
The Japanese Occupation of Singapore: Examining the Success of the Endau Settlement

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Introduction

The Japanese occupation in Singapore was widely regarded as a reign of terror. With the rigid impression of the Japanese as inhumane and violent during World War II, such perceptions overshadowed the changes that occupation might bring to Japan's colonized populations. Most publications discussing the Japanese occupation of Singapore analyse statistics and case studies associated with the brutality of occupation.¹ Due to the short period during which Singapore was occupied by the Japanese, policies implemented by the Japanese administration have been overlooked as exerting negligible impact on the Singaporean political landscape and discussions of Japanese occupation elsewhere. While there are few papers which discuss such policies—such as Yōji Akashi and Mako Yoshimura's research on Japan's economic policies for occupied Malaya and Paul H. Kratoska's discussion of labor mobilisation within Malaya—these studies tend to prioritize their political and economic impact, and lack analyses of their

¹ Cheah Boon Kheng, *Red Star over Malaya: Resistance and social conflict during and after the Japanese Occupation, 1941-1946*. (NUS Press, 2012).

social dimension.² To acquire a detailed picture of the Japanese occupation of Singapore, it is imperative to derive a new social perspective regarding policies implemented by the Japanese administration during Singapore's occupation.

Throughout the Japanese occupation of Singapore, food shortages were one of the primary issues facing the government and Singaporean population. The Allied forces' tight control over the region's imports exacerbated these problems, particularly when Malaya had a rice deficit and relied heavily on imports to feed its people.³ Mortality rates were high during the period of occupation due to beriberi, an illness caused by malnutrition.⁴ According to the Malayan Union Report on the Registration of Births and Deaths, the death recorded rose sharply between 1942 to 1944, peaking at 146,476 in the year 1944.⁵ To cope with devastation from food shortages, a relocation scheme was announced in 1943 to relocate between 300,000 and half a million people out of urban centers into rural areas.⁶ Welfare officer Shinozaki Mamoru set the destinations for each population: the Endau settlement (*New Syonan*) for the Chinese settlers, the Bahau settlement (*Fuji Village*) for the Eurasian and the Chinese Roman Catholics, and Riau Island for the Malays and the Indians.⁷ The most successful of these relocation schemes was the Endau settlement. Employing interview

² Yōji Akashi and Mako Yoshimura, *New Perspectives on the Japanese Occupation in Malaya and Singapore, 1941-1945*, (Nus Press, 2008); Paul H. Kratoska, *The Japanese occupation of Malaya: A social and economic history*, (C. Hurst & Co. Publishers, 1998): 9.

³ Kratoska, *The Japanese occupation of Malaya: A social and economic history*, 19.

⁴ Lucius Nicholls, "Nutrition in Singapore During Japanese Occupation," *The British Medical Journal* (1948): 37-39.

⁵ Kratoska, *The Japanese occupation of Malaya: A social and economic history*, 277.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 277.

⁷ Information retrieved from Singapore Former Ford Factory exhibition, Zone 3 "Becoming Syonan." The Former Ford Factory was the site where the British forces surrendered Singapore to the Japanese Imperial Army on 15th February 1942. It was restored as a permanent World War II exhibition on 15th February 2006. Yanqing Vanessa Ong, Kuan Wah Pitt, Tik Loong Stanley Tan, and Huiwen Michelle Tay, *Memories unfolded: A guide to memories at Old Ford Factory* (National Archives of Singapore, 2008).

transcripts obtained from oral histories in the National Archives of Singapore (NAS), this article analyses the relative success of the Endau relocation program and provides insight into settler's personal perspectives to gauge the program's success.

A variety of factors played significant roles in the establishment of the community of Endau. Key contributions to the resettlement project's success were Shinozaki Mamoru's role overseeing the project, the contribution of the Oversea Chinese Association (OCA) in managing rural displacement, and the local receptiveness and adaptivity to the scheme implemented.⁸ To understand the rationale behind the decisions of these key players and their respective policies, I will employ Cernea's Impoverishment Risk and Reconstruction (IRR) Model.⁹ This model highlights the risks faced by a resettled community and how such considerations should be factored into the planning and policy-making phase. It classifies risk into eight areas: landlessness, joblessness, homelessness, food insecurity, increased morbidity, social disarticulation, marginalisation, and the loss of access to common property. The IRR model is a useful theoretical framework for analysing interview transcripts obtained through the NAS about the contributions of Shinozaki, the OCA, and locals in the area.

