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**MALAYA AND SINGAPORE
DURING THE
JAPANESE OCCUPATION**

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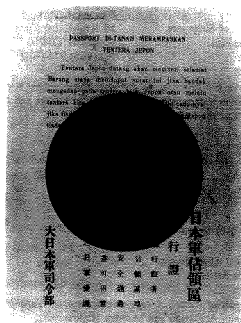
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MALAYA AND SINGAPORE DURING THE JAPANESE OCCUPATION

EDITED BY PAUL H. KRATOSKA



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Paul H. Kratoska

September, 1995

Cover

The cover shows a safe conduct pass distributed in Malaya at the time of the Japanese invasion. The gist of the message is given below. The Malay is rambling and ungrammatical, while the Chinese is concise but also ungrammatical. The document survives because, owing to a shortage of paper after 1945, the reverse side was used to write a note that was placed in a post-war file.

Malay Text

Passport in Lands Seized by the Japanese Military

The Japanese Military coming will provide security to anyone bearing this letter if given to our Japanese troops or through our military wishes to give this card to them, if not bearing this power the Japanese military does not permit to present or pass.

Main Japanese Army

The photographs in the background are taken from a Japanese propaganda sheet issued in Malaya during the Occupation.

Both items are reproduced with the permission of the National Archives of Malaysia, whose assistance the *Journal* gratefully acknowledges.

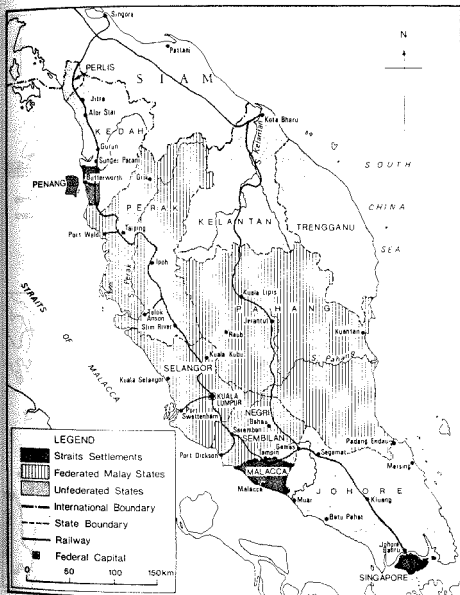
Chinese Text

Japanese Occupied Territory

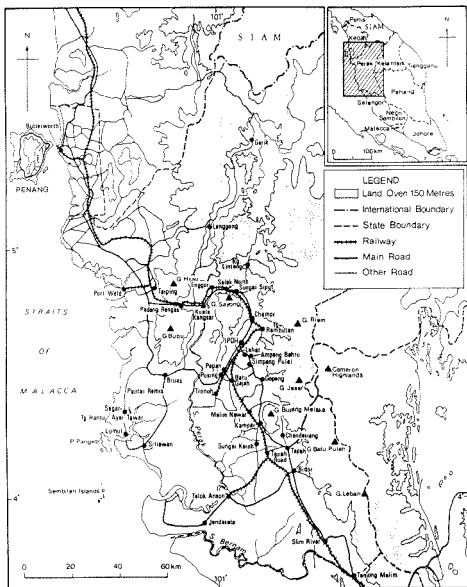
The bearer of this pass when entering Japanese occupied territories will have the privilege of safe passage and will be granted privileged treatment by the Japanese military stationed in the locality.

Office of the Commanding Officer

MAP 1
Malaya at the Time of the Japanese Invasion



MAP 2
Perak during the Japanese Occupation



Introduction

PAUL H. KRATOSKA

The Japanese takeover of Malaya began in early December 1941 when Japanese forces landed in southern Thailand and in Kelantan, and was completed when the British surrendered in Singapore on 15 February 1942. From Singapore, Japan's combat forces moved on to Burma and the Indonesian archipelago, and Malaya was placed in the hands of a military garrison force, supported by a large contingent of civilians who filled administrative posts and key positions in the private sector. Despite pronouncements about the shaping of a Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere, the Japanese administration in Malaya displayed little sense of purpose apart from supporting the war effort and trying to provide the population with food and other basic necessities. Even these limited objectives could not be met. There was little that people in Malaya could do to assist in the war effort, and the Japanese were unable to overcome the shortages of food, clothing and other manufactured goods that afflicted the country. By the time the Japanese capitulated on 15 August 1945, the people of Malaya were suffering from malnutrition, the currency had all but lost its value, basic consumer goods were extremely scarce, and the economy was at a standstill.

The Japanese destroyed the greater part of the records of their administration in Malaya immediately after the surrender, and as a consequence many aspects of this period remain obscure. In recent years, however, by drawing on personal recollections and the fragmentary documentation that did survive, researchers have been able to develop a somewhat fuller picture of the experiences of the Malayan population under Japanese rule. The authors of the papers collected in the present volume have used oral sources, published memoirs, local records generated under Japan's Malayan Military Administration, and Japanese records to shed light on three issues: social and political alignments within Malaya, relations between the Japanese and the local population, and the personal and professional consequences of the occupation for those who lived through it.

The population of Malaya included people loyal to, and people hostile to the British; people who supported, and people who opposed the Japanese; and a great mass of people who had no strong political sentiments but found themselves entangled in a conflict between outsiders. British loyalists among the Malays, often men who had worked for the colonial administration, disliked the Japanese for invading Malaya and because of the rough treatment they meted out to the local population, but few were willing or able to cause much trouble. A small number of Malays fought against the Japanese invasion or

participated in anti-Japanese guerrilla organizations, and their struggle and sacrifice has received little attention. Among the Chinese, British loyalists tended to be locally born, English-educated, and involved in business. As part of their last desperate efforts to keep the Japanese out of Singapore, the British armed a collection of Chinese irregulars known as Dalforce, and these poorly trained men put up a determined struggle as the Japanese swept in. However, for both the Malays and the Chinese the need for people to protect their families and communities took precedence, and open resistance to the Japanese was confined to a small minority. People were resigned to the Japanese regime, but did not support it with any real conviction.

Malay and Chinese radical elements hostile to British rule differed markedly in their responses to the Japanese. Malay radicals, concentrated in the Kesatuan Melayu Muda (KMM — the Young Malay Union), welcomed the coming of the Japanese as a liberation from British rule, but the Japanese showed little interest in making political concessions to the Malays and in June 1942 directed the KMM to disband. The leaders of the KMM later were officially recognized by the Japanese as community leaders, although these men did not command widespread support. They were frequently quoted in the newspapers, but their role as propagandists for what looked to many like a new imperialism did not fit well with their nationalist ideals. They were also very different from Chinese collaborators, a category which included informers, as well as prominent business figures who accepted posts in Japanese-sponsored communal organizations such as the Oversea Chinese Association.

Chinese opponents of the British included both communist and Kuomintang sympathizers. Although these two factions made common cause against the Japanese following Japan's invasion of China, their mutual antagonism was so strong that supporters of the two groups hiding in the jungle during the occupation on occasion fought with each other. The communists built up the larger anti-Japanese military force, the Malayan Peoples' Anti-Japanese Army, and dominated the anti-Japanese Union, the civilian organization which provided support for the guerrillas. In this volume Hara Fujio reviews the structure of the Chinese anti-Japanese movement throughout Malaya, and Yoji Akashi examines in some detail the activities in Perak of guerrillas belonging to the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army, and the efforts of the *kempeitai* to defeat them.

The main concern of activists within the Indian community was independence for India, and the Japanese held out the prospect of a march on Delhi in appealing for Indian support. Most of Malaya's pre-war Indian population consisted of Madras Tamils, but northern Indians, including a substantial number of trained soldiers whom the British had brought to Malaya to fight against the Japanese, dominated the wartime organizations for Indians, the Indian Independence League and the Indian National Army. The leader

of the movement was Subhas Chandra Bose, a Bengali who had no political base in Malaya but was an established and respected figure in the nationalist movement in India.

For the politically inert, the Occupation brought a sharp decline in living standards and a great deal of fear and uncertainty. The Chinese were targeted by the invading forces because of the aid sent from Malaya to China at the time of Japan's invasion there, and the Japanese massacred large numbers of Chinese, an act which touched nearly everyone in the Chinese population and created enmity among people who for want of strong political convictions might otherwise have reached an accommodation with the new regime. A majority of the Indians in Malaya were unskilled labourers, large numbers of whom were recruited for Japanese construction projects where poor diets and harsh working conditions produced high death rates. For Malays, disillusionment was slower and less spectacular. The critical feature of the Japanese regime was not the treatment of nationalist politicians, who had only a small following, but Japanese policies with regard to Islam. As Abu Talib Ahmad shows, the Japanese were well aware of the importance of this issue and adopted a policy of non-interference in religious affairs, but still in many instances offended Muslim sensibilities. By the end of the Occupation, the absence of strong religious leadership was giving rise to concern regarding lax observance of religious obligations.

Malaysians of all races lost family members or friends during the Occupation, and even now many find it extremely painful to recall those years. For nearly everyone the war was a difficult time endured and best forgotten. Whatever their experiences during this period, most people in Malaya simply reacted to circumstances which were not of their own making. They were powerless, and their accounts relate the iniquities visited upon them. As the article by Patricia Lim demonstrates, the first years after the war produced exposés of Japanese atrocities by Chin Kee Onn, Tan Thoon Lip and Sybil Kathigasu, the latter a redoubtable figure whose brutal treatment at the hands of the *kempeitai* caused her early death in 1949. Later accounts are notable for their measured, unemotional presentation of events, and some see favourable consequences, particularly the changed relationship with the British after the war, and the country's progress toward independence. Although Malayan authors portray valour and loyalty, opportunism and cowardice, they tend not to look for deeper significance in the events they describe. Topics such as the character of the Japanese, the psychology of the local population as victims or collaborators, the capacity of men to endure or inflict pain, receive little comment. The Japanese told people in Malaya that they were participating in a great, historic enterprise, the creation of a new Asia liberated from colonialism and western domination. Newspapers, speeches in connection with public holidays, radio broadcasts and the school curriculum extolled the ideal

of a free and prosperous Asia led by Japan. However, Malaysians set these claims against an occupying force they found harsh, arrogant and inefficient, and an administration which was unable to ensure their basic needs.

The Japanese see the issue from a different perspective, for they were the leaders and instigators of the proposed new order. Much of what happened in Malaya during the Occupation was the result of Japanese will and initiative, and the consequences for better or worse rest on Japanese shoulders. In this volume, Henry Frei examines the views of Japanese writers on the war and the Occupation of Malaya, and finds that the judgements they offer vary widely. For a few, the failure was military, and Japanese intentions continue to be viewed in a favourable light. Others argue that the Japanese betrayed their own ideals. The sufferings of the people of Southeast Asia weigh on their consciences, and some Japanese writers have gone to great lengths to place before their countrymen evidence of Japanese iniquity. The issue remains contentious, for the facts are not well established and hard evidence is difficult to obtain. To some extent Japan's destruction of wartime records has had its desired effect, but the lack of documentation also makes it difficult for Japan to mount an effective defence of its actions.

The experiences of European armies, and of the European prisoners-of-war and civilian detainees in Malaya during the period of the Second World War have been studied in considerable detail. The contribution of these papers lies in the information they provide on the activities of the Malayan population.

The Impact of the Japanese Occupation on the Malay-Muslim Population

ABU TALIB AHMAD

Universiti Sains Malaysia

Introduction

Existing studies on the impact of the Japanese Occupation on Malaya and in particular on the Malay-Muslim population (which should also include the sizeable Indian-Muslim population, such as that domiciled in Penang) have produced various observations and conclusions. Most scholars, and also those Malays who lived through this period, have emphasized the positive aspect of the occupation in terms of the birth of a new political awareness among Malay youth, the ability of the Malay people to break out of their parochial environment and the first involvement of Malay women in political and social organizations.¹ Other studies have emphasized the divisive nature of Japanese policy, and its direct and indirect impact on the intricate racial balance then in existence. According to this interpretation, Japan failed to take into account Malaya's racial balance when implementing various policies in the social, economic or politico-military fields, and this oversight later affected ethnic relations and contributed to serious racial conflicts

¹ See for instance Zainal Abidin Wahid, *Sejarah Malaysia Sepintas Lalu* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1983); Aishah Ghani, *Memoir Seorang Pejuang* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1992). Jaafar Hussin, *Kebeneran* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1989), and Ibrahim Ismail, *Menuju Kelahiran Malaysia* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1992). See also Yoji Akashi, "Japanese Military Administration in Malaya - Its Formation and Evolution in Reference to the Sultans, the Islamic religion and the Muslim Malays - 1941-45", *Asian Studies* 7,1 (Apr. 1969): 81-110, and Yoji Akashi, "The Japanese Occupation of Malaya: Interruption or Transformation?", in *Southeast Asia Under Japanese Occupation*, ed. Alfred McCoy (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asian Studies, 1980).

in 1945-46.² More recent studies by history undergraduates at the Universiti Sains Malaysia have even shown the involvement of Japanese individuals in these racial clashes such as in Trengganu in 1945 and Perak in March 1946 (at Bekor in Kuala Kangsar district).³

In the development of the Malay language, and Malay literature and journalism, the importance of this period is undeniable even if the tenor and vibrancy of Malay journalism was much more subdued than during the exciting 1930s.⁴ The period saw the blossoming of talents like Masuri S.N., who in 1944 at the age of 17 first submitted his poems to *Berita Malai*, then effectively run by the equally young A. Samad Ismail, but better established figures like Ishak Haji Muhammad or Pak Sako (Sako being coined from the Japanese pronunciation of Ishako

² Wan Hashim Wan Teh, *Race Relations in Malaysia* (Kuala Lumpur: Heineman, 1983), pp. 39-45; Cheah Boon Kheng, *Red Star over Malaya: Resistance and Social Conflict during the Japanese Occupation, 1941-46* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1983) and Leon Comber, *13 May 1969: A Historical Survey of Sino-Malay Relations* (Kuala Lumpur: Heineman, 1984) ch. 4.

³ See, for instance, Hamzah Abdullah, "Antara Jepun dan Bintang Tiga: Satu Analisa Kekejaman Pentadbiran, Pengalaman Penduduk Kuala Trengganu" (term paper for HST 422 Japanese Occupation of Southeast Asia, History Section, School of Humanities, 1994; henceforth "HST 422 Paper"); and Hamdan Mohd. Ali, "Sejarah Hubungan Etnik di Bekor, 1941-46 (Satu Kajian Kes Perselisihan Kaum pada 6 Mac 1946)" (Academic exercise, History Section, School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 1995; henceforth "History Section AE"), pp. 111-14.

