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A study of the refugee problems and its solutions in Macau during the Anti-Japanese War period (1937-1945) through newspaper report

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Abstract

During the Anti-Japanese War period (1937-1945), Macau was ruled by the Portuguese government. Macau people under colonial rule could not organize anti-Japanese rescue activities openly due to the restriction of neutral policy, but the Macau people were united as one, overcame obstacles and difficulties, actively carried forward the spirit of the country, and did everything in their power to support the mainland Chinese in the war. Through the neutral newspapers of Macau at that time, it reported the support and rescue work of the Macau, the refugee and crime problems that Macau faced at the time. The excavation and research of these issues from the perspective of the press and newspapers helped to deepen the understanding of the social development of Macau at the time and enrich the related research on the relationship between Macau and the Anti-Japanese War.

Keywords: *The Anti-Japanese War period ; Macau ; Macau people ; Newspapers*

1. Introduction

During the eight-year Anti-Japanese War period (1937-1945), Macau was a “neutral” area in South China that was not affected by the Sino-Japanese war, so it became a destination and residence for refugees from surrounding war zones. Since the fall of Guangzhou in October 1938, the Japanese occupied Zhongshan in March 1940. Then the Pacific War happened in December 1941, Hong Kong was occupied by the Japanese, Macau had experienced

three times of refugee influx. The total population of Macau has increased from more than 150,000 before the anti-Japanese War, by the end of 1941, the number of people reached 450,000.¹ These refugees came from different places and countries, including

¹ Lin Faqin, *Aomenren de kangzhan* 澳门人的抗战, Macau: Macau Polytechnic Institute press, 2016, p. 18.

mainland China, Hong Kong, Portugal, Britain, the United States and other countries.² The continuous influx of refugees into Macau has caused Macau to encounter unprecedented pressure in terms of food assistance, housing supply, culture and education, personal epidemic prevention, and social security. Relief of these huge numbers of refugees required the investment of huge social resources and materials. Obviously, it already exceeded the limit that Macau, a small place like this, could bear.

These refugees and children from mainland China needed relief and help from Macau people. At this time, Macau society was witnessing this man-made disaster caused by the war. The nation and compatriots were at this critical moment of survival. Macau society resolutely overcame the ensuing disasters. Despite the difficulties, they united strong and continued to carry out relief activities again and again, and assumed the responsibility of rescuing refugees and needy children without hesitation.

At that time, the whole of Macau Chinese were mobilized to participate in this relief movement. For example, “the Macau-Portuguese government, the Catholic Church, the Hong Kong and Macau Relief Association, temporary agencies for public-private cooperation, numerous Macau non-governmental Chinese associations, local religious groups, and Western religious organizations took conscious action to help the refugees who were in dire straits, played an important role in relief and made a lot of contributions.”³ At that time, Chinese people from all walks of life in Macau also raised a large amount of money and materials to relieve refugees.

In the late period of the Anti-Japanese War, Macau society also began to fall into economic depression, and crimes occurred in Macau from time to time, such as gangsters kidnapping wealthy Macau businessmen, bombs being planted in Macau casinos, etc. “Neutral” Macau was also affected to a certain extent after the war.

2. The Fall of Guangdong and the Flow of Refugees in Macau

With the fall of Guangzhou in October 1938, the capture of Zhongshan by the Japanese in March 1940, and the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941 when the Japanese captured Hong Kong, the population of Macau increased dramatically, reaching more than 450,000 by the end of 1941. The population had tripled, and the refugees in Guangdong were heavily bombarded by Japanese artillery fire. Regarding the Japanese aggression, newspapers *Shenbao* 申报 at the time had the following records (This report is about the Japanese invasion of the Shiqi 石岐 - Macau section on the way from Hong Kong to Macau:

“The Japanese authorities suddenly announced last Friday that they would close the Pearl River for ten days on ‘military grounds.’ Therefore, the original Japanese regular traffic between Guangzhou and Macau Commercial transport and British gunboats were not allowed to sail into the Pearl River. The special correspondent of Haitong News Agency 海通社, who was on his way to Macau for inspection, had to take the land route via Shiqi to Macau and see the area he passed. Although it was directly outside Guangzhou... from Hong Kong On the way to Macau, the Shiqi - Macau section is the most dangerous. The Japanese Air Force fired

² Lin Faqin, *Aomenren de kangzhan* 澳门人的抗战, p. 18.

