstrations of work took place in the shop as well as outside of the shop. The table below showed the occupations of the participants in the second season.

Occupation	Number of participants
Worm rearing	4
Rattan craftsman	4
Paper cutting craftsman	4
Silverware craftsman	4
Pomelo carving craftsman	4
Embroidery craftsman	2
Ivory ware craftsman	2
Cook	6
Waiter and shopkeeper	5
Sales	20
Cashier	5

Table 16 Chinese participants in 1925

Source: The Chinese Mail^{ccccxxvi}

A photography shows that the doll making process was showcased to Queen Mary during her visit. She also purchased green pendants, silver charms artificial flower souvenirs, three hand-made doors, ivory products, teapot and a bird cage.^{ccccxxvii}



Image 36 The demonstration of doll making during the visit of Queen Mary

Source: Public Records Office, Hong Kong



Image 37 Queen Mary viewing the demonstration of work, probably rattan making process
Source: Public Records Office, Hong Kong



Image 38 Postcards showing the process of rattan making, available for purchase at Hong Kong Section

Among all, the showcase of the silk production (both in 1924 and 1925) caught the most attention. It is partly because the silk production plant in Hong Kong was owned by Robert Hotung. Robert Hotung and Lady Hotung accompanied many guests to watch the showcase of the silk production process. Yue Lee Yuen was a comprador company that established formed by Robert Hotung. The demonstration of silk production probably took place there.

There was a series of real photo postcards showing the process of silk production, which were available for purchase at Hong Kong Section. The women workers and the silkworms were sent from Hong Kong to Wembley. Shortly after the BEE opened in 1924, the demonstration stopped because of the insufficient mulberry leaves supply to the silkworms. More mulberry leaves were then sourced from France and Italy. ^{cccxxxviii}



Image 39 Postcards showing the process of silk production, available for purchase at Hong Kong Section

Rickshaws and chair coolies

‘Races in Residence’ was not implemented at Hong Kong Section and the idea Chinese village was rejected. But it does not mean that Hong Kong Section was free from any controversy. The major opposition came from the rickshaw and sedan chair pullers (coolies) in Hong Kong. In the earlier plan of Hong Kong Section, it was proposed to bring rickshaw and sedan chair coolies to London.^{cccxxxix} For instance, a local British newspaper reported in 1923 that visitors ‘will all probability be able to charter rickshaw or a sedan chair, though that not yet settled’.^{cccxi}

The service of rickshaw and sedan chair would not be limited to Hong Kong Section but be available around the Exhibition Site. As the Exhibition Site at Wembley covered a big area, Herbert Bird expected that rickshaw would make a good fortune to Hong Kong Section.^{cccxli} His artistic impression of the Chinese Restaurant at Hong Kong Section had also included a rickshaw, coolie workers and a person using carrying pole.

However, Herbert Bird received strong resistance. The rickshaws pullers in Hong Kong also protested against the proposal. The idea of rickshaw and sedan chair at Wembley was finally rejected.^{cccxlii} Rickshaw was neither invented in Hong Kong nor available in Hong Kong only. It was reported that the Ceylon Section might include rickshaw (but finally not).^{cccxlili}



Image 40 West entrance next to the shop of The Sincere

Nevertheless, it does not mean that the images of rickshaw were excluded from Hong Kong Section. The film at Hong Kong Section had included the scenes of rickshaw and the pullers in Hong Kong:

Round the corner, the rickshaws are running silently to left and to right, their dim lamps, white in front and red behind, swaying to the motion of the runner. They are variously burdened. The trains have just ceased their rumble, and the rickshaw puller has come into his own. Taipans go home from the dance, white-fronted and immaculate, men who have planted the pine-against fever, men who fill up the ships' of-the world and empty them, men who know the weight of a dollar and. how to double-it, men who throw mountains into -the sea and: ornament the skyline with palatial homes, men who put the lights into Hong-kong.^{cccxliv}

Rickshaw was still regarded by the British communities in Hong Kong and London as one of the most iconic symbols of Hong Kong. When Queen Mary visited Hong Kong Section in May 1925, she purchased 'six silver charms in the form of a rickshaw'.^{cccxlv}

5.9 The Printed Materials

The Hong Kong government and the exhibitors at the Hong Kong Section published some booklets to introduce Hong Kong to visitors. The Hong Kong Section was, obviously, also mentioned by the official guidebooks of the BEE. These materials provide resourceful reference to examine the representation of Hong Kong to the visitors at Wembley Park. The table below lists out the printed materials that published by Hong Kong Section and official guidebooks authorised by the BEE.



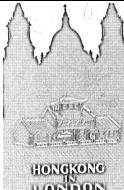


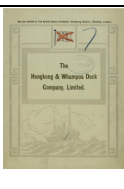

Cover	Year	Title	Publisher / Printer, Location	Content
	1924	The British Empire Exhibition, 1924: designed to display the natural resources of the various countries within the Empire, and the activities, industrial and social, of their peoples: Wembley Park, London	Fleetway Press, London	This is official guidebook of the BEE.
	1924	British Empire Exhibition, 1924, Wembley, London, April - October: Handbook of general information	The British Empire Exhibition, London	The official handbook of the BEE. Image Source: State Library of Victor
	1924	Hongkong Section, British Empire Exhibition, 1924. The Chinese Street	Hong Kong Section, Hong Kong	The official guidebook the shops at the Chinese Street. Image Source: State Library of Victoria
	1924	Hongkong	Publicity Bureau for South China, Hongkong	A booklet providing information of Hong Kong. Image Source: State Library of Victoria
	1924	The British Colony of Hong Kong (1841-1924): Handbook of Export Trade	British Exporters of Hongkong, unknown publishing location	The official guidebook providing the information about the exhibits (mainly the samples of South China produce) that provided by the British and European exporters in Hong Kong. Image Source: V&A
	1924	The Hongkong & Whampoa Dock Company, Limited	Hongkong & Whampoa Dock Company, Limited (publisher); Ye Olde Printerie Limited (printer), Hong Kong	The booklet providing information about Whampoa Dock Image Source: State Library of Victoria
	1925	The British Empire Exhibition 1925: Official Guide	Fleetway Press, London	The official guidebook of the BEE in 1925.

Table 17 List of printed publications issued by the organisers and exhibitors of the BEE

Chapter 6 The Representations of Hong Kong at Wembley

In September 1924, Sir Thomas Wilford, the Leader of the Opposition of New Zealand, questioned the Prime Minister William Massey if China and Japan organised any pavilions to sell respective items at the BEE in Wembley. William Massey replied that 'Hong Kong was a British Possession and that would account for Chinese being at the Exhibition'.^{cccxlvi} Massey's response clearly illustrates the BEE's ambition and the visitors' general perception of including China into Wembley through Hong Kong.

How to integrate China through the Hong Kong Section? As Hong Kong had already developed as a modern city in the 1920s, would the integration of the Chinese images at the Hong Kong Section conflict with the real images of Hong Kong? Did the Hong Kong Section successfully present the new images of Hong Kong at Wembley? Are the representations of Hong Kong accurate? Were there any discrepancies between the presentation by the organisers and perception of visitors?

6.1 The Hong Kong Pavilion and the 'Praya'

The most visible component of the Hong Kong Section is the northern side of Hong Kong Pavilion, i.e. the 'Chinese Restaurant' and the two gate towers. They can be viewed from the 'Praya' clearly. Did the Pavilion represent the most popular and representative architectural design of Hong Kong in the 1920s? The answer is clearly not. By 1920s, City of Victoria was quite developed and sizeable. As I will elaborate in the next section, the prime business area around Central was full of buildings with European architectural styles. The Chinese architectural style of the Hong Kong Pavilion could not represent the latest development of Hong Kong in the 1920s.

Similar to other colonial pavilions like Burma and Ceylon, the Hong Kong Pavilion was not designed to illustrate the latest development there. Obviously, the organiser intended to emphasize Hong Kong's connection with historical China. As the official guidebook of the 1924 season suggests, the Hong Kong Section would give visitors a feeling of being 'in China':

Stepping off the main road of the Section – which Rudyard Kipling has named the 'Praya' after the fine sea-front promenade in Hong Kong – the visitor finds himself really in China.^{cccxlvi}

Therefore, the more appropriate questions to evaluate the representation of Hong Kong Pavilion are: did the Hong Kong Pavilion represent 'real China'? Did Hong Kong Pavilion represent the most popular and representative Chinese architectural design in Hong Kong? At Wembley Park, the pavilions of most colonies and dominions were not designed by architects with the respective indigenous origins. The traditional architectural elements were appropriated and applied in the pavilions at Wembley Park.^{cccxlvi} Similar to the pavilions of some other colonies, Hong Kong Pavilion was designed by a British architect practising in Hong Kong, Herbert William Bird. The architectural design of the Hong Kong Pavilion aimed to present the image of Hong Kong before colonisation. The Chinese Restaurant and the two gate towers were the Chinese architectural elements that Bird appropriated at the Hong Kong Pavilion for this purpose.



Image 41 The Hong Kong Pavilion
Source: Getty Image

Bird's design was successful to draw attention. The official guidebook in 1924 commented that the gate towers are the 'usual fashion of gateways leading to Chinese cities'.^{cccxlx} *The Sphere* published an illustration of the Chinese Restaurant and the tower (as viewed from the Horticultural Section). The caption reads that '[t]he fascination of the Orient will be exemplified in this pavilion, which form part of a general scheme illustrating life in Hong Kong'.^{cccl} Such a comment is rather fair. It acknowledges that only part of the life in Hong Kong, i.e. the life of the Chinese community, could be demonstrated through this building. The everyday life of British and European settlers was excluded from the image.

The Chinese Restaurant was built like a joss house. No existing record indicates any particular buildings that Herbert Bird had made reference with. However, one of the souvenir postcards (published by Raphael Tuck & Sons) that was available for sale at the Hong Kong Section included a photograph postcard of a joss house in Hong Kong. The caption reads that the roof ornamentation on the main ridge looks similar to that of the Chinese Restaurant. The dragon and the ball at the centre and the phoenixes at both end at the ridges of the Chinese Restaurant resembles the ornamentation on the postcard photo. The temple in the postcard photo is Kwun Yum Temple at Hung Hom, Kowloon Peninsula of Hong Kong. This Temple was built in 1873 and underwent a major renovation in 1909. Kwun Yum, the deity, was worshipped by followers of both Buddhism and Taoism.^{cccli} Bird or the craftsman might have referred to this Temple when designing and building the Chinese Restaurant.

Except the ornamentation on the main ridge and the design with two side halls, both buildings were designed with different architectural styles. The most notable difference is the roof: the Chinese Restaurant was designed with single-eave hip roof while Kwun Yum Temple was built with a hanging hill roof. Besides, the Chinese Restaurant did not open door at the front but on both sides, leaving the centre built with four columns.

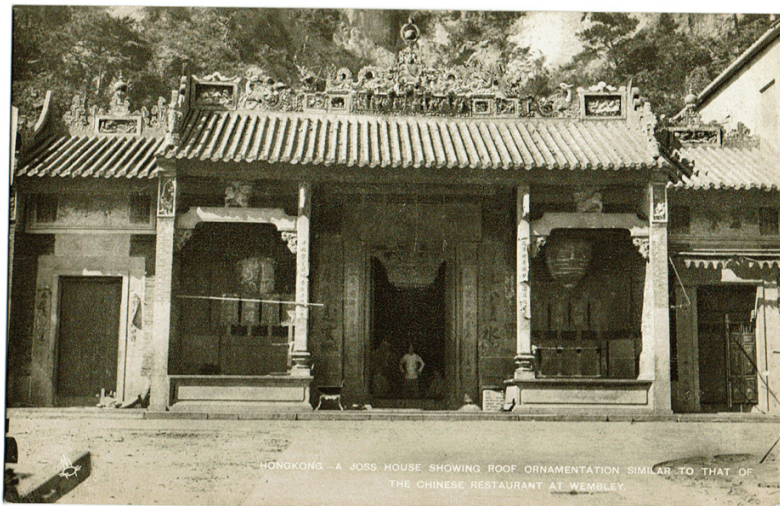


Image 42 A souvenir postcard showing a joss house in Hong Kong, available for sale at the Hong Kong Section

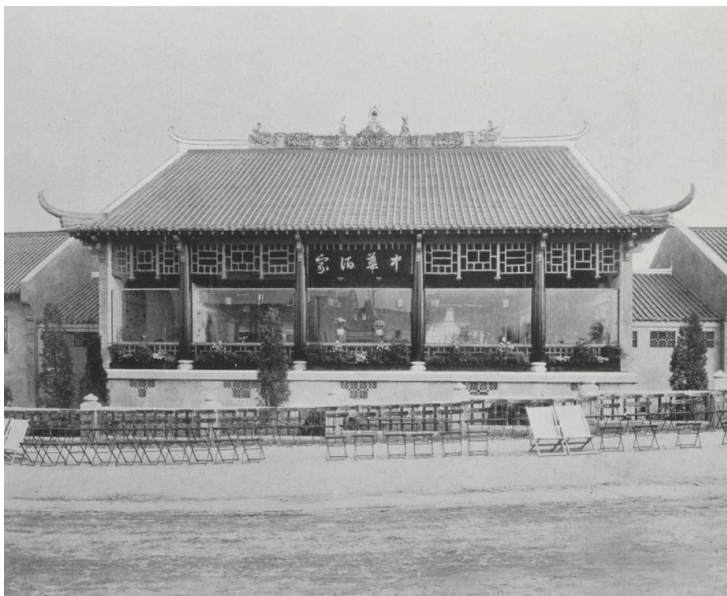


Image 43 The Chinese Restaurant, as viewed from the 'Praya'
Source: V&A

Northern Star described that 'high walls ending in towers' of the Hong Kong Pavilion 'like those of the Great Wall'. The Great Wall is, obviously, not located in Hong Kong. The traditional villages of Hong Kong Island (where Britain initially colonised) were never gated. Some villages at the New Territories were built with walls for protection purpose. However, the entrances of most walled villages were built with doorways without any tower. Even if the villages were built with a protection wall and gate (e.g., Kat Hing Wai in Yuen Long), the architectural design did not resemble the Hong Kong Pavilion.



Image 44 The wall and entrance at Kat Hing Wai (1950s)
Source: Lord Kadoorie's Photography Collection

Tung Chung Fort and Kowloon Walled City are the only two comparable examples where city gates were installed in Hong Kong. Tung Chung Fort was rebuilt by the Qing Court in the early 18th century to combat pirates. But it was abandoned by the colonial government. After Britain controlled Hong Kong Island, the Qing Court constructed Kowloon Walled City (completed in 1847) and deployed soldiers there.^{ccclii} The gate tower, Lung Tsun Pavilion (龍津亭; or named as 接官亭, which literally means Pavilion for Greeting Officials), was built along the coast at Kowloon Bay in 1875 for welcoming the officials sent from the Qing Court. Kowloon Walled City was nearly ungoverned after the British soldiers expelled the Manchurian officials in 1899. Indeed, the reclamation project in 1924 almost buried Lung Tsun Pavilion.



Image 45 Lung Tsun Pavilion (1915)
Source: National Archives, UK

In other words, these two gate towers were not well preserved by the colonial government. Rather than representing Hong Kong's architecture, they symbolised Britain's obliteration of Hong Kong's connection with Chinese history. The city gate design of the

Hong Kong Pavilion is a misinterpretation and an application of inappropriate stereotypes of oriental style of architecture.^{cccliii}

Overall speaking, the northern side of the Hong Kong Pavilion does not resemble any single building in Hong Kong. The building looks very similar to a traditional architecture in China. But the representation is not accurate in detail, probably except the design of the roof ornamentation. The traditional Chinese architectural elements employed are not the most popular forms in Hong Kong. But China is incorporated to the imagination of the British Empire through these architectural elements. Similar to the pavilions of some other colonies and dominions, the design of the Hong Kong Pavilion shows how the architectural elements were appropriated for providing an exotic gaze of the visitors at Wembley.

6.2 The Chinese Street

Handbook of General Information describes that the Hong Kong Section ‘reproduces a native street, where many Chinese would be seen at work in their ordinary surroundings. Did the Chinese Street truly represent ‘a native street’ (i.e. Queen’ in Hong Kong?