⁴ See for instance Drs Li Chuan Siu, *Ikisar Sejarah Pergerakan dan Kesusasteraan Melayu Moden, 1945-1965* (Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Antara, 1981) ch. 3; Abdul Latif Abu Bakar, *Abdul Rahim Kajai: Wartawan dan Sasterawan Melayu* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1984); Arena Wati, *Cerpen-cerpen Zaman Jepun: Satu Kajian* (Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Antara, 1980); Pyan Husayn and Ismail Ahmad, *Puisi Zaman Jepun* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1978); Khoo Kay Kim, *Majalah dan Akhbar sebagai Sumber Sejarah* (Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Universiti Malaya, 1984); Rus Ain Abdullah, "Surat Khabar dan Majalah di Zaman Jepun: Satu Kajian ke atas Perkembangan dan Peranan" (Academic Exercise, History Department, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1988) and Mohd. Sarim Mustajab et al., (eds.), *Akhbar dan Majalah di Malaysia* (Bangi: Jabatan Sejarah, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1988).

for Ishak) were more restrained.⁵ On the other hand the generation of Malay writers represented by Abdullah Hussein, A. Samad Said and Arena Wati, all of whom rose to prominence in the 1960s, was deeply affected by this period. Some of their more prominent novels are a testament to this influence.⁶ On the military aspect, a very popular theme is the heroic exploits of those Malays who served in the British imperial forces (either in the Malay Regiment or as volunteers) or in Force 136, the wartime intelligence unit.⁷ Often neglected is the fact that these men were tools of an imperial government fighting desperately for its life against another equally imperialistic power. Some of them rose to political and military prominence after 1957 while others, including members of the Japanese sponsored military organizations such as the *giyu-gun*, retired into oblivion. Many who are still alive harbour a burning resentment against the British government for alleged neglect. Other aspects of the occupation that in one way or another affected Malay-Muslims include the activities of the *penghulu* (heads of a circle of villages) during war time, forced labour including those who were

⁵ Abdul Latif Abu Bakar, *Ishak Haji Muhammad: Penulis dan Ahli Politik Sehingga 1948* (Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Universiti Malaya, 1977) chs. 3, 4 and 5; and A.M. Iskandar, *Persuratkhabaran Melayu, 1876-1968* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1980) and Abdul Latif Abu Bakar, *Abdul Rahim Kajai*.

⁶ Abdullah Hussein, *Terjebak* (Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Antara, 1977) and A. Samad Said, *Salina* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1970).

⁷ Wan Hashim Wan Teh, *Perang Dunia Kedua: Peranan Gerila Melayu Force 136* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1993); (General) Ibrahim Ismail, *Have You Met Mariam* (Johor Baru: Westlight, 1984).

sent to the Thai-Myanmar border and the teaching of the Japanese language.⁸

This essay re-examines the Japanese Occupation and its impact on the Malay-Muslim population in terms of the polarization of the Malay-Muslims during 1942-45 (as well as before 1942) and the plight of the Islamic faith, the decay of Islamic morality and the perceptions of religious elites on these issues. For this study I have consulted various sources including published accounts by scholars and participants, as well as unpublished studies such as academic exercises, mini-theses and much shorter term papers submitted by students for a course on the Japanese occupation of Southeast Asia that I conduct at Universiti

⁸ Some of the relevant Academic Exercises completed by USM undergraduates for the History Section, School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia, included Haron Talip, "Peranan Penghulu dalam Zaman Jepun di Johor, 1942-45: Kajian Kes Mukim Sungai Raya, Muar Johor" (1982); Mat Zin Mat Kib, "Persatuan Bekas Buruh Paksa dan Keluarga Buruh Jalan Keretapi Maut Siam-Burma 1942-45 Persekutuan Tanah Melayu, 1958-1973: Satu Tinjauan Sejarah Perkembangannya" (1988) and Wan Noraini Wan Ahmad, "Pendudukan Jepun (1942-43) and Thai (1943-45) Di Kelantan: Kesan Ke atas Masyarakat Melayu" (1986). Some of the mini-thesis that will be cited include Abdul Hamid Ghazali, "Temerluh Semasa Pendudukan Jepun, 1942-45" (mini-thesis for HSM 411, Documents in Malaysian History, History Section, School of Humanities, 1995; henceforth "HSM 411 Mini-Thesis"), Mohd. Azlan Abdul Rahman, "Sistem Pendidikan di Zaman Jepun di Sekolah-Sekolah Daerah Temerluh" ("HSM 411 Mini-Thesis", 1995). Some of the essays include Elias Senik, "Pentadbiran Jepun: Implikasi Buruh dari sudut Sosio-Ekonomi terhadap Kg Tok Kassim, Kota Bahru, Kelantan" ("HST 422 Paper", 1994), Yasmin Hashim @ Yasin, "Tumpuan Khas terhadap Haji Hasan bin Abdul Samad melalui pengalaman sebagai Buruh Paksa Keretapi Maut di zaman Pemerintahan Jepun" ("HST 422 Paper", 1994), Abdul Kudus Abu Bakar, "Kedudukan Ekonomi Masyarakat Petani semasa Pendudukan Jepun (Satu Tinjauan di Guar Cempedak, Kedah)" ("HST 422 Paper", 1994), Yus'aiman Jusoh @ Yusoff, "Implikasi Positif pendudukan Jepun terhadap orang-orang Melayu di Arau, Perlis (1942-45): Tumpuan Khusus kepada Bidang Ekonomi" ("HST 422 Paper", 1994), Wan Basthiah Haji Abdul Rahman, "Bincangkan penubuhan, peranan dan kesan pasukan pertahanan awam iaitu Jikeidan dalam membantu menjaga keselamatan kampung semasa pendudukan Jepun" ("HST 422 Paper", 1994) and Kosnan Bukhiran, "Pendudukan Jepun di Johor (1942-45): Tinjauan sejauhmana pentadbiran tentera Jepun mengubah corak kehidupan seharian penduduk di bandar dan di kawasan pedalaman" ("HST 422 Paper", 1994).

Sains Malaysia (USM).⁹ For the discussion on Islam, I have consulted the records of the Johore Religious (Affairs) Department which provide invaluable information on Islam during the war and religious decadence among Malay-Muslims, a phenomenon that caused much concern among religious officials.¹⁰

Malay-Muslim Perceptions of Japan before 1942

Before 1942 Japan did not attract much attention from Malay elites and the Malay intelligentsia apart from Ibrahim Yaacob and some members of the Kesatuan Melayu Muda (KMM). In the case of Ibrahim contact apparently took place as early as 1940.¹¹ On reading the biographies and autobiographies of leading Malays in the political, administrative and military fields one is struck by the paucity of references to Japan although there is much discussion of Britain and reactions to British colonialism.¹² Many of these memoirs were written

⁹ It is most unfortunate that before 1993 I did not keep a list of all the term paper titles and all of them were returned to the writers. A few students were generous enough to furnish me with copies of their work and this collection, growing steadily during the last two years, will be published in the near future.

¹⁰ I am currently undertaking a study of the records of the Islamic Affairs Department of the various states at the Malaysian National Archive in Kuala Lumpur and its branches in Alor Setar, Kuala Trengganu, and Johor Bahru. This two-year research project is being funded by Universiti Sains Malaysia's short term research grant.

¹¹ Cheah Boon Kheng, "The Japanese Occupation of Malaya, 1941-45: Ibrahim Yaacob and the Struggle for Indonesia Raya", *Indonesia* 28 (Oct. 1979): 91-98.

¹² See for instance, William Shaw, *Tun Abdul Razak: Riwayat Hidup dan Zamannya* (Kuala Lumpur: Longmans, 1977); Mohd. Yusoff Haji Ahmad, *Decades of Change (Malaysia 1910s - 1970)* (Kuala Lumpur: Pesaka, 1983); Zabha, *Tan Sri Haji Mohamed Noah* (Kuala Lumpur: Utusan Melayu, 1976); A. Samad Ahmad, *Sejambak Kenangan* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1981); Ramlah Adam, *Dato' Onn Jaafar: Peranannya di dalam Politik dan Pentadbiran Persekutuan Tanah Melayu, 1895-1962* (Kuala Lumpur: Gateway Publishing House, 1987); Alias Mohamad, *Ghaffur: A Biography* (Kuala Lumpur: Pelanduk, 1993); Victor Morais, *Lord President Suffian: His Life and Times* (Kuala Lumpur: The Law Publishers, 1980); Jawatan Kuasa Sejarah Lisan, *Reminiscences of Tunku Abdul Rahman on the Japanese Occupation 1941-45* (Penang: Universiti Sains Malaysia, 1989); Cecilia Tan, *Tun Sardon Jubir: His Life and Times* (Petaling Jaya: Pelanduk Publication, 1986); Abdul Aziz Zakaria, *British, Japanese and Independent Malaysia: A Memoir* (Kuala Lumpur: Institut Tadbiran Awam Negara, 1989); and Ahmad Meah Baba Meah, *Penaklukan Jepun: Suka Duka di Georgetown* (Kuala Lumpur: Media Indah, 1992). In the existing studies/memoirs only Ibrahim Yaacob and Mohd. Yusoff Haji Ahmad make any reference to the Japanese before 1942, although for different reasons.

in English which is not surprising as these personalities were mostly English educated (either in Malaya or the United Kingdom, where for the most part they attended Oxford or Cambridge and the various Inns of Court in London). Some of them provide a lengthy description of the occupation period, its significance for them and how they coped with the rule of the samurai,¹³ while others treat it with disdain and simply regret the discomforts they and their families had to endure.¹⁴

Before the war most educated Malay-Muslims held no specific views regarding the Land of the Rising Sun. In contrast with the situation in neighbouring countries in Southeast Asia, Malaya barely registered Japan's victory in the 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese war, and the event had little impact on Malay political attitudes, particularly in comparison with developments in Turkey and elsewhere in the Middle East which were of great interest to young religious and political reformers (the "Kaum Muda" or Young Group).¹⁵ In the 1930s the various strata of Malay society viewed Japan with fascination, fear, even optimism. Deluded into a false sense of security most Malay-Muslim elites never gave Japan or the threat from the east much thought despite the presence of Japanese investments and citizens in various parts of the peninsula, including even school teachers such as one Mr Nishikawa who was the headmaster of St. Michael's Institution, Alor Setar, from 1934 through 1937.¹⁶

¹³ For instance, see Tan, *Tan Sardon Jubir*, pp. 11-13; Abdul Aziz Zakaria, *British, Japanese and Independent Malaysia*, pp. 6-29; and Shaw, *Tan Abdul Razak*, pp. 48-73.

¹⁴ The classic example is Zabha, *Tan Sri Haji Mohamed Noah*, pp. 61-62. The Japanese period is treated in less than two pages in this biography of a former speaker of the House of Representatives.

¹⁵ See for instance William Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1967) and Firdaus Abdullah, *Radical Malay Politics: Its Origins and Early Development* (Petaling Jaya: Pelanduk Publications, 1985).

¹⁶ Ahmad Nordin Haji Mohd. Zain, "Sejarah Pendidikan Inggeris dan Pelajaran Tinggi di Kedah", in *Dokumentasi Konvensyen Sejarah Negeri Kedah Darul Aman* (Alor Setar: Lembaga Muzium Negeri Kedah, 1991), pp. 107-108.

A fascination with Japan is most evident among Malay women. Professor Khoo Kay Kim has studied *Bulan Melayu*, a magazine which was first published in June 1930 and served as the official organ of the Johor Malay Women's Association. This body was composed mainly of Malay teachers, and *Bulan Melayu* under the editorship of Zin Sulaiman (popularly known as Ibu Zain) gave prominence to Malay education especially among women.¹⁷ This magazine was also interested in economic issues and interestingly the editor urged Malay women to look east and to emulate Japanese women, who sacrificed themselves for the welfare of their families. It is quite significant that the editor was also aware of the plight of the mainly rural women who laboured in Japanese factories under poor working conditions and for extremely low wages.

Other sections of the Malay intelligentsia, obviously males, had different views regarding Japan. For instance they were concerned about the plight of Malay fishermen after Japanese interests took control of the local fishing industry. By the mid-1930s, Japanese fishing concerns had already usurped the place traditionally held by the Chinese and soon enough they were competing with coastal Malay fishermen. On 20 August 1934 the influential Malay paper *Warta Malaya* expressed alarm at the increasing presence of Japanese fishing boats in Malayan coastal waters. The editor lamented the plight of Malay fishermen who could not compete with the newcomers because they lacked sufficient capital.¹⁸

As the Japanese advanced into Southeast Asia a few Malay elites began to express concern over the possibility of a Japanese invasion. One such man was Mohd. Yusoff Haji Ahmad who early in 1941 was appointed senior collector of land revenue in Raub district in Pahang.

¹⁷ Khoo Kay Kim, *Majalah dan Akhbar Melayu sebagai Sumber Sejarah*, pp. 10-11. During 1943-44 Ibu Zain took charge of the Women's Section of the bi-monthly magazine *Fajar Asia*, and in 1950 she became head of the women's wing of United Malay National Organisation (UMNO).

¹⁸ Cited in Eric Robertson, *The Japanese File: Pre-War Japanese Penetration in Southeast Asia* (Kuala Lumpur: Heinemann, 1979), p. 51.

In the quiet rural setting of Raub this extremely loyal Malay Administrative Service (MAS) officer and his colleagues, including an FMS volunteer officer, often discussed the war in Europe and the uncertain situation in Malaya *vis-à-vis* Japanese intentions especially when it was publicly known that Japanese nationals had been involved in espionage activities in the peninsula.¹⁹

On the other hand rural Malays, less educated, less concerned with the existing east-west clash, and certainly less well-off had a different perception of Japan. Most of these Malays, mainly peasants and labourers, associated Japan with a new hope of economic prosperity. This hope, which early in the occupation proved to be unfounded, was brought about in part by an avalanche of Japanese textiles, bicycle, toys and chinaware which poured into the local market during the 1930s. As these goods were cheap, they were extremely popular with the local population. Malays were not involved in the 1937 Chinese boycotts of Japanese goods, and they remained important customers right through 1942. Informants who lived through this period note the aggressive nature of Japanese marketing. Even small towns like Yan in Kedah, Sungai Mati in Muar, Johor, and Nibong Tebal in Penang had Japanese stores.²⁰ One is also reminded of the remarkable activities of a man named Shiiba who dabbled as an intelligence operative in Kedah. Those who met this colourful figure recall that he was friendly towards Malays, well-versed in the Malay language and customs, and generous to his Malay clients. One such client from Alor Setar was obliging enough to be photographed by my student in 1994 clasping a piece of chinaware presented by Shiiba during one of his regular visits. Even Malays who never met any Japanese before 1942 viewed them favourably, saying they were different from the allegedly egoistic British expatriates.²¹ These Malays looked forward to the arrival of the Japanese army

¹⁹ Mohd. Yusoff Haji Ahmad, *Decades of Change*, p. 188.

²⁰ Teh Koon Hoo, "Pendudukan Jepun di Yan, 1941-43" ("HSM 411 Mini-Thesis", 1995), p. 12; and Noorhassim Mahat, "Kedatangan Orang Jepun ke Tanah Melayu sebelum tahun 1942 adalah sebagai Pengintip" ("HST 422 Paper", 1994).

²¹ Abdullah Hussein, *Terjebak*, p. 18.

because they believed, erroneously, that cheap Japanese goods were also on their way. In fact the Malays of Yan district associated the boom of artillery fire in nearby Guar Chempedak and Gurun in the second week of December 1941 with a festive occasion, the celebration for *Aidil Fitri* (raya Puasa) or the end of Ramadhan.²² When the reality of war reached their doorsteps, they still clung tenuously to the new hope associated with Dai-Nippon - instant prosperity and a better standard of living. Why they persisted with such views is an interesting question but perhaps years of benign neglect under British rule were finally taking their toll.