³ Lin Faqin 林发钦, *Aomenren de kangzhan*, p. 18.

machine guns at cars and buses indiscriminately. The day before yesterday, reporters witnessed three passengers dying violently...”⁴

The Japanese army’s aggressive behavior and innocent killings frightened the refugees in the war zone. Determined to leave the war zone and temporarily escape the war, “neutral” Macau became the first choice for refugees. Regarding the newspaper reports on the Macau and Guangdong war zones at that time, there were the following records in *Shenbao* 申报:

“Although Guangdong and Macau are only separated by one coast, there is indeed a huge difference in life and death. Macau is adjacent to the coast of Guangdong, only ten lines apart, but the scenes on the two sides are completely different; Macau is quiet and peaceful, Guangdong is a war that’s wreaking havoc and blood flowing in canals.”⁵

There was a huge contrast between the peace and tranquility of Macau and the smoke of Guangdong, so refugees from war zones were trying their best to escape to Macau.

Reports on refugees from the Guangdong war zone, Jiangmen 江门 refugees, Xiangzhou 香洲 refugees and Zhongshan 中山 refugees fleeing to Macau include the following records in *Shenbao* 申报:

“Refugees from the Guangdong war zone had to pass through Guangdong, a province full of bullets, and risk their lives to get to Macau. Since the war broke out in South China, refugees have fled to Macau one after another to temporarily escape the war. The average number of refugees escaping from the Guangdong war zone every day. About 10,000 people flowed into Macau, a Portuguese peninsula located to the west of Hong Kong. Standing at the intersection of Macau and China, I saw 23 large cars loaded with Chinese refugees, like in the video. They were arranged like sardine, transported from the bomb-laden Guangdong Province, through the strategic junction, to a safe area.”⁶

Jiangmen 江门 was captured by the Japanese army, and local refugees fled to Macau one after another. “After the war in Huicheng 会城 and Jiangmen, there were more than tens of thousands of local compatriots and people who escaped to Macau...”⁷

Xiangzhou 香洲 was bombarded by the Japanese navy, causing many casualties. Local refugees fled from Xiangzhou to Macau along the road. “The Japanese navy jointly attacked the nearest island of Dianjia Bay 店家湾, and (according to the lower reaches of the Yangtze River) the whole city was reduced to ruins. During the bombing of Xiangzhou, the warships at sea fired violent

⁴ “On the way to Shiqi Macau, the Japanese Air Force continued to wreak havoc, and volunteers from all over the country built roads to maintain order”, in *Shenbao*, February 8, 1939, (Issue 23329), p. 3.

⁵ “Macau after the Fall of Guangdong”, *Shenbao* 申报, November 5, 1938, (Issue 23234), p. 12.

⁶ “Macau after the Fall of Guangdong”, *Shenbao* 申报, November 5, 1938, (Issue 23234), p.12.

⁷ “In order to rush for urgent relief, two representatives of the new association went to Macau yesterday morning to investigate the transportation route from Macau to the mainland, and will first provide relief to the refugees in Wan Chai, Macau”, *Shenbao* 申报 (Hong Kong Edition, Issue 395), April 9, 1939, p.5.

artillery fire at the same time, causing numerous casualties. An unusually large number of refugees fled from Xiangzhou along the road to Macau.”⁸