The Leadership of Shinozaki Mamoru

Shinozaki Mamoru's initial assessments during the relocation to the Endau settlement were significant in guiding subsequent implementation and the appointment of suitable personnel. According to the IRR framework, failure to identify and provide for the needs of the affected communities during the methodology planning phase

⁸ Mamoru Shinozaki, *Syonan, my story: The Japanese Occupation of Singapore* (Singapore Times Books International, 1982).

⁹ Michael M. Cernea, "Impoverishment Risks, Risk Management, and Reconstruction: A Model of Population Displacement and Resettlement," last modified 1997, <https://commdev.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Impoverishment-Risks-Risk-Management-and-Reconstruction.pdf>.

eventually leads to the impoverishment of the resettled population.¹⁰ As a result, conventional risk assessments often prioritize the economic aspect and rely heavily on the provision of monetary benefit as compensation to the resettled population.¹¹ However, in the case of the Endau settlement, monetary compensation was not available or possible due to the ongoing war. Hence, in planning for Endau, Shinozaki Mamoru chose instead to focus on the establishment of a safe and peaceful environment in recognition of the people's concerns for their survival.

Shinozaki Mamoru's accurate assessment of the population was a result of his style of leadership and governance. In contrast to the strict managerial style of the Central Military Administration (*Gunseikanbu*), Shinozaki, the chief welfare officer of the municipal administration (*Tokubetsu Shi*), adopted a "softer" approach in governance and focused on establishing rapport with the population.¹² An oral testimonial from Wan Leong Gay, a survivor of the Endau resettlement scheme, provides insight into the people's reliance on and trust in Shinozaki.¹³ Gay recalls his brother's fear of being persecuted by the *kempeitai* for minor trouble he ran into before relocating to Endau. Feeling vulnerable, he placed his faith in Shinozaki and confided in him his fear.¹⁴ Gay explained, "[Gay's brother] was asked to report to the *kempeitai* in Syonan, but fortunately, he met Shinozaki that evening and Shinozaki took the letter and asked him not to worry. Then everything's forgotten".¹⁵ In another

¹⁰ Cernea, "Impoverishment Risks, Risk Management, and Reconstruction: A Model of Population Displacement and Resettlement."

¹¹ Cernea, "Impoverishment Risks, Risk Management, and Reconstruction: A Model of Population Displacement and Resettlement."

¹² Geok Boi Lee. *The Syonan Years: Singapore Under Japanese Rule, 1942-1945*. Vol. 1. (National Archives of Singapore, 2005).

¹³ Wan Leong Gay, interview, *Oral History Centre*, National Archives of Singapore, March 23, 1985, accession No. 000535 /Reel/Disc 4 of 7.

¹⁴ The *kempeitai* was the Japanese military police in charge of persecuting those being suspected of being anti-Japanese (Lamont-brown 1998): 19-20, 35-36.

¹⁵ Gay, interview.

account by Robert Chong, he refers to Shinozaki as “a very exceptional, a very kind man.”¹⁶ Shinozaki’s approachable image allowed the establishment of a close relationship with the people he governed and was necessary to alleviate the fear and distrust of the Japanese administration, particularly after the horror of the Sook Ching Massacre.¹⁷