Loyalty and Pre-War Polarisation among Malay-Muslims

As the Japanese threat loomed larger towards the end of the 1930s, the question of loyalty to the British became an important issue within the colonial society. From various studies of prominent Malay politicians as well as their memoirs, it appears that Malay aristocrats and civil servants were loyal to Britain, at least until they were left on their own after the British capitulation on 15 February 1942, and many remained loyal throughout the occupation. These men were conservative in outlook, and while some were critical of various aspects of British policy, on the whole their criticisms were still within the accepted bounds of colonial society. It was these conservative Malays who formed the core group of the various state Malay associations. According to the late Tun Abdul Razak Hussein, a former prime minister whose father was the number two in the Pahang Malay Association, these conservative Malays "aspired to improve the lot of the Malays in general through cooperation with the British administration as long as Britain supported these aims and made known, even in the more distant future, its intention to provide independence to Malaya".²³ It is also within this group that one finds Malays like Mohd. Yusoff who contributed to the British war effort by joining the FMS Volunteer Force, or even the newly formed Malay Regiment.

²² Teh Koon Hoo, "Pendudukan Jepun di Yan", p. ix.

²³ Shaw, Tun *Abdul Razak*, p. 40.

The Volunteer Force failed to attract many educated Malays, although it was popular among lower ranking government officials because of the attractive allowances.²⁴ Nevertheless for those who did join, membership is a fair indication of their loyalty to the empire.

In the defence of Malaya against Japanese aggression the loyal Malay-Muslims played a most commendable part. Mainly for defensive purposes, members of the two-battalion strong Malay Regiment were sent to various parts of Malaya before participating in the final encounter with the imperial Japanese army in Singapore. In the fighting at Batu Pahat, one of them, Lt. Ibrahim Alla Atta even won a decoration. Equally creditable were the Malay volunteers. In the defence of Singapore Malay soldiers put up a very spirited struggle, and as a boy I was often reminded of the heroism of Lt. Adnan Saidi and Captain Yazid Ahmad who died in fierce hand-to-hand fighting at Pasir Panjang. Less well known but no less heroic was Saidi's fellow officer, Ismail Babu (who retired as a Major from the Malaysian armed forces). Ismail, of Pathan-Malay descent, was born in Batu Gajah, Perak in 1916.²⁵ His father was a captain in the Punjabi Regiment and died for the British empire while fighting the Germans at Somme in 1917. Academically Ismail was an average student but he excelled in sports and was also a King's Scout. Despite the heated debates in the late 1920s and early 1930s concerning the distinction between Malays and Malayan Muslims of Arab or Indian descent, Ismail was accepted into the Malay Regiment in 1933 on his second attempt. At one time he served in the same company as Lt. Adnan Saidi. From September 1940, his company (part of the First Battalion) was posted to Kota Baru for eight months to dig trenches at Pengkalan Chepa air base; he was then sent to Port Dickson, and to Singapore in 1941. Warrant Officer Ismail provides a detailed description of the Japanese attack on Singapore and the valour of the defenders. He also saw many of his soldier friends perish in fierce fighting in the three days prior to the British surrender on 15 February

²⁴ Mohd. Yusoff Haji Ahmad, *Decades of Change*, pp. 181-82.

²⁵ Mejar (B) Ismail Babu, *Kisah Seorang Perajurit* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1990).

1942. For his gallantry, Ismail was awarded the MBE in May 1947 (Ibrahim Alla Atta received his Military Cross on the same occasion).

In his memoir Ismail mentions eight Malay officers who out of loyalty to their profession and to King George V refused to take off their uniforms and were as a consequence put to death by the Japanese on 28 February 1942.²⁶ It is therefore understandable if Ismail and his fellow members of the Malay Regiment harboured a strong resentment against Ibrahim Yaacob and those KMM members who collaborated with the Japanese. (Elsewhere we are told that Ibrahim too was saddened by and regretted the whole affair as it meant a reduction of the already small number of Malay intellectuals.)²⁷ In the later part of the war, similar feelings are observable among those Malays who joined Force 136. As noted by one academic who has studied this group, they were loyal to the British empire and willing to risk death for the imperial cause.²⁸ Their exploits especially in the Lenggong area were no less heroic and provided inspiration for the novel *Lt. Nor Pahlawan Gerila* [Lt. Nor the Guerilla Fighter], which I first read as a secondary school student in the 1960s. It is unfortunate that at present such men are semi-forgotten residents of land settlement schemes in northern Perak.

Loyalty to the empire also found expression among Malays in India and England. One example is Mohamed Suffian (later Tun) Hashim, a prominent legal officer after 1957 who later became Malaysia's Lord President, the country's most senior judicial official. Suffian was born in 1917 at Kota Lama Kiri near Kuala Kangsar in Perak.²⁹ He attended the local Malay school, was taught Arabic and the Quran, and later joined Clifford School in Kuala Kangsar. A brilliant student, Suffian obtained three double promotions and in 1933 scored

²⁶ The men included four member of the Malay Regiment (Lt. Ariffin Haji Sulaiman, Lt. Ibrahim Sidek, Lt. Abdullah Saad and Lt. Abdul Wahid Judin) and four from the FMS Volunteers (Captain Raja Aman Shah Raja Harun, Tunku Abdul Rahman's brother-in-law and a Malayan Civil Service officer, Lt. Abbas Said, Lt. Abu Bakar Umar and Lt. Usman Kering Dato Naning).

²⁷ Ismail Babu, *Kisah Seorang Perajurit*, p. 170; A. Samad Ahmad, *Salina*, p. 151.

²⁸ Wan Hashim Wan Teh, *Gerila Melayu Force 136*, Ch 3.

²⁹ Victor Morais, *Lord President Suffian*, pp. 10-29.

six As in his Senior Cambridge examination. He was also a King's Scout, and his biography mentions that he once met Lord Baden-Powell. In 1935 he won the Queen's scholarship, the first Malay from a rural school to win such a prestigious award, and this enabled him to read law at Cambridge and the Middle Temple in London. In February 1941 along with (Tun) Sardon Jubir (who would become a cabinet minister after 1957, and governor of Penang between 1975 and 1981), he was called to the English Bar.

Mohamed Suffian was still in London at the time of the Japanese invasion, and he found work with the BBC. As he recalls, his job was mainly to say in Malay that the Japanese would be defeated. He was to work with the BBC again as head of the Malay section in 1945-46. In between he became involved in the propaganda war against Japan when he was appointed as head of the Malay unit of All-India Radio in New Delhi, under the Southeast Asia Command (SEAC) of Lord Mountbatten. Tun Suffian's autobiography contains a photograph of his propaganda team, which included Idris Ahmad Shah (later head of the overseas service of Radio Malaysia) and Ghazali Ismail (later to serve with the Information Department). Unfortunately he does not provide any examples of the anti-Japanese propaganda they produced.

The radical Malays, especially those within the KMM, rejected British imperialism, and from December 1941 those who managed to escape the British dragnet provided useful services to the invading Japanese army all the way from Alor Setar and Kota Baharu to Singapore. Cheah Boon Kheng's assessment that the involvement of Ibrahim Yaacob, the KMM leader, with the Japanese in 1940 was "due to the existing conditions which encouraged him to take advantage of the situation for himself and for the KMM"³⁰ is probably correct. Ibrahim's idea was to solicit Japanese assistance to further the cause of Malaya's independence within Indonesia Raya (Greater Indonesia). Ibrahim travelled across the peninsula, met a number of Japanese and received \$18,000 in April 1941 to purchase the Malay-language

³⁰ Cheah Boon Kheng, "Ibrahim Yaacob", p. 91; see also Mashor Kaslan, "Perjuangan Kesatuan Melayu Muda dalam Perkembangan Politik Tanah Melayu, 1937-45" (Academic Exercise, History Section, School of Humanities, 1986).

newspaper *Warta Malaya*, which he then filled with KMM members and sympathizers who knowingly or otherwise worked for the Japanese cause. The newspaper was not overtly pro-Japanese but it published criticism of the British, which was good enough for its Japanese patrons. In November 1941 Fujiwara Iwaichi came into the picture and a meeting was held in Bangkok between himself and the KMM, represented by Mustapha Hussain, the number two in the KMM hierarchy (1937-41). What really transpired during this negotiation has been variously interpreted, and it would not be surprising if each side actually misunderstood the other regarding the issue of Malaya's independence. The immediate result was KMM involvement in fifth column activities including carrying out propaganda works among the Malay population. The mass arrest of the KMM leadership other than those from Kedah and Kelantan beginning in mid-December 1941 meant that only a handful were free to offer any assistance to the Japanese army. Those that were not picked up include A. Kadir Adabi and Asaad Shukri Haji Muda from Kota Bahru, Mustapha Hussain who was then on holiday in Taiping, and Onan Siraj, a senior KMM leader and Ibrahim's brother-in-law. Fujiwara mentions only Onan Siraj by name and credits him with assembling and training KMM cadres to help the Japanese. For this assistance (as well as the aid given by Indians of the Indian Independence League and Sumatra youth) the Japanese army captain had a very good reason to be thankful. However, Malaya's aspirations to achieve independence had by February 1942 been nipped in the bud.³¹

There was also another group of Malays who were willing to risk their lives to assist the Japanese although their broad aim was the emancipation of Sumatra from Dutch colonial rule. This latter group consisted mainly of Achehnese from Kedah and Perak. Fujiwara mentions various names such as Mohammad Salleh, Said Abu Bakar, a prominent religious teacher in Kg Acheh in Yan, and Tengku Hashi,

³¹ Lt. General Fujiwara Iwaichi, *F Kikan: Japanese Army Intelligence Operations in Southeast Asia during World War II*, trans. by Yoji Akashi (Kuala Lumpur: Heinemann, 1983); see also Mashor Kaslan, *Perjuangan Kesatuan Melayu Muda*, p. 85, App. 5 ("Ringkasan Perjuangan Saya untuk Kemerdekaan Bangsa dan Nusa - Mustafa Hussain").

and says they recruited fellow Sumatrans to be sent clandestinely to Sumatra from Kuala Selangor on 16 January 1941. Included in this first group was Abdullah Hussein, a young man who had no specific reason to join or to make the clandestine trip to Sumatra as part of the Japanese propaganda team. While taking refuge in Kg Acheh in December 1941 he was summoned by Said whom he greatly respected, and he was much surprised to discover the reason why. As he recalled later, he could neither refuse nor enquire for details on the proposed mission. He ended up living in Sumatra serving the Japanese military administration for the duration of the war and later took part in the war of Indonesian independence. During the 1960s Abdullah became a well known writer in Malaysia.³²

Not all arrested KMM members were pro-Japanese or even provided assistance to the Japanese cause. An interesting case in point is A. Samad Ahmad (Pak Samad), an important Malay language activist after the war. Samad was born in 1913 in Kelang and had some hazy memories of the Great War of 1914-18 in particular the attention given by the authorities to the control of rice.³³ He received his early education in a Malay school before going on to the Anglo Chinese School at Port Kelang, and later to Kelang High School. During his secondary school days he became aware of racialism among Malayan children and the sorry plight of the Malays in a plural society. In 1932 he sat for his Junior Cambridge examination, but he failed and in the following year was accepted as an apprentice by *Majlis*, an important Malay newspaper run by the highly respected journalist Abdul Rahim Kajai. Samad also took a serious interest in writing and his published works included one *hikayat* (chronicle) and a Malay translation of a book on Abraham Lincoln, whom he greatly admired. It was a chance meeting with Ibrahim that led him to join *Majlis* as a journalist. As he recalls in his memoirs, he enjoyed the newspaper environment, where Ibrahim provided the main intellectual stimulation for a group of restless Malay youth in the Kelang Valley.

³² Abdullah Hussein, *Terjebak*, pp. 21-38.

³³ A. Samad Ahmad, *Sejambak Kenangan*, chs. 8-10.

His colleagues at *Majlis* included Ahmad Boestaman, an important political figure of the left after 1945, and Melan Abdullah, who later headed the newspaper *Utusan Melayu* and the Malaysian newsagency *Bernama*. As one who was close to Ibrahim, Pak Samad was drawn to the new awakening of the Malay intelligentsia who were concerned with the survival of the Malay race and with the idea of "Malaysia" (used before the war to refer to the Malay world) or Melayu Raya (Greater Malaya). Samad became an active member of the KMM, and claims to have been the one who suggested the name of this body in 1937, an assertion disputed by Mustapha Hussain.³⁴ Because of this connection, and the blanket allegation that KMM members were fifth columnists, Samad was arrested in his Kuala Lumpur office on 16 December 1941 and later brought to Changi Prison, although he makes no mention of the spy issue in his memoirs.

Not so clear perhaps is the case of Buyong Adil, Malaysia's most famous amateur historian. If being a member of the FMS volunteer force is synonymous with loyalty to the empire, then Buyong must be regarded as a loyal element, but he was never accepted as such. He too was found guilty by association. Buyong was born in 1907 at Telok Anson (now Telok Intan), Perak.³⁵ His early education was completed in a Malay school and he did not go on to attend an English school. His headmaster did not recommend his name as his father refused to offer any financial incentive. For four years Buyong worked in his uncle's shop before joining the Sultan Idris Training College (SITC) in 1924, two years after the college opened its doors. Buyong apparently was an outstanding student, and in his third year was elected a prefect and captain of the field games. Upon graduation he became a full time member of the teaching staff at the college, and Ibrahim Yaacob was one of his many students. In 1938 Buyong wrote two history books entitled *Sejarah Alam Melayu Penggal 4 & 5* (History of the Malay World volumes 4 and 5), a continuation of an earlier series undertaken

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 110-11; see also Mashor Kaslan, *Perjuangan Kesatuan Melayu Muda*, p. 8.

³⁵ Haji Buyong Adil, "Haji Buyong Adil", *Malaysia in History* 19.2 (Dec. 1976): 7-20.

by staff of the Pejabat Karang Mengarang (Translation Department) then based at SITC. However, despite his commendable record of service at SITC, Buyong was dismissed from his post in 1941.

How this happened is a very interesting episode which Buyong himself recounted in the late 1960s.³⁶ While at the college, Buyong was a member of the SITC Volunteer Force then headed by the principal, R.P.S. Walker, with the assistance of four Malay teachers, including Yazid Ahmad. All held the rank of captain. As a lieutenant, Buyong was in charge of a platoon but he was denied a chance to go to Singapore with his platoon on grounds that he was a collaborator and a nationalist who opposed the British. While Buyong's activities after 1945 and his involvement in UMNO qualify him as a nationalist, before 1942 the case is difficult to make. Buyong himself professed to have had no interest in politics. He knew Ibrahim Yaacob as one of his students, and was also acquainted with Ishak Haji Muhammad (Pak Sako), already a well-known literary figure. As he confided to a former student, Buyong did not wish to participate in any form of political activity before 1942, although he did collaborate with the Japanese when he worked as a clerk at the Lower Perak Education Department in Telok Anson. For him, the most important task was to provide Malays with education. Unfortunately visits to his house by Ibrahim and Ishak were monitored by Yazid Ahmad, who informed Walker. As a result Buyong was demoted to the reserve, dismissed from the college (then based in Kuala Kangsar) and transferred to a Malay school in Tanjung Malim.