Queen’s Road was among the earliest roads that built by the colonial government. In the 1920s, most buildings along Queen’s Road reached four-storey tall. Many of them were built with Italianate architecture style that the front verandah was included. The Chinese Street at Wembley Park generally resembled the ‘a native street’ in the Hong Kong in the 1920s, but the scale is smaller than it should be.

The Sphere reported that the shops were copied to look ‘exactly they are in Hong Kong’. Existing information is insufficient to confirm this. However, it is certain that the visitors could have a taste of shopping below the verandah like in Hong Kong. The description of the *Handbook* is rather fair. Among the Chinese exhibitors, the offices of Hip Son Company, Hontsz & Co. Ltd. (Hon Hin Yeung Hong), Tai Yick Chai, Hwamer Company, Hang Cheung Shing, Ho Chen Kee, The Sincere and Wah King Trading Co. were located at Queen’s Road Central.

At the Hong Kong Section, opposite to the shophouses is the Chinese Restaurant. Obviously, the Chinese Street could not create the same ambiance of shopping and doing business along a narrow road. The Chinese Street in the sketch of Herbert Bird looks more similar to a small plaza with the Chinese Restaurant as the focus. Having said that, the Chinese Street still generally provided the visitors of experience of shopping in Hong Kong, especially shopping in the verandah building.

The major debate on the representation of Hong Kong at the Chinese Street was the language of the signs of the shops. In order to ensure that ‘all details should be correct’, as *The Sphere* reported, the ‘fittings [of the building] were made in the Pacific port and shipped to England’.^{cccliv} Besides, it is also reported that a native Hong Kong who has come to this country specially to paint the signs of the shops at the shophouses at the Hong Kong Section.^{ccclv}



Image 46 A Chinese worker painting Chinese Inscriptions
Source: The Times Supplement^{ccclvi}

Herbert Bird hoped to include more Chinese visual images in the Pavilion. He claimed that most signs were in English by June 1924 and demanded more Chinese signs.^{ccclvii} In a talk at Helena May Institute in November 1924, Herbert Bird expressed his disappointment about the Chinese exhibitors' lack of interest in bringing sufficient number of Chinese signs to Wembley. He hoped to have three times more there.^{ccclviii} Besides, all shophouses at the Hong Kong Pavilion were installed with poles. Herbert Bird emphasized to put on flags at each shop. Many buildings along was installed with poles, but few of them hung flags outside of their shops. Overall speaking, the Chinese Street demonstrated the major features of Queen's Road (verandah structure and shophouses). But Bird's interpretation of Chinese elements was again not completely consistent with the real images in Hong Kong.



Image 47 Queen's Road Central in the 1924
Source: National Archives, UK

6.3 The Exhibits at European Exporters' Room

The architectural design of the Hong Kong Pavilion drew the most attention from media. The building highlighted Hong Kong's connection with historical China. However, the colonial government also attempted to present this colony as a developed industrial city with the contribution of the British and European communities in Hong Kong. In order to achieve this purpose, the colonial government, HKGCC, the Association of Exporters and Dealers of Hongkong and other individual companies had spent a lot of effort to present a relatively wide combination of exhibits at the exhibition halls.

As discussed above, the Joint Committee worried that Hong Kong as a 'non-producing colony' would find it difficult to provide sufficient exhibits at Wembley. As the 1925 official guidebook illustrates, Hong Kong is a "British port, and a coaling station, has big shipping interest, and a large number of ships are actually built there".

The worry possibly was not quite shared by the European merchants. At the European exporters' room at the Hong Kong Section, the exhibits focused more on the progress of the city than Hong Kong's connection with Chinese history and culture. The most important feature was 'the model of Hongkong' and the connected pinhole installation 'Hongkong by night'. Both models presented the progress and the beautiful city scene of this British colony. According to the following written record of *The Times*, 'Hongkong by night' presented the panorama of Hong Kong:

By the other entrance there are the great relief map of the whole Colony— on which you can see how small are the city of Victoria (which most tourists suppose to be 'Hong Kong') and Kowloon in comparison with the whole — and the very ingenious illuminated panorama of Victoria — the water front, city, and the Peak — by night. The even more wonderful view, namely, that from the Peak — "up topside" — looking down, is, of course, not showable. That "inverted firmament," as it has been called, with all the tens of thousands of sampans, each with its light (for the sampan is a dwelling house as well as a boat), at swaying gently to the rocking of the water, so that the lights shift and twinkle without ceasing, many people have declared to be the loveliest sight in all the world.^{ccclix}

Other than the general view of Hong Kong. The Exporters' Room also display models showing the heavy industries in Hong Kong, e.g., of the models of the dockyards and the proposed factory, office and staff quarters of Green Island Cement Co. In particular, the dockyard models presented the advancement of the industrialisation of Hong Kong. As I will discuss soon, the growing importance of Hong Kong to the shipbuilding industry was also highlighted by the English media.

The progress of colonial Hong Kong contrasts Hong Kong's connection with historical China. At the Exporters' Room, the paintings of Chinese Mandarins and other historical events and scenes of China, Hong Kong and Macao were exhibited.^{ccclx} The paintings strengthened the view that Hong Kong was a part of an ancient civilisation. However, the choice of including these paintings also showed that Hong Kong's connection to the Chinese culture was a background of Britain's modernisation project. The paintings came from Chater Collection, which provides:

a vision of China as she was when the Westerner found her: the China of Marco Polo – for little change had occurred since the Great Venetian travelled the length and breadth of Kublai Khan's domains".^{ccclxi}

The colonisation of Hong Kong was a consequence of the Sino-British diplomatic relations. Hong Kong was colonised by Britain because of the Qing's defeat in the First Opium War (1839-1842).^{ccclxii} Pre-colonial history of Hong Kong was not the major focus but served as a background of Hong Kong's modernisation project. The Hong Kong Section delivered this more important message: the modernisation of Hong Kong is a product of the British colonisation project. For instance, the official guidebook of the BEE also highlighted how the British Empire brought progress to Hong Kong:

Hong Kong was a desolate island inhabited chiefly by fishermen in 1841, when it was ceded to Great Britain, and was the discovery of gold in Australia, and the consequent Chinese emigration ten years later that was the beginning of its commercial importance. As China gradually opened up to foreign trade, so the trade of the Colony increased, and the opening of the Suez Canal had a good effect. The harbour of Hong Kong, with an area of 10 square miles, is as fine as most in the world. The natural products of the island are few, but it is great distributing centre of a variety of goods – coal, cotton, iron, nuts, tea, sugar, sandalwood. In respect of tonnage Hong Kong is the largest shipping port in the world. The climate, once very malarial, is now extremely healthy, thanks to the plantation of pine forests, and to modern sanitation.^{ccclxiii}

The quote above clearly illustrates attributed the progress of Hong Kong to British colonisation. Hong Kong developed from a 'desolate island' in feudal China to a contributing member of the British Empire. Hong Kong became commercially important after the gold rush in Australia (a British colony) and the construction of Suez Canal (partly owned by British investors). Besides economic activities, the Hong Kong Section also intended to showcase how Britain tamed nature by knowledge and modern technologies. However, the British coloniser already adapted to the subtropical weather of Hong Kong by afforestation and modern sanitation. As *The Chinese Mail* reported, tools of fishery, exhibits about tropical diseases and 'the customs of Hong Kong' was included in the original plan of the Hong Kong Section.

The exhibits at the European Exporters' Room elucidated the discourse of Britain's modernisation project in Hong Kong. Therefore, the European Exporters' Room emphasized the contribution of the British and European settlers in Hong Kong. Having said that, among all exhibits at Hong Kong Section, the European Exporters' Room still provided a rather more comprehensive representation of Hong Kong history and development during before and after British colonisation. The exhibits from the Chinese merchants (i.e., some of the items available for sale at the shops) were displayed there. The stage-set models of Walter Sinclair were also displayed at the European Exporters' Room to illustrate the presence of British cultures in Hong Kong and the cultural exchanges with the Chinese community.

Nonetheless, the progress of Hong Kong, and that of the other colonies in general, was not the focus of the Board of the BEE. The contribution and significance of Hong Kong on public health, art and culture were not valued by the Board. No found record indicates the inclusion of exhibits from Hong Kong to the Tropical Health Section. The stage-set models were 'incidentally' not included to the collection of the British Drama League at

the Palace of Arts.^{ccclxiv} There is also no existing record indicates the inclusion of any other exhibits from Hong Kong to the Palace of Arts.

6.4 The Exhibits at the Chinese Shophouses

In the section above, I argued that the Hong Kong government aimed to showcase the progress of Hong Kong in Wembley Park. The European Exporters' Room provided a relatively accurate representation of Hong Kong in the 1920s on its industrialisation. However, such a representation is still biased. The changes of Hong Kong from an unimportant fishing village to a modern industrial city, obviously, was regarded as Britain's modernisation project. The contribution of the Chinese community was less emphasized.

A news report commented that the list of exhibits at the Chinese Street was lack of originality.^{ccclxv} The comment was, indeed, quite fair. The list of exhibits also looked very similar to the exhibits at China Pavilion at the Sesqui-Centennial International Exposition at Philadelphia in 1926.^{ccclxvi} A report said that small items like was well accepted. But the sales of expensive ones like porcelain and silverware were not quite satisfactory. The exhibitors said that the exhibitors in London looked for something 'apparently to find Chinese workmanship peculiar and entirely different from theirs'.^{ccclxvii}

6.5 The Images of Participants

As the proposal of the Chinese Village was shelved, the participants of the Hong Kong Section were not displayed as a human exhibit. The most reprehensible aspect was the representation of the Chinese working class, i.e., the rickshaw pullers and coolies (labourers). Mary Abbott's quote above supported that it is not untrue to see rickshaws on the streets of Hong Kong. But the inclusion of rickshaws and Chinese labourer would pinpoint the inferior status of the Chinese community in the British colony of Hong Kong. The rickshaw pullers and coolies opposed to work in the Hong Kong Section. They also rejected the idea of displaying rickshaws there. The Hong Kong Section finally did not include any rickshaws or Chinese labourers.

However, related images were still shown in the Hong Kong Section and the English media. For instance, the image of rickshaws and pullers were included to the film *The Port of Hongkong*. After the film screening at The Helena May Institute on 5 May 1925, a newspaper article in Hong Kong commented that '[s]ome of the best portions are those which show native life and coolie labour at work'.^{ccclxviii} After Herbert Bird returned to Hong Kong by RMS Empress of Asia in June 1924, he still expressed his disappointment of rejecting rickshaw in the Hong Kong Section. He commented that '[t]wo hundred rickshas [rickshaws] would have been a blessing to Hongkong and the Exhibition'.^{ccclxix}

On 23 April 1924, the day the BEE opened, the local newspaper *Western Morning News* published an illustration of the Chinese Street. The illustration included rickshaws, rickshaw pullers and coolies with carrying pole. Possibly it is an artistic illustration of the Chinese Street without visiting the Hong Kong Section in person. The Chinese labourers

probably achieved their objective at the end. The exclusion of rickshaws and coolies at Wembley was rather successful in establishing another image of Hong Kong. Only a few similar illustrations with rickshaws and coolies were presented after the BEE opened.

The appearance of the participants of the Hong Kong Section drew the visitors' attention. During the visit on 20 May 1925, Queen Mary said, probably jokingly, that she should 'have her hair robbed' like the female participants at the Hong Kong section.^{ccclxx} More attention was also put on the demonstrations of work by the Chinese workers, which were the highlight during official visits. For instance, during the same visit, Queen Mary was guided by Edwin Hallifax and Robert Hotung to observe the manufacturing processes of doll making, match making, rattan making and silk making.^{ccclxxi}



Image 48 Postcards showing street hawkers in Hong Kong, available for sale at Hong Kong Section

To a certain extent, the Hong Kong Section was successful to emphasize the advancement of industries of Hong Kong, both the businesses owned by Chinese and European communities. However, the more attention was still paid on the demonstrations of work, which were idealised as the skills from China. For instance, after the visit to the doll making demonstration, the Sultan of Perak emphasized the connection of the doll making technique to the Chinese ancestors:

A doll maker in Hong Kong Section attracts attention. The doll maker's tools are his subtle fingers; his mortar is the ball of his left hand. With these he cunningly contrives arms and feet for his models. His ancestors have been doing this sort of thing for untold centuries and now the magician has come to Wembley to carry on the tradition.^{ccclxxii}

The photogravure postcard below shows a Chinese doll maker working outside of Wun Man & Co. The doll maker was handmaking a doll with a needle. There were at least four dolls displayed on the rack in front of him. At the back of this postcard the doll maker was described as a 'magician' who 'rubs the mixture' of 'a piece of flour and wax ... with other matte of varied colour' and 'becomes a Chinese mannikin with comical pink head and a coloured kimono'. Such a description, again, connects the craftsmanship and industries of Chinese business to the history and culture of China.



Image 49 The demonstration of doll making process in front of the shop of Wun Man

The official guidebook in 1925 reads that the participants at the Hong Kong Section were required by the organiser to retain their native dress.^{ccclxxiii} However, the guidebook, *Wembley Guide*, that published by Daily News, highlighted that the participants no longer had ponytail. They dressed in lounge suit and spoke fluent English:

At the doors of the shops, which are packed with the treasure of the East are bland Chinamen, not in the pigtail and flowing robes of the so-called heathen Chinese, but in irreproachable lounge suits, speaking creditable English, smoking cigarettes, and doing business.

As shown in the image above, the doll maker at Wun Man had put on suit and tie. The writers of the official guide obviously considered native dress as traditional Chinese costume. However, what is the native dress of the Chinese community living in Hong Kong? Can we say that suit and tie had become the ‘native dress’ of local Chinese in Hong Kong after 80 years of British colonisation?

Existing photos show that none of the participants at the Hong Kong Section put on the costumes of the Great Qing. Through the participation at Wembley, Hong Kong somehow presented new images of both men and women from China / Hong Kong to the British audience. Among all, Robert Hotung and her daughter, Mary Ho, was the most important participants to the creation of this new image. On 27 June 1924, Robert Hotung and Mary Hotung joined the Government Garden Party at Hampton Court Palace in London. The event was attended by more than 3,000 visitors from the dominions and colonies. The participants put on their own costumes. *The Times* reported that Hotung ‘made a picturesque appearance in the rich garments of his race’.^{ccclxxiv} On 12 August 1925, SCMP relayed an article from *The China Express and Telegraph* on the costume of Robert Hotung:

Unlike the students and the temptation to adopt the younger fry who have come to this country from China, he has wisely avoided the temptation to adopt European clothing, and, on one of our very hot days recently, attired as he was in Chinese garb, he had the distinction of being described as “the coolest man in London.” It is common to read of him as “a stately figure in his Chinese costume, who seems to be always the centre of interest,” or similar phraseology,

but the writer said that near Mrs. Lloyd George sat “some Far Eastern dignitary in strangely Tibetan-looking grab and with a smaller circular cap on the top of his head, seemingly half biretta, half Heidelberg [Heidelberg] student’s cap,” needs educating.^{ccclxxv}

Mary Ho was described by the local newspaper *N.C.D. News* as ‘A Girl of Modern China’, ‘wears drop earrings, jade beads, and French heels. But she prefers the somewhat austere Chinese national costume to our London and Paris fashions nicely-pronounced English’. However, her father wanted her to put on Chinese costumes:

Father likes me to wear Chinese costumes We do not wear low neck and sleeveless dresses in China. But some of our young women have bobbed their hair, some smoke cigarettes, and most of us love modern dancing I want to wear white on my wedding day – like London girls. Of course, our mother-in-law prefer scarlet or pink for brides, because white is worn at funeral My fiancé studied engineering and architecture in London University, and he proposed in the European way. Yes, I shall wear white for my wedding!^{ccclxxvi}

As I will discuss in the next section, some of the media coverage of the Hong Kong Section has presented modern Hong Kong / China. The active participation of the Hotung family in the social lives in London helped establish such a new image in London.



