

A Study on the Social Activities of Overseas Chinese in Macao During the War of Resistance: Focusing on Donations for the War of Resistance

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Abstract: During the Sino-Japanese War, the social activities of overseas Chinese in Macao held significant historical value. This study focuses on the core theme of wartime donations, exploring the social behavior of Macao apos, overseas Chinese during this period. Through an analysis of their background, forms of donations and motivations, this study uncover the outstanding contributions of this group during wartime. The donations not only manifest their profound patriotic sentiments but also reflect their cultural identity and social responsibility. Additionally, the Macao government, to a certain extent, encouraged these social activities despite some limitations. Wartime donations not only strengthened the cohesion and identity of the Macao overseas Chinese community but also had a positive impact on the Macao economy. The findings of this study contribute to a better understanding of the social activities of Macao apos; overseas Chinese during the Sino-Japanese War, providing essential insights into the historical and cultural heritage of the overseas Chinese community. Moreover, this research inspires broader discussions on the social involvement of overseas Chinese in other historical periods and regions.

Keywords: Sino-Japanese War, Macao overseas Chinese, wartime donations, cultural heritage

1. Introduction

The War of Resistance period was significant in China's history when the entire nation joined forces to fight against foreign invasion and secure the country's independence and liberation. However, the war of resistance was not just a period of resistance in Mainland China; the small island of Macao also played a role and became an important stronghold of the overseas Chinese community. The Macanese diaspora, as part of the Chinese culture and nation, was actively involved in the war of resistance, and its social activities have attracted widespread attention to war donations as a central theme. This study aims to delve into the social activities of Macao's Chinese diaspora during the War of Resistance, especially the behaviors centered on war donations, to reveal its historical significance and impact.

As a multicultural city, Macao attracted many overseas Chinese to live and work in the city. After the outbreak of the War of Resistance, the Macao overseas Chinese community actively participated

in the War of Resistance and supported the resistance efforts in Mainland China through donations. These donations not only reflected the deep patriotic feelings of the overseas Chinese, but also demonstrated their cultural identity and sense of social responsibility. In addition, the Macao government encouraged these social activities to a certain extent, albeit with some restrictions. This study will examine in detail the anti-war donation behavior of Macao's overseas Chinese, including the scale, uses, beneficiaries and motives of the donations, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the social activities during this period.

Through an in-depth study of the social activities of Macao's Chinese diaspora, this research can have a better understanding of the historical status and contributions of the Chinese community during the War of Resistance period, and at the same time provide critical insights for the study of the historical and cultural heritage of the Chinese diaspora. This study not only helps to fill the research gap in the existing literature, but also provides valuable references for understanding the social participation of overseas Chinese in other historical periods and regions.

1.1. Objectives and Significance of the Study

1.1.1. Research Purpose

This thesis provides an in-depth study of the social activities of overseas Chinese in Macao during the War of Resistance, focusing on war donations as a central theme, aiming to achieve multiple important research objectives. Firstly, this research will reveal the historical background of the social activities of overseas Chinese in Macao during the War of Resistance, by examining their history and social status to understand their social, cultural, and political motivations for participating in the War of Resistance. Secondly, this research will delve into the form and scale of anti-war donations, including the specific forms of donations, such as cash donations and material aid, as well as the scale of donations, to demonstrate the contribution of the Macao Chinese community in supporting the war. At the same time, this study will examine the beneficiaries and uses of the donations, including support for China's domestic anti-war efforts as well as assistance to anti-war refugees, to gain a deeper understanding of the actual impact and social responsibility of the Chinese community in Macao. Finally, this study will analyze the motives of the Chinese diaspora's participation in anti-war donations, including patriotic sentiments, cultural identity, and sense of social responsibility, to reveal the deeper reasons for their social behaviors. By achieving these research objectives, this study will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the social activities of overseas Chinese in Macao during the war period, especially the behaviors centered on anti-war donations, and provide important insights for the study of the history and cultural heritage of the overseas Chinese community.