Polarization During Wartime: Malay Collaboration and Resistance

Other than those who were already outside or who had left the country, loyal and disloyal Malays faced two choices after February 1942, namely to collaborate with Japan's Malayan Military Administration (MMA) or to resist. Most Malay-Muslims chose the former option. The list of wartime collaborators includes a most impressive who's who of post-war Malay-Muslim leaders. They include MCS/MAS officers (one of whom was to become the first prime minister after

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

1957), intellectuals from the left and right, school teachers, religious leaders, local elites, and the youth.³⁷ Malays collaborated with the MMA for a number of reasons, including fear, a sense of patriotism and — for the KMM members — the mistaken belief that such a course would ultimately lead to Malayan independence within Indonesia Raya. Many also collaborated for personal gain, such as two Indian-Muslim police officers who had been passed over for promotion by the British in the pre-1941 period but rose to prominence between 1942-45 and in the process caused much suffering to the population of Melaka, particularly in Alor Gajah district.³⁸ Many collaborators provided useful services to the MMA even at the expense of fellow Malays and Malaysians, and some paid dearly for their actions at the hands of the MPAJA or the British Military Administration (BMA). The MPAJA actions unfortunately produced ugly racial violence when rural Malays, for instance in Johor, Perak and Pahang, retaliated against the Chinese including Chinese who had lived in Malay villages most of their lives before the war.³⁹

Many of those who collaborated later would turn against their new Japanese masters in support of their previous one — the British. Their actions took various forms, including non-cooperation in the case of Alor Gajah District Officer, Mohd. Yusoff Ahmad, membership in Force 136 which particularly appealed to younger Malays who were still loyal to Britain such as Ismail Babu, or through subtler means such as participation in Saberkas, a politically inclined co-operative society formed in Alor Setar in 1944 by Malay government servants and Malay youth who had undergone training as *giyu-gun*. There were also Malays who joined armed anti-Japanese groups such as Askar Melayu Setia

³⁷ With very few exceptions, such as Hussein Onn (former prime minister), Ismail Abdul Rahman (former Deputy Premier) and Mohamed Suffian Hashim (former Lord President), who spent the war years outside the country, the post-war Malay leaders remained in Malaya during the Japanese Occupation.

³⁸ Mohd. Yusoff Ahmad, *Decades of Change*, p. 224. One of them was Majid Chota.

³⁹ Amin Zaki Mohammad Yusoff, "Insiden Sungai Manik (15 Ogos-15 September 1945) - Suatu Cetusan perasaan orang Melayu terhadap Bintang Tiga atau suatu konflik ras yang wujud sewaktu Pendudukan Jepun di Tanah Melayu" ("HST 422 Paper", 1993).

of Perak and Kedah and the Wataniah in Pahang. These two military organizations are not as well-known as the MPAJA but their members were certainly loyal to Britain. It is also notable that some of these Malays, as in the case of Ismail Babu who joined Force 136, were suspicious of the overwhelming Chinese predominance within the MPAJA.⁴⁰

Although some Malays joined the more active MPAJA, their numbers were small. In fact, as in Johor, MPAJA attempts to get more Malay support especially among the village élites backfired.⁴¹ Regarding the participation of Malays in the MPAJA the case of Perak is certainly interesting. Abdullah C.D., a well-known MCP leader after 1945, was involved in the MPAJA in the Sungai Manik area,⁴² but much more interesting was when whole Malay villages joined or provided support to the MPAJA. In Bekor (actually a group of three small villages) the MPAJA made a dramatic appeal, positioning itself as a champion of Islam by outlawing gambling. The most powerful local MPAJA figure in Bekor was a Malay who was aided by 10 other Malays; they in turn received support from Malay villagers including religious élites.⁴³ However, support for the MPAJA did not spare residents of Bekor from falling victim to a serious racial clash when over 60 of them were massacred or maimed by a group of armed Chinese during a dawn attack on 6 March 1946.

Neither the pressures of the Occupation nor the efforts of the Japanese administration proved able to unite the Malay left and right. On the contrary the occupation merely reinforced the ideological cleavages between the main protagonists. The Malay left especially former members of the KMM took an active part in the various military and other Japanese sponsored organizations such as the *giyu-gun*, *giyu-tai* and *heiho*. Firdaus Abdullah's contention that former members of these organizations later formed the backbone of the radical youth group

⁴⁰ Ismail Babu, *Kisah Seorang Perajurit*, p. 120.

⁴¹ Cheah Boon Kheng, *Red Star Over Malaya*, pp. 65-66.

⁴² Amin Zaki Mohammad, "Insiden Sungai Manik".

⁴³ Hamdan Mohd. Ali, "Sejarah Hubungan Etnik di Bekor", chs. 2, 4.

Angkatan Pemuda Insaf (API) after August 1945⁴⁴ is probably correct although some former members, including Mustaffa Hussain, later joined the more conservative UMNO. Buyong Adil joined the *giyu-tai* as a favour to the district officer of Lower Perak but his duty was to learn and later to teach the Japanese language. Buyong too was active in UMNO politics in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Ismail Babu, after doing various jobs, including working for a Japanese firm, succumbed to his military inclinations and joined the *giyu-tai*. He was later incorporated into the regular army, and saw service against the MPAJA in northern Perak before deciding to link up with Force 136 in Kedah towards the close of the occupation.⁴⁵ Ismail later became a professional soldier but never enjoyed the promotions that were given to some of his juniors. The early period of Saberkas was also characterised by tension among its members especially between the aristocracy (as represented by Tunku Abdul Rahman) and other more "proletarian" Malays. After 1957, many former members of Saberkas became prominent UMNO leaders, including the Tunku himself, Senu Abdul Rahman and Mohd. Khir Johari.⁴⁶

Going back to the Malay left, despite their invaluable assistance to the Japanese military machine their struggle for independence was nipped in the bud at Kuala Lumpur in mid-February 1942. For a time the KMM was still allowed to function but it was treated with suspicion by the Japanese and was disbanded in June of the same year. A. Samad Ahmad has recorded the feeling of disappointment among the KMM leadership and members in Kelang during this uncertain period. He recalls Ibrahim Yaacob's impassioned speech in Singapore on 18 February 1942 when the KMM leader told his audience that "Japan's victory is not our victory" and stressed the need to plan ahead for the liberation of Malaya within Indonesia Raya.⁴⁷ After the KMM disbanded, its former leaders followed various courses of action:

⁴⁴ Firdaus Abdullah, *Radical Malay Politics*, pp. 67-68.

⁴⁵ Ismail Babu, *Kisah Seorang Perajurit*, ch. 18.

⁴⁶ Mohd. Isa Othman, *Pendudukan Jepun di Tanah Melayu, 1942-45 (Tumpuan di Negeri Kedah)* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1992), pp. 130-32.

⁴⁷ A. Samad Ahmad, *Sejambak Kenangan*, pp. 150-54.

Mustapha Hussain "retired" to Taiping after he was physically manhandled by the military; Ahmad Boestaman went back to Ipoh and later became an important member of the Japanese propaganda team in Perak; three others were sent to Tokyo; some were ordered to work in the Sumatra gunseikanbu; a few including Ibrahim himself, A. Samad Ismail and Pak Sako joined *Berita Malai*; and A. Samad Ahmad worked with *Perubahan Baru*, the new name for *Majlis*, in Kuala Lumpur for the entire duration of the war, and also became a radio broadcaster.

With the formation of the *giyu gun*, *giyu-tai* and *heiho* the Malay left was given a new lease of life.⁴⁸ Members of the officer corps of the *giyu gun* for instance were picked by MMA in consultation with Ibrahim, who harboured the idea that it would be used later to further the cause of Malay nationalism. The response of Malay youth was overwhelming due to a vigorous campaign conducted by former KMM members in the local media. Nevertheless not all KMM members took part in the newly formed army. Mustapha and Kadir Adabi joined briefly, but both withdrew later in protest against Japanese interference.⁴⁹ Moreover, not all states shared this enthusiasm, and Kelantan and Trengganu provided the least number of recruits for the officer corps. In the end the Japanese sponsored military organization in which Malays predominated was used for internal purposes, mainly against the MPAJA, and this contributed to the poor ethnic relations during the immediate post-war period.

The formation of *Kris* (Kesatuan Rakyat Indonesia Semenanjung, Union of the People of Peninsular Indonesia) in May 1945, again under Japanese sponsorship, can be seen as the last effort of the Malay left to realize the dream of Malayan independence within Indonesia Raya.⁵⁰ Between May and July 1945 Ibrahim tried feverishly to form *Kris* branches based on the former KMM leaders but the attempt was not

⁴⁸ See for instance Cheah Boon Kheng, *Red Star Over Malaya*, ch. 2; see also his "Ibrahim Yaacob".

⁴⁹ Mashor Kaslan, *Perjuangan Kesatuan Melayu Muda*, p. 85; Alias Mohamad, *Gerakan Sosial dan Politik Kelantan* (Kuala Lumpur: Insular Publishing House, 1984), p. 75.

⁵⁰ Cheah Boon Kheng, *Red Star over Malaya*, pp. 113-23.

very successful. An All-Malaya Pemuda Conference was scheduled to be held in Kuala Lumpur on 17-18 August to inaugurate *Kris* and launch the campaign to pursue independence within Indonesia Raya, but the Japanese surrender on 15 August 1945 disrupted these plans. A meeting of the *Kris* committee on 15-16 August discussed three important issues: Malayan independence within Indonesia Raya, how to deal with Chinese domination of the MPAJA and safeguard Malay rights, and how to remove the stigma of collaboration that hung over all *Kris* delegates. The conference passed 12 resolutions but only two are relevant to the present discussion. The first called for the setting up of a democratic people's Malaya involving both the aristocracy and former KMM leaders, and the second called for a guerrilla war to oppose the British landing. In the end neither proposal was carried out.⁵¹ At the same time Indonesia's declaration of independence on 17 August effectively spelt the end of the left's struggle for independence within Indonesia Raya. In desperation Ibrahim approached the MPAJA proposing that the two groups cooperate, but this suggestion was turned down. Ibrahim fled to Indonesia on 19 August (along with his wife, Onan Siraj and Hassan Manan), leaving the radicals to face an uncertain future. Malays of the disbanded *giyu-gun* also responded in various ways to the new circumstances: some went to Indonesia to fight the Dutch while others became involved later in anti-Chinese clashes in Batu Pahat. Many simply awaited possible punishment. A. Samad Ahmad recalls mass arrests and the imprisonment of former KMM members during the BMA period; he himself anticipated arrest but for unknown reasons was spared.⁵² In Kelantan Asaad Shukri was less fortunate and spent eight months in prison.⁵³

As has been said earlier, the Malay right's disenchantment with the rule of the samurai saw many of them tried to undermine the MMA. The case of Abdul Razak Hussein is an example of the change in the Malay mood.⁵⁴ As he recalls, towards the end of 1943 many Malays

⁵¹ Cheah Boon Kheng, *Red Star Over Malaya*, pp. 119-20.

⁵² A. Samad Ahmad, *Sejambak Kenangan*, p. 212.

⁵³ Alias Mohammad, *Gerakan Sosial dan Politik Kelantan*, pp. 76-77.

⁵⁴ William Shaw, *Tun Abdul Razak*, pp. 65-75.

including himself were unhappy with Japanese rule, and the cession of the four northern Malay states to Siam pushed him after some delay to join Wataniah in early 1945. Wataniah, a wholly Malay organization, had existed since the early period of the occupation under Yeop Mahidin, then serving at the Bentong district office. It became more active when Yeop was transferred to Raub and soon Wataniah was able to set up its own jungle base. Yeop liaised with the MPAJA but kept Wataniah's existence a secret. Wataniah's role was limited mainly to providing information on Japanese positions towards the end of the occupation.

Less fortunate but no less commendable is the case of Mohd. Yusoff Ahmad who was deputy assistant district officer of Kuala Kangsar in late 1941. At the time of the British retreat this MAS officer was responsible for Tampin. He reported for duty as district officer of Alor Gajah on 26 February 1942 - 11 days after the British surrender and after the fourth attempt by the local *penghulu* to get him to do so.⁵⁵ He refused to serve the Japanese at an earlier date because he still had hope that the Japanese would be pushed back from Johor. Both Yusoff and his father, who retired from the Special Branch in 1932 with an Imperial Service Medal, had an unshakeable faith in the British forces and could never see "how they could lose to the barbaric Japanese army". The fall of Singapore, for him, was too much to take: "it was a great shock to me, all my hopes and dreams are shattered and the future looked bleak".⁵⁶

For this MAS officer collaboration was a necessary evil so that no harm befell his family and fellow villagers. As a district officer Yusoff was paid a paltry \$140 a month, and received a meagre ration, a house, a confiscated Morris Minor and a pistol with some ammunition. As for the duties of a district officer, there was nothing much to do apart from issuing ration cards and permits to cut down the jungle to plant tapioca and other crops.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Mohd. Yusoff Ahmad, *Decades of Change*, p. 206.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

Under the Japanese, Malay officers were elevated to higher positions of authority but in these posts they were not given due respect. Mohd. Yusoff's experiences were extreme, for he was arrested by the Kempeitai, interrogated, tried and imprisoned. Mohd. Yusoff is a particularly interesting district officer who had his own group of Anglophile friends, which included the chief police officer, the court interpreter and a few wealthy Chinese such as Edward Tan, the proprietor of Melekek Estate and Lim Tuan Chow, a rubber dealer in Melaka town. As he recalls, people like him "had to lead a dual life: one pretending to be with the Japanese, pretending to carry out their instruction, laugh and smile with them but in our hearts we were hoping for the British to come back and everyone had plans to assist the British if they do appear".⁵⁸

As a district officer, Mohd. Yusoff often found Japanese demands on his district burdensome and unreasonable. He cited the case when the Japanese ordered Alor Gajah district to supply 2,000 labourers for overseas duty within 24 hours. In the end Yusoff only managed to secure 30. In another instance the Japanese demanded 300,000 tons of a type of local fruit to be made into pickles at a time when this particular fruit was not in season. Yusoff considered joining the anti-Japanese resistance but the thought of possible consequences for his family and parents held him back. The best he could do was to encourage the rural population of Alor Gajah not to give up hope of a British return. He also asked them to resist unreasonable Japanese demands on their precious crops. This district officer was critical of his subordinates especially in the police department who took advantage of the situation for personal gain.⁵⁹

In the second half of 1943 Yusoff was arrested by the Kempeitai. During his lengthy interrogation he was grilled about various matters including anti-Japanese resistance in the district, the landing of a British submarine and the presence of British military officers, his membership in the FMS volunteers, his father's service with the Special Branch and the Imperial Service Medal, the reasons for his frequent transfers and

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 218.

⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 231-34.

the books that he had read. In all he had to spend three months in the local police lock-up, another three months in a prison located within the Melaka hospital before he was transferred to a third-class ward in the same hospital prior to being discharged. After his release he enjoyed a short "holiday" in Singapore followed by a trial for his "crimes". He was found guilty as charged but was spared the death penalty and subsequently imprisoned. Life in prison — he was made responsible for the rope making section — was bearable for this district officer whose faith in the British never wavered. On the other hand he was convinced more than ever of the precariousness of the Japanese war situation, a belief shared by fellow prisoners who included the cream of the pre-war Melaka intellectuals. After his release on the occasion of the emperor's birthday in April 1945, Yusoff did not return to his former job. With his wife he lived on the jungle fringe and worked on the land. Away from the prying eyes of Japanese informers, he managed to keep in touch with the anti-Japanese resistance until the Japanese surrender. His tribulations earned Yusoff the respect of both the Malays and Chinese in Negri Sembilan especially in the racially sensitive areas of Jelebu where he was appointed as district officer in September 1945.⁶⁰

From the Ka'ba to the Imperial Palace: Islam and the Japanese

For Malaya, there is no equivalent to *The Crescent and the Rising Sun*, Harry Benda's classic study of Islam in Indonesia during the Japanese Occupation. Japanese scholars such as Yoji Akashi and Yoichi Itagaki have argued that the Japanese followed an official policy of non-interference in Islamic matters, which is partly true.⁶¹ Akashi is also correct in saying that Islam was used for propaganda purposes in the hope of soliciting support from the Malay-Muslims.