Image 50 Robert Hotung and Mary Hotung at the Government Garden Party (1924)
Source: BnF

6.6 The Representation in Official Programmes and Related Printed Materials

As discussed above, it is argued that the BEE intended to ‘incorporate’ China through the Hong Kong Section. Rather than presenting Hong Kong as a distinctive modern city in the Far East, the BEE aimed to pinpoint Hong Kong’s connection with traditional Chinese culture. Because of this consideration, the organiser of the BEE was more interested in

feudal China than the current images of China and Hong Kong in the 1920s. For instance, official catalogue of the Hong Kong Section emphasized that it presented the real China:

The two entrances to the Section are on the North side, and taken the form of gates leading into a Chinese walled city. Each gate is surmounted by a pagoda-like roof ornamented at its highest point by a blue enamelled ball. Set in panels in various parts of the building are fine open-work green tiles, common enough in Hongkong architecture, but little known in this country.

Many images of the BEE and the Hong Kong Section showed the stereotypic images of China. For instance, the poster of Gerald Spencer Pryse, which was commissioned by the Board of the BEE, includes many stereotypic elements, e.g., sedan chair, queue (men's ponytail, official Manchurian hairstyle during the Qing Dynasty), dragon, carrying pole and roof with red tiles.^{ccclxxvii} By 1924, the Republic of China had established for more than 10 years. Most Chinese had abandoned the Manchurian hairstyle. This poster with 'exotic' visual elements was adopted probably because it fitted the ambition of including China to Wembley. In comparison with presenting Republican China or Hong Kong as another colonial city with European settlers, such an image would probably fit the visitors' impression of Hong Kong. The images of Hong Kong in the official promotional materials thus contrasted significantly from the modern images of the participants at the Hong Kong Section.

The illustrated map below shares similar stereotypic elements. The map was commissioned by London Underground and designed by artists Thomas Derrick and Edward Bawden in 1924. Different symbols were assigned to different colonies and dominions. For instance, elephant was drawn next to the Burma Section, common ostrich was included to the South Africa Section, kangaroo and sheep were presented at the Australia Section. The Hong Kong Pavilion in the map was represented as a gate tower. The red and white building was decorated with a tree and flowers. The most obvious stereotypic image is the dragon at the top of the gate tower. Below the tower was a rickshaw puller carrying a Mandarin. One of coolies was holding a carrying pole with two baskets of fruits. All of them had ponytail. The only lady at the Hong Kong Section was holding a hand fan.



Image 51 Map of the BEE by Thomas Derrick and Edward Bawden in 1924
Source: Google Arts and Culture^{ccclxxviii}

Hong Kong was portrayed with the ‘preconceived standards’ of being part of the Chinese culture in the illustrated map of London Underground. The following souvenir postcard also confirmed these stereotypic images of China at the Hong Kong Section. The illustration shows the Chinese Street facing the eastern end. The two Chinese participants at the bottom right corner are dressed in knee-length tunic with wide sleeves, which was no longer popular in the 1920s. Another Chinese participant was holding a red Chinese style oil-paper umbrella. This forms a sharp contrast with the lady portrayed at the left corner, who put on short sleeves dress with a white umbrella.



Image 52 A postcard with inaccurate representations of the participants at in the Hong Kong Section

The examples above highlighted Hong Kong as a part of the Chinese civilisation. However, the role of Hong Kong to the economy of the British Empire was also acknowledged in the official materials, mainly through the explanatory text. The *Handbook* reads that ‘Hong Kong is the representative at Wembley of an enormous Pacific trade, which not has been British since its inception, but is now looking to Great Britain for support against competition’. The materials prepared by the Hong Kong Government also intended to demonstrate the progress of Hong Kong, particularly the modernisation and industrialisation of Hong Kong since British colonisation. Governor Reginald Stubbs contributed the following introduction to the *Handbook*:

No longer a barren rock, Hongkong to-day vies with the beauty spots of the world. Its teeming modern city of Victoria, its steep hills dotted with the homes of the well-to do, its peerless harbour crowded with argosies from many lands, Hongkong presents at once a picture of unbounded activity and unsurpassed beauty and dignity.

The official guidebook of the BEE in 1924 regarded shipbuilding as ‘the most important industry’ of Hong Kong, where constructed more ships ‘than in all the rest of the Empire outside of the United Kingdom’ in 1923.^{ccclxxix} The Hong Kong Section successfully advertised the industrial advancement of Hong Kong in Britain, despite the Joint Committee’s worry of considering Hong Kong as a ‘non-producing colony’.

6.7 The Representation in the English Media

The Hong Kong Section was very successful in drawing media attention in Britain and the British colonies. Together with New Zealand and Singapore, Hong Kong was regarded as one of the three colonies and dominions making the “most imposing contributions to the Empire’s shop window”.^{ccclxxx} Media coverage in Britain and the British colonies usually reported that the Hong Kong Section showcased the ‘real Chinese’. This section looks at the several versions images of Hong Kong/ China that reported by media in Britain and its colonies.

(1) Stereotypic Images

The first type of representation is the stereotypic images of feudal China or modern China. The illustration of *Western Morning News* mentioned above depicted rickshaw pullers and coolies at the Hong Kong Section. Similarly the following illustration that published by a local British newspaper *Berwickshire News* on 20 May 1924 includes the images of rickshaw, rickshaw pullers and coolies with carrying pole.

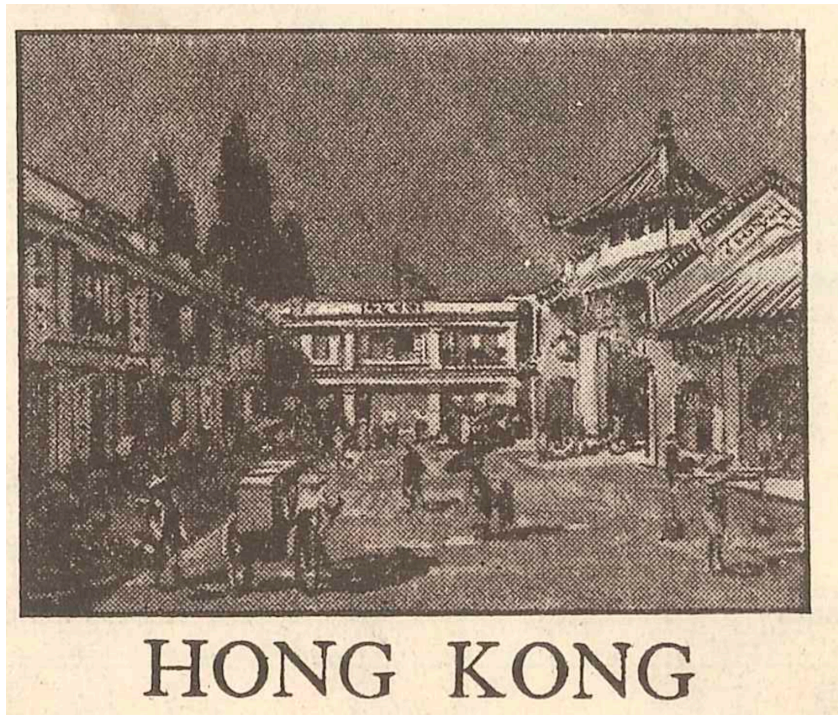


Image 53 The images of rickshaw pullers and coolies on the official tourist map (1925)

The exotic images of China were presented through Hong Kong Section. For instance, *Evening Star*, a New Zealand newspaper, wrongly reported that rats would be served at the Chinese Restaurant at the Hong Kong Section:

Chinese make many stranger dishes than these, including rats, which are caught and fed entirely on vegetation, but are not eaten until the fourth generation is captivity. It is said there is a special mountain in China from which actual parts of the earth, rare and hard to find, are boiled for many days until they become one of the most expensive dishes of the Chinese menu.^{ccclxxxi}

It does not matter to the English media and most British visitors if Hong Kong Pavilion truly represents the 1920s Hong Kong or not. The colony of Hong Kong was symbolised as the presence of Britain in China. However, as I have discussed above, such an inaccurate representation of the scenes at the Hong Kong Section was not widely printed in the English media. Most news reports focused on the second and the third types of representation since the BEE began.

(2) 'Real China'

Similar to the representation written on the official guidebook in 1924, most media representations emphasized that the Hong Kong Section presents the 'real China'. For example, *The Illustrated London News* claimed that the Hong Kong Section represent the 'real China'. It is because '[e]very detail was made in the Colony and shipped to England'.^{ccclxxxii}

The Exhibition is not so rich as some of its predecessors in transferences to Great Britain of actual examples of the life of sister countries; but this most interesting means of education has not been neglected in the case of Hong Kong. Here one may walk in a real Chinese street among real Chinamen

carrying on their usual business in the usual way. There is no fake about Hong Kong at Wembley. Every detail was made in the Colony and shipped to England. The result is most picturesque and attractive — a real view of the real China that salutes the British flag. The street is a great show, but perhaps the most popular accessory is the real Chinese restaurant, presided over by a former chef of the Imperial Palace at Peking. This artist will provide you with dainties made according to secret recipes formerly used only in the Emperor's kitchen. His bill of fare includes bird's nest soup.

The following description of an Australian newspaper *Northern Star* illustrates how the building and the signs in the Hong Kong Pavilion had successfully attracted visitors:

The restaurant is like a miniature temple from Peking — a simple, dignified structure of heavy black pillars and beams supporting a lofty red roof adorned with lanterns; without walls, but enclosed in glass panels, and set at one side of the compound so that diners can look out upon the exhibition on one side" and on the courtyard comprising the fragment of China on the other.

The Hong-kong Pavilion is itself a thing of beauty. The central temple-like restaurant is flanked by high walls ending in towers like those of the Great Wall, all green and red with a brave frieze of lifelike figure in high relief depicting the adventures of the various gods.

The tower gates lead to a rectangular courtyard, on the far end of which is the street of 22 two-storeyed, arcaded shops, each with its three lanterns signifying long life, prosperity and happiness, and gigantic signs, and a municipality of Eastern wares for which the 5-miles-long Queens-road in Hong-kong is famous.^{ccclxxxiii}

The following photograph on *The Times Supplement* was taken at the Chinese Street before completion. The poles had not been installed. The caption emphasized that the signs in Chinese looked 'strange'.



Image 54 Chinese Street

Source: *The Times Supplement*^{ccclxxxiv}

As I have evaluated above, the architectural design of the Chinese Restaurant and the gate towers are not the best representations of Hong Kong in the 1920s. But it did not bother the English media. Such a design successfully confirms the imagination of China among the audience and visitors. Another example is the representation of the eastern gate tower by the same issue of *The Times Supplement*. The caption of the photograph claimed that the gate tower was built with Chinese style. Similarly, the British media did not bother evaluating the popularity of city gate in Hong Kong. Hong Kong's connection with traditional China was always emphasized.

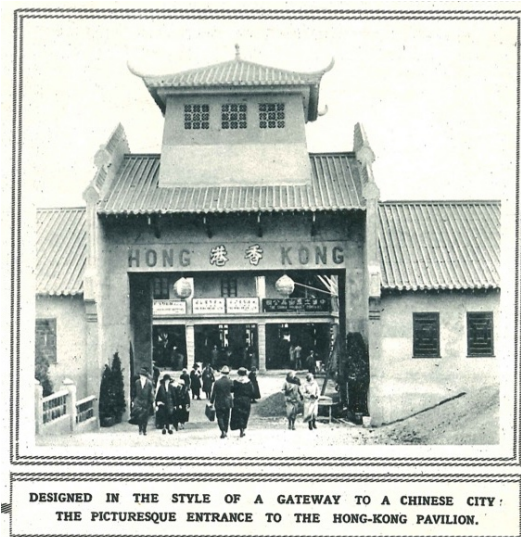


Image 55 Chinese Street

Source: *The Times Supplement*^{ccclxxxv}

The most important proof of the representation of 'real China' at Hong Kong Section is the presence of authentic Chinese cuisine at the Chinese Restaurant. In comparison with 'chop suey', a Chinese dish typically served by Chinese restaurants overseas, the menu at the Chinese Restaurant was much more authentic. The following four articles illustrated this view clearly:

All among the Chinese crinkum-crankums,
All among the bells and ding-dongs;

Once inside the attractive and "Chinesey" building, you find yourself in a Chinese street of little shops, where they sell every crinkum-crankum that ever was. Blackwood, ceramics, silver, ivory, kake-monos, Chinese umbrellas, fans and lamps, silks, embroideries, kingfisher-feather ware, rattan, mats, preposterous little carved figures, brassware, crystal jade, and curios of every kind; it is a wilderness of pretty things. And it is worth dallying a while at the shop which is tenanted jointly by Messrs. Sun Tack Loong and Koon Yick to consider the things to eat that are put up in engaging little tins and bottles.

The Times^{ccclxxxvi}

On entering the Hong Kong section the visitor steps it were straight into China. Everything that Hong Kong produces will be on view.

If native Chinese products attract the visitor he will be able to buy blackwood furniture, carved ivory, rattan wares, silver filagree [filigree] work or silk

embroidery. If wants a he can visit a real Chinese restaurant, not for ‘Chop Suey,’ which unknown in China, but for the genuine delicacies the. country such “bird’s nest soup” and ‘shark’s fins.’

Lincolnshire Echo and Exeter and Plymouth Gazette^{ccclxxxvii}

The Hong Kong portion will be one of the most interesting features of the exhibition, and preparations are now completed for the exact reproduction of an actual street in the town of this British colony. it will have Chinese restaurant, shops, and native products. Practically every assistant will be Chinaman. if the visitor is tired of an English grill he can try such genuine delicacies as ‘bird’s nest soup’ and ‘shark’s fins.’ He must not ask for ‘chop suey.’ The name of this dish appears in a ma novels dealing with but is unknown in this country. Rickshaws are coming, too, and, there will also be sedan chair” in which visitors to the exhibition may ride.

Belfast Telegraph^{ccclxxxviii}

In this typically Oriental restaurant the visitor can well imagine himself actually in Hong Kong. He is served with delicious and quaint Chinese food by Chinese waiters in a real Chinese setting.

The Sphere^{ccclxxxix}

The captions below the photograph shows the eastern gate tower, published by *The Sphere*. The caption also emphasized that all workers at the Hong Kong Section came from Hong Kong:

As presented above, the chef of the Chinese Restaurant in 1925 was actually recruited in London. Is it, however, problematic to argue that the Hong Kong Section exhibited the ‘real China’? It is probably not inaccurate to describe the Hong Kong Section as a live showcase of modern China at Wembley. As noted by the following travelogue on *The North – China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette*, a newspaper published in Shanghai, the Hong Kong Section represented the wider Chinese communities^{ccccxc}

The Hongkong section in particular appealed to me, with its green upturned roofs reminiscent of Peking. From the tea-house, where Chinese meals can be partaken of, came strains of music as I approached, real Chinese music such as I had not hear since I left the East. I have often wondered why London’s Chinese Restaurants do not cut the jazz.

In Wembley’s Hongkong are shops run by firms well-known to Shanghai-dwellers, “Wing-On,” “Sincere” and others. You can get food-stuffs or furniture, umbrellas or Cloisonné ware, and prices are not much above those I paid in Shanghai itself. I did not see any of those wooden figures which are familiar in Hongkew (and which by-the-way are much prized by folk at home) but I did see a man fashioning little figures in wax such as they make in the Chinese City. I think I shall always take myself first to that corner of the grounds.^{ccccxi}

Cynthia Maguire, the author, lived in Shanghai. She sensibly observed that some exhibitors the Hong Kong Section came from Shanghai, i.e. two department stores The Sincere and Wing On. As the Board of the BEE relaxed the requirement of ‘Empire goods’, the Hong Kong Section has included the goods from other parts of China. The Hong Kong Section represented more than Hong Kong.

(3) More accurate representation of Hong Kong / China

The third type of media representation is the more accurate portrayal of Hong Kong and China, and the events and image at Hong Kong Section. The illustration was drawn by the British artist and illustrator Steven Spurrier (1878-1961). The caption in German reads that the Chinese Restaurant is the special attraction at the Wembley Exhibition, which offers Europeans an opportunity to consume Chinese dishes in a Chinese way of dining. Comparing the photos showing the interior of the Chinese Restaurant, Spurrier shows a rather accurate representation. His drawing also provides us a rare reference of the happenings in the Chinese Restaurant. The restaurant full of European customers. At the front, the customers are trying hard to use chopsticks.