1.1.2. Research Implications

The research significance of this thesis is multidimensional and profound. Firstly, the social activities of Macao's overseas Chinese during the War of Resistance, especially centered on war donations, reflect the active participation and contribution of the overseas Chinese community in China's war against Japan. This study helps to fill the research gap in the historical literature on the social activities of Macao's overseas Chinese during the War of Resistance and will provide the historiography community with important cultural and socio-historical information to promote a more comprehensive understanding of the history of the overseas Chinese. Secondly, through an in-depth exploration of the forms, scale, beneficiaries, and motives of anti-war donations, this study can better understand the patriotic sentiments, cultural identity, and sense of social responsibility of the overseas Chinese community and reveal the deeper reasons for their social behaviors. This helps us to understand the social participation of Chinese communities in different historical contexts and provides new perspectives for the study of global Chinese history. In addition, the study of the impact

of war donations on Macao's economy as well as its continuation and development on the social activities of the Chinese diaspora in Macao also contributes to a better understanding of Macao's history and social evolution. This research provides useful historical references for the formulation of social and governmental policies in Macao, as well as lessons for the continuation and development of social activities. Therefore, this thesis is of broad academic and social significance in advancing the study of the history of the Chinese diaspora and the history of Macao, as well as in inspiring research on the social participation of other Chinese communities.

1.2. Literature Review

1.2.1. Overseas Review

In Western studies, the social activities of Macao's overseas Chinese during the War of Resistance, especially the topic centered on anti-war donations, have attracted widespread attention. In 1996, American scholar Gerald W. Ward, in his study *Macao during the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression: Independence Neutrality and the Dynamics of the Overseas Chinese Community*, delved into the anti-war activities of the Macao Overseas Chinese community. He points out that Macao, as an independent and neutral region, attracted many Chinese diaspora members who actively supported China's anti-Japanese war through donations and charitable activities. According to Wald, these donations were not only material assistance, but also a way to express the patriotic feelings and cultural identity of the Chinese community in Macao [1].

In addition, in 2010, Australian scholar Catherine Man-hing Lo's study, "The Overseas Chinese Community in Macao during the War of Resistance: Perspectives on International Relations and Cultural Identity," also focuses on the Macao Chinese community's participation in the war of resistance. She argues that the social activities of the Chinese community in Macao not only reflected their deep feelings towards China, but also demonstrated their cultural identity and sense of social responsibility. Benhamming's study highlights the important role of Macao Chinese in international relations and cultural identity [2].

These Western studies provide important insights into the social activities of Macao's Chinese diaspora during the war period. Although these studies provide valuable insights, there is still room for an in-depth study of the topic, especially in relation to the domestic historical context, to understand the social activities of Macao Chinese during the war period in more dimensions, and to deeply explore their historical status and contributions with the war donations at the center.

1.2.2. Chinese Literature review

As early as 1983, there were already studies on the history of the Chinese diaspora in Macao in Chinese academic circles. It focused on the study of the drudgery trade during the development of the Chinese diaspora. In the process of trafficking Chinese laborers, the "piggy bank" emerged as a trading shop, and the tragic situation of these indentured Chinese laborers was highlighted [3]. Some scholars have also studied the evolution and social change of overseas Chinese society in the form of a dissertation. The impact on social change brought about by three social components among the returnees of Xiangshan origin in Guangdong: foreign students, merchants and political groups is addressed [4]. Academics have made remarkable progress in the study of the social activities of overseas Chinese in Macao during the War of Resistance.

The core idea of Zhang Wenqin's prospects for the Study of Macao's History and Culture is to explore the historical evolution and cultural connotations of Macao, and to emphasize the important position and role of Macao's Chinese diaspora in this [5].

Scholar Liu Fang's study focused on the actual impact and uses of anti-war donations. She pointed out that the Macao Chinese community's anti-war donations directly supported the anti-war efforts in

Mainland China and provided important resources for the domestic war effort. Liu Fang's study highlights the practical contributions of Macao's overseas Chinese during the War of Resistance, as well as their sense of social responsibility towards the country [6].

Scholars Deng Kaisong, Lu Xiaomin and Yang Renfei have several aspects of the perspective of the Chinese diaspora in Macao. The importance of the Macanese diaspora in Macao's history and culture is emphasized in several aspects of the book, which sees them as an important part of the diversity of Macao's society, presenting the full range of roles and influences that the Macanese diaspora has had in Macao's socio-historical changes. Studies by domestic scholars have provided insights into the field of Chinese diaspora social activities in Macao during the war period, providing a strong theoretical and empirical basis for a better understanding of social activities during this period. This thesis will continue to draw on and develop these studies to gain a comprehensive understanding of the social activities of Macao's Chinese diaspora during the War of Resistance, particularly the behaviors centered on war donations [7].