On the basis of Japanese documents, Akashi has discussed the dilemma of the MMA in formulating policies regarding Islam and the sultans who were (and still are) the heads of religion in their respective states. In the end they produced "a policy without direction with the

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Yoji Akashi, "Japanese Military Administration in Malaya", pp. 81-110.

consequence that the MMA, though it took more positive steps in the last phase of the war, was never able to formulate an imaginative plan beyond the framework of using sultans and religion for winning the minds of the Malays".⁶² Akashi agrees with some of the wartime officials that the MMA's record "can not be complimented as being a success". Viewed from the perspective of the records of the Johor Religious (Affairs) Department, Akashi's conclusion is rather flattering to the Japanese for in reality Islam was much abused, and the *ummah* (society of believers) faced a serious crisis, its most serious in the modern period.

In early 1942 Japan was hesitant in its policies toward Islam and the sultans. A more coherent policy only began to emerge in early 1943.⁶³ Owing to this initial uncertainty, troops committed a number of abuses during the early days of the occupation. It was not uncommon for soldiers to violate the sanctity of mosques, as in the case of a very old mosque (built in 1734) at Batu Uban in Penang.⁶⁴ Early in 1942 this mosque was used by the navy to store food and ammunition, and the Japanese held parties in the mosque precincts which served alcoholic drinks and non-*halal* food (that is, dishes not prepared in accordance with Islamic ways or making use of food that is prohibited such as pork). It was impossible to use the mosque for religious purposes such as prayers because the ablution water, normally kept in a large concrete tank, was used for bathing. The violation of the mosque only stopped when the *imam* (head of the mosque congregation) bravely complained to the Japanese authorities.

In Johor the *kathi* (head of Islamic affairs at the district level) of Kluang district reported a similar incident when Japanese soldiers defiled the ablution water (perhaps by bathing inside the tank) of a mosque in the district and prevented Muslims from conducting their

⁶² Akashi, "Japanese Military Administration in Malaya", pp. 109-110.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

⁶⁴ Zulkifli Khair and Badrol Hisham Ibrahim, "Sejarah Awal Masyarakat Islam di Pulau Pinang dan Masjid Jamik Batu Uban", in *Sejarah Islam Di Pulau Pinang: Islam dan Masyarakat*, vol. 1 (Pulau Pinang: Jabatan Agama Islam Pulau Pinang, 1994), pp. 14-15.

weekly Friday prayers.⁶⁵ Japanese soldiers also used mosques as a resting place, which is permissible so long as proper decorum is observed, but in these cases it apparently was not. On certain occasions such as the Emperor's birthday, mosques were required to play suitable music and to offer special prayers to the Showa Tenno and Japanese soldiers who had been killed at the war front.⁶⁶ Religious officers concerned with these new developments were powerless to check such abuses.

Most if not all officials found it difficult to work under the new constraints they now faced. Johor, like other states, had its own comprehensive Islamic laws and imposed penalties for breaking those laws (e.g., by committing adultery or not performing Friday prayers).⁶⁷ After 1942 these laws were unenforceable. Moreover, the Chief Kathi (of Johor) was not given official transport in carrying out his official duties, duties which probably did not make much sense to the average Japanese soldier. Like other Malays or Malayans, he too had to obtain passes from the military even when on official duty.⁶⁸ No public lectures, whether inside a mosque or elsewhere, could be given by any religious officials in the state without prior permission from the local police station. Department officials were equally helpless to prevent Malays from distilling toddy from coconut as such activities were extremely profitable. Non-Muslim eating shops in the state misused the *halal* sign⁶⁹ to attract Muslim customers, as they knew the Johor Religious Department was unable to stop such practices.

The use of Tokyo time for the whole of Malaya was a new experience for all Malayans. For Muslims Tokyo time was confusing and forced them to depend on the position of the sun to determine the time for prayers.⁷⁰ In accordance with Tokyo time, lunch break was

⁶⁵ Samsudin Abdul Kadir, "Tinjauan Keadaan Ekonomi dan Sosial di Johor, 1942-45" ("HSM 411 Mini-Thesis", 1995), p. 45.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁶⁷ "Undang-Undang tahun 2602", *Pejabat Agama Johor* 63/2602. This was actually a pre-war enactment that was annually updated by the Religious Department.

⁶⁸ Samsudin Abdul Kadir, "Tinjauan Keadaan Ekonomi", p. 46.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

fixed between 1 and 2 pm but this was too early for the *zuhur* (noon) prayer or for Friday prayers.

On the issue of determining the beginning and end of the fasting month, religious officials could never come to terms with the MMA's disregard for established practices. By local convention both dates were fixed by a combination of *rukayah* (calculation) and the sighting of the new moon, undertaken simultaneously in various parts of the peninsula. In 1942 the Johor *chokan* (governor) disregarded this convention and two weeks in advance of the actual event fixed 12 and 13 October as the first and second day of *Aidhil Fitri*.⁷¹ For Selangor however the date for the start of fasting was determined by local convention and *Aidhil Fitri* was fixed on 11 October.⁷² Religious leaders were concerned about the lack of uniformity for the states regarding both dates, and in December 1944 they petitioned the MMA to remedy the situation.⁷³

Toward the end of 1942 there was a marked improvement in Japanese attitudes towards Islam. These changes, which included the holding of an Islamic conference in Singapore involving religious leaders from Malaya, Singapore and Sumatra in April 1943 were, according to Akashi, meant to solicit the support of the Malay-Muslim population.⁷⁴ The Japanese became more understanding on Islamic matters such as fasting during the month of Ramadhan and its impact on Muslim government servants. Tunku Ali, the wartime sultan of Trengganu, recorded his gratitude that Muslim civil servants in the state were allowed home after 2 pm.⁷⁵ However, Muslims who served in the army and police during this period managed to avoid fasting, perhaps with Japanese protection. In December 1944 the case of these Muslims were brought to the attention of the MMA and religious leaders insisted that no exception be given to any Muslims, including soldiers and policemen.⁷⁶ In 1945 a Japanese official, the Selangor deputy *chokan*,

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 48.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Kathi Besar 257/04.

⁷⁴ Akashi, "Japanese Military Administration in Malaya", pp. 100-01.

⁷⁵ Wan Ramli Wan Mohamad, *Pengakuan Tenku Ali: Mengapa Saya diturunkan Dari Takhta Terengganu?* (Kuala Lumpur: Fajar Bakti, 1993), p. 39.

⁷⁶ Kathi Besar 257/04.

tried to bend the rule on fasting and sought a *fatwa* (ruling) that Muslim soldiers serving with the Japanese were not required to fast. The Selangor Malays rejected this request because of its serious religious implications.⁷⁷

In 1943 the MMA declared certain days to be Muslim holidays. These included the first day of Muharram (Muslim New Year), 10th Day of Muharram (a day of mourning actually for Shiites, and for the Indian-Muslims and Malays of Penang a time for their *boria* festivities), the Prophet's birthday, *Israk Mikraj* (the day when the Prophet ascended to heaven), and *Aidhil Fitri* and *Aidhil Adha* (Akashi calls these days respectively *raya Besar* and *raya Kecil* which is not entirely accurate because in Kelantan *Aidhil Adha*, rightly, was given more prominence). Malays including the Sultan of Trengganu were thankful for this change, even if these were no longer Malayan holidays (only Japanese national holidays were regarded as such) or if the so-called Muslim holidays included the irrelevant *Mandi Safar* (bathing to purify the soul) which is more Hinduistic.

One significant change was a requirement that senior MMA officials attend religious celebrations including prayers on *Aidhil Fitri* and *Aidhil Adha*. In reality attendance of non-Muslims on such occasions at the mosque had a negative impact, and turned such occasions into farcical political shows. In the first place the arrival of these non-Muslim dignitaries was ceremonious and quite often meant a temporary stoppage of the recitation of Quranic verses. The dignitaries required special seating within the mosque precincts,⁷⁸ and as part of the whole charade, both the guests and the congregation, the latter still on their prayer mats, had to bow to the Imperial Palace. For the Muslims this required making a 180-degree turn from the direction of the Ka'ba. Muslims considered this a rather strange situation, but they had to comply because of the "overwhelming presence of the Japanese".⁷⁹ When the *chokan* was present it was mandatory for the congregation to listen to his speech, which was of course translated. The *chokan*

⁷⁷ A. Samad Ahmad, *Sejambak Kenangan*, p. 208.

⁷⁸ Ahmad Meah Baba Meah, *Suka Duka di Georgetown*, pp. 70, 92, 117.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

would develop a suitable theme such as the new dawn in Malaya and the need for Muslims to make sacrifices in rebuilding their country within the Co-Prosperity Sphere.⁸⁰ Perhaps this sounded strange and difficult for the congregation to swallow and in that case the *imam* would have to play his part. In a Penang mosque during the *Aidhil Fitri* celebration of 1944, the *imam* used the *khutbah* (sermon) to ask Muslims to co-operate with the authorities in increasing agricultural and livestock production to meet the existing shortages.⁸¹ On this particular occasion the *chokan* (Lt. General Shinohara) was present but we do not know what were his reactions, although he addressed the congregation a short while later.

In Johor religious celebrations, including *Aidhil Fitri*, were similarly used by the Japanese for propaganda purposes.⁸² On such occasions Muslims were required to pray for the soul of Japanese soldiers who died fighting allegedly for the welfare of the Asian people. Programmes for the celebration of the Prophet's birthday had to be approved by the *chokan*'s office, which made "suitable amendments". For instance during the 1944 celebrations the *tonarigumi* (neighbourhood association) was mentioned, and Muslims were reminded of its supposed similarities with Islamic institutions.⁸³

The MMA's "non-interference" in Islamic affairs drew a favourable response from Malay rulers. In his study Akashi notes the positive reaction of the Sultan of Perak, and the Sultan of Trengganu, Tunku Ali (who was deposed by court elites and the British soon after the occupation ended) also expressed great satisfaction regarding Japanese concern towards Islam.⁸⁴ He cited the proliferation of Arabic and religious schools, incidents of Japanese soldiers punishing Muslims who did not attend Friday prayers, the smooth collection of the *zakat* (tithe money) and the practice of giving holidays to Muslims to celebrate

⁸⁰ Ahmad Meah Baba Meah gives various examples from the three and a half years of Japanese rule.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

⁸² Samsudin Abdul Kadir, "Tinjauan Keadaan Ekonomi", p. 48.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁸⁴ Wan Ramli Wan Mohamad, *Pengakuan Tunku Ali*, pp. 42-43.

religious (and non-religious) festivities. A more recent study on Perlis, based mainly on oral sources, similarly found Malay informants expressing satisfaction with Japanese policy regarding Islam.⁸⁵ In the latter two cases the comments seem to refer to the period after 1943.

As discussed by Akashi, in December 1944 the MMA held an important conference attended by Malay religious leaders and important Malay political figures. This conference was indeed a milestone of Japanese policy towards Islam though it came somewhat late. It was the first meeting of its kind to be held in Malaya during the colonial period. Prior to this meeting the various states re-organized their respective religious councils, in Johor, for example, in September 1944.

The momentous conference was held on 13 through 15 December 1944 at Kuala Kangsar. Most of the delegates and other Malays who attended this conference were apparently from the more established and conservative school ("Kaum Tua" or the Elder Group) despite the presence of former chief minister of that state after 1957.⁸⁶ The MMA was represented by the *Bunkyo Kacho* (Head of the Cultural and Religious Affairs Section of the General Affairs Department), MMA officials from Perak, one Professor Watanabe, and lesser officials including perhaps Burhanuddin Al-Helmy, the advisor to the MMA on Islamic affairs who after the occupation became head of the Parti Kebangsaan Melayu Malaya (PKMM) or Malay Nationalist Party. A number of significant issues, generally reflecting the conservative orientation of the delegates, were brought to the attention of the MMA.⁸⁷ These included the need for uniformity of important dates in the Muslim calendar for the whole of Malaya such as the beginning of fasting and the *Aidhil Fitri*, the need to establish a Supreme Islamic Council for Malaya, the setting up of an Islamic high school, the need to punish Muslims of Singapore, Penang and Melaka who flouted Islamic laws as was done in other states. The meeting requested the

⁸⁵ Shaballah Zainal Abidin, "Pendudukan Jepun di Negeri Perlis (1941-45): Satu Tinjauan dari Aspek Pentadbiran dan Pendidikan" ("HSM 411 Mini-Thesis", 1995) pp. 33-34.

⁸⁶ Wan Ramli Wan Mohamad, *Pengakuan Tenku Ali*, pp. 31-33, 43.

⁸⁷ Butir-Butir Mesyuarat Ugama Islam, Kathi Besar 257/04. The following discussion on the 1944 conference is based on this report.

MMA to take firm action against Muslims involved in gambling, and asked that Muslim soldiers and policemen be allowed to fast during Ramadhan, and that *ustaz* (religious teachers) be given opportunities to offer lectures on Islam to these soldiers and policemen. The delegates also unanimously supported Selangor's call to give Muslim civil servants time off each day between 2 and 3 pm for *zuhur* prayers, and from 1:30 to 3:30 on Fridays to go to mosque. It is unclear how far the MMA was willing to accommodate these very reasonable and non-radical requests. One obvious impact was a sudden reduction in Japanese interference, and an increase in the powers given to the religious departments of each state to deal with Muslims who neglected their religious duties.

All delegates took a pledge of loyalty to the emperor and Japanese empire in the afternoon session, when there were two important items on the agenda. The first concerned how delegates and other Muslims could play their part in the East Asian war. The identified areas included collecting donations for the war effort, advising fellow Muslims and Malayans to cooperate with the Japanese military, assisting the Japanese in matters of security in the various states as well as increasing vigilance and praying for a Japanese victory to bring the war quickly to an end. The second and more significant item was related to the oath of allegiance which all delegates took to the Showa Tenno, pledging to concentrate all efforts towards a Japanese victory, to give full trust to the MMA and to continue giving sacrifices for the war effort and lastly to build a new Malaya based on Islamic principles. The MMA's reaction to the last item is not stated, nor is it clear who was responsible for it. Possibly Burhanuddin had a hand in its formulation.

On the following day the delegates paid a courtesy call on the commander-in-chief of Japanese forces (*gunshireikan*) in Taiping and during the short meeting a representative expressed gratitude to the MMA for arranging the just concluded conference. This was followed by a visit to the Taiping air field and a volunteer force base (presumably a *giyu-gun* battalion). The last item for the day was a *zuhur* prayer at the famous Ubudiah mosque in Kuala Kangsar in which delegates joined the congregation to pray for a quick end of the war.