Image An illustration of Chinese Restaurant by Steven Spurrier

6.8 An Evaluation: between Britain and China

As illustrated above, the building, exhibits, souvenirs, images and written materials presented two rather contrasting images of Hong Kong, i.e. (1) Hong Kong as a small fishing village having close connection with historical China, and (2) Hong Kong as a modern industrial city developed by the British coloniser. The former image was much more heavily focused. The Hong Kong Section was predominantly described as a showcase of the 'real China'. The perfect example is the naming of Hong Kong. The BEE

held the bonniest baby competition in 1924. Elsie Mary Collis Hallowes represented Hong Kong and received a prize. Her origin was written as 'Hong Kong, China' rather than 'Hong Kong'.^{ccccxii} This naming of Hong Kong shows the organiser's ambition of integrating China to the imagination of the British Empire.

Such an emphasis of Hong Kong's connection with historic China to the British Empire sharply differs from other colonial sections. Other colonial sections usually spent a lot of effort to illustrate the 'progress' since the British colonisation. The emphasis of the colonies' departure from its local history ironically created anti-imperial movements (e.g., Sections of West Africa and India).^{ccccxiii} Such a discourse was relatively less focused at the Hong Kong Section. The priority was given to Hong Kong's connection with historical China. Accidentally or ironically, such an emphasis avoided the Hong Kong Section from stimulating any anti-imperial movement.

First, the emphasis of 'real China' meant that the images of pre-colonial Hong Kong and Hong Kong's connection with China were emphasized. Even though some images on the official programmes and media strengthened the stereotypic images of China in Britain (e.g., ponytail, sedan chair and rickshaw), it was comparably less provocative to the Chinese and Eurasian participants from Hong Kong. The images of China as a backward country could be attributed to the weaknesses of the Great Qing, which many Chinese merchants in Hong Kong supported the revolutions against it.

The idea of native village is controversial as it ignored the contribution of the indigenous community and neglected the coloniser's exploitation during the 'progress'. After the idea of the Chinese village was replaced by the Chinese Street, these images attributed Hong Kong as part of China in its pre-colonial or early colonial days. The presence of the Chinese merchants and their shops could showcase the latest of the Chinese communities in Hong Kong (under British colonisation) and Southern China (since the establishment of the Republic of China).

Second, the design of the Hong Kong section and the choice of exhibits had become an accidental showcase the glorious past of ancient China. These images of 'real China' were shown through the design of the Pavilion, the exhibits and demonstrations of work. If we compare the designs of the pavilion and exhibits with other exhibitions that China (Qing Court or the Republican Government) participated, we can find many similarities. For instance, the Qing Court commissioned Englishmen, Atkinson and Dallas, a company based in Shanghai, to design the main building of Chinese Pavilion, which a replica of the country home of the Manchu Prince Pu Lun to join the exhibition at Philadelphia in 1906. The final design of the entrance of included a Chinese pagoda consisting of six thousand hand-carved pieces of wood inlaid with ebony and ivory was erected by skilful Chinese artisans.^{ccccxiv}

As illustrated above, there was no city gate in Hong Kong that is comparable to that of the Hong Kong Pavilion. However, it's fine. But by 1920s, the progress of Hong Kong and China are different. But still very strong exchanges. Hong Kong was not presented as a colonial city having significant difference from the rest of feudal China. The Hong Kong Section did not differentiate Hong Kong from the rest of the Chinese community. But it is fine. The purpose of organising the Hong Kong Section was not to clarify the

distinctiveness of Hong Kong. The plan of Britain ironically connected them with the Chinese identity.

Third, the emphasis of 'real Chinese' accidentally strengthened Hong Kong's connection with China. The Hong Kong Section did not intend to differentiate Hong Kong from the rest of the China, so as to show that China is included Britain and highlight Hong Kong's role in the Chinese materials. As Cynthia Maguire, a former resident of Shanghai, mentioned, the Hong Kong Pavilion looked like Beijing's and the shops are from Shanghai.^{cccxcv} So where is Hong Kong? Wing On and Sincere. of course, by origin, the shops were from Shanghai.

Fourth, the local Chinese community of Hong Kong collaborated closely with the Hong Kong government. They tended to avoid any provocation with the Hong Kong government, this is the skill of collaboration. When having discussion on 1925, the meeting discussed the role of Chinese merchants, whether they are participating 'as a business proposition, or to advertise the Colony'.^{cccxcvi} In face of strikes and the increasing underground activities of the CCP in the mid 1920s, the interests of Hong Kong government, British merchants and Chinese merchants were getting closer. The Chinese businessmen also had closer relationship with Britain than the warlords in China after Sun Yat Sen got control of Canton in 1923.^{cccxcvii} Robert Hotung hoped to demonstrate his support to the governments in Hong Kong and London through the organisation of Hong Kong Section and the BEE in general. In July 1924, he contributed HK\$15,000 to guarantee the potential loss of the local exhibitors at Hong Kong Section.^{cccxcviii} Besides, he sponsored some free tickets to school children in Britain to visit the BEE.^{cccxcix} The organisation process of Hong Kong Section confirmed the emergence of the Chinese merchant class in Hong Kong and continued to strengthen Hong Kong government's collaboration with Chinese merchants.^{cd} Even though weak support from general public on the Hong Kong Pavilion was observed, such a collaboration was critical to the governance of Hong Kong amid the surge of Chinese nationalism and imperialist expansion of Britain in the 1920s.

The term imperialism was popularised by CCP in the 1920s (article by Wang)
But HK merchants are fearful of CCP

6.9 An Evaluation: between Modern and Tradition

The Hong Kong Section was meant to include China into the British Empire at Wembley Park. The immediate question that we need to answer is: what is China in the 1920s?

Robert Hotung spoke at luncheon of the Overseas League. The quote below reflected his view of progress that Britain brought to China and probably the best summarised the Chinese elites' intention of joining the BEE^{cdi}

Sir Robert Ho Tung said that his countrymen knew that under the British flag they could follow their lawful callings in peace and security; they had prospered As a race the British were the first to enter into commercial and political relations with China, and China owed a great debt of gratitude to

the successive men of the British race for organizing and bringing to its present state of high efficiency and splendid service the China Maritime Customs there was no f China should abandon her own excellent traditions, while at the same time acquainting herself with what was best in other nations.

As discussed above, China has gone through revolutions, urbanisation and industrialisation by the 1920s. It was no longer like the old representation as an ancient empire. In 1925, Paris organised the International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts. China participated and showcased the latest development of design and urban culture from China.

As I argued above, the Chinese merchants did not mind showing the traditional Chinese images to confirm the expectation of the West. However, they have strong concern when the representation of modern images of China differed from their expectation. The Chinese business community were getting more influential in Hong Kong in the 1920s. However, the Chinese elites did seem not to show much interest in presenting the modern images of Hong Kong at Wembley. Traditional Chinese products (like rattan-ware, silverware and porcelain) and manufactured products (ropes, sugar) were shown.

When we compare the arrangement of the Hong Kong Section in 1924 and 1925 with some earlier exhibitions, the representations of Hong Kong were strikingly similar. The design of the Hong Kong Pavilion looks similar to the Chinese pavilions at other exhibitions, e.g., the Great Exhibition in 1878, 1900 and 1938. This is the most clichés presentation of Chinese culture to visitors overseas. Overall speaking, the architectural design and the decorations of the pavilions, and the exhibits across these exhibitions strengthened the images of Hong Kong as a member of Chinese community, without much success of presenting the latest development of China and differentiating Hong Kong from the rest of the Chinese community. Some exhibits at Hong Kong were also the same to China' participation in other exhibitions.



Image 56 C The hina Pavilion at *Exposition Universelle* in Paris in 1878

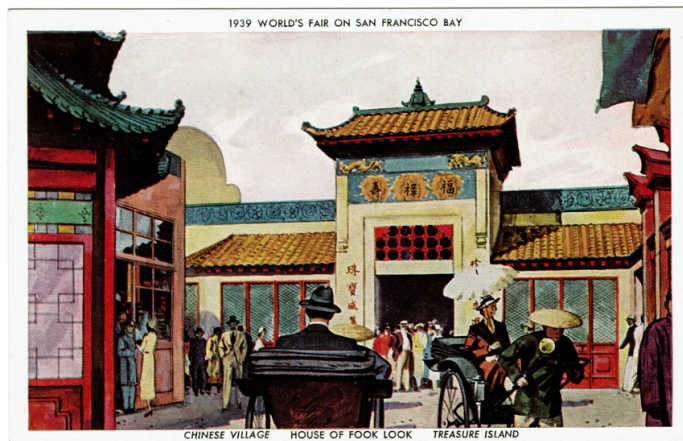


Image 57 The China Pavilion at the World's Fair in San Francisco in 1939

Can we say that this is a wrong representation of Hong Kong? It is not so. But such representation cannot reflect the changes of Hong Kong by the 1920s. However, the Chinese merchants mainly concerned the sales of their goods at the shop. They did not bother showcasing the industry plants (obviously as some goods were not produced in Hong Kong) like the British merchants.

The Chinese junk at the Chinese Street and ship models at the Exporters' room present two contrast images of Hong Kong. While the Chinese merchants were not eager to present the latest development of Hong Kong / China through the exhibits, Hong Kong government and the British merchants focused on British firms' contribution to the modernisation of Hong Kong and emphasized Hong Kong's role in Britain's regional trade. Hong Kong Section attempted to present a new image in the 1920s. In the official catalogue that published by Publicity Bureau for South China titled *Hong Kong*, the introduction of Stubbs wrote that:

Hongkong is a splendid example of what can be accomplished by British energy and capital, associated with the courage and restraint that go hand-in-hand with British colonization. Eight-two years of patient administration by nineteen Governors and eleven administrators have brought Hongkong into the front rank of the world's commerce. This happy achievement is due in no small measure to the harmonious working of two such different peoples as the British and Chinese.^{cdii}

It is not untrue to argue that Hong Kong Section was somehow successful to introduce other images of Hong Kong in Britain. Overall, Hong Kong Section has somehow presented more different images of Hong Kong to Britain.

Chapter 7 Aftermath

The organiser aimed to provide the visitors (mainly local British) close encounters with the ‘wonders’ coming from the British colonies. The purpose of the BEE was stated clearly in the official catalogue of the 1925 season:

Without such a display as is offered here it would baffle the imagination of the untraveller to understand even a part either of what the Empire has achieved or what remains to be done, and we cannot forget that, for this last, every one of us is, in some sense, responsible.^{cdiii}

The Hong Kong Section probably successfully presented the tradition and modern images of Hong Kong to the ‘untraveller’ visitors in Britain. However, in terms of attendance and income, the Hong Kong Section finished with disappointments. The attendances of the BEE dropped sharply in the second season. The Canton-Hong Kong General Strike also discouraged the Chinese exhibitors’ interest and the possibility of replenishing goods from Hong Kong to Wembley on time. The Financial Account of the Hong Kong Section reads that the Hong Kong Section earned HK\$503.05 and HK\$2,501.47 in 1924 and 1925 respectively.^{cdiv}

	1924	1925
Total estimate cost	HK\$550,000	£25,000
Balance on hand	HK\$503.05	HK\$2,501.47

Table 18 Balance of the Hong Kong Section in 1924 and 1925

Source: Financial Report of the Joint Committee^{cdv}

7.1 Medals and Awards

All exhibitors in 1924 were issued certificates to recognise their participation. But three certificates were kept as their participation were classified as bad debts.^{cdvi} The products at the Hong Kong Section received very good reputation in Britain. Many products received medals,^{cdvii} even though the medals arrived as late as in 1927.^{cdviii}

Some individuals received awards in recognition for their contributions to the Hong Kong Section. For instance, George Duncan received a M.B.E. medal in 1926. He was the only representative from Hong Kong in the list of honours of the BEE. Cheung Tsio, the chef at Oxford Street, was issued a diploma by the BEE.^{cdix} Lady Hotung was awarded a Diploma and a Special Certificate of Honour by the Exhibition Authorities of the BEE for arranging the demonstration of the silk making process:^{cdx}

Besides all these filings, there is silk: silk in every shape from the cocoons to lovely embroideries. And in all Wembley there is, perhaps, nothing more illustrative of the genius of the Empire than the large sign which calls attention to the exhibit of “silk from the farm of Sir Robert and Lady Ho Tung.”^{cdxi}

At the individual level, the two Honorary Associate Commissioners received significant recognition from Britain. In June 1924, Robert Hotung and his brother of half blood, Ho Kam Tong, were awarded the silver badge of the St. John of Jerusalem.^{cdxii} The ceremony was conferred by King George V at Buckingham Palace.^{cdxiii} On the farewell

dinner in September 1924, he was presented a silver cup.^{cdxiv} On 30 December 1924, Robert Hotung was appointed a Knight of the Most Ancient Order of Christ by the Portuguese President. He was the first Chinese receiving an order of this grade.^{cdxv} On 17 October 1925, King George V granted Robert Hotung an authority to wear ‘the insignia of Commander of the Order of Christ’, in recognition of his service at Macao. Robert Hotung was conferred by the President of the Portuguese Republic.^{cdxvi} Another Associate Commissioner, Chow Shouson was knighted in January 1926.^{cdxvii} He was appointed to ExCo in August 1926 to replace Paul Chater (who passed away in 1926). *The China Express and Telegraph* said that Chow Shouson is a suitable candidate as he represented the Chinese community in Hong Kong at ExCo. Given Chow Shouson’s status in Hong Kong, it is exaggerating to emphasize the significance of the BEE in bringing his honour and the appointment.^{cdxviii} However, his popularity in Britain was probably further proved by this involvement in the BEE.



Image 58 Certificate issued to Po Sum On (replica)
Source: Po Sum On Medicine Factory Limited

By the 1920s, local Chinese merchants began to establish food production companies for local consumption, with the factories mainly located at Kowloon. Most factories produced processed food, beer, soft drinks, cigarette and soup with a relatively lower level of technology. The exposure at Wembley promoted their business network in Europe and promoted their levels of production. For instance, Siu Sui Cheong, the company owner of Wing Cheong Hong Chinese Goods Company, revealed his plan to establish branches in Europe (e.g. Paris and London) after the BEE in 1924.^{cdxix} Koon Yick, a chili sauce manufacturer, expanded its business network in London and received several medals from the BEE.

7.2 The Exhibits and the Chinese Restaurant

After the end of the BEE, the samples of export products at the Hong Kong Section were sent to the Imperial Institute upon the Queen's request.^{cdxx} The donation from the Hong Kong Section expanded the Institute's collection on Hong Kong. For instance, the models of the docks were kept.^{cdxxi} In this aspect, the Hong Kong Section was rather successful to present an image of Hong Kong as a modern industrial city.

Image 59 The status of the demolition of Wembley Park (1926)

While some exhibits of the Hong Kong Section went to the Imperial Institute, most of the other exhibits were put for auction. On 26 November 1924, Whitfield Baker & Co. Ltd. (the official auctioneers to the British Empire Exhibition) held an auction at 5B, Pall Mall, SW1. The exhibits Punjab and Madras Courts of the Indian Pavilion, Australia Pavilion was also put on sale in November 1924.^{edxxxii} The catalogue of the auction reads that ‘the whole of the contents of the famous Chinese restaurant’ were included in the auction. The table below shows a summary of the auction articles.

Table 19 The auction of items of Hong Kong Section in 1924

The catalogue listed 1,391 items, including a Chinese junk. In December 1924, there was a suggestion to offer the Chinese junk display to Hull Corporation. However, the Committee of Wembley Park requested the quotation of the removal cost before making any decision.^{cdxxiii} The deal had not been reached.

Similarly, the unsold items of the Hong Kong Section in 1925 were put for auction. The auction, with several thousand lots, took place on 28 and 29 October 1925. The categories of the items were listed in the table below.^{cdxxiv}

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blackwood furniture (arm chairs, dinning room chairs, tables settees, stools, screens) - Rattan furniture (deckchairs, settees, garden sets, work baskets) - Tea (in large quantities) - Jade - Ivory - Necklaces - Carrings - Rings - Bracklets - Combs, silk embroidery and drawn thread work - Tea sets - Bedspreads - Handkerchiefs - Dress lengths - Shawls - Kimonos - Miscellaneous (mah-jong sets of all values, hundreds of parasols, brass works of all kinds, baskets and bead work)

Table 20 The list of auction items of the Hong Kong Section in 1925
Source: Knight and Sabey (1984)

The auction items generated an income of £8,000.^{cdxxv} This is not a small amount. In the 1925 season, the Hong Kong Section earned only around £10,000 from the sales of products.