Zhongshan中山 was also captured by the Japanese army in 1940, and tens of thousands of refugees fled to Macau. “On March 5, 1940, the Japanese invaded Zhongshan. The Chinese army was resisting strongly, and the villages were destroyed. Tens of thousands of refugees fled to Macau. According to Reuters report on the 5th, ‘the Japanese army today, took advantage of the thick fog to land at Tangjiawan唐家湾 and Xiangzhou香洲 in Zhongshan, Guangdong. The Chinese army is resisting the Japanese invasion of the mainland, and tens of thousands of refugees are flocking to Macau...”⁹

Refugees from the Guangdong war zone flocked to Macau from all directions to escape the war. The population in Macau suddenly increased. The Portuguese government and people from all walks of life in Macau launched a series of powerful relief and resettlement measures for the refugees. However, Macau, a small country, had to bear the responsibility of providing relief to nearly hundreds of thousands of refugees and resettling their lives. It was facing unprecedented pressure on issues such as food, housing, culture and education, medical and epidemic prevention, and social security.

3. Social problems caused by the influx of refugees and its solutions

Since the fall of Guangzhou in October 1938 and the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong in December 1941, Macau has become the only “neutral” region in South China that had not been affected by the war. At this time, “Macau Governor Gabriel Mauricio Teixeira (reign 1940-1947) publicly announced through the radio that all those who want to seek refuge in Macau will be protected. He said that in accordance with the guidance of Legislative Regulation No. 579 of September 17, 1938, it has been clearly stated that all persons who are members of the government and the people. Our responsibilities must be based on the public welfare. Therefore, anyone who comes to Macau due to the impact of the war and takes refuge under the Portuguese flag must do our best to protect them.”¹⁰ After refugees from war zones in various provinces and cities in mainland China learned the news, they all chose to flee to Macau to escape the war. From October 1938 to October 1941, Macau’s population increased dramatically. There were reports about the influx of refugees and the rapid increase in Macau’s population at that time: “On October 27, 1941, Macau’s population surged. According to the International News from Hong Kong on the 27th, neutral Macau, due to the wars in Europe and China, and the helpless refugees in the war zones of Guangdong and North China provinces, all regarded Macau as a good place to

take refuge. Because there is no immigration ban there. In view of the gathering of refugees, the Macau government allocates AUD 600,000 (USD 3,333,330) annually to provide relief and resettlement for refugees. At the same time, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Kiang Wu Hospital and Other charitable organizations have carried out relief work. Since 1938, the population of Macau has risen to 500,000 due to the surge in asylum seekers. According to official estimates, of the 300,000 refugees, 250,000 are They are people who are extremely poor.”¹¹ Due to the continuous influx of refugees, small Macau has encountered unprecedented pressure on issues such as food, housing, culture and education, medical and epidemic prevention, and social security. The following points will be discussed.

3.1. The food issue and its solutions

Refugees needed food relief, and Macau citizens also needed food to maintain their daily lives. Therefore, stabilizing rice prices and rice sources could guarantee their basic livelihood. In January 1942, July 1943 and May 1945, due to the state of war and the Japanese blockade, Macau encountered three major food crises and panics.

During the first panic period, there were more than a thousand people died of starvation in January. The Portuguese governments have done a lot of work in stabilizing rice prices. The following are news reports from the Portuguese governments on stabilizing rice prices:

Seeing the increase in the population of Macau, many rice merchants wanted to take advantage of the opportunity to increase the price of rice to make a profit. The Portuguese government issued regulations and decided to limit the price of rice. “On August 12, 1938, the Macau authorities planned to revise the price of rice. Since the enemy invaded South China, more and more people are migrating to Macau. In order to maintain food for the people, the city government is afraid that rice merchants will take the opportunity to raise prices and profit from it. Therefore, it has specially set a price for rice and announced it to the market. If rice merchants are illegally selling rice at high prices, they will be punished as soon as they are discovered. Heavy penalties.”¹²