Through his initial assessment, Shinozaki foresaw the potential dangers of the resettlement scheme and established the OCA to oversee the development of the Endau settlement.¹⁸ Barriers to effective development included the locals’ skepticism towards the Japanese propaganda materials, their uneasiness with the Japanese administration, and the imminent threat from the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA).¹⁹ To encourage the Chinese settlers’ relocation, and to deter the anti-Japanese movement from sabotaging the resettlement scheme, Shinozaki granted the Chinese autonomy in governing Endau and reduced the Japanese’s administrative control in that area.²⁰ This move was a bold yet decisive way to resolve the complications involved in successfully establishing the Endau settlement. From the Japanese perspective, granting the Chinese autonomy over the Endau settlement was a huge concession. With the Japanese fixation on power, their diplomatic decisions often prioritized the interests and dignity of the Japanese as the dominant ruler. In his decision, Shinozaki risked

¹⁶ Robert Chong, *Oral History Centre*, National Archives of Singapore, June 4, 1983, accession No. 000273 / Reel/Disc 9 of 16).

¹⁷ The Sook Ching Massacre (“Purging through cleansing”) was part of the Japanese military operation to exterminate anti-Japanese element from the Chinese population in Singapore. Animosity towards the Singaporean Chinese arose after their central role played in the fund-raising effort to aid China during the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937 (Tan et al., 14-15).

¹⁸ Beng Luan Tan and Irene Quah, *The Japanese Occupation 1942-1945: A Pictorial Record of Singapore During the War* (Times Editions, 1996).

¹⁹ MPAJA was the largest anti-Japanese resistance group in Malaya that comprised of mainly ethnic Chinese Guerrilla fighters (Tan and Quah, 164-166).

²⁰ Tan and Quah, *The Japanese Occupation 1942-1945: A Pictorial Record of Singapore During the War*.

possible confrontation with higher authority.²¹ Yet, Shinozaki prioritized the wellbeing of the people above an exclusive pursuit of Japanese interests. The people of the Endau settlement therefore possessed more freedoms and greater agency under Chinese administration, while other areas operated under strict Japanese governance. In the Bahau settlement, for example, an exit permit was required for temporary release from the settlement.²² In contrast, no restrictions were placed on the movement of those in the Endau settlement, and some settlers even had access to radio despite the tight control over radios by the Japanese administration elsewhere.²³ Furthermore, Wan Leong Gay complimented Shinozaki's management of the Endau settlement, noting that it was "very peaceful."²⁴ As a result, it is evident that Shinozaki's foresight, coupled with his actions to promote the welfare of the settlers, was of paramount importance for the fulfilment of the Chinese people's needs.

Assessing the Endau population's needs and mitigating their impoverishment, two important elements of the IRR model, would be futile without local reception of resettlement policies. According to Thomson and Boutilier, social license—the level of acceptance toward the policies executed in context—operates based upon legitimacy and trust, as these principles set the foundation of effective cooperation and

²¹ In setting up the OCA, Shinozaki Mamoru secured the release of prominent Chinese leader, Lim Boon Keng, from the detention of the *kempeitai*. Lim was subsequently appointed as the chairman of the OCA (Turnbull 1989, 195). Shinozaki's action was severely criticized by the other members of the military administration, where he was deemed as being pro-Chinese. The conflict of interest led to the temporary removal of his role as OCA's adviser. It was only until August 1942, where he became the chief welfare officer that he was tasked to manage OCA again (Shinozaki 1992, 55-56).

²² Fiona Hodgkins, "Bahau: A Utopia That Went Awry," *Biblioasia* 12, no. 2 (July 11, 2016).

²³ During the Japanese occupation, radio was utilised as a propaganda tool to disseminate information pertaining to the Nippon spirit and culture (Murthy and Huang 2016). As part of the Japanese media censorship effort, it prohibited the ownership of radio that was unregistered with the authority. Those who dared to violate the rules were deemed as being anti-Japanese and risked decapitation by the *kempeitai* (Nen Khiong Yong, National Archive of Singapore, August 10, 2010).