After the Hong Kong government decided to take up the operation of the Hong Kong Section in 1925, the chef, Y.T. Lum planned to establish a similar ‘Chinese Restaurant’ in Central, Hong Kong. He planned to decorate the restaurant in the same way to the restaurant in the Hong Kong Pavilion, but with a much grander scale.^{cdxxvi} No further information about this plan could be located.

7.3 The Hong Kong Pavilion

By December 1926, the ‘glories that made up the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley are disappearing’.^{cdxxvii} Most pavilions were demolished, or rebuilt to factories, laundries, garages and restaurants. The Joint Committee of the Hong Kong Section hoped to sell the building of the Hong Kong Pavilion to LNER. The agreement was not reached. It was because the land where the Hong Kong Section located was not owned by the BEE Incorporation. The land was under LNER’s short lease to the BEE. Rather than purchasing the building, LNER required the Hong Kong government to demolish the Hong Kong Pavilion within six months. The Hong Kong government chose to hand it over to the liquidators of the BEE.^{cdxxviii}

The Hong Kong government was unwilling to demolish Hong Kong Pavilion at this own cost. Accidentally, the Hong Kong Pavilion was preserved for more than 40 years after the BEE finished. The Pavilion was used as the office and warehouse of various

companies before demolition. In 1936, the Hong Kong Section was the office of George Edward Booth, an automatic machine manufacturer and importer.^{cdxxxix}

The image below shows the Ordnance Survey map of Wembley in 1947. The Hong Kong Section can be found at the bottom right corner. The map shows that the Pavilion had undergone reconstruction, the western entrance was blocked. Further information can be seen from the next image, which shows part of an aerial photo of Wembley in 1948. The Hong Kong Pavilion can be found at the top right corner. Both gate towers were removed. A close up of Hong Kong Section from an aerial photo was shown photograph taken in 1953. The photo was taken in 1953, which also shows that the gate towers were removed. The Ordnance Survey map in 1967 still indicated the presence of 'Hong Kong Works'. However, the reconstructed Hong Kong Pavilion could not be identified in an aerial photo dated 1966. Therefore, it is reasonable to say that the Hong Kong Pavilion was demolished around 1966 or 1967.

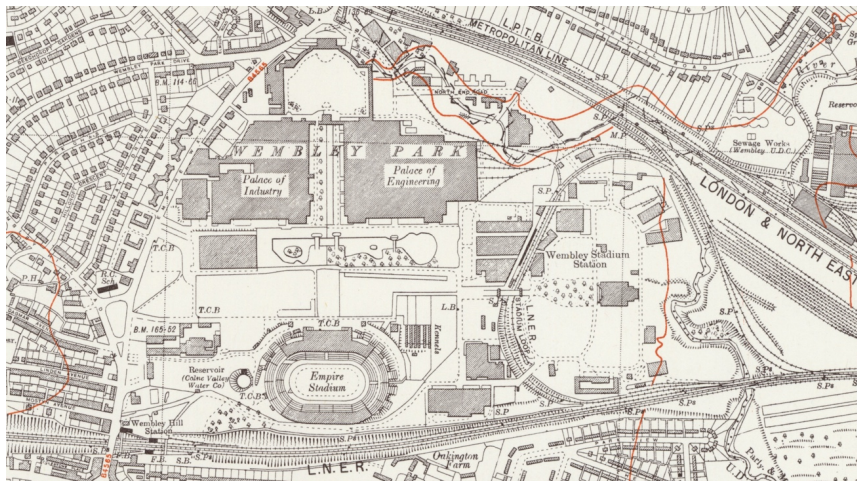


Image 60 Ordnance Survey map of Wembley (1947) (part of a bigger map)
Source: National Library of Scotland



Image 61 Aerial photo of the original exhibition site of the BEE (1948) (part of a bigger photo)
Source: Britain from Above



Image 62 Aerial photo of the original exhibition site of the BEE (1953) (part of a bigger photo)
Source: Britain from Above

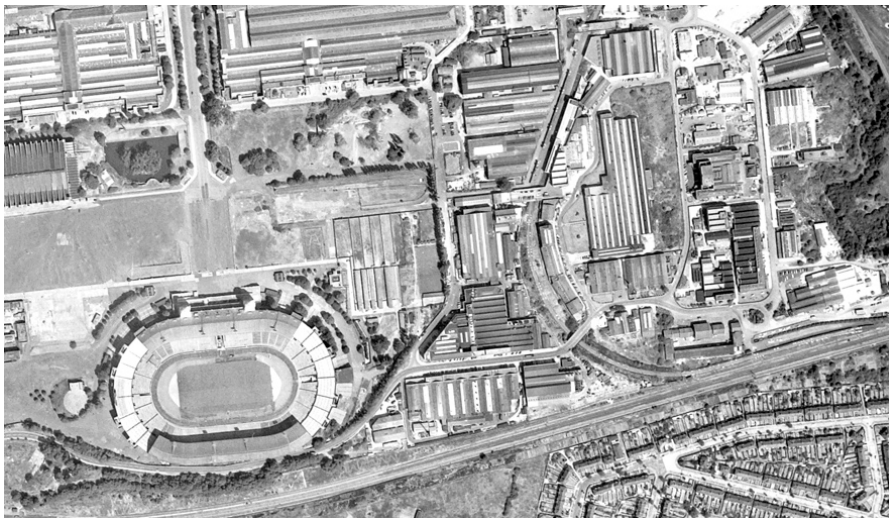


Image 63 Aerial photo of the original exhibition site of the BEE (1959) (part of a bigger photo)
Source: NCAP



Image 64 Aerial photo of the original exhibition site of the BEE (1966) (part of a bigger photo)
Source: NCAP

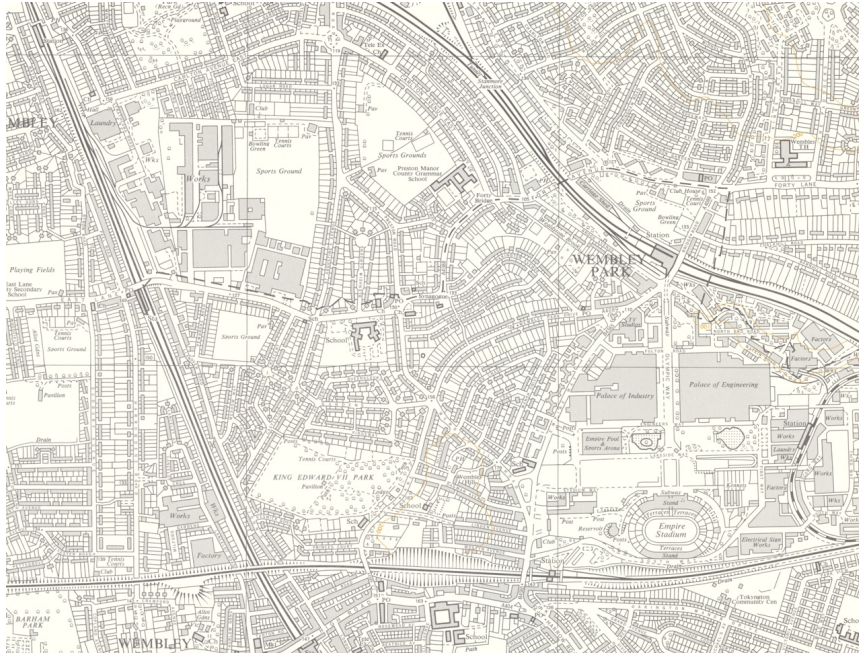


Image 65 Ordnance Survey Map of Wembley (1967) (part of a bigger map)
Source: National Library of Scotland



Image 66 Hong Kong Substation at Wembley
Source: Philip Grant^{cdxxx}

Similar to many other exhibitions, the BEE had speeded up the urban development, the expansion of public transport and other kinds of spatial rearrangement of Wembley.^{cdxxx} Empire Stadium was renamed to Wembley Stadium and continued to host sports events including FA Cup, World and the 1948 Olympic Games. Between 2002 and 2003, the Wembley Stadium was demolished and rebuilt. The iconic twin tower at entrance were relocated. Only the flagpole of the east tower was preserved and displayed at Tokyngton Recreation Ground. The living record of the BEE is now hardly seen at Wembley.

Chapter 8 The Significance of the Hong Kong Section

One of the intended functions of colonial exhibitions is ‘building in its finest aspects reflects the character of a nation as a community’.^{cdxxxii} However, the outcomes of the BEE were not identical among all colonies. Some colonies developed its own identity and looked for a greater degree of autonomy while some received discrimination.^{cdxxxiii} There were also competitions between colonies and dominions at Wembley Park. For instance, Australia and Canada competed for the butter market in Britain.^{cdxxxiv} Hong Kong’s participation at the BEE happened during a transient period of the Sino-British relations. Besides, local British and Chinese merchants hoped to achieve different goals at Hong Kong Section. The views of between two Chambers showed the conflicts between two groups of businessmen in Hong Kong in the 1920s.

In this section, I will discuss the significances of organising Hong Kong Section to the governments in London and Hong Kong, the British and European merchants in Hong Kong, as well as three groups of Chinese communities, i.e. the Chinese elites in Hong Kong, the ordinary Chinese residents in Hong Kong, and the Chinese communities in London and overseas.

8.1 London

Victor Christian Cavendish, the ninth Duke of Devonshire and one of the exhibition’s main financial guarantors, praised Wembley as ‘a triumph of imagination, art, organization and patriotic purpose’.^{cdxxxv} The stage-set models of Walter Sinclair served to connect British culture to the Chinese cultural in Hong Kong (e.g., including Chinese elements to the Shakespearean plays). However, in terms of the display of artwork and cultural life from the British communities Kong, the contribution from the Hong Kong Section was only minimal.

The presence of Hong Kong at Wembley was more regarded as the presence of China. As briefly noted by Leo Amery, what the Hong Kong Section showcased is another kind of civilisation that differed from Britain.

Wembley’s influence is broadening too. Children — and grown-ups as well — see in India’s beautiful pavilion, in the delicate carving of Hong Kong and in the crude designs of West Africa’s Walled City evidences of civilisations other than their own, of people with different ideas and tastes. A visit to Wembley has all the effects of a world tour; it gives standards of comparison upon which one’s own tastes and ideas may be judged.^{cdxxxvi}

Comparing with cultural changes, the BEE has a more important function to promote trading activities among members of the British Empire. The business at some colonial and dominion sections looked rather impressive. For instance, Australia Section sold seven million apples to visitors while Palestine Section successfully introduced its orange to the British market.^{cdxxxvii} The British Government tried to promote trade with the Far East, in particular, China.^{cdxxxviii} For the Department of Overseas Trade and the Board of the BEE, Hong Kong Section was successful.

At the same time, colonies' labour conditions continued to draw the attention of politicians and media in Britain in the 1920s. Besides the concerns from the rickshaw pullers in Hong Kong, as the reports from SCMP reported, the potential concerns of the labour unions in Britain.^{cdxxxix} The satire cartoon in *Punch* illustrates Chinese businessman's anger. During Canton-Hong Kong Strike, *Lansbury's Labour Weekly* wrote to Sir Reginald Stubbs on 18 July 1925:

you have represented us so that Britain appears as a cad and bully. Your threat to deport all strikers and flog strike pickets is worthy of you. I wish you would come over here and try your bluster on some railwaymen and dockers. You would learn something. Meanwhile, if there is an outbreak of a movement for ducking governors in Hong-Kong Harbour we shall know the reason why.^{cdxli}

However, the interest of the British politicians and activists is, after all, not in Hong Kong. Hong Kong did not attract the sympathies of the Movement for Colonial Freedom and was almost absent as a topic of British political debate.^{cdxli} The controversies at Hong Kong Section had not brought any change.

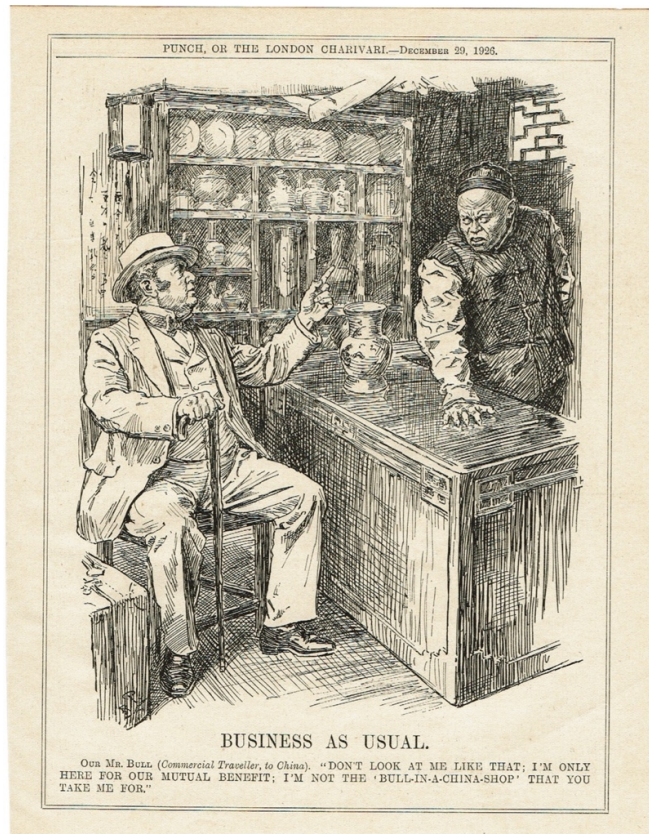


Image 67

8.2 The Hong Kong Government

When the Hong Kong government negotiated with the Board of the BEE on the requirements of display the natural resources and empire goods from Hong Kong, Travers Clarke criticised the Hong Kong's concern 'too acute and too blunted'. Governor

Reginald Stubbs' handling of the two major strikes received heavy criticisms. Stubbs' letter to the Board of the BEE was also blunt. However, we might argue that the blunt message by Stubbs was a strategy to negotiate the best interest of Hong Kong. Indeed, such a concern was proven to be sensible. The goods from Southern China and the Chinese Restaurant had successfully attracted the attention of the visitors and media.

Hong Kong was relatively unimportant to the British Empire before WWII. It was usually regarded as a colony with a small population where without much natural resources nor industrial production. It is only taken as a small Chinese town to trade with China. The general public also lacked deep understanding or interest of Hong Kong. Hong Kong had already begun to industrialise in the 1880s with the advocacy by the Governor John Pope Hennessy. But the factories were mainly established by local British merchants. WWI blocked the import of goods from Europe to Hong Kong. As a result, Hong Kong began to develop light industry in the 1920s. Part of them were owned by local Chinese merchants and the products were exported to China and overseas markets.^{cdxlii} In general, Hong Kong Section also successfully provided another perspective of Hong Kong to the visitors of the BEE. Hong Kong Section highlighted the industrial development of Hong Kong. The Imperial Institute also included a wider range of collection from Hong Kong. By highlighting the achievement of industrialisation of the British companies in Hong Kong, Hong Kong government successfully showcased the progress that British colonisation had brought to this city in the Far East.

What made Hong Kong different from other most of the other colonies of Britain is the special position of Hong Kong to Sino-British relations. London always paid special attention to maintain a healthy connection relationship with China. London's policy on Hong Kong is also part of its diplomatic policy. Colonial Hong Kong was a temporary home to those fled from China or other places. Being relatively stable, some politicians fled to Hong Kong to escape from political struggles in the 1920s and 1930s. These 'warlord refugees' included Chen Jiongming, Li Zongre, Li Jishen (arrived Hong Kong in 1923, 1929 and 1930 respectively). Sun Yat Sen also fled to Hong Kong in August 1922.

Stubbs also hoped to demonstrate his political skill at Hong Kong Section. He invited Liang Shiyi, the former Premier of China's Beiyang Government, to visit the opening of the Hong Kong Pavilion at Wembley in 1924. We have discussed how Hong Kong government managed to use the special role of Liang Shiyi to demonstrate the importance of Hong Kong Section. During the preparation stage, after discussing with government, both Chambers sent request to the Civil Governor of Canton, the Commissioner of Customs and the Canton Chinese Chamber of Commerce, to ask Canton of the goods from Canton should pay tax or not. The Civil Governor of Canton gave the exemption from export tax of all goods sent through Canton to the Exhibition.^{cdxliii} This also showcased the respect of the Chinese customs from Hong Kong.