The Portuguese governments could protect the lives of Macau people by limiting rice prices. However, rice prices also raise and fell with market changes. The government also adjusted rice prices at the request of rice merchants. For example, “In January 1940, the price of rice in Macau soared, and the poor were complaining. In Macau, the price of rice has risen sharply recently. According to rice merchants, the reason was due to the lack of sources and the high price of rice. Therefore, the rice merchants made several inquiries to the economy at the request of the bureau, the price limit was increased. Today, the Economic Bureau responded to its request and revised the price limit, increasing it to more than 1 dollar per load according to the original price limit.....After the new price limit was announced, the selling prices of various rice stores were about to rise to the top. The public suddenly panicked about this. Because at the end of the year, the public bought and stored rice for the New Year. According to custom, there were more people than the first dollar before buying rice. The poor also

⁸ “The enemy troops landed near Zhan'ao Island, and the whole city of Xiangzhou was reduced to ruins”, *Shenbao* 申报(Hankou汉口 Edition, Issue 23233), February 8, 1938, p. 1.

⁹ “Japan invaded Zhongshan, the Chinese army was resisting strongly, villages were destroyed, and tens of thousands of refugees took refuge in Macau”, *Shenbao* 申报, March 22, 1940, Issue 23723, p.6.

¹⁰ Lin Faqin and Wang Xi: *Island Image: Macau and the Anti-Japanese War Illustrated Chronicles* 孤岛影像：澳门与抗日战争图志, Guangzhou: Guangdong Education Press, 2015, p. 5.

¹¹ “Macau's population surge”, *Shenbao* 申报, October 28, 1941, (Issue 24296), p.3.

¹² “Macau authorities plan to revise rice sales price”, *Hua Qiao Bao* 华侨报, August 12, 1938, p.3.

had to buy rice for several days at the end of the year. As for rice, rice shops were closed during the few days of the Chinese New Year. However, during these days when everyone had to buy rice, the price of rice in Macau suddenly raise sharply. The rich had no problem, but the poor were overwhelmed. Bitter”.¹³

The sharp increase in rice prices had a direct and great impact on people's livelihood, especially the poor, who were particularly affected. By 1941, the problem of skyrocketing rice prices became more serious. In order to make profits, profit-seeking rice merchants did not hesitate to manipulate the rice market. For example, “On May 9, 1941, rice merchants were fined for manipulating the rice market. Amid the soaring prices of firewood and rice in Macau, a generation of profiteers and bad businessmen even took advantage of the monopoly and sold at high prices. They did not hesitate to benefit themselves at the expense of others. They only wanted to enrich their own pockets and ignored the livelihood of the people. The hardship... There were three rice merchants who did not comply with the market price set a few days ago and raised the price without permission. The citizens were fooled and complained to the Municipal Administrative Bureau. After official investigation, it was found to be true, and the police were dispatched to arrest the rice merchants. Police Station. Among them, those arrested successively include Ye En叶恩 from the No. 0 store on the main street, Gao Zhi高芝 from the No. 39 store on the same street, and Li Cai李材 from the No. 16 store at the Gongbu Xinshi North Street新市北街, and Chen Ruichu陈瑞初 and others from Shop A, No. 39, Main Street. After interrogation by the Municipal Administrative Director and Police Director, it was found that because the merchant and others did not comply with the prescribed market price, the evidence was confirmed, that is, they sold according to the regulations. He would be fined ten times the price, and declare that if he violated it again, he would be sent to court for investigation.....”¹⁴ The Portuguese governments were determined to severely punish illegal rice merchants and spare no effort to stabilize rice prices. It also introduced a new policy, “Since December 1941, the grain and oil food distribution system had been implemented. Residents could go to designated grain stations with rice grain certificates to purchase limited grain and non-staple food. The remaining grocery stores must be closed.....”¹⁵ Since then, the rice price issue had been temporarily resolved.