The concern as expressed by religious elites in the December 1944 conference underscored the rapid changes that had occurred within the

ummah brought about mainly by wartime socio-economic conditions. A recent study on Johor during this period indicates that socio-economic hardships faced by the *ummah* had a significant impact on their perceptions of Islam and Islamic duties.⁸⁸ In 1944 the Batu Pahat *kathi* noted that mosques had fallen into disuse among the coastal Malay community as they were more preoccupied with going to sea to earn a livelihood.⁸⁹ In Johor the changing perception is also evidenced by the neglect of Friday prayers, reports that Muslims were flouting the fasting month by consuming food and drink publicly during the daytime, and the high incidence of divorce among Muslims. The Johor religious officials were aware of the crisis faced by the *ummah* and tried various measures to arrest some of these tendencies, but with limited success.

As part of the anti-inflationary campaign undertaken in 1943 the MMA introduced state lotteries and allowed the setting up of gambling centres.⁹⁰ Both are un-Islamic practices and Muslims are not allowed to participate in either activity, but the Johor Religious Department undertook the responsibility of selling lottery tickets to Malay-Muslims, a step which defies logic.⁹¹ Perhaps the department was convinced that it could control these vices if they were properly regulated, as gambling was widespread among Malay-Muslims including officials of the department, such as the deputy *kathi* of Muar who was later dismissed. Perhaps, too, it succumbed to Japanese pressure, as had happened when the MMA solicited donations from Muslims through the Religious Department for the erection of a war memorial for Japanese soldiers.

Equally serious for the *ummah* was the lack of interest shown by Muslims in Friday prayers, and the practice of Muslim women cohabiting with non-Muslim males (including Japanese soldiers), which was partly a product of the high divorce rate among Malay-Muslims.

⁸⁸ Samsudin Abdul Kadir, "Tinjauan Keadaan Ekonomi", chs. 2, 4.

⁸⁹ Repot Pulau Sialu Kawasan Penghulu Awang Domek Pantai Laut Kuala Batu Pahat, *Kathi Batu Pahat* received by the Pejabat Agama Johor on 13 January 1944. Pejabat Agama Johor 63/04.

⁹⁰ Chin Kee Onn, *Malaya Upside Down* (Kuala Lumpur: Federal Publications, 1976), pp. 88-89. Gambling was always present but the Japanese took the initiative in November 1943 to set up gambling farms and lotteries.

⁹¹ Samsudin Abdul Kadir, "Tinjauan Keadaan Ekonomi", p. 38.

Complete data on divorce for the various races during this period or even the complete data for all cases involving Muslims in Malaya are not available, but the records of the Johor Religious Department provide some indication of the seriousness of the problem. In the following I have tabulated the divorce percentages in relation to the actual marriage as performed by the various district *kathis* for the months of June, August and September 1942.⁹²

<i>Districts</i>	<i>June</i>	<i>August</i>	<i>September</i>
Johor Baru	11	16	40
Batu Pahat	21	36	34
Segamat	27	40	37
Pontian	14	69	09
Kota Tinggi	80		
Mersing	64		
Muar	24	20	
Kluang	83	27	
State Average	21%	37.5%	26%

The high rate of divorce meant in the first place an increase in the revenue of the various *kathi's* offices. For instance for 1942 the Batu Pahat *kathi* Office reported an income of \$6,667.05 while Kota Tinggi returned a figure of \$1,010.65.⁹³ High divorce figures were also found among Malay-Muslims living in garrison towns such as Batu Pahat, Johor Bharu and Kluang. A recent study indicates that some divorced Malay women became mistresses of Japanese soldiers because their former husbands were unable to provide *nafkah* (a maintenance stipend).⁹⁴ Economic hardship was also responsible for the increasing

⁹² The figures have been modified from Samsudin Abdul Kadir, "Tinjauan Keadaan Ekonomi", pp. 43-44. Meanwhile the rate of reconciliation was small, in most cases less than 4 per cent of all divorces in each district under review.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, attributing his information to 86-year-old Tuan Haji Abdul Rahman, an ordinary villager during that period.

number of Malay-Muslims involved in prostitution. A. Samad Ismail in his autobiographical novel, *Patah Sayap Terbang Jua* describes three Malay divorcees employed by the New World Cabaret in Singapore.⁹⁵ All three had the dubious distinction of being mistresses — one to a Japanese soldier, one to a Chinese *towkay* (businessman) from Ipoh and the third to a low ranking Malay civil servant who already had a family.

The high number of Malay-Muslims absent from Friday prayers was a new phenomenon. To combat this trend, some mosque officials in Johor began registering those who were present or otherwise, as in the case of Kg. Batu Tujuh at Teberau in the Johor Bahru area.⁹⁶ This small village had just 48 mosque-going males. For June 1942 the rate of absenteeism was above 50 per cent, while in September of the same year, the weekly figures for absentees varied from 39 per cent to 56 per cent. In Batu Pahat during January 1943, 20,161 Muslims were reported to have attended Friday prayers in the district's 141 mosques as against 8,365 absentees.⁹⁷ I have not yet seen figures for other districts in Johor but it seems that similar tendencies could be expected.

In the case of Johor various parties such as religious officials and the sultan had expressed concern on the laxity of the *ummah* in upholding the tenets of Islam.⁹⁸ Besides exhorting all Muslims in the state to be more earnest in these matters, it was also suggested that religious classes be conducted among parents, government officials including the police and soldiers, and women in the rural areas. Attempts were also made to increase the number of students in Arabic schools who would be trained as *ustaz*. It was also suggested that *penghulu* and the police be given power to arrest Muslims who did not attend Friday prayers. However the police refused to undertake this task as such matters were the prerogative of the Religious Department.

With the reorganization of the Johor Islamic Council and as a result of the 1944 conference there were some notable changes. For

⁹⁵ A. Samad Ismail, *Patah Sayap Terbang Jua* (Kuala Lumpur: Creative Enterprise, 1993).

⁹⁶ Samsudin Abdul Kadir, "Tinjauan Keadaan Ekonomi", pp. 40-41.

⁹⁷ Kenyataan dari Pejabat Kathi Batu Pahat bagi Bulan Januari 2603, Pejabat Agama Johor 63/03.

⁹⁸ Samsudin Abdul Kadir, "Tinjauan Keadaan Ekonomi", pp. 41-42.

the first time religious officials were provided with the power to arrest and fine Muslims who neglected Friday prayers. These powers were soon put to use, and in December 1944, 10 Muslims from Segamat and another 49 from Pontian were fined by their respective *kathi*.⁹⁹ Police also began taking action against Muslims who frequented non-Muslim eateries to consume non-halal food. On another note, there was also a marked decrease in Japanese interference in religious matters: in 1945 the Prophet's birthday celebration was strictly a religious affair and no longer used for propaganda purposes.

In the end the success of the Johor Religious Department was restricted to purely legal affairs. The department failed to improve Malay-Muslims attitudes towards Islam. The incidence of divorce among Malay-Muslims remained high. For the district of Muar in the first three months of 1945, 429 marriages were registered but the number of divorce during the same period was equally high involving 218 cases.¹⁰⁰ District religious officials were already worried about the possible impact on Muslim family life. Despite the strict enforcement those who were absent for Friday prayers continued to increase. The Muar *kathi*'s office gave the following figures for absentees: January 1945, 31 per cent (12,142), March, 33 per cent (16,316) and April, 46 per cent (24,176).

Concluding Remarks

The question of collaboration and resistance within the Malay-Muslim society did not substantially affect the career of post-war political figures. Malays were indifferent to what their leaders did during 1942-45, and even within UMNO collaborators were to play a leading role both at the national and local level. The demise of the Malay left was unrelated to the "crime of collaboration". It was partly the result of the unpopularity of the Indonesia Raya concept to which most of its leaders, in particular Ibrahim Yaacob, subscribed, and partly the consequence of an effort by the British to eradicate leftwing influences in the

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

immediate post-war period, in which they were abetted by members of the pre-war loyal Malay group.¹⁰¹ The arrests of some former KMM members during the BMA period, and widespread arrests starting from July 1947 of all important members of the Malay left, were part of this policy.

Concerning Islam, this article has shown that the Japanese Occupation directly and indirectly produced major changes in Malay-Muslim perceptions towards their faith. As for Islam itself it would be more correct to say that Islam was abused by the Japanese in the initial period of the occupation and they did very little to clean up the mess after that, despite efforts to gain Malay-Muslim support against the Allies by offering support to Islam through the state Religious Departments.

¹⁰¹ Firdaus Abdullah, *Radical Malay Politics*, ch. 4.

The Japanese Occupation of Malaya and the Chinese Community

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The objective of this article is to review how the Japanese occupation affected and transformed the Chinese community in Malaya, and how the Malayan Chinese responded to it. The analysis is divided into three parts dealing with (1) the left-wing anti-Japanese movement represented by the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army, (2) the right-wing pro-Japanese bodies represented by the Oversea Chinese Associations and (3) settlement schemes that were promoted by the Japanese Military Administration (henceforth JMA) mainly under the name of the "grow-more-food" campaign. The first division represents the labouring class Chinese, the second the business community, and the third the common people. The general features of those who led each category will also be analyzed. It is hoped here that by focusing on these three categories, the Malayan Chinese community in general can be comprehensively analyzed.

1. *The Left-Wing*

The struggle of the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA) led by the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) has been well analyzed by many scholars.¹ Here I would merely like to introduce a number of interesting facts that have been disclosed recently by former members of the organization now living in China.

¹ See, for example, G.Z. Hanrahan, *The Communist Struggle in Malaya* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1971) and Cheah Boon Kheng, *Red Star Over Malaya* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1983).

(a) *Formation and Structure of the MPAJA*

The general structure of the MPAJA is shown in Appendix A. This is mainly constructed from information contained in three books prepared by former MPAJA members. One, by Hai Shang Ou, was published in 1945. The second, a collective effort by the Xinma Qiaoyou Hui [Friendship Association of Overseas Chinese Returned from Singapore and Malaya] appeared in 1992, and the the third is a collection of historical materials also published in 1992 by the same group.²

First, I would like to point out a few important new facts obtained from these volumes. It is commonly known that the MPAJA consisted of eight regiments (independent forces). The 8th Regiment, the last to be formed, operated in Kedah and according to Hai Shang Ou was established in August 1945.³ Why it should have been set up at the time of the Japanese surrender has long been a puzzle. According to the 1992 MPAJA volume, the pro-communist groups of Kedah were out of contact with the centre of the MCP after early 1942. The anti-Japanese army in Kedah was originally created early in 1943 as the Kedah Anti-Japanese Guerrilla Force, a name that was later changed (see Appendix A). On 21 August 1945, immediately after the Japanese surrender, it adopted the name Kedah People's Liberation Army (KPLA) in anticipation of launching an anti-British war. When the British authorities learned of this development in early September 1945, they warned the centre of the party to dissolve the KPLA. The secretary general of the MCP, Lai Tek, who was revealed in 1947 to have been a Japanese as well as a British agent, responded promptly. He ordered

² See Hai Shang Ou, *Malaiya Renmin Kangri Jun* [Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army], (Singapore: Huaqiao Chuban She, 1945); Xinma Qiaoyou Hui (ed.), *Malaiya Renmin Kangri Jun* [Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army] (Hong Kong: Witness Publish Co., 1992). In the discussion that follows, Hai Shang Ou's book will be cited as [MPAJA 1945], and the volume by the Xinma Qiaoyou Hui will be cited as [MPAJA 1992]. The Xinma Qiaoyou Hui's collection of documents, *Malaiya Renmin Kangri Douzheng Shiliao Xianji* [Selected Historical Materials of Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Struggle] (Hong Kong: Witness Publish Co., 1992), will be cited as Xinma Qiaoyou Hui (ed.), [Selected Historical Materials].

³ Hai Shang Ou, [MPAJA 1945], p. 32.

the new name revoked, dismissed the KPLA leaders and restructured the organization, making it the 8th Regiment of the MPAJA. The leaders of the KPLA opposed the party's decision to demobilize the MPAJA and did not demobilize themselves.⁴

The 1992 MPAJA volume also discloses for the first time that the 2nd Regiment operating in Negeri Sembilan was formally dissolved in May 1942 and was only reinstated at the end of 1944. It attributes this mistake to Lai Tek, who criticized the adventurism of the regiment.⁵ These facts suggest that Lai Tek tried to temper the party strategy, and that the manoeuvre of the JMA to make use of him succeeded to a certain extent in disuniting the left-wing organizations.

A full list of the top leaders of each regiment, the highest being the party representative and the second being the commander, can be drawn up from the 1992 publications of the Xinma Qiaoyou Hui (see Appendix A). These sources reveal that the well-known book written by Hai Shang Ou just after the end of the war only listed leaders of the MPAJA's open corps, which had no party representatives.⁶ The decision to divide the MPAJA into secret (or old) and open (or new) corps was taken at an Emergency Conference of Senior Cadets of the Party and the MPAJA held in Kuala Lumpur in October 1944. The open corps were to have 4,500 members and the secret corps 5,400.⁷ The open corps were eventually formed around May 1945, and their demobilization on 1 December 1945 brought the Malayan people's anti-Japanese war formally to an end.⁸ The MCP dissolved the secret corps, which were to become the preparatory body of the National Liberation League,⁹ on 25 August 1945,¹⁰ and went underground. According to one of the

⁴ Xinma Qiaoyou Hui (ed.), [MPAJA 1992], pp. 126, 350-76.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 197-204.

⁶ Hai Shang Ou, [MPAJA 1945], pp. 34-53.

⁷ Xinma Qiaoyou Hui (ed.), [MPAJA 1992], pp. 94, 95, 332; Xinma Qiaoyou Hui (ed.), [Selected Historical Materials], pp. 10, 11, 261-67.

⁸ Xinma Qiaoyou Hui (ed.), [MPAJA 1992], pp. 178, 204, 231, 318.

⁹ Xinma Qiaoyou Hui, (ed.), [Selected Historical Materials], p. 11.

¹⁰ Xinma Qiaoyou Hui (ed.), [MPAJA 1992], p. 335.

former top leaders of the MPAJA, Wu Liang Ming, the real leaders of the party belonged to the secret corps.¹¹

(b) *Leaders of the MCP and the MPAJA*

In 1944 a Japanese newspaper correspondent named Tsutsui Chihiro published a book which listed leaders of the MCP, drawing on information presumably obtained from the Japanese *kempeitai* (military police). This account purported to list all of the central committee members of the MCP, consisting of seven standing committee members and nine executive committee members. However, according to the ex-MPAJA sources, Tsutsui Chihiro's list includes five people who were state MCP leaders but not part of the Central Committee. (See Table 1)

All but one of the Central Committee Members elected at the 7th Plenary Conference of the party in July 1941 were betrayed by Lai Tek and killed by the Japanese army. The sole survivor was Ya Zhong (Wu Tian), Secretary of the East Pahang Division Committee. A Ning was captured owing to information supplied by Lai Tek, and was executed because he witnessed a secret meeting between Lai Tek and a Japanese *kempei* while interned. However, A Ning himself was said to have given information about his comrades to the *kempeitai*,¹² and is considered a traitor by the MPAJA. After A Ning's death, Lai Tek, who already had a Vietnamese wife in Singapore, married his widow, Jiang Wen Ying.¹³

Among the Central Committee Members on the Xinma Qiaoyou Hui list, Xiao Zhong, Zhu Lao and Xiao Ping attended the Batu Caves conference on 1 September 1942. The first two were killed on the spot,

¹¹ Interview with Wu Liang Ming on 4 Sep. 1994. Though Xinma Qiaoyou Hui describes him as the political commissar of the 6th Regiment ([MPAJA 1992], p. 316), he himself said he had been the party representative of the 1st Regiment at the end of 1942, and later transferred to the 6th Regiment.