However, Hong Kong Section further proved the poor governance skills of the Stubbs administration. During the preparation process of the 1924 season, CCU requested to the government to share half of the HK\$500,000 to the Chinese exhibitors. But there was full of miscommunications between the government and CCU during the negotiation process. The arrangement of the 1925 season is more disastrous than the first season. On 6 June

1925, *The Times* reported said that '[i]n view of the chaotic condition of affairs in China the mercantile community in Hong-kong was, this year, disinclined to continue the display at Wembley on the same lines as in 1924, so the Colonial Government took it over, and the whole exhibit in this year arranged and managed by the Government.'^{cdxliiv} It is only half true, Canton-Hong Kong Strike began in June while the government already decided to take over the control of Hong Kong Section. The participation at the 1925 season certainly did not lengthen the career of Stubbs in Hong Kong. Local British merchants found it increasingly difficult to handle Canton-Hong Kong Strike. In November 1925, the CO replaced Stubbs by Sir Cecil Clementi.

The Financial Report that the Joint Committee submitted to the LegCo illustrated the dissatisfaction towards the organiser of the BEE. The Report even questioned the appropriate use of the title of the BEE.

In 1925, there was less immediate reason than ever for the Colony to be represented; but with the British Isles doing so little ... the enterprise of the Dominions required support. The extension to 1925 secured the backing of the British Government and its blessing, but India, Burma, some large and a number of smaller colonies, still dropped out. An effort was therefore called for to hold the rest together if by way of justifying the retention of the title of British Empire Exhibition. Hong Kong fell into line: for the coming events of 1925 had not yet cast their shadow on the Colony. The decision to participate was a desire to take our share in supporting the one great advertising and propaganda effort the Empire as a whole has ever made: and it remains to be seen whether that effort was justified ... The British Empire Exhibition provide "a solid foundation for the Imperial Building that had throughout formed its central idea": and the proper use of this foundation has yet to be made.^{cdxlv}

The Hong Kong government also relied heavily on the London Committee and the branch of local British companies in London. For instance, Messrs. Lowe, Bingham and Matthews were requested to perform duties before accounting and auditing. Messrs. J.D. Hewett & Co. (with an address at 101 Leadenhall Street) was commissioned to handle all transport and storage in Britain.^{cdxlvii}

8.3 Local British and other European Merchants

Daniel Stephen observed that the BEE promoted the businesses of the indigenous people in colonies and dominions rather than fostering London as the economic centre. The same case happened to the Hong Kong Section, but with different reasons. The Annual Report of the HKGCC in 1924 summarised that the economy Hong Kong was dependent on the trading activities with South China. The participation at the Wembley Park was insignificant to the members of the HKGCC.

Nevertheless, the experience at Wembley clearly indicated that Hongkong, as a non-producing Colony, an entrepot to one of the world's great trade routes and the storehouse of South China, entirely dependent for its degree of prosperity or adversity upon conditions in the vast country on whose borders she stands, can derive slight benefit from participation in a great Empire demonstration of this kind.^{cdxlviii}

Besides, local British and European merchants began to consider the challenges from local Chinese merchants on their domination of Hong Kong business environment in the 1920s. The British and other European merchants in Hong Kong criticised that the Chinese merchants benefited much more at Hong Kong Section and the colonial government favoured the Chinese merchants. The British firms joining the BEE were requested to communicate with the D.K. Blair (the Secretary of HKGCC) before the 18th Sep, regarding the space requirements. On 27 September 1923, a local British Merchant wrote to SCMP with possibly a pseudo name 'Fairplay' to complain the government of being overly generous and trusty to the Chinese concerning the arrangements of the exhibition, as well as the fierce competition from local Chinese businessmen:

the Chinese merchant is coming more and more into competition with local foreign merchants and the latter know that business is not what it was there is no lack of British traders willing to assume executive positions needing to be filled in connection with the Exhibition.^{cdxlviii}

There was another article on SCMP showing the concern of the 'enormous sum of money' that costed by the exhibition and hoped to have the support from the British Chamber of Commerce in the Far East.^{cdxlix} At Hong Kong, the emphasis was also put on the Chinese exhibits instead of the exhibits at the Exporters' room. For instance, during the visit of Queen Mary in 1924, it is reported that the Queen was much impressed by the exhibits of the demonstration of work by Chinese workers:

Here they were received by Mr. Hallifax, the Chief Commissioner, who conducted them to the Chinese restaurant, in which a native orchestra was performing. Their Majesties were also very interested in watching the display arranged by Sir Robert Ho Tung of silk spinning, which is being carried on.^{cdl}

In terms of immediate business opportunities and recognition, British merchants benefited less. However, it is also exaggerating to argue that Hong Kong Section did not bring any benefit to the British merchants. Hong Kong Section has popularised Hong Kong's leading position in shipping building. It showcased the achievement of the industrialisation of Hong Kong.

The most important implication of the BEE to the British community in Hong Kong is the construction of a British imperial identity. The reports of SCMP played a vital during this process.^{cdli} For instance, as early as in 1922, SCMP reported that the Duke of York cuts the first turf at the entrance of National Sports Ground (i.e. Empire Stadium at Wembley).^{cdlii} Besides, the BEE also provided a chance for the old residents in London to gather again and be engaged by the government to contribute during the organisation process.

8.4 Local Chinese Merchants

Comparing with the local British and European business communities, local Chinese businessmen seems to benefit more from organising and joining Hong Kong Section, at least in terms of immediate income generation. The Chinese merchants took this opportunity to showcase their products to overseas buyers and collected the most update

information about their industries.^{cdliii} Exhibitors like Koon Yick had extended its business network through the BEE. Indeed, Hong Kong's Chinese merchants were rather enthusiastic to join exhibitions in the 1920s. While the HKGCC declined some invitations for exhibition, the CCU coordinated the exhibition at Philadelphia in 1926.^{cdliv} While the CCU was coordinating the Hong Kong Section, they were in the discussion to participate in an exhibition organised by the Chamber of Commerce in Qingdao.^{cdlv}

Carroll argued that the Chinese elites' participation at the BEE facilitated Hong Kong as an 'active member' of the British Empire.^{cdlvi} This observation is probably true for Robert Hotung. He was very active to join the social activities in London. However, most of the other delegates from Hong Kong were not very active in Britain. Hong Kong did not join most of the major events except the Imperial Jamboree. Most of the events about Hong Kong took place at the Hong Kong Section only. Carroll's observation probably better described the involvement of Hong Kong's Chinese merchants in the commercial and political activities in London.

The Hong Kong Section also became an arena for local Chinese merchants to strengthen their roles as the Chinese leaders. Local Chinese elites originally emerged with the expansion of education during the early colonial period. Entering the 1920s, most of the local Chinese elites were merchants or compradors. They established themselves as the new social class, for instance, through participation in the CGCC. Besides, the local Chinese elites usually achieved political status through the directorship of Tung Wah Hospital, Po Leung Kuk, District Watch Committee, the appointment of unofficial Justice of the Peace, and unofficial members of LegCo or ExCo, etc.^{cdlvii} The Hong Kong government also engaged much more local Chinese in the advisory boards to govern this increasingly unstable colony.

As Zou observed, the Chinese merchants showcased an 'imperial identity' at the BEE, i.e. a combination of loyalty, a desire to elevate their social, economic and political standing and materialism'.^{cdlviii} The Hong Kong Section is the limited means that official recognition from London and Hong Kong governments was given to the Chinese communities. Similar to the organisation of the Jubilee celebration in 1891, the Chinese elites actively participated in the organising committee of the Hong Kong Section.^{cdlix} Local Chinese and Eurasian merchants like Chow Shouson, Ip Lan Chuen, Robert Hotung and Robert Kotewall showcased their social status to the Chinese community through their involvement at the Hong Kong Section.^{cdlx}

Colonial Hong Kong was an autocracy system serving British interest.^{cdlxi} The recognition from the Hong Kong government was essential for the Chinese merchants to confirm their political status. However, the Chinese elites' close collaboration with the British colonials in Hong Kong does mean their full support to the British coloniser.^{cdlxii} By the 1920s, local Chinese elites had already developed themselves as an influential social class in Hong Kong.^{cdlxiii} They had also begun to question the prospect of Britain to remain as a global power.^{cdlxiv} Chinese nationalism did not develop in Hong Kong. Chinese elites in Hong Kong manipulated double loyalties of Britain and China for personal and societal interest. Compared with West Africa and India, the indigenous community of Hong Kong shared greater power with the government. The boycott of the Indian Section was not successful as Sir Thiruvalluvar Vijayaraghavacharya was the only Indian representative after Srinivasa Sastri and Jamnadas Dwarkadas resigned. The

Section could be organised without the much support from various states of India in 1924.^{cdlxv} However, Hong Kong Chinese merchants shared more power during the organisational process of the Hong Kong Section. For instance, two Associate Honorary Commissioners were exceptionally appointed. Because of this, the Hong Kong Section did not attract similar backlash like West African and India Section. The financial failure of the Hong Kong Section in 1925 further proved that the colonial collaboration with local Chinese elites is essential.

8.5 Chinese Community in Hong Kong

The BEE had produced minimal impact on the construction of British identity among the Chinese commoners living in Hong Kong. Compared to SCMP, there were only a few reports on the Hong Kong Section in local Chinese newspapers. As the Chinese newspapers mainly represented the interest of the Chinese elites,^{cdlxvi} most news reports focused on the activities of the members of the delegates or major events like the visits of King George V, Queen Mary and Liang Shiyi. There was also a lack of interest in the BEE among local community.^{cdlxvii} Even though anti-imperialism idea had begun to spread in Hong Kong and China, surprisingly the Hong Kong Section did not attract much disputes Kong.

As discussed above, the most visible objection in Hong Kong came from the rickshaw pullers and coolies. They refused to have any presence of rickshaw, sedan chair and coolies in Wembley. Coincidentally, by the rickshaw and chair coolies (mainly serving the Peak district) launched a labour strike on 30 April 1924.^{cdlxviii} The immediate cause of the strike was the prosecution of a rickshaw puller.^{cdlxix} In the 1920, there were many conflicts between the colonial government, rickshaw pullers and coolies. Similarly, the Chinese merchants played the role to mediate the interests of both sides. For instance, on a meeting of both Chambers in 1922, the CCU channelled the demands of the cargo coolies (on the demand for the salary increase of shipping companies owned by British merchants) and negotiated it with the HKGCG.^{cdlxx} The development of anti-imperialism sentiment and working class consciousness were contained by the collaboration between the Hong Kong government and the Chinese merchants.

The further objection from the rickshaw pullers was avoided. However, the reason was probably commercial calculation but not political judgement. An article on SCMP commented that it was 'a wise choice' to withdraw the ideas of rickshaws because of three reasons:

To every traveller one of the charms of east of Suez is its varying modes of travel. In every country he touches he sees primitive methods of transport still in operation and the oldest and most disillusioned globetrotter will probably remember his first ride in a rickshaw; the peculiar reaction he found in being hauled along by a sweating fellow human. Many people are surprise that the Hongkong-section of the Empire Exhibition was not invested with another touch of local colour such as fleet of rickshas would have given it. On the face of things it may seems a strange omission, but it was not an oversight the first objection came from the coolies themselves. Even in their lowly station they objected to being shown as beasts of burden in other than their own country. The more enlightened of the Chinese also objected on the same

ground and additional one: that what may be loosely termed national prestige might be lowered in the eyes of the British Empire. There still remained the problem of how these section of sending coolies to England would be looked upon by various labour organisation. It can easily be imagined that if they adopted a critical attitude Hong Kong would not gleam any the brighter in the eyes of those at home as a star among the Empire's constellation of coolies. Later, it was found that another difficulty presented itself. The transport services within the Exhibition had all been contracted out, and there would have been resentment at competition from rickshaws from Hongkong – possibly also from Malaya, Ceylon and South Africa – compelling the vehicles confine themselves to their respective sections. Wembley is a very big and very tiring, and rickshaws would have been a boon; but the matter has been dropped and Britain has had to accept Hongkong without its familiar rickshaws. On the whole the policy has undoubtedly been a wise one.^{cdlxxi}

The first and second factors concerns the objections from the pullers and the potential form labour organisations. However, the third concern is purely commercial, i.e. the potential objection from the transport service providers at Wembley Park. At the end, the rickshaw pullers and coolies' demands were not fully met. Related images were still shown at the Hong Kong Section.

8.6 Chinese Communities in China and Overseas

Besides the labour strikes at Wembley Park, the major resistance movement against the BEE came from the British colonies. Rather than consolidating an identity among all members of the British Empire, Daniel Stephen's thesis showed that the BEE ironically triggered anti-colonial consciousness among the students and activists from West Africa living in London and the Indian visitors.

The problematic representation at the West Africa Section was central to the formation of the WASU and other anti-colonial and anti-imperial activities in London. In the 1920s, Hong Kong was tied up by British imperialism and Chinese nationalism. It would be reasonable to expect disagreement with the representation of China at the Hong Kong Section from overseas Chinese students. No written record of any Chinese visitors at Wembley could be identified so far. It is not possible at this stage to evaluate the perception of the Hong Kong Section by Chinese visitors.

However, the Hong Kong Section was not exactly important to coordinate the activists and political figures in Hong Kong and London.^{cdlxxii} There were some prominent Chinese living in London when the BEE was held. For instance, scholar Cai Yuenpei stayed there between 1924 and 1926. He arrived at London on 28 March 1924 when Britain began to discuss the arrangement of the Boxer Indemnity with the Republic of China.^{cdlxxiii} Writer Lao She was also living in London in 1924.^{cdlxxiv} No record indicated that Cai or Lao visited the BEE or met with the delegates of the Hong Kong Section.

Chapter 9 Concluding Remarks

In 1925, the HKGCC received the invitations from Hanoi, Lausanne, Manila, New Orleans and Paris to participate the exhibitions there. Due to the Canton-Hong Kong Strike, the HKGCC declined all invitations and declared that ‘it was not felt likely that support from Hongkong would be forthcoming’.^{cdlxxv} Britain organised several other empire exhibitions in the 1930s. However, the Northern Expedition of the KMT, the Great Depression and then the Second Sino-Japanese War incessantly challenged the business environment in Hong Kong in the late 1920s and the 1930s. The growing anxiety and the outbreak of Japanese invasion in China limited the government and merchants from the participation of all these exhibitions. In the British Empire Exhibition at Glasgow in 1938, only some photos of Hong Kong were displayed.



Image 68 Cinderella stamp of the BEE in 1938

As the independence movements of some British colonies continued to develop after WWII, no other empire exhibition was organised after WWII. When the Festival of Britain was held in 1951 in London as the centennial anniversary of the Great Exhibition in 1851, no British colonies participated with any independent pavilion. The Hong Kong Section at Wembley was not only occasion exhibiting Hong Kong in Britain. However, the BEE in 1924 and 1925 was the rare occasion that comprehensively displayed Hong Kong in Britain during the colonial period.^{cdlxxvi}

	Title	Location
1931	The British Empire Exhibition, Argentina	Buenos Aires
1936	The British Empire Exhibition, South Africa	Johannesburg
1938	The British Empire Exhibition, Scotland	Glasgow

Table 21 The British Empire Exhibitions between 1926 and 1941

Hong Kong’s participation at Wembley remained largely unknown to the general public in Hong Kong today. However, the Hong Kong Section demonstrated Hong Kong’s special yet often ignored position in the British Empire and modern China in the 1920s. The major observations of this project are summarised below:

(1) The representations of Hong Kong: Between Tradition and Progress

Two rather conflicting representations of Hong Kong was displayed at the Hong Kong Section. First, the Hong Kong Section highlighted Hong Kong's connection with traditional Chinese culture. At Wembley Park, the British Empire 'included' China by appropriating traditional Chinese architectural elements and stereotypic images of China at the Hong Kong Section and highlighting the Section as the 'real China. However, except the offensive images like the display of rickshaws were rejected, the Chinese community did not show any explicit objection. It is because such a representation of Hong Kong could strengthen the identity of the Chinese merchants there.