²⁴ Gay, Oral History Interview.

communication.²⁵ In order to engender trust within the Chinese, Shinozaki disallowed the Japanese Army from interfering with the governance of the Endau community, therefore heightening the probability that the Chinese accept resettlement. However, one of consequent problems facing the administration of Endau was the shortage of law enforcement officers. This problem was exacerbated by fears within local law enforcement that they might be mistaken as traitors by the MPAJA for working for the Japanese.²⁶ As part of the MPAJA traitor killing regime, those who were suspected of being the “working dog” of the Japanese were assassinated.²⁷ To respond to these concerns, Shinozaki mobilised Shanghainese Policemen from China to govern the laws and orders of the community instead of requiring locals to participate in the police force.²⁸ As a result, Shinozaki reduced the uncertainty of those resettled to Endau and built a community of trust. Such trust became instrumental to the successful implementation of policies by the OCA to mitigate other impacts of resettlement.

The Oversea Chinese Association

The Oversea Chinese Association (OCA) was a local organization formed by Shinozaki Mamoru in 1942 to manage operations within Endau settlement. The organization comprised a group of affluent businessmen, including Mr. Lim Boon Keng, Mr. Yap Pheng Geck, and Mr. Lee Choon Seng.²⁹ Catering to the welfare of Endau residents, these men oversaw the welfare of the Chinese community, on-site

²⁵ Robert G. Boutilier and Ian Thomson, "Modelling and measuring the social license to operate: fruits of a dialogue between theory and practice," *Social Licence* (2011): 1-10.

²⁶ Constance Mary Turnbull, *A History of Singapore, 1819-1988*, (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1989), 198.

²⁷ Turnbull, *A History of Singapore, 1819-1988*.

²⁸ Wan Leong Gay, Oral History Interview, *Oral History Centre*, National Archives of Singapore, March 23, 1985, accession No. 000535 /Reel/Disc 4 of 7.

²⁹ Yeok Seong Tan. *History of the formation of the Oversea Chinese Association and the extortion by JMA of \$50,000,000 military contribution from the Chinese in Malaya*. (Nanyang Book Company, 1947), 6-7.

implementation of resettlement policies, and resettlement finances.³⁰ According to Kum Chee Chan, an auditor to the OCA's operation in Endau, the OCA was the courier between the Japanese and the people: "Without them, the Japanese could not pass through any instructions. The Oversea Chinese Association, they were supposed to be the leaders of the country."³¹ In terms of the IRR model, the OCA's activities can be summarized as the planning, execution, and maintenance of on-site policies to minimize risks associated with landlessness, joblessness, food insecurity, and morbidity.³² While Shinozaki Mamoru was the bridge between social policies and their implementation at the local level, the OCA was the engineer.

Oral accounts from the Endau settlers suggest the policies under the OCA's administration were effective and well-planned. Other departments were established to tackle complex challenges concerning agriculture, sanitation, health, and the environment. Furthermore, the OCA relied on employed personnel to facilitate resolution of these challenges within the community. A senior civil servant with prior experience in the Singapore civil sector served at the head of each department.³³ Core institutions such as schools, banks, restaurants, and hospitals also were constructed to facilitate the development of a self-sustaining community.³⁴ The recruitment of diligent and qualified personnel was therefore essential to the comprehensive success of the OCA rural planning scheme. Resettlement was not a mere bureaucratic exercise but rather, an incorporation of the perspectives, attitudes, and ideologies of the Chinese people.

Apart from efforts to target basic infrastructural needs, programs were established to cultivate a sense of belonging within the Endau

³⁰ Turnbull, Constance Mary. *A History of Singapore, 1819-1988*. (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1989), 198.

³¹ Kum Chee Chan, *Oral History Centre*, National Archives of Singapore, September 23, 1983, accession No. 000341 /Reel/Disc 4 of 11.

³² Chan, interview.

³³ Gay, interview.

³⁴ Gay, interview.

community. One such program was designed to welcome those who were resettled; in fact, the head of the various administrative departments were required to attend the welcome dinner to greet and communicate with new residents upon their arrival.³⁵ Despite their efforts to serve and welcome Chinese settlers, members of OCA were constantly under the threat of assassination by the anti-Japanese movement.³⁶ The OCA was an entity that sat precariously between the MPAJA and the Japanese authority and was regarded by the MPAJA as the ‘working dog’ for the Japanese administration. However, the OCA was able to maintain operations within Endau despite threats against the lives of its leaders.