¹² See, for example, Huang Ya Lu, "Magong Zhongyang Zongmishu Laite Ruhe Sihai Guogong Liangdang Ji Liangjun Ganbu" [How Secretary General of the MCP, Lai Tek, Killed Cadres of both the Kuomintang and the MCP as well as the Allied Forces], *The International Times* (Singapore), Aug. 1968.

¹³ Interview with Chang Ming Ching on 3 and 5 Sep. 1993.

Table 1

MCP Leadership	
Central Committee Members according to Tsutsui Chihiro Nampo Gunsei Ron	Central Committee Members according to Xinma Qiaoyou Hui Malaiya Renmin Kangri Jun
Standing Committee 1. Huang Shao Dong (Lai Tek) 2. Huang Cheng 3. A Nian 4. Xiao Zhong 5. Lim Kang Sek (Lin Jiang Shi) 6. Ke Min 7. Xue Feng	Lai Tek Huang Cheng (Huang Shi) A Ning (Zheng Sheng Lie) Xiao Zhong (Li Zhen Zong) Lim Kang Sek (Huang Bo Sui) Cai Ke Ming Bai Yi (Li Xue Feng @ Li Liang)
Executive Committee 8. Lao Zhang 9. Ya Ye 10. Xiao Hei 11. Tu Yue 12. Xiao Luo 13. Ke Ping 14. Bing Hong 15. Ya Weng 16. A Qiu	Zhang Jin Zhang Xiao Lu (Chen Pei Qing) Liu Wen (Zhong Bu Qing) A Qiu (Qiu Liang Jie) Xiao Ping (Lin Wang Sheng)

Sources: Tsutsui Chihiro, *Nampo Gunsei Ron* [Treatise on the Southern Military Administration] (Tokyo: Nihon Hoso Shuppan Kyokai, 1944), pp. 154, 155; Xinma Qiaoyou Hui (ed.), [Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army], pp. 138, 156, 339, 379; Xinma Qiaoyou Hui (ed.), [Selected Historical Documents], pp. 54-58, 286, 296, 335.

while Xiao Ping was captured a few days later. Liu Wen was arrested in the middle of 1942, and five other members had been arrested in April 1942, so the central committee had virtually been extinguished by September 1942.¹⁴ Cai Ke Ming was captured in April 1943, after which the sole remaining member apart from Lai Tek was usually working in remote areas such as Kelantan, and the committee in practice was reduced to Lai Tek himself.

Four others mistakenly described as members of the Executive Committee by Tsutsui Chihiro were also captured and executed. They were Xiao Hei (no. 10),¹⁵ Ya Ye (no. 9), Tu Yue (no. 11) and Bing Hong (no. 14). The first was a Singapore division cadre whose full name was Wang Xiao Hei, the second was a Singapore division committee member (and incidentally a composer of repute), the third the Perak division secretary, and the last the Kedah division secretary.¹⁶

After being arrested by the Japanese, Gao Ke Ping (no. 13), a member of the Selangor division committee but not of the party's Central Committee, was forced to organize a pro-Japanese pseudo-centre of the MCP mainly to persuade the MPAJA members and supporters to surrender. He had an accomplice, namely Huang Guo Ping (Wong Kok Ping), the captured ex-commander of the 2nd Regiment. Both of them are considered big traitors.¹⁷ Interestingly enough, according to a story on the front page of *The Malai Sinpo* of 10 March 1943, the "ex-Chairman, Selangor Branch of the former Malaya [sic] Communist Party, Wong Pei Ping" was appealing to all Party members and guerrillas to surrender.¹⁸ No such name appears in the sources mentioned above. Wong Pei Ping may have been a composite of these

¹⁴ Xinma Qiaoyou Hui (ed.), [MPAJA 1992], pp. 54-59; Huang Ya Lu, [How Secretary General of the MCP, Lai Tek, Killed Cadres].

¹⁵ Huang Ya Lu, [How Secretary General of the MCP, Lai Tek, Killed Cadres].

¹⁶ Xinma Qiaoyou Hui (ed.), [MPAJA 1992], p. 156; Xinma Qiaoyou Hui (ed.), [Selected Historical Materials], pp. 58, 314, 331, 360.

¹⁷ Xinma Qiaoyou Hui (ed.), [MPAJA 1992], pp. 45, 50, 287; Xinma Qiaoyou Hui (ed.), [Selected Historical Materials], p. 441.

¹⁸ As far as the newspaper reports during the occupation are concerned, among the collaborators with Japan, Wong had held the highest position in the Party.

three persons.¹⁹ Lai Tek did not betray Ya Zhong, and he apparently mixed several non-committee members in the list of the committee members. The reasons are unclear. Nonetheless it is quite apparent that all the leaders whose identities he did reveal to the *kempeitai* were captured and killed. It is noteworthy that, except for Zhu Lao, none of the MCP Central Committee Members became top leaders of the MPAJA, possibly because they were arrested or killed too early.

Turning to the fate of the top leaders of the MPAJA, 12 of the 49 persons who held top posts as Party Representative, Commander or Deputy Commander were killed either on the battle field or in prison, including two who were arrested on other charges and then betrayed to the Japanese army. The rest seem to have survived the war, and at least nine later went back to China (in most cases because the British deported them).

In conclusion, the MPAJA developed steadily during the war despite the loss of the early group of senior leaders. Top leaders in the later stage completed their struggle. Members and supporters increased, and operational areas widened. As a result, the MCP emerged from the war as the most influential political organization in Malaya.

(c) *Personal Background of the Leaders*

Information is available concerning two of the thirteen Central Committee Members on the Xinma Qiaoyou Hui list above. Xiao Zhong was born in 1918 in Fujian, China, and came to Singapore in 1926 or 1927. He joined the MCP in 1936, and was elected to the Central Committee in April 1939. Lim Kang Sek was born in Guangdong in 1916, came to Perak in the early 1920s, joined the MCP in 1937, was elected to the Central Committee in April 1939, and became the Director of the People's Armament Division which was formed at the end of December 1941 as a part of the General Association of Singapore Anti-

¹⁹ On 1 September 1951 *The Straits Times* disclosed the names of four top communists who had given friends away to the Japanese. They were Wong Kwok Leong, Lao Kao, Ah Lee and Ah San. Wong Kwok Leong and Lao Kao should be Wong Kok Ping and Gao Ke Ping respectively.

Enemy Mobilization. As director of the People's Armament Division, he led the Singapore Chinese Volunteer Force, the so-called Dalforce.²⁰

Biographical data on the MPAJA leaders is found in Appendix A. Of the four persons whose birth places are known, one was born in Malaya and the other three, including the chief of the MPAJA central military committee, Lau Yew, were born in China. Ya Ye (9 on the above list) was born in Singapore in 1921 soon after her mother arrived there. Of the heroes enumerated in the historical materials collected and published by the Xinma Qiaoyou Hui, seven are shown as having been born in China and two, including Ya Ye, in Malaya.²¹ In addition, an MCP Singapore City committee member, Huang Ya Lu, who was interned by the *kempeitai* in April 1942 because of Lai Tek's betrayal, was born in Fujian in 1913 and came to Malaya in 1936.²² A cadre of the Fifth Regiment, Chang Ming Ching, who was to become the MCP Singapore representative after the end of the war, was born in China in 1920 and came to Malaya in 1936.²³ A cadre of the First Regiment, Phang Sau Shoong (Peng Shao Xiong), who became the MCP Selangor representative in 1945, was born in Kuala Kubu Baru, Selangor.²⁴ Phang travelled to China in 1939 as a member of the Dong Jiang Column which had been organized by the Selangor Fui Chiu Association to join the anti-Japanese war in their home province, Guangdong.²⁵

After the war, the commander of the Second Regiment, Deng Fu Long, became the deputy chairman of the Negeri Sembilan Federation for Peace and Democracy in China, a China-oriented organization.²⁶ A cadre of the Eighth Regiment, Wang Hai Zhi, who was at the time chairman of the Penang Federation of Trade Unions, became the virtual

²⁰ Xinma Qiaoyou Hui (ed.), [Selected Historical Materials], pp. 282-312.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 282-395.

²² Zhu Li Fu (ed.), *Cong Gulangyu Dao Xinjiapo* [From Gulang Island to Singapore] (Xiamen: Xiamen University Press, 1995), pp. 35, 64.

²³ *Combatant's Friend*, 17 Oct. 1947.

²⁴ Phang Sau Shoong died on 21 May 1946.

²⁵ *Min Sheng Pao*, 23, 24, 25 May 1946. Xinma Qiaoyou Hui (ed.), [Selected Historical Materials], pp. 40, 359.

²⁶ *Min Sheng Pao*, 12 Jul. 1947.

top leader of the China Democratic League, a Chinese political party.²⁷ He was later deported to China.

It can be safely concluded that a large majority of the MCP and MPAJA leaders were born in China, and maintained close moral or mental relations with that country. The same is probably true of the rank and file members of the two organizations. According to the MPAJA Ex-Comrades Association, of 1,225 MPAJA members who were killed in the struggle against Japan, 661 either had their homes in China or the whereabouts of their homes is unknown. The remainder apparently had their homes in Malaya.²⁸ Most MPAJA members were born in China and tended to consider the see in Malaya as part of China's Anti-Japanese war.²⁹

We cannot say that the anti-Japanese war diluted the China-oriented sentiment of the Malayan Chinese. However, as far as their close mental relation with China (meaning mainland China after the success of the communist revolution) in the early post-war period is concerned, it was not totally spontaneous. At that time circumstances forced them to consider that they had to continue living in Malaya, and therefore had to participate in the socio-political activities of the Malayan people to improve their living conditions. However, whether they wished to or not, they were forced to strengthen their relationship with China because many Malayan Chinese were deported to China by the British authorities.

Immediately after the war the MCP was the most powerful political organization in Malaya, and its leaders were highly regarded by the Chinese community. This situation did not last long, and the great socio-political assets and dignity that the MCP and the MPAJA had strenuously established in the anti-Japanese war were lost without achieving any lasting effect. This is because of the excessive revenge taken against the collaborators with Japan, the rejection of the MCP by the Malays, the betrayal of Lai Tek and the resultant uncertainty associated with the leadership of the MCP, and stern oppression by the

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 7 Jul. 1947.

²⁸ *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, 8 Sep. 1947.

²⁹ Interview with a former MPAJA member, Chen Rui Yao, on 4 Sep. 1994.

British authorities. A majority of the MCP members entered the jungle again in June 1948, and disappeared from the mainstream of Malayan society. Some leaders considered that renewed armed struggle would not gain the support of the Malay peasants, and rejected this approach. However, few of them were given an opportunity to play an active role in Malayan society. Some became manual labourers after leaving the party in 1948.³⁰

Some of those who went back to China of their own free will or were deported by the British authorities were branch members of such Chinese political parties as the China Democratic League and the Zhi Gong Party, but the majority were MCP members or supporters. While the Chinese government provided the former with higher positions, but it treated the latter comparatively coldly because the Chinese Communist Party had been critical and sceptical of the MCP ever since it had failed to begin an anti-British war immediately after the end of World War II.³¹

Finally, the Secretary General of the MCP, Lai Tek, was suffocated to death in Bangkok in Autumn, 1947 by an assassin, sent by the MCP, who had chased him from Hong Kong.³² The victims of the biggest traitor were thus avenged.

2. *The Right Wing*

(a) *Pro-Japanese Organizations*

The Singapore Oversea Chinese Association has been analyzed elsewhere.³³ Here I will focus on the organizations created in peninsular Malaya. Information is limited to a few states, and my discussion will concentrate on Selangor, Perak and Penang.

³⁰ Interview with Wu Liang Ming.

³¹ Hara Fujio, "Maraya karanō Kikoku Kakyo" [Returned Overseas Chinese from Malaya], in Zheng Shan Yu, *et al.*, *Guiqiao yu Zhongguo Xiandaihua Jianshe* [Returned Overseas Chinese and the Modernization of China] (Tokyo: Institute of Developing Economies, 1992), pp. 118-25.

³² Interview with Chang Ming Ching on 24 Aug. 1991.

³³ See, for example, Shu Yun Tsiao (ed.), *Xinma Huaren Kangri Shiliao 1937-1945* [Malayan Chinese Resistance to Japan 1937-1945 — Selected Source Materials] (Singapore: Cultural and Historical Publishing House, 1984), pp. 376-497.

Shinozaki Mamoru, the man in charge of Chinese affairs in the Singapore JMA, wrote in his memoir that immediately after occupying Singapore, he decided to organize the Syonan Oversea Chinese Association and sought approval from the chief military administrator, Major General Manaki Takanobu, who was responsible for Chinese affairs and said to be sympathetic to the overseas Chinese. According to Shinozaki, Manaki said: "Congratulations! However, don't form such an organization as the Peace Maintenance Committee. It is of no good use. Soldiers shouldn't interfere too much. All the PMCs failed in North and Middle China."³⁴

Shinozaki indicates that no Peace Maintenance Committees were organized in Malaya, but this is incorrect. In every state and every main city, the Japanese army ordered the local community to organize a Peace Maintenance (or Preservation) Committee to keep order and prevent anti-Japanese activities. When the JMA decided to collect a "voluntary donation" of fifty million dollars, the Peace Maintenance Committees had to bear the initial burden of collecting funds to meet this formidable demand. In Selangor, a provisional organization called the Gift Presentation Committee was formed for the purpose.

By the middle of 1942, the Peace Maintenance Committees had been disbanded. As a mechanism to deal with the Chinese, an Oversea(s) Chinese Association (OCA) was established in every state (see Appendix B). In Perak and Selangor the OCA was created by restructuring the Peace Maintenance Committee, while in Penang the Peace Maintenance Committee became a section of the OCA. In this connection, the Singapore OCA and the United Malayan OCAs were officially established on 8 March 1942³⁵ and 1 May 1942³⁶ respectively. Some affiliated bodies were formed after the headquarters was established, a sequence of events that reflected the JMA's desire that

³⁴ Shinozaki Mamoru, *Shingapore Senryo Hiroku* [Occupation of Singapore; A Secret Document] (Tokyo: Hara Shobo, 1976), p. 59.

³⁵ *The Malay Mail New Order*, 4 Dec. 1942; *The Penang Daily News*, 5 Dec. 1942.

³⁶ *The Penang Daily News*, 13 May 1942.

the donation should be collected as quickly as possible by whatever form of state organizations.³⁷

The OCA officially took charge of donations toward the 50 million dollar gift, and also became responsible for conduct of the Grow-More-Food campaign. Penang created a Grow-More-Food Committee in October 1942, Perak a Planting Bureau in March 1943 and Selangor a Food-crop Committee in March 1944. Among other measures they promoted settlement schemes in which urban residents were shifted to rural areas to reclaim forest or rubber plantation and grow food crops.