3.2. The housing Issue and its solutions

Facing the huge number of refugees, solving the housing problem of refugees and refugee children has become a top priority for Macau society. At this time, the Macau government decided that “during the Anti-Japanese War, all hospitals, churches and schools run by the Catholic Church in Macau would be turned into refugee

centers and wounded reception centers.”¹⁶ In addition, the issue of refugee housing was also reported in newspapers at the time:

Faced with displaced refugees, Macau charities such as the House of Mercy actively launched rescue operations. “On June 13, 1938, more than 40,000 refugees from all over the country fled to Macau. The houses in Macau were in danger of being overcrowded, and the poor refugees had no way to make a living. Chinese and Western celebrities in Macau, the director of the Hall of Mercy, etc. organized a refugee relief committee and visited the Macau governor regularly to discuss relief matters.”¹⁷

Even small temples were overcrowded. “On November 11, 1938, refugees from all over the country were increasingly crowded. Kiang Wu Hospital had already admitted 600 people, and it could no longer accommodate them. Therefore, the police commissioner announced that major temples such as Guanyin Hall were closed. It accommodates more than 10,000 people, but there are few beds and mats in the temple, and most of the refugees did not bring quilts. The cold wind is blowing and it is extremely cold. The director of the temple hopes that people from all walks of life can donate quilts and mats.”¹⁸

The refugees fled to Macau without any personal belongings or even clothes. Therefore, all walks of life in Macau tried their best to raise necessary items and clothes for them. The education sector in Macau also tried its best to help the refugees and raise the personal items they needed. For example, “on December 10, 1938, students from Wangde Kaichi School望德后智学校 expressed condolences to the refugees in Macau. Macau Wangde Girls' High School望德女中 sympathized with the displaced refugees, specially organized a condolence team.....A total of more than 60 dollars was collected, and more than 1,500 towels were purchased.....went to Jingwu Hospital, Guanyin Hall, Linfeng Temple and other places to distribute supplies to each refugee.....Dozens of students from Kaichi School启智学校have spent two days of fruit, food and money today to buy shortcakes and distribute them to the refugees in the above three places.”¹⁹

At that time, the Qingzhou青洲 Refugee Camp in Macau provided relief to 1,461 refugees in 1942. “The Qingzhou Refugee Camp was taking in more and more people. Tsui Nok Chi (崔诺枝Joel José Choi Anok, 1867~1945)²⁰ visited Director Bu Yingsha and asked for an advance for relief. According to Tsui Nok Chi, chairman of Tung Sin Tong, now Qingzhou Refugee Camp accommodates 1,461 refugees, men, women, old and young. They

¹⁶ Beatriz Basto da Silva施白蒂, *Chronicle of Macau in the 20th Century (1900-1949)* 二十世纪澳门编年史(1900-1949), trans. by Jin Guoping金国平, Macau: Macau Foundation, 1999, p. 276.

¹⁷ *Selected Archives and Historical Materials of Guangdong and Macau*, China Archives Publishing House, 1999, p.380.

¹⁸ *Shen bao*申报, November 8, 1938, (Issue 23237), p.2.

¹⁹ “Students of Wangde Qizhi School express condolences to Macau refugees”, *Hua Qiao Bao*华侨报, December 11, 1938, p. 3.

²⁰ Tsui Nok Chi, a Macau gentleman who is extremely wealthy and willing to participate in charity activities; he serves as the general associate director of Macau Kiang Wu Hospital, the chairman of Tung Sin Tong and the general associate director of the Macau Chamber of Commerce.

¹³ “The price of rice in Macau has soared, and the poor are complaining”, *Hua Qiao Bao*华侨报, January 30, 1940, p. 4.

¹⁴ “Rice merchants were fined for manipulating the rice market”, *Hua Qiao Bao*华侨报, May 9, 1941, p. 5.