From Landlessness to Land-based Reestablishment

“Project support, combined with resettlers’ initiative and resources can turn the loss of land into an opportunity.”³⁷

In the planning phase, a substantial amount of time and resources were dedicated to locating and surveying suitable regions of the local area. Rameswaram Nagalingam, who worked under the survey department of Shinozaki’s administration, was one of the surveyors recruited by the OCA to assess the suitability of Endau for settlement.³⁸ The on-site surveying team consisted of approximately forty men, including draftsmen and surveyors.³⁹ The extensiveness of the planning process was of utmost importance in planning the allocation of the lands

³⁵ Hock Seng Lee, interview, *Oral History Centre*, National Archives of Singapore, November 17, 2005, accession No. 002995 /Reel/Disc 1 of 5.

³⁶ Lee, interview.

³⁷ Michael M. Cernea, “Impoverishment Risks, Risk Management, and Reconstruction: A Model of Population Displacement and Resettlement.”

³⁸ Rameswaram Nagalingam, interview, *Oral History Centre*, National Archives of Singapore, October 19, 1983.

³⁹ Nagalingam, interview.

that were suitable for farming.⁴⁰ In the Endau settlement, 300,000 acres of land were set aside for the agricultural needs of the resettled population.⁴¹ Every family was assigned with 1.5 acres of dry and 1.5 acres of wet land to engage in agricultural activities in order to promote self-sufficiency among the resettlers.⁴² The agricultural department was managed by Tan Hoon Siang to assist settlers in the cultivation of their own.⁴³

From Joblessness to Reemployment

“The risk of losing wage employment is very high both in urban and rural displacements for those employed in enterprises, services, or agriculture. Yet, creating new jobs is difficult and requires substantial investment.”⁴⁴

To entice people to relocate to Endau and contribute to the running of the settlement, wages raised higher in Endau than in other areas under Japanese administration.⁴⁵ Employment opportunities were also readily available in the rapidly developing settlement. For example, Shuen Choo Chu and her family were dispersed across various industries to sustain their livelihood when agricultural work did not sufficiently meet their needs.⁴⁶ Her husband sold fish and pork in the wet market; her sister worked as a waitress; her other sister sold breakfast cakes; and Chu herself sold cloths in the black market.

⁴⁰ Mamoru Shinozaki, *Syonan, my story: The Japanese Occupation of Singapore*, (Singapore: Times Books International, 1982): 81.

⁴¹ Malcolm H. Murfett, *Between Two Oceans: A Military History of Singapore from First Settlement to Final British Withdrawal* (Oxford University Press, 1999): 258.

⁴² Lee, interview.

⁴³ Lee, interview.

⁴⁴ Michael M. Cernea, “Impoverishment Risks, Risk Management, and Reconstruction: A Model of Population Displacement and Resettlement.”

⁴⁵ Rameswaram Nagalingam, *Oral History Centre*, National Archives of Singapore, October 19, 1983), accession No. 000340 /Reel/Disc 5, 6 of 9.

⁴⁶ Chu, interview.

From Homelessness to Housing

“In a broader cultural sense, loss of a family’s individual home and the loss of a group’s cultural space tend to result in alienation and status-deprivation.”⁴⁷

Policies that targeted house reconstruction provided settlers with a physical home. Upon the arrival of settlers at Endau, families were temporarily assigned to reside in longhouses, which depending on the size of their families, would hold between five to ten families.⁴⁸ After land had been allocated to each family, they were given the choice to either remain in the longhouse or to build their own residence. Measures were also put in place to foster a sense of community among the settlers. For instance, the Chinese Wayang, street opera productions, were brought into the settlement for Chinese New Year attempting to encourage community on the basis of shared heritage.⁴⁹

From Food Insecurity to Adequate Nutrition

“Organized assistance to refugees (emergency relief) can be highly effective for offsetting immediate nutritional and health risks to resettlers and for focusing on most vulnerable groups (children, the elderly, pregnant women, etc.).”⁵⁰

To cater to the nutritional needs of the resettled population in Endau, the OCA provided each settler with 18 catties of rice per month for the

⁴⁷ Michael M. Cernea, “Impoverishment Risks, Risk Management, and Reconstruction: A Model of Population Displacement and Resettlement.”