2. Background of the Chinese diaspora in Macao during the war period

2.1. Historical and geographical background of Macao

Located in the south of China, Macao is geographically a small but special region, bordering China's Guangdong Province and the mouth of the Pearl River. As a Portuguese dominion, Macao experienced turbulence and change during the war period in the first half of the 20th century. Although Macao was not directly involved in the war against Japan during this period, its geographical location made it an important hub of economic and cultural exchange. Macao's overseas Chinese community, especially overseas Chinese merchants, played an active role in supporting China's anti-war cause by participating in anti-war donations and charitable activities. The study of this period not only helps us to understand Macao's historical position during the War of Resistance, but also highlights the important influence of the patriotic sentiments and social activities of the overseas Chinese community on Chinese history [8].

2.2. Formation and development of the overseas Chinese community

The social activities of the overseas Chinese community in Macao during the war period are a vibrant and far-reaching history. Macao has always been a place where the Chinese diaspora gathered and attracted overseas Chinese from different parts of China to make a living. The main reasons for the formation of this community include geographical proximity, the historical background of the Portuguese dominion in Macao, and the impact of the turbulent situation in mainland China [9].

The formation of the overseas Chinese community contributed to the diversification of cultural and social activities. During the war period, when China was invaded, the Macanese diaspora felt deep concern and responsibility. Donations became one of the social activities in which they actively participated, aiming to support China's anti-war efforts. The overseas Chinese community organized numerous fundraising activities, including fundraising, bazaars, and charity dinners, to raise funds to support China's war of resistance. These donation activities not only demonstrated the unity and patriotic sentiments of the overseas Chinese community, but also provided valuable support to China's anti-war endeavors.

2.3. Historical stages of the Overseas Chinese Period in Macao

Due to the limitation of information, this article only combed through the donations made by overseas Chinese in Macao from 1937 to 1940.

According to the statistics of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee of the Nanjing Government,

after the outbreak of the War of Resistance in July, the donations received from overseas Chinese from all over the world in August 1937 totaled 3,315,000 yuan, of which 44,000 yuan came from the Macao region [10]. Although the total amount of donations from overseas Chinese in Macao was not large, overseas Chinese from all over the world were concerned about the war against the motherland and showed their passion for the motherland. Under the leadership of the government's Overseas Chinese Affairs Commission, a few months later, a relevant organization was set up in Macao to facilitate overseas Chinese to make patriotic donations in support of China's war effort and to organize donation activities on a regular basis. The following are the historical phases of the Macao Overseas Chinese Period, covering the major historical events from 1937 to 1940 respectively:

Firstly, at the outbreak of the Anti-Japanese War. On 7 July 1937, the outbreak of the Lugou Bridge Incident plunged China into a phase of full-scale resistance against Japanese aggression, and the war of resistance officially began. In Macao, during this period, the Chinese community began to pay close attention to the situation in the motherland. Associations and chambers of commerce were quick to respond and may have started to organize anti-war donations and relief actions to express their firm support for the motherland. The Chinese community in Macao, demonstrated a strong sense of patriotism at a time of crisis for the motherland, and actively participated in the War of Resistance to do their part in supporting China's resistance efforts. Knowing that the enemy is pressing on the territory, the violence is rampant, the wounded soldiers and refugees, a tragic sight. At this time of national survival, all nationals should be united and rise to the rescue of the country's preparations. Therefore, since the beginning of the war in Shanghai, Macao compatriots have given the urgent rise to organize the Macao Disaster Relief Association [11].

Secondly, the crisis of the fall and the donation campaign. 1938, with the Japanese occupation of Nanjing and many other places, the situation of the war of resistance became more and more severe, and the Overseas Chinese community in Macao felt a more urgent need for the motherland. This year, the Chinese community in Macao may have launched a large-scale donation campaign against the war. Among them, the General Attack along the river became an important historical event, marking the climax of the donation campaign. Overseas Chinese associations and chambers of commerce responded positively by organizing fund-raising activities and widely mobilizing community members to participate. The amount of donations could be huge, reflecting the firm support of Macao's overseas Chinese to the motherland's war of resistance.

Thirdly, the deepening of the war of resistance and the outbreak of global war. In 1939, when the Sino-Japanese war escalated and the Second World War broke out in Europe at the same time, Macao's overseas Chinese communities and chambers of commerce may have continued to support the motherland in this complex global war situation. They might make new donation campaigns and provide support for the war effort through various forms. During this period, the actions of Macao's overseas Chinese may become more urgent. In the face of the Japanese invasion and the spreading of the World War, they may take more positive initiatives, such as propaganda for the war, collection of materials, and support for the war refugees, to contribute to their motherland's cause of the war. Overseas Chinese associations in Macao during this period may become a bridge to build up the connection between the motherland and Macao and continue to play an active role in contributing to the defense of justice and the resistance against the invasion.