The format of the Hong Kong Section at Wembley seems to have shaped Hong Kong's images in similar exhibitions after the WWII. The design of the Hong Kong Pavilion of 1970 Osaka World Exposition resembles a Chinese junk. The Hong Kong Pavilion at New York's World's Fair in 1964/1965 was designed as a junk and the Chinese *pailou*. The *Official Guide Book* describes the major features of the Hong Kong Pavilion, which are almost the same to the Hong Kong Section at Wembley.^{cdlxxvii}

MARKET STREET. The first floor of the Hong Kong building suggests a busy, modern street in the colony. On both sides sit little shops and stalls where jade and ivory pieces are carved to order, measurements are taken for custom clothing and a wide variety of other merchandise is sold.

THE CLUB ON DISPLAY. The entrance to the Crown Colony Club, flanked by tiny sampans and the huge junks with their multicolored sails, has the distinctive appearance of a Hong Kong dockside. On display in the club are antique furniture, richly colored rugs and a number of art objects.

RESTAURANTS. Light lunches may be purchased at an outdoor café, or entire meals in the two restaurants. In the restaurants, Chinese waitresses bring trays of dishes to the tables; diners choose from hundreds of entrees, including Cantonese squab, duckling stuffed with shark fin, and shrimp and beef in lily leaves. At the Colony Club, Chinese opera singers, acrobats and other groups perform during the evening.



Image 69 The Hong Kong Pavilion at New York World's Fair 1964/1965

Colonial exhibitions typically emphasized coloniser's contribution to the 'progress' of the colonies from their the coloniser's point of view.^{cdlxxviii} The Hong Kong government also presented Hong Kong as a developed trade centre and industrial modern city, with the introduction to modernisation by Britain. The Hong Kong Section also highlighted the importance of British exporters' manufacturing industries. Similarly, the Chinese exhibitors were not unhappy with this presentation, as the business at the shops was their major concern.

Through the demonstrations of work, models of dockyard and the social activities of the Chinese exhibitors, the Hong Kong Section also display the modern images of Hong Kong / China at Wembley. In other words, the Hong Kong government, British and Chinese merchants all successfully presented their own version of Hong Kong at Wembley Park.

(2) The Chinese Merchants: Between Britain and China

The analysis of Danial Stephen on the anti-colonial, anti-imperial movements at Sections of India and West Africa cannot be applied to explain the Hong Kong Section. In comparison with the Sections of India and West Africa, the indigenous community (i.e. the Chinese merchant class) in Hong Kong was much more heavily involved in the preparation and operation of the Hong Kong Section. The Chinese merchant class exercised their influence through the CCU's participation in the Joint Committee and the exhibitors of the shops. The rejection of the idea of bringing rickshaw pullers to Wembley Park clearly shows that the colonial government and the British merchants could not ignore the opinions of the local Chinese community. Robert Hotung's involvement in the Hong Kong Section and other social activities in London also illustrates how the Chinese merchants manipulated Hong Kong's special position between Britain and China to develop their interests in the British Empire and modern China.

The Hong Kong Section illustrates Chinese elite class' distinctive position between Britain and China. Through the close collaboration with the colonial government, the Chinese merchants 'confirmed' their role as a leader of the Chinese community and expanded their business network. At the same time, they acted as the Chinese leaders to assist the colonial government to govern the local Chinese community in Hong Kong. Such a role became even more important in the 1920s, as they also assisted the government to handle the increasingly problematic Sino-British relation. Chinese elite class in Hong Kong was particular important in the 1920s when the political situation of China, especially Guangdong, was increasingly unstable and affected Britain's interest in China.

(3) Identity construction as a member of British Empire

On 23 April 1924, 'I declare this exhibition open', the final words of the opening speech of King George V, was broadcasted through radio. It was the first sentence by a head of state that ever transmitted live on radio.^{cdlxxix} However, public radio broadcasting service was unavailable in Hong Kong until 1928. Newspapers was the major means reporting

the happenings at Wembley. The coverage of English media like SCMP, as well as the participation of the British community in Hong Kong and old residents of Hong Kong in London fostered the relationship between Hong Kong and London among the British community. The impact was only minimal to the Chinese community in Hong Kong and Britain. Rather than promoting Hong Kong's role in the British Empire, the Chinese delegates from Hong Kong ironically regarded the Exhibition as a chance to discuss the future of China.

One of the objectives of the BEE was to strengthen cooperation among Britain and its colonies. The Chinese merchants benefited relatively more than the British exhibitors. Some Chinese merchants expanded their business networks in Europe by taking part in the BEE. However, the Chinese merchants in Hong Kong began to emphasize 'imperial cooperation' only after its business connections with China were disrupted. By the mid 1920s, most Hong Kong-made products were intended for the Chinese market as Hong Kong market was small.^{cdlxxx} But the Nationalist government's exercise of customs control effectively barred Hong Kong from the Chinese market. The Chinese merchants welcomed 'imperial cooperation' in the late 1920s because of practical consideration of economic returns, instead of a sense of belonging to the British Empire.

In conclusion, Hong Kong joined the British Empire Exhibition in 1924 and 1925, when the social, economic and political environment of China experienced a seashore change. The participation of the Chinese merchants at Hong Kong Section accidentally opened new channels to sustain their political and economic influence. Hong Kong's relationship with Britain and China continued to evolve after the BEE finished. After the KMT's Northern Expedition concluded the Warlord Era, the Nationalist government resumed customs control in 1928. Hong Kong-made products were then unqualified as Chinese products. The industrialisation of local Chinese businesses was forced to slow down.^{cdlxxxi} Worst still, the Great Depression since 1929 brought further damage to the economy in Hong Kong.^{cdlxxxii} In 1930, the Department of Overseas Trade suggested to organise an annual trade exhibition in Hong Kong.^{cdlxxxiii} In 1933, British Empire Fair was held at Peninsula Hotel in Kowloon. The scale of this exhibition was, certainly, incomparable to the BEE. But the arrangement and happening reminded us the special socioeconomic positions and social issues of Hong Kong before WWII. The Chairman of the Kwantung Provincial Government (Lin Yun-koy), the Mayor of Canton (Liu Chi-wen) and other officials from China were invited to join the opening ceremony in 1933. The Chinese Chamber of Commerce took up the role of receiving these guests.^{cdlxxxiv} Coincidentally, some rickshaw pullers rushed into Peninsula Hotel during the exhibition as a strategy of their protests.^{cdlxxxv} Similar to the BEE, the British Empire Fair was arena for various stakeholders to liaise their best interests.



Image 70 Poster of the Empire Products Fair (1933)
Source: Hong Kong Heritage Project

In response to the Great Depression, Ottawa Agreement was signed in 1932. Under this Agreement, Hong Kong was given ‘Imperial Preference’, i.e. enjoying more favourable rate of tariff when trading with Britain and the members of the Commonwealth. The Chinese merchants in Hong Kong began to focus on the markets of Britain and the Commonwealth. The industries of Hong Kong briefly revived until the Second World War broke out.^{cdlxxxvi}

On 29 October 1925, the BEE’s Exhibition Commissioner organised a dinner at Victoria Hotel in London. Together the major personnel like the Duke of York, Traver Clarke and Lord Stevenson, Edwin Hallifax joined as a representative from Hong Kong Section. During the toast, Lord Stevenson believed the benefits of the BEE would last for many years. Travers Clarke observed that ‘Buy Empire Goods’ began to be popular in the columns of the newspapers in 1924 and found the BEE ‘splendidly successful’.^{cdlxxxvii} The words finally came true in Hong Kong in the 1930s. The BEE’s objective of ‘imperial cooperation’ was somehow realised in Hong Kong, when Hong Kong’s trade with China was obstructed.

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鄭宏泰、高皓，2016 年。《白手興家：香港家族與社會 1841–1941》。香港：中華書局（香港）有限公司。

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報章

京報 Jing Bao

叻報 Lat Pat

南洋商報 Nanyang Siang Pau

申報 Shen Bao

香港華字日報 The Chinese Mail

ⁱ Stephens, 2013.

ⁱⁱ August, 1993.

ⁱⁱⁱ Darwin, 2009.

^{iv} Brendon, 2007, p.339.

^v MacKenzie, 1984, p.107.

^{vi} In 1904, the British Empire League has proposed to hold an exhibition for the commemorating tour of the Prince of Wales. Yet, the

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- Russo-Japanese War in 1904-1905 ended the plan (Hill and Varrasi, 2009, p.32).
- vii Geppert, 2010, p. 142.
- viii Stephens, 2013, p.29.
- ix MacKenzie, 1984 p.108.
- x Knight and Sabey, 1984, p.2
- xi Knight and Sabey, 1984, pp.3-4.
- xii HKGCC, 1920, p.122.
- xiii MacKenzie, 1984, p.108.
- xiv Hughes, 2006, p.68.
- xv Hill and Varrasi, 2009, p.33.
- xvi New York Times, 22 March 1922.
- xvii Geppert, 2010, pp.137-138.
- xviii Hill and Varrasi, 2009, p.34
- xix Geppert, 2010, p.153.
- xx Geppert, 2010, pp.107-108.
- xxi Geppert, 2010, pp.137-138.
- xxii August, 1993.
- xxiii <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O771945/british-empire-exhibition-1924-poster-herrick-frederick-charles/>
- xxiv CAB-24-171-80
- xxv Geppert, 2010, p.146.
- xxvi MacKenzie, 1984
- xxvii Evening Post, 18 December 1925.
- xxviii The Times (London, England), February 6, 1924, Issue 43568, p.7 AND SCMP, 25 March 1924.
- xxix Geppert, 2010, P. 150.
- xxx MacKenzie, p.110
- xxxi Geppert, 2010, p.146.
- xxxii Stephen, 2013, p.10.
- xxxiii Stephen, 2013, p.2.
- xxxiv <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/written-answers/1923/apr/23/british-empire-exhibition>
- xxxv Geppert, 2010, p.149.
- xxxvi The Times, 30 Sep 1924.
- xxxvii Geppert, 2010, pp.153-154.
- xxxviii Cook and Fox, 1924, pp.26-27.
- xxxix Andrew Thompson A. 'A Tale of Three Exhibitions': Portrayals and Perceptions of "Britishness" at the Great Exhibition (1851), Wembley Exhibition (1924) and the Festival of Britain (1951)' in Millat G. (ed.) Angleterre ou Albion, Entre Fascination et Repulsion (Lille, 2006), 91 – 102.
- xl Evening Post, 18 December 1925.
- xli SCMP, 16 February 1924.
- xlvi Hill and Varrasi, 2009, p.39.
- xlvi MacKenzie, 1984, p.111
- xliv Stephen, 2013, p.23.
- xl Clendinning, n.d.
- xlvi August, 1993.
- xlvi Hill and Varrasi, 2009, p.33.
- xlvi The China Mail, 4 April 1924.
- xlvi SCMP, 6 May 1924.
- i MacKenzie, 1984, p.111.
- li Stephens, 2013, p.50.
- li Stephens, 2013, p.13.
- li Stephens, 2013, p.13.
- liv Hoffenberg, 2001, p.255
- lv Stephen, 2013, p.2.
- lvi Clendinning, n.d.
- lvii Darwin, 2009, pp.389-393.
- lviii Geppert, 2010, p.163.
- lix Hughes, 2006, p.68.
- lx Cook and Fox, 1924, p.126.
- lxi MacKenzie, 1984, p.114.
- lxii Corbey, 1993, p.341.
- lxiii Blake, 2002, p.35.
- lxiv August, 1993.
- lxv Clendinning, n.d.
- lxvi Burton, 2012
- lxvii Stephens, 2013.
- lxviii Clendinning, n.d.
- lix Hughes, 2006, p.68.
- lxx Stephens, 2013.
- lxxi Chronicle, 26 April 1924.
- lxxii Carroll, 2007; Tsang, 2004.
- lxxiii Hampton, 2015.

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- lxxiv HKGCC, 1925, p.122.
- lxxv Chiu, 1973, pp.38-40.
- lxxvi Water Supply Department, 2017.
- lxxvii Ure, 2012, p.27.
- lxxviii Ure, 2012, p.28.
- lxxix 蕭國健, 2013 年, 頁 30。
- lxxx Ure, 2012, p.27.
- lxxxi 陳學然, 2014 年, 頁 135 至 136。
- lxxxii 蔡榮芳, 2001 年, 頁 103。
- lxxxiii Bergère, 1983, p.764.
- lxxxiv Waldron, 1995, pp.3-5.
- lxxxv Waldron, 1995, p.10.
- lxxxvi Chan Lau, 2005, p. 169
- lxxxvii Chan, 1979, p.128
- lxxxviii Chung, 2005, pp.82-84.
- lxxxix Chung, 2005, p.87.
- xc Chung, 2005, p.89.
- xc1 Chung, 2005, p.90.
- xcii Chan, 1979, p.132.
- xciii Tsang, 2004, p.88.
- xciv Chan Lau, 1999, p.21.
- xcv Tsang, 2007.
- xcvi sang, 2007.
- xcvii Bergère, 1983, 764
- xcviii Western Mail, 1 October 1925
- xcix Western Mail, 1 October 1925
- c Chow, 2017, p.157.
- ci Fung, 1991.
- cii Chan Lau, 1999, p.54.
- ciii Tsang, 2004, p.106.
- civ Lin, 2018, p.28.
- cv 蔡榮芳, 2001 年, 頁 164。
- cvi Cameron, 1991.
- cvii Stephens, 2013, p.4.
- cviii Carroll, 2007, p.90.
- cix Bergère, 1983.
- cx Chung, 2005, p.81.
- cx1 Chung, 2005.
- cxii 鄭宏泰、高皓, 2016 年。
- cxiii 鄭宏泰、高皓, 2016 年。
- cxiv Chung, 2005, p.105.
- cxv Van de Ven, 2003, pp.84-89.
- cxvi SCMP, 2 January 1920.
- cxvii SCMP, 15 July 1920.
- cxviii HKGCC, 1920, pp.119-124.
- cxix HKGCC, 1921, p. 227.
- cxix CCU is now named as Chinese General Chamber of Commerce. In 1924, the official name in Chinese and English were 'Chinese Commercial Union' and '華商總會' respectively, which were renamed from 'A Principal Society of the Chinese Residents in Hong Kong' and '華商公局' respectively. For more information about the history of the naming and organisation structure of CCU, refer to Wang (2007, p.200).
- cxxi HKGCC, 1921, p. 227.
- cxii *The China Express and Telegraph*, 28 November 1922.
- cxiii SCMP, 17 November 1921.
- cxiv HKGCC, 1922, p. 263.
- cxv The Hong Kong Telegraph, 21 July 1922.
- cxvi SCMP, 31 August 1922 and 1 September 1922.
- cxvii HKGCC, 1924, p.265
- cxviii SCMP, 9 September 1922.
- cxix HKGCC, 1922, p.27 and 264. However, Gershom Stewart, a former LegCo member of Hong Kong, was not included to the membership list in the HKGCC's annual report.
- cxix SCMP, 21 December 1920.
- cxxi SCMP, 10 July 1923.
- cxix SCMP, 17 January 1924.
- cxix HKGCC, 1923, p.72.
- cxix Stephen, 2013, p.2.
- cxix LegCo, 1928, pp.1-2.
- cxix Cook and Fox, 1924.
- cxix HKGCC, 1922, p.269.