⁴⁸ Lee, interview.

⁴⁹ Chinese Wayang or commonly known as Chinese street opera, are theatrical performances based on Chinese folk tales (Lee 2009, 7-8).

⁵⁰ Michael M. Cernea, “Impoverishment Risks, Risk Management, and Reconstruction: A Model of Population Displacement and Resettlement.”

initial few months.⁵¹ According to Wan Leong Gay, the people were granted permission to abstain from farming activities if they were able find the means to survive off the rations provided by the OCA.⁵² The people also had the option to purchase food from markets.⁵³

From Morbidity to Improved Health Care

*“Massive population displacement threatens to cause serious declines in health levels. Displacement-induced social stress and psychological trauma are sometimes accompanied by the outbreak of relocation-related illnesses, particularly parasitic and vector-borne diseases such as malaria and schistosomiasis.”*⁵⁴

A shortage of medical personnel in the Endau settlement prompted Shinozaki Mamoru to approach locals with expertise in nursing to ask them to work in the Endau hospital. Hock Seng Lee was one of the medical personnel recruited by Shinozaki.⁵⁵ Assigned the job of prescribing free medication to the population, he recounted, “I prescribed, I made the medicine. All [the] stocked medicine. If you got ulcer, [I’ll] give you lotion, Flavin, Eusol [and] all the common medicine...Everyone is asking for quinine because of Malaria”.⁵⁶ According to Lee, Tan Cheok Koon was the only surgeon in the Endau hospital.⁵⁷ Even though Tan Cheok Koon was not a doctor, Shinozaki recruited him because of his experience as an operating theater assistant in Singapore’s Tan Tock Seng Hospital. The medical and health

⁵¹ Gay, interview.

⁵² Gay, interview.

⁵³ Lee, interview.

⁵⁴ Michael M. Cernea, “Impoverishment Risks, Risk Management, and Reconstruction: A Model of Population Displacement and Resettlement.”

⁵⁵ Lee, interview.

⁵⁶ Lee, interview.

⁵⁷ Lee, interview

department in the Endau settlement was managed by Dr. Chen Ah Po, who was also head of the Endau hospital. Shuen Choo Chu praised Dr. Chen Ah Po's dedication for providing outpatient care for the sick who were incapable of leaving their barrack longhouses, therefore providing for extensive healthcare in the settlement.⁵⁸

Local Efforts and Ingenuity

Although the OCA played a critical role in serving the Endau community, eventual integration hinged on the adaptability, cohesion, resilience, and resourcefulness of the community. Food shortages prevent people from being over reliant on the welfare policies of the OCA. However, the locals themselves in Endau were instrumental to the mitigation of IRR risks associated with social disarticulation, marginalisation, and the loss of access to common property—the risks that depended on the inherent social construct rather than external management. As described by Blaxell, the spirit of Endau settlers and locals can be described as the “workability of ethnic diversity within regional unity.”⁵⁹

From Disarticulation to Community Reconstruction

*“Forced displacement tears apart the existing social fabric. It disperses and fragments communities, dismantles patterns of social organization and interpersonal ties; kinship groups become scattered as well.”*⁶⁰

Risks associated with social disarticulation were more minor concerns in the management of the Endau settlement. Several accounts by resettlers emphasized the friendly rapport struck between the

⁵⁸ Shuen Choo Chu, *Oral History Centre*, National Archives of Singapore, March, 1985, accession No. 000462/Reel/Disc 8, 9, 10 of 12.

⁵⁹ Vivian, Blaxell, "New Syonan and Asianism in Japanese-era Singapore," *Japan Focus* 23, (2008).

⁶⁰ Michael M. Cernea, “Impoverishment Risks, Risk Management, and Reconstruction: A Model of Population Displacement and Resettlement.”