Fourthly, the Sino-foreign conflicts and continuous support in Macao. In 1940, Macao became a strategic location, and the conflicts between China and foreign countries became more and more significant. The Portuguese colonial government adopted a policy of neutrality, but at the same time maintained some co-operation with Japan. The Chinese community in Macao may have faced more difficulties during this period, but continued to support the motherland through various forms, which may have included continued donations, relief operations.

Overseas Chinese wartime donations are an important supplement to the wartime national

government's financial economy and one of the most important sources of financial support for the motherland's long-term war of resistance [12].

3. Social Motives of Macao Overseas Chinese during the War of Resistance

3.1. Patriotic sentiments and anti-war enthusiasm

During the War of Resistance, overseas Chinese in Macao demonstrated strong patriotic sentiments and anti-war enthusiasm under the special historical background. Social activities centered on anti-war donations became the key vehicle to manifest these sentiments. Overseas Chinese responded positively to the call of the state, rich or poor, and gave up their meagre savings to provide important financial support for the war of resistance against Japan. They organized fund-raising activities, set up national salvation groups and actively participated in the anti-war movement, demonstrating their firm belief in the war. In addition, the overseas Chinese in Macao also actively spread the positive energy of the war of resistance and united and strengthened the anti-war team through various propaganda and social activities.

3.2. Cultural identity and national identity

During the War of Resistance, the social activities of overseas Chinese in Macao played an important role in cultural identity and national identity. Through their active participation in donation activities for the war of resistance, Macao Chinese showed a strong cultural identity. Not only did they donate their wealth, but they also passed on and promoted Chinese culture, firmly upholding the traditional values of Chinese culture. This act not only expresses their deep feelings towards China, but also strengthens their cultural identity, linking the Macao Overseas Chinese closely with Chinese culture. In addition, the act of donations during the war period also strengthened the national identity of the Macao Chinese. Their active participation demonstrated their support and loyalty to the motherland. By contributing to the Chinese anti-Japanese cause, they identified themselves as part of the Chinese people and shared the fate of the motherland [13]. This positive sense of national identity strengthened the ties between Macao Chinese and mainland China, at the same time promoted the unity and harmony of the Macao community. Therefore, the social activities of Macao Chinese during the war period, especially the war donations, not only deepened their cultural identity, but also strengthened their national identity. Such activities have left a deep mark in history, demonstrating the steadfast support and loyalty of the Macao-Chinese in times of difficulty.

3.3. Influence of social and political factors

During the War of Resistance, the Macao Overseas Chinese actively participated in social activities such as donations for the War of Resistance, which were deeply influenced by social and political factors. On the social front, the Macao Chinese were deeply affected by the plight of the invasion of mainland China, and this social sentiment inspired their actions. The anti-war donations not only represented a deep feeling for the motherland, but also expressed the determination to resist the invasion. In addition, social pressure and public opinion also prompted overseas Chinese in Macao to actively participate to safeguard their social status and image. Politically, Macao was a Portuguese dominion at that time, and its political status was linked to the Portuguese policy of neutrality. Overseas Chinese in Macao often needed to be cautious when participating in war donations so as not to offend the Portuguese authorities. These political considerations also influenced their social activities, which were carried out in secret or discreetly [14].

To sum up, during the war period, the social activities of Chinese people in Macao were influenced by a mix of social emotions, social pressures, and political factors. These factors motivated them to

actively support the anti-war cause in mainland China, which showcased the loyalty and unwavering commitment of Macao's overseas Chinese.

4. Conclusions

Taking the social activities of Macao's overseas Chinese during the War of Resistance, especially the donations for the War of Resistance, as the core topic, this thesis has thoroughly researched the social participation of Macao's overseas Chinese during the period and the historical, geographical, social, and political factors behind it. The study finds that Macao, as a port city with a special geographical location, attracted many mainland Chinese residents who came to seek refuge, including many anti-Japanese activists and intellectuals. At the same time, the Portuguese government's policy of neutrality also influenced the social activities of Macao's Chinese residents during the War of Resistance. As an important social activity, anti-war donations not only represent the cultural and national identity of Macao's Chinese residents, but also reflect their deep affection and support for the motherland. This study not only provides an in-depth historical examination of the social activities of Macao's overseas Chinese during the War of Resistance, but also highlights their unwavering loyalty and active participation in times of difficulty, which is important for understanding the complex roles and contributions of the overseas Chinese community during the War of Resistance in the international context.

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