¹⁵ Lin Faqin林发钦, *Aomenren de kangzhan*澳门人的抗战, p. 18.

are given porridge twice a day in the morning and evening. Each person has two large shells, which is more than enough for their belly. Nine large pots of porridge are cooked every day, and each pot requires 50 meters. Secondly, it costs more than 150 dollars to add miscellaneous items such as Qiang, beans, oil, salt, and firewood for cooking porridge. Fortunately, the authorities often allocate rice for donations. Enthusiastic people from all walks of life also enthusiastically donated.....The rice and stone brought in and the donations have been exhausted. Mr. Cui went to the police station today to meet with Bu Yingsha of the Municipal Administrative Bureau and the members of the Food Control Committee to request for the allocation of 30 bags of rice and stone. He also borrowed a certain amount of money, thinking that it would be used as miscellaneous materials for cooking porridge. After the charity money is raised, it will be returned in full. Bruce of the Police Department immediately donated HK\$1,000 in Hong Kong paper, and the Inspector-General allocated 15 bags of white rice. The church today we also received a donation of 1,500 silver dollars from Dafu Company大福公司 and a donation of 500 silver dollars from Wang Song王颂.”²¹

3.3. Cultural and educational issues and its solutions

At that time, there were a large number of refugee children who fled to Macau to take refuge from the war, and they were in the stage of needing education. The education sector in Macau was actively responsible for the education of refugee children, and they all contributed to their education. Regarding the education of refugee children, news reports on education were recorded in newspapers at the time:

The Chinese Educators Association of Macau澳门中华教育会 opened 20 evening schools for children in need. “On March 5, 1939, the Chinese Educators Association of Macau held a special meeting to discuss relief measures and decided to open two evening schools for children in need. Ten schools are located in each member school, and all fees are completely waived.....”²²

At that time, there were also schools to raise funds for performances at primary schools for needy children. For example, “On March 7, 1939, Yuehua Middle School raised funds to establish a school for needy children. The famous play ‘The Drinking Minister’ was performed on the fourth and fifth nights of this month. The audience was extremely crowded, and the revenue was more than 1,100 dollars, and a wealthy businessman from Macau raised 800 dollars on his behalf. This fundraising income is total more than 2,200 dollars. The principal of the school decided to use this money as the opening expenses for establishing a primary school and an arts center for disadvantaged children.”²³ Another example is “On July 4, 1939, the Student Government Association of Macau of Sino-German Middle School performed a world-famous play ‘Dusca’ to raise funds for the school’s needy children who were out of school. The director was Mr. Shao Zhifu邵知妇, and the venue was Qingping Theater. The date was the

²¹ “Qingzhou Refugee Camp takes in many people, Tsui Nok Chi visits Director Bu Yingsha and asks for an advance for relief”, *Da Zhong Daily* 大众报, September 22, 1942, p. 1.

²² *Selected Archives and Historical Materials of Guangdong and Macau*, p. 382.

²³ *Selected Archives and Historical Materials of Guangdong and Macau*, p. 380.

sixth day of July, the time is at noon, and the fares are divided into four dollars, two dollars, one dollar, six cents and forty-five cents.”²⁴

At that time, there were many volunteer schools for needy children in Macau, such as Yueshan Volunteer School越山义学, Yufen Volunteer School雨芬义学, Chongshi Volunteer School崇实义学, Zhixing Volunteer School知行义学, Bao Gong Temple Volunteer School包公庙义学, Kanggong Temple Volunteer School康公庙义学, Lianxi Volunteer School莲溪义学, etc. The funds for running free schools are mainly obtained through various public fundraising and donations from others.

3.4. Medical epidemic prevention and social security issues and its solutions

As for the medical treatment of refugee children, there were also reports in newspapers at that time:

“Tung Sin Tong同善堂 has organized more charitable activities to help refugees. The various charitable activities carried out by the church over the years have always been said to be perfect and have long been highly praised by the overseas Chinese. Recently, refugees from Zhongshan County came to Macau. Fortunately, the Macau Overseas Chinese Relief Society 澳门华侨赈济会 managed to take them in, so that they had food and lodging, so they did not suffer from cold or hunger. In the current spring climate, diseases are common and there are many refugees, and it is difficult to guarantee that no disease will occur among them. Therefore, the Relief Society recently sent a letter to Tung Sin Tong to donate medical supplies. The medicine application part was done properly. After receiving the letter, Tung Sin Tong Chairman Tsui Nok Chi, Cai Wenxuan蔡文轩 and other directors immediately added stoves to decoct medicine for the patients. After the health team of the Relief Association issued the receipt, they tried their best to apply medicine. At the same time, various charitable deeds such as giving away cotton-padded clothes and giving porridge were organized. In addition, when children in need were ill and could not delay medical treatment due to lack of finances, fortunately Dr. Wu Shanshi吴善施 from the Bumrungrad Children’s Laboratory had a kind nature and brought good fortune to the family. Doctors received no money for administering medicines. Therefore, every day, more than a hundred compatriots from all over the country came to seek medical treatment with their children in their arms.”²⁵