The 50 million dollar donation was handed over at an official ceremony on 25 June 1942. Four days later *The Penang Daily News* reported :

The volume of actual circulation of Straits Settlements dollar...was estimated at \$140,000,000 against a total circulation ... of \$220,000,000 during pre-war days.... Contraction was mainly caused by destruction in warfare as well as the recent donation.... Although bank deposits prior to the war totalled \$450,000,000, at present deposits only amount to \$30,000,000....³⁸

The serious effect of the donation on the Chinese community can be perceived from this passage. It had proved impossible to collect the full allotted amount, and \$21,250,000 — over 40 per cent of the \$50,000,000, was borrowed by seven state OCAs from the Yokohama Specie Bank. The annual interest on this loan was six per cent.³⁹ After the submission ceremony, these seven OCAs had to persuade or even

³⁷ This episode has been discussed by various writers. See, for example, Akashi Yoji, "Japanese Policy towards the Malayan Chinese 1941-1945", *Journal of the Southeast Asian Studies* 1,2 (Sept. 1970); Chin Kee Onn, *Malaya Upside Down* (Singapore: Jitts, 1946); Y.S. 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", *Journal of the South Sea Society* 3,1 (1947): 1-12.

³⁸ *The Penang Daily News*, 29 Jun. 1942.

³⁹ Tan, "Formation of the Oversea Chinese Association". The debt of the Selangor OCA was the largest (\$6 million), followed by Penang (\$4.65 million) and Perak (\$4.25 million).

coerce the people to pay the arrears. In Selangor a number of clan associations were compelled to sell their properties to meet the payments demanded of them.⁴⁰ Some members were also ruined by demands to pay their arrears. It is not known how much of the debt to the Yokohama Specie Bank had been repaid by the end of the war. The British military administration wrote off the balance of the debt in June 1947.⁴¹

The OCAs also had to pay various other "voluntary donations". By the end of 1943, OCAs of Malacca, Penang, Selangor, Johor and Perak had provided \$20,000, \$200,000, \$500,000, \$100,000 and \$200,000 respectively for the purchase of warplanes.⁴² Warplanes were donated again in December 1944 by the OCAs of Selangor (4 aircraft), Pahang (1) and Malacca (1), Penang (number unknown) and Perak (number unknown).⁴³ Moreover, the expenses of resettlement schemes were largely met by donations.

Other bodies created during the occupation included Sanji Kai or Advisory Councils set up in each state in December 1943 "in order to hear the wishes and desires of the public".⁴⁴ The chairmen were the (Japanese) governors of the states, and the vice chairmen the sultans. The ethnic composition of the councils differed from state to state. In Selangor and Perak, Syoan Kai (Pacification Committees) were set up in the middle of 1944 to persuade anti-Japanese people to surrender.⁴⁵

The financial demands of the Japanese left the Chinese community as a whole financially exhausted. However, it cannot be denied that

⁴⁰ A number of clan associations published notices in *The Malai Sinpo* announcing sales of property in 1944. They include the Hokkien Association (3 Oct. 1944), Kwong Siew Wooi Koon (16 Oct. 1944), Keng Chiew Hoe Kuan (24 Oct. 1944), Selangor Chinese Athletic Assn. (11 Dec. 1944). See also Publishing Committee of the Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall (ed.), *Xuelan'e Zhonghua Dahuitang Qingzhu 54 Zhounian Jinian Tekun* [Magazine Commemorating 54th Anniversary of the Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall] (Kuala Lumpur: Education and Culture Committee, SCAH, 1977), pp. 672, 716, 730, 736.

⁴¹ *Min Sheng Pao*, 24 Jun. 1947.

⁴² *The Malai Sinpo*, 18 Oct., 4 Nov., 14 Dec. 1943.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 7, 9 and 11 Dec. 1944.

⁴⁴ *The Malai Sinpo*, 10 Dec. 1943.

⁴⁵ A list of committee leaders is available for Selangor but not for Perak.

there were also people who gained in this period, including the leaders of the pro-Japanese bodies.

(b) *Leaders*

The names of office bearers of the various pro-Japanese organizations in Selangor, Perak and Penang are shown in Appendix B along with the positions they held after the war. Here I wish to examine some of their characteristics. First of all, we note that in each state, offices of the main organizations were filled by virtually the same persons. Wong Tet San of Selangor, Heah Joo Seang of Penang and K.C. Chan of Perak served as chairmen of almost all bodies in their respective states, and all were state Advisory Council members. This suggests that the JMA was supported by a limited number of people. Those who worked with the Japanese enjoyed great advantages in doing business. I will give a few examples. Heah's companies became manufacturers and sole agents for medicines, beverages, tea, stout and rubber products, and a new vitamin food produced by H.J.S. Laboratories was reported to have met with an overwhelming demand.⁴⁶ Wong Tet San was chairman of a Chinese daily, *Hin Ah Sin Poh*, of Kuala Lumpur⁴⁷ and the owner of a gambling house.⁴⁸ Ng Teong Kiat of Selangor declared 21 kinds of trade marks in *The Malay Mail* as property of NTK Highlands Plantations Ltd., which dealt with various kinds of tea.⁴⁹ In 1944, Ng's factories in Setapak and Klang were reported to have succeeded in breeding silkworms on tapioca leaves.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ *The Penang Daily News*, 8 Dec. 1942. *The Penang Shimbun*, 16, 24 Jan. 1943, 15 Feb. 1943. For information concerning Heah's close connection with Mitsui & Co. of Japan in the 1930s, see Rajeswary A. Brown, *Capital and Entrepreneurship in South-East Asia* (London: Macmillan Press, 1994), pp. 117-22.

⁴⁷ *The Malay Mail*, 2 Apr. 1942.

⁴⁸ The Southeast Asia Federation of China Relief Funds (ed.), *Dazhan yu Nanqiao* [World War and the South Sea Chinese] (Singapore: Nanyang Chuban She, 1947), p. 222.

⁴⁹ *The Malay Mail*, 5 Oct. 1942.

⁵⁰ *The Malai Sinpo*, 3 Mar. 1944.

After the war the leaders of this group fared very differently from those of the MCP. Cheah Boon Kheng has written that "the towkays who had become identified as spokesmen and apologists of the Japanese administration lost the prestige they enjoyed before the war".⁵¹ In some cases, notable examples are Wong Tet San and K.C. Chan, this statement is correct, but a great many of the leaders listed in Appendix B remained prominent community leaders during the post-war years.

The Straits Times of 19 February 1946 reported: "Heah Joo Seang ... was cleared of all collaboration allegations in the special court by Major T.M. Bishop.... [C]omplaints ... were not supported by evidence". In a paper headed "Statement by Mr. Heah Joo Seang" which is supposed to have been submitted to this court, Heah listed 15 points to refute charges of collaboration, including benevolent activities, protection of prisoners, refusal to accept the profits from the gambling farm for his own use and diversion of these funds to the grow-more-food movement, support for pro-British people and so on.⁵²

The activities of Heah Joo Seang and Lim Lean Teng (the latter was a standing committee member of the Penang Grow-More-Food Committee, and both were prominent Teochew leaders in Penang) after the war were reported in a positive way by a pro-Chinese Communist Party paper in Penang, *Xian Dai Ri Bao* [Modern Daily News], until that paper was closed by the British authorities in 1950. In October 1951, Heah bought about 26,000 acres of former Japanese rubber estates in Johor at a price of six million dollars.⁵³ It seems clear that he was viewed favourably by the post-war Chinese community.

In an interview recorded in 1946, Ng Teong Kiat said that he had rejected top positions offered him by the JMA, including the vice chairmanship of the OCA, and that he had contributed five million dollars to the MPAJA, and another seven million dollars to the British soldiers parachuted into Malaya.⁵⁴ In fact his name appears as a vice chairman of the Gift Presentation Committee, but it is equally true that

⁵¹ Cheah Boon Kheng, *Red Star*, p. 47.

⁵² Paul H. Kratoska kindly gave me this paper on 21 Feb. 1995.

⁵³ *The Straits Times*, 6 Oct. 1951.

⁵⁴ Shu (ed.), [Malayan Chinese Resistance to Japan], pp. 715-18.

he was arrested by the *kempai* on 12 August 1945 as head of a spy group supporting the MPAJA.⁵⁵ Certainly he was well received by the Chinese community after the war. Even the MCP newspaper, *Min Sheng Pao*, warmly reported on his activities.⁵⁶ He remained a fairly low key figure in Selangor after the war, possibly because a group of about 10 factories he set up in Xiamen, Fujian, all failed within two years.⁵⁷ Tan Chin Siong, a Committee Member of the Selangor Peace Maintenance Committee, led the Selangor division of the China Democratic League, a pro-CCP party with headquarters in China, from the time it was formed in 1946 until it was banned in 1948.

Two other collaborators fared less well. The *Malai Sinpo* of 6 February 1945 carried a report on a memorial service held at the Chinese Assembly Hall two days earlier for Wong Tet San, who had passed away on 15 January. The newspaper said nothing about why or how he died, but he was in fact assassinated by a special squad of the MPAJA's First Regiment. He was regarded as a big traitor because he had exploited employees in his tin mines, built a comfort house to provide girls for the Japanese soldiers, oppressed anti-Japanese forces,⁵⁸ and run a gambling house.⁵⁹ According to the Syoan Kai, thanks to his activities over 2,000 "misguided people" had come forward "to lead good lives" in one year (between March 1944 and March 1945).⁶⁰ Even though this figure is likely to have been greatly exaggerated for propaganda purposes, the top leader of the Syoan Kai was not forgiven. In his defence it has been suggested that he cooperated with the Japanese to safeguard the Chinese.⁶¹ If so, the explanation was not accepted by the Chinese community, and his name is seldom, if ever, mentioned these days.

⁵⁵ Onishi Satoru, *Hiroku Syonan Kakyō Shukusei Jiken* [Secret Document of Syonan Chinese Cleaning-up Incident] (Tokyo: Kongo Shuppan, 1977), pp. 169, 170.

⁵⁶ *Min Sheng Pao*, 6 Jun. 1946; 26 Jul., 27 Nov. 1947.

⁵⁷ Zhou Nan Jin (ed.), *Shijie Huaqiao Huaren Cidian* [Dictionary of Overseas Chinese] (Beijing: Beijing University Press, 1993), p. 720.

⁵⁸ Xinma Qiaoyou Hui (ed.), [Selected Historical Materials], pp. 144, 145.

⁵⁹ The Southeast Asia Federation of China Relief Funds (ed.), *Dazhan yu Nanqiao*, p. 222.

⁶⁰ *The Malai Sinpo*, 7 Mar. 1945.

⁶¹ Shu (ed.), [Malayan Chinese Resistance to Japan], pp. 562-68.

K.C. Chan of Perak was the elder brother of Chan Peik Kwan (Chen Bi Jun in Mandarin), wife of the president of the pro-Japanese Nanjing government, Wang Qing Wei. Chan's father had migrated to Malaya from Guangdong and become a rich businessman in Penang. One of his younger brothers was appointed governor of Guangdong in 1941, but was assassinated in 1944.⁶² Wang died in November 1944 in Japan. He was declared a traitor by both the Chongqing government and the CCP for cooperating with the Japanese. When Japan surrendered, Chan Peik Kwan was arrested by the Kuomintang government, and its successor, the People's Republic of China, kept her imprisoned until her death in 1959.⁶³ In the early post-war period, political events in China had a decisive influence on the Malayan Chinese. Hence the fate of Wang and Chan Peik Kwan affected the prospects of K.C. Chan, who continued his law practice in Ipoh after the war, but kept a very low profile until his death.⁶⁴ His name is also never referred to in publications dealing with the Perak or Penang Chinese.

To sum up, most of the top leaders of pro-Japanese bodies resumed their activities soon after the war in such main organizations as the assembly halls and chambers of commerce. However, in a few instances leaders were either socially or physically obliterated. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the MPAJA took its revenge on informers, lower level collaborators and other people who betrayed them. This seeming contradiction came about because the top leaders, who were wealthy figures during the Occupation, secretly cooperated with the MPAJA and were a source of financial support. Though most cooperated unwillingly, they were able to make use of their cooperation to protect themselves from MPAJA reprisals.

⁶² Wang Guang Yuan, Jiang Zhong Qiu, *Chen Bi Jun yu Wang Qing Wei* [Chen Bi Jun and Wang Qing Wei] (Beijing: Qingnian Chubanshe, 1992), pp. 162-65.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 240, 241.

⁶⁴ Information from Wong Yeow Hume, who lived in Ipoh during and after the war, and is now in Seremban. Letter to the author from his daughter, Dr Wong Shuang Yann, 3 Jul. 1995.

3. *Settlement Schemes*

The fact that hundreds of thousands of urban Chinese went into the jungle to avoid persecution and grow their own food has already been well analyzed.⁶⁵ Two big projects promoted by the JMA in Endau and Bahau, have also been examined.⁶⁶ Here I will concentrate on aspects of the settlement schemes which have received less attention.

(a) *Private Settlement*

It is sometimes believed that the urban Chinese resettled themselves without the approval or even the awareness of the government. In fact, the JMA encouraged people to shift to rural areas as part of the grow more food campaign. Responding to this encouragement, many Chinese businessmen in the larger towns applied for state land to settle Chinese residents. In Johor, a number of applications for large-scale alienation of state land were submitted to the Commissioner of Land and Mines by businessmen living in Singapore or Johor Baru.⁶⁷ In one case, a Malay penghulu (village head) applied for 74 acres on behalf of 37 Chinese.⁶⁸ In 1942, out of 219,000 acres (87,600 hectares) of state land applied for, 188,000 acres (75,200 hectares) were Malay reservation land.⁶⁹ Most of these applications were approved. Therefore, it is wrong to suggest that it was unauthorized settlement of Chinese in rural or forest areas that angered the Malays and led to ethnic conflict between the two towards the end of the war. Responsibility lies with the JMA.

⁶⁵ See, for example, Francis Loh Kok Wah, *Beyond the Tin Mines*, (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1988).

⁶⁶ Shinozaki, *Shingapore*.

⁶⁷ The largest was an application by Tan Tien Guan of Syonan. He applied for 3,000 acres (1,200 ha.) in 1943, and was approved 2,000 acres in 1944. "Application for 3,000 acres at Layang Layang for planting tuba and foodstuff", Commissioner of Land and Mines (CLM) Johor 61/2603 [AD 1943] (Johor Branch, National Archives of Malaysia).

⁶⁸ "Application for 74 acres State Land from Penghulu Mohd. Shah for Chinese for planting foodstuffs", CLM (Johor) 174/2604 [AD 1944].

⁶⁹ "Asks whether application by non-Malays for lands inside the Malay Reservations can be accepted", CLM (Johor) 172/2602 [AD 1942].

(b) Settlement Schemes Promoted by the Government

Settlement schemes promoted by the JMA are shown in Appendix C. These schemes were of two types, the one publicly carried out mainly for economic reasons, the other secretly executed for political as well as military purposes. The second type only became known to the public after the war. Some of the schemes to alleviate food shortages in urban areas included Malays or Indians, but the overwhelming majority of settlers were Chinese. The *Asahi Shinbun* of Japan wrote that by the end of January 1944 the JMA had received reports of 19 settlement schemes in six states, inclusive of Endau and Bahau, and that in the first phase 230,000 hectares (552,000 acres) would be reclaimed. Each family was to be allotted 1.6 hectares (4 acres), which meant that the first phase would accommodate about 144,000 families.⁷⁰

The projects were formally implemented by the state OCAs under instructions from the JMA. The greater part of the cost was borne by the OCAs or individually by their top office bearers. To cite a