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- exxxviii HKGCC, 1922, p.271.
exxxix HKGCC, 1924, p.57.
exl CO129/479
exli CO129/479
exlii Hamill, 1981, p.89.
exliii CO129/479
exliv CO129/479
exlv Oddy, 2016, p.279.
exlvi CO129/479
exlvii CO129/480
exlviii HKGCC, 1923, p.67.
exlix The Newcastle Sun, 2 March 1923.
cl CO129/479
cli CO129/479
clii CO129/479
cliii Cook and Fox, 1924, p.14.
cliv 香港華字日報，1923年8月23日。
clv SCMP, 18 July, 1923.
clvi SCMP, 31 July 1923.
clvii SCMP, 17 November 1921.
clviii SCMP, 31 July 1923.
clix SCMP, 16 May 1923.
clx SCMP, 19 May 1923.
clxi SCMP, 26 May 1923.
clxii SCMP, 21 June 1923.
clxiii SCMP, 16 July 1923.
clxiv SCMP, 29 May 1923.
clxv SCMP, 27 June 1922.
clxvi SCMP, 31 July 1923.
clxvii HKGCC, 1923, p.68.
clxviii 香港華字日報，1924年02月11日。
clxix SCMP, 16 May 1923.
clxx SCMP, 26 May 1924.
clxxi SCMP, 21 June 1923.
clxxii SCMP, 11 July 1923.
clxxiii LegCo, 1928, p.2
clxxiv Hong Kong Daily Press, 1923-08-24.
clxxv Cook and Fox, 1924, p.77.
clxxvi Poverty Bay Herald, 7 April 1924.
clxxvii 馮美蓮、尹耀全，2013年，頁100至101及194。
clxxviii SCMP, 13 February 1924.
clxxix 周佳榮（等），2002年，頁32。
《香港中華總商會百年史》節錄了《葉蘭泉十七年來任華商總會司理之經過》部份內容，當中包括前往參與大英帝國展覽的經歷。
elxxx HKGCC, 1926.
elxxxi LegCo, 1928, p.4.
elxxxii LegCo, 1928, p.4.
elxxxiii HKGCC, 1923, p.73.
elxxxiv SCMP, 10 July 1923.
elxxxv HKGCC, 1923, p.72.
elxxxvi SCMP, 6 May 1924.
elxxxvii 李吉奎，2005年，頁424。
elxxxviii Chung, 1998, pp.75-82.
elxxxix 香港華字日報，1924年2月14日。
exc Communications Clique means a political group in Guangdong during the period of Beiyang Government. “Old Communications Clique” was led by Liang Shiyl.
exci 李吉奎，2005年，頁424。
excii Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer, 6 May 1924.
exciii SCMP, 9 April 1924.
exciv 李吉奎，2005年，頁451。
exciv The North - China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette, 26 April 1924.
excvi 李吉奎，2005年，頁451。
excvii SCMP, 9 April 1924
excviii 李吉奎，2005年，頁448。
excix SCMP, 1 March 1923.
ec Kua, 2011, p.115.
eci Dunstan Times, 27 October 1924.
ecii The Scotsman, 29 March 1924.

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- cciii The Chinese Express and Telegraph, 17 July 1924.
- cciv Hawera & Normanby Star, 28 August 1924.
- ccv SCMP, 15 May 1924.
- ccvi SCMP, 15 May 1924.
- ccvii The China Mail, 26 May 1924.
- ccviii SCMP, 1 and 2 May 1924.
- ccix According to the personal correspondences with the spokesperson of The Helena May, most records before WWII were destroyed. No written record about these events can be located.
- ccx SCMP, 2 May 1924.
- ccxi 香港華字日報，1924年6月21日。相關內容參考香港浸會大學圖書館早期華文報紙資料庫。兩則報的網址如下：
<http://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/chinesefilms/search.php?lang=tc&id=4786>
<http://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/chinesefilms/search.php?lang=tc&id=9535>
- ccxii SCMP, 22 July 1922.
- ccxiii SCMP, 17 January 1924.
- ccxiv SCMP, 1 and 2 May 1924.
- ccxv SCMP, 24 November 1924.
- ccxvi SCMP, 14 December 1924.
- ccxvii HKGCC, 1924, p.57.
- ccxviii Hill and Varrasi, 2009, p. 36.
- ccxix The Times, 6 December 1924.
- ccxx The Times, 21 January 1924.
- ccxxi HKGCC, 1924, p.58.
- ccxxii 香港華字日報，1925年2月16日。
- ccxxiii HKGCC, 1924, p.58.
- ccxxiv HKGCC, 1924, p.57.
- ccxxv HKGCC, 1924, p.58.
- ccxxvi Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer, 6 June 1925.
- ccxxvii 香港華字日報，1925年3月2日。
- ccxxviii 香港華字日報，1925年3月18日。
- ccxxix SCMP, 13 February 1924.
- ccxxx 香港華字日報，1925年4月10日。
- ccxxxi SCMP, 8 June 1925.
- ccxxxii Witchard, 2012, p. 107.
- ccxxxiii Lawrence, 1925, pp.100-101.
- ccxxxiv In 1925, the monopoly of food and catering service of Messrs. Lyons & Co. was replaced by other companies. The BEE also allowed more sections to generate income by running their own restaurant at their pavilions. For instance, the sections of Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, West Africa, West Indies and Ceylon operated their own restaurants (Evening Post, 28 March 1925). However, the Chinese Restaurant at Hong Kong Section was the only one managed by government but not private sector (Lawrence, 1925, pp.118-119).
- ccxxxv LegCo, 1928 p.5.
- ccxxxvi 香港華字日報，1925年11月28日。
- ccxxxvii HKGCC, 1924, p.58.
- ccxxxviii 香港華字日報，1925年2月16日。
- ccxxxix Geppert, 2010, pp.146.
- ccxl LegCo, 1928, pp.2-3.
- ccxli LegCo, 1928, p.2.
- ccxlii 香港華字日報，1925年3月27日。
- ccxliii The Times, 27 October 1925.
- ccxliv SCMP, 7 November 1925.
- ccxlv 香港華字日報，1925年11月28日，1925年12月12日。LegCo, 1928, pp.4-5.
- Messrs. Lowe, Bingham and Matthews is now Price Waterhouse.
- ccxlvii LegCo, 1928, pp.2-3.
- ccxlviii Daily Herald, 4 June 1925.
- ccxlix Zheng, 2007.
- ccxlx Zheng and Wong, 2007.
- cccl SCMP 1 July 1925.
- cccli SCMP, 5 July 1924.
- ccclii The Times, 20 May 1924.
- cccliii The Times, 26 June 1924.
- cccliv The Times, 9 September 1924.
- ccclv SCMP, 25 April 1924.
- ccclvi 鄭宏泰、高皓，2016年，頁189至190。
- ccclvii SCMP, 8 January 1924.
- ccclviii SCMP, 7 January 1924.
- ccclix The Times, 20 May 1924.
- ccclx SCMP, 22 August 1925.
- ccclxi 南洋商報，25 September 1924.
- ccclxii Bickers, 1999, p.51.

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- celxiii Northern Whig, 9 September 1924.
- celxiv Dictionary of Scottish Architects, 2016.
- celxv SCMP, 12 October 1923.
- celxvi According to the personal correspondences with the spokesperson of Palmer and Turner Group, most records of Palmer and Turner Group before WWII were destroyed. No written record about the Hong Kong Pavilion can be identified.
- celxvii The Mercury, 12 March 1923.
- celxviii The Mercury, 12 March 1923.
- celxix SCMP, 25 June 1924.
- celxx Valentine & Sons' originated as a lithography printing company in 1825 and later became a pioneer of postcard production. It began to employ other printing methods like colourtone in the 1930s.
- celxxi The Scotsman, 29 March 1924.
- celxxii SCMP, 31 July 1923.
- celxxiii Cook and Fox, 1924, p.1.
- celxxiv Cook and Fox, 1924, p.79.
- celxxv SCMP, 11 November 1924.
- celxxvi SCMP, 11 November 1924.
- celxxvii Evelyn Wrench is "the promoter of the British empire" who founded The Royal Over-Seas League. He was a contributor, editor and shareholder of The Spectator.
- celxxviii The Spectator, 10 May 1924.
- celxxix SCMP, 5 September 1922.
- celxxx The news report of *The Sphere* reads that Wu-Tu-Feng had worked in the Imperial Palace. It probably referred to Wu Tingfang, who had served the Manchu Court of Qing Empire. He was also appointed as the first Chinese unofficial member of the Legislative Council in Hong Kong.
- celxxxi Northern Star, 21 June 1924
- celxxxii Camperdown Chronicle, 26 July 1924.
- celxxxiii South Western Times 1924-07-05
- celxxxiv Evening Star, 9 August 1924.
- celxxxv On 7 April 1922, the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) arrived Hong Kong. He was brought to attend the rally of boy scouts, an official banquet at the Government House, played polo and enjoyed Hong Kong at night at Victoria Peak (Straits Times, 8 April 1922).
- celxxxvi The Times, 6 June 1924.
- celxxxvii Chronicle, 26 July 1924.
- celxxxviii Evening Star, 9 August 1924.
- celxxxix Chronicle, 26 July 1924.
- ccxc Northern Star, 21 June 1924.
- ccxei 香港華字日報，1924年1月21日。
- ccxcii Chronicle, 26 July 1924.
- ccxciii The Northern – China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette, 21 June 1924
- ccxciv The Times (London, England), February 6, 1924, Issue 43568, p.7 AND SCMP, 25 March 1924.
- ccxcv SCMP, 5 September 1922, p.7.
- ccxcvi HKGCC, 1923, p.73.
- ccxcvii SCMP, 31 August 1922.
- ccxcviii HKGCC, 1923, p.67.
- ccxcix HKGCC, 1922, pp.267-268.
- C.A. Middleton Smith of the Taikoo Professor of Engineering suggested to the Joint Committee to loan the silver model from Lugard (who was living in Britain at that time). No record about the showcase of this exhibit at the Hong Kong Section is found so far.
- ccc HKGCC, 1923, p.73.
- ccci HKGCC, 1923, p.73.
- No record about the showcase of this exhibit at the Hong Kong Section is found so far.
- cccii SCMP, 14 May 1925.
- ccciii SCMP 29 November 1923.
- ccciv As Hong Kong was under British colonization, British merchants were generally in the dominant position. The terms British and Europeans were sometimes taken as synonyms. Chan, 1991, p.19.
- cccv The Times, 12 May 1924.
- cccvii HKGCC, 1924, p.59.
- cccviii The China Express and Telegraph, 23 November 1923.
- cccix SCMP, 23 August 1923.
- cccix The Sphere, 19 July 1924.
- cccix The Times, 23 April 1924.
- cccxii SCMP, 31 December 1923.
- cccxii SCMP, 8 June 1925.
- cccxiii The Sphere, 19 July 1924.
- cccxiv SCMP, 31 December 1923.
- cccxv Kalgoorlie Miner, 14 April 1924.
- cccxvi The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser, 28 May 1924.
- cccxvii SCMP, 1 May 1924.
- cccxviii The China Mail, 1 May 1924.

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- cccxix SCMP, 1 May 1924.
 cccxx SCMP, 6 May 1924.
 cccxxi SCMP, 27 February 1924.
 cccxxii SCMP, 6 June 1925.
 cccxxiii SCMP, 6 June 1925.
 cccxxiv SCMP, 8 June 1925.
 cccxxv SCMP, 29 November 1923.
 cccxxvi The Stage, 24 July 1924.
 cccxxvii The China Mail, 1 March, 1926.
 cccxxviii Smith, 1982 p.233.
 cccxxix Smith, 1982 p.232.
 cccxxx Evening Post, 13 October 1923.
 cccxxxi The Mercury, 12 March 1923.
 cccxxxii Belfast Telegraph, 22 August 1923.
 cccxxxiii The Hong Kong Telegraph, 1 July 1924.
 cccxxxiv Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc. (n.d.)
 cccxxxv The China Express and Telegraph, 29 November 1923.
 cccxxxvi 香港華字日報，1925年3月18日。
 cccxxxvii SCMP, 22 May 1925.
 cccxxxviii Yorkshire Evening Post, 9 May 1924
 cccxxxix SCMP, 5 September 1922.
 cccl Exeter and Plymouth Gazette, 22 August 1923.
 cccli SCMP, 11 November 1924.
 ccclii SCMP, 26 June 1924.
 cccliii Arbroath Guide, 8 March 1924.
 cccliv The Times, 23 April 1924.
 ccclv SCMP, 22 May 1925.
 ccclvi Evening Post, September 1924
 24 Cook and Fox, 1924, p.79.
 ccclviii Geppert, 2010, p.149.
 ccclix Cook and Fox, 1924, p.77.
 cccl The Northern – China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette, 21 June 1924.
 cccli USC Libraries (u.d.) “Temple in Hong Kong, China, ca.1920” [online]
<http://digitalibrary.usc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/p15799coll123/id/8257> [Accessed 30 June 2020].
 ccclii The officials continued to stay there even after the southern part of Kowloon was colonised by Britain. Kowloon Walled City became the Qing Court’s Chinese Customs in Hong Kong.
 cccliii Denison and Ren, 2014, p.83
 cccliv The Sphere, 19 July 1924.
 ccclv The Times Supplement, 24 May 1924.
 ccclvi The Times Supplement, 24 May 1924.
 ccclvii SCMP, 25 June 1924.
 ccclviii SCMP, 11 November 1924.
 ccclix The Times, 12 May 1924.
 ccclx SCMP, 8 June 1925.
 ccclxi SCMP, 8 August 1925.
 ccclxii It is also worth noting that opium and opium pipes were not exhibited at the Hong Kong Section.
 ccclxiii Cook and Fox, 1924, p.79.
 ccclxiv SCMP, 24 November 1924.
 ccclxv SCMP, 11 October 1923.
 ccclxvi 香港工商日報，1926年11月20日。
 ccclxvii The Hong Kong Telegraph, 1 July 1924.
 ccclxviii SCMP, 6 May 1924.
 ccclxix SCMP, 25 June 1924.
 ccclxx SCMP, 22 May 1925.
 ccclxxi SCMP, 22 May 1925.
 ccclxxii The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser, 16 June 1924.
 ccclxxiii Lawrence, 1925, p.100.
 ccclxxiv The Times, 28 June 1924.
 ccclxxv SCMP, 22 August 1925.
 ccclxxvi SCMP, 25 April 1924.
 ccclxxvii In 1924, Pryse sued the Board of the BEE for not accepting some of his commissioned works. One of the rejected drawings features the ‘coaling station in Hong Kong’ (SCMP, 18 September 1924). No copy of Pryse’s work on Hong Kong could be identified so far. It is thus impossible to evaluate how the coaling station in Hong Kong was presented.
 ccclxxviii Google Art and Culture Institute.
 ccclxxix Cook and Fox, 1924, p.77.
 ccclxxx The Capricornian, 26 April 1924.
 ccclxxxi Evening Star, 9 August 1924.
 ccclxxxii The Illustrated London News, 4 May 1924.

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- ceclxxxiii Northern Star, 21 June 1924.
ceclxxxiv The Times Supplement, 24 May 1924.
ceclxxxv The Northern – China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette, 21 June 1924.
ceclxxxvi The Times, 12 May 1924
ceclxxxvii Lincolnshire Echo, 21 August 1923. And Exeter and Plymouth Gazette, 22 August 1923.
ceclxxxviii Belfast Telegraph, 22 August 1923.
ceclxxxix The Sphere - Saturday 24 May 1924
cccx The Times, 12 May 1924
ccxcxi The Northern – China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette, 21 June 1924
ccxcxii Manawatu Standard, 15 October 1924. Imperial Baby week is to be held during the fourth week in July, which is a health competition about the Empire children under 5 years old (SCMP, 9 April 1924).
ccxcxiii Stephens, 2013.
ccxcxiv Ling, 2002, p.212.
ccxcxv The Northern – China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette, 21 June 1924.
ccxcxvi SCMP, 3 December 1924.
ccxcxvii 鄭宏泰、高皓，2017 年，頁 189 至 190。
ccxcxviii The Hong Kong Telegraph, 1 July 1924.
ccxcxix The Times, Monday, 23 June 1924.
cd Zou, 2012.
cdi The Times, 14 June 1924.
cdii HK industry, p.32
cdiii Evening Post, September 19
cdiv LegCo, 1928.
cdv LegCo, 1928.
cdvi SCMP, 24 February 1928.
cdvii 香港華字日報，1924 年 10 月 27 日。
cdviii 香港華字日報，1927 年 8 月 20。
cdix SCMP, 24 February 1928.
cdx SCMP, 24 February 1928.
cdxi The Times, 12 May 1924.
cdxii SCMP, 26 June 1924.
cdxiii 《南洋商報》，1924 年 6 月 26。
cdxiv 香港華字日報，1924 年 09 月 27 日。
cdxv The Times, 30 December 1924.
cdxvi The Times, 17 October 1925.
cdxvii SCMP, 6 January 1924.
cdxviii Chow Shouson was the member of the Executive Committee at the reception of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales in 1922. SCMP, 6 Jan 1924.
cdxix 香港華字日報，1924 年 10 月 27 日。
cdxx LegCo, 1928.
cdxxi LegCo, 1928.
cdxxii The Times, 11 November 1924.
cdxxiii Hull Daily Mail, 19 December 1924.
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