Charitable organizations in Macau, such as charity organizations and private medical institutions, provide free medical treatment and medicines to refugee children. “Since the fall of Hong Kong in December 1941, the total number of people seeking refuge in Macau has reached 300,000. Coupled with the chaotic war situation and the Japanese siege and blockade, Macau’s food sources and supply of daily necessities have become increasingly tight, and starvation has often occurred.”²⁶ Life in Macau is becoming increasingly difficult, and “various social resources are becoming increasingly scarce, making the lives of refugees in Macau even more difficult, and the mortality rate increasing.”²⁷

²⁴ *Hua Qiao Bao* 华侨报, July 4, 1939, p. 4.

²⁵ “Tung Sin Tong organizes additional charitable activities to help refugees”, *Hua Qiao Bao* 华侨报, March 29, 1940, p. 5.

²⁶ Lin Faqin, *Aomenren de kangzhan*, p. 23.

²⁷ Lin Faqin, *Aomenren de kangzhan*, p. 23.

Therefore, the refugees all started to want to return home. At this time, the Australian Overseas Chinese Relief Association held a joint meeting at the East Asia Hotel and announced the establishment of the Australian Overseas Chinese Assistance Refugees Return Home Committee, with Liu Baiying刘柏盈, chairman of the Relief Association, as the president. The Governor Gabriel Maurício Teixeira praised it. He donated 50,000 silver dollars and accepted the position of honorary president of the Homecoming Association.²⁸ This work of assisting refugees to return home took 10 months and cost millions. “This work started in April 1942 and ended in February 1943. It raised more than 1 million dollars in donations to assist or escort the refugees back home.” There are about 12,000 people in 47 batches.²⁹

The Macau government, various associations in Macau, and Macau society had made great contributions in this campaign to rescue refugees and refugee children that had lasted for many years. They had overcome various difficulties and done everything they could help refugees and refugee children. In addition, Chinese people from all walks of life in Macau also donated generously to support and helped refugees and children in need.

4. Summary

To sum up, during the Anti-Japanese War, Macau became the only “neutral” area in South China that was not bombarded by war. Therefore, refugees from the Guangdong war zone fled to Macau to temporarily escape the war. Since the fall of Hong Kong in 1941, as many as 300,000 refugees had gone to Macau. Therefore, refugee relief had become a top priority for Macau society. At this time, “the Macau-Portuguese government, the Catholic Church, the Hong Kong and Macau Relief Association, temporary institutions of public-civilian cooperation, numerous Macau non-governmental Chinese associations, local religious groups, and Western religious organizations”³⁰ were actively responsible for the relief of refugees and needy children. Faced with these huge numbers of Chinese refugees at that time, especially the Chinese associations in Macau and Macau charities such as Kiang Wu Hospital, Tung Sin Tong, and the Macau Chamber of Commerce, etc., made every effort to raise materials and property for the refugees and needy children to sustain their lives. In addition, prominent businessmen and gentry from the Chinese community in Macau also joined in the relief of refugees and children in need. It could be seen that Macau residents have a very deep relationship with the people of mainland China, and they could not be affected by any political environment. As long as there is need, the Chinese in Macau are absolutely willing to stand up and provide assistance to their compatriots.

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²⁸ Lin Faqin, *Aomenren de kangzhan*, p. 23.

²⁹ Lin Faqin, *Aomenren de kangzhan*, p. 23.

³⁰ Lin Faqin, *Aomenren de kangzhan*, p. 18.