Chinese of different dialect groups. Shuen Choo Chu explained that one neighbor offered food to her family, “Come and collect some tapioca for your family to eat.”⁶¹ Such gestures mirror the Confucian virtues of giving and sharing, an example of how the Endau settlers adhered to traditional values amongst adversity and hardship.⁶² Rather than bringing out the worst in mankind, the wartime situation in Endau settlement resulted in the unification of people from different cultural and familial backgrounds, reflecting the strong social fabric of the Endau community.

From Marginalization to Social Inclusion

“Planners tend to overlook these sociocultural and psychological (not just economic) dimensions, and are rarely concerned with facilitating reintegration within host populations or compensating community-owned assets.”⁶³

Psychological and cultural aspects of displacement are often overlooked in policies according to the IRR model. In his research on the effects of development programs, Appell found the feeling of anxiety and the loss of self-esteem to be a common issue for resettled populations.⁶⁴ In the Endau resettlement, however, people were quick to regain their footsteps and sought ways to adapt to their new livelihoods, such as working in the paddy field to sustain a livelihood even when highly educated. For example, Hock Seng Lee’s parents were educated in missionary schools, where his mother worked as a teacher and his father worked as a dispenser in a pharmaceutical company; despite difficulties with their living conditions, his whole

⁶¹ Chu, interview.

⁶² Chu, interview

⁶³ Michael M. Cernea, “Impoverishment Risks, Risk Management, and Reconstruction: A Model of Population Displacement and Resettlement.”

⁶⁴ George N, Appell, "The pernicious effects of development" *Fields Within Fields* (1975).

family adapted to the situation, as they learned to plant vegetables such as kangkong, spinach and tomatoes.⁶⁵

Expropriation to Restoration of Community Assets/Services

“Typically, losses of common property assets are not compensated by governments. These losses are compounded by loss of access to some public services.”⁶⁶

Due to the limited material support the OCA could provide, the settlers of Endau depended on inventive ways to turn every obstacles into opportunities for survival. Midway through the resettlement scheme, the OCA could no longer supply enough rations for the population, resulting in a drastic decline in the quantity of rice from 18 catties per month per person to only 4-5 catties.⁶⁷ Consequently, trading food and services in the black market between the local Malay villagers and Endau settlers emerged.⁶⁸ Services such as barbers, pawn shops, and pharmacies that were initially unavailable also started up in the private homes of the settlers, creating a microeconomy within the settlement.⁶⁹

A Collective Effort in Endau

Shinozaki Mamoru, the OCA, and the locals all contributed to the eventual success of the Endau resettlement scheme. Shinozaki's foresight in setting up the OCA to manage the operations within Endau alleviated the risks of landlessness, joblessness, homelessness, food insecurity, and morbidity. Shinozaki Mamoru's efforts to establish rapport and build trust were essential in building social connections with the locals. Furthermore, the inventiveness and adaptiveness of the locals

⁶⁵ Lee, interview

⁶⁶ Michael M. Cernea, “Impoverishment Risks, Risk Management, and Reconstruction: A Model of Population Displacement and Resettlement.”

⁶⁷ Gay, interview.

⁶⁸ Chu, interview.

⁶⁹ Gay, interview.

towards their situations mitigated IRR risks associated with social disarticulation, marginalization, and the loss of access to common property. Through this process, the locals gained greater esteem through their work and contributions within the settlement.

The Endau settlement is an astonishing account that provides insight into the resilience of those resettled under Japanese occupation. While public education focuses heavily on anti-war sentiment to remind the current generations the atrocities of war and the value of peace, such as the annual commemoration of Total Defence Day, causing many curriculums to overlook the successful struggle of the Chinese resettled in Endau and the assistance of Shinozaki Mamoru.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Total Defence Day is marked annually on 15th February to commemorate Singapore's fall to the Japanese on 15th February 1942 and to remind the citizens of the sufferings endured by the forefathers during the war (Singapore Civil Defence Force n.d.). On this day, a memorial service is also held in the Civilian War Memorial Park in Singapore, in remembrance of the war victims (Singapore Tourism Board n.d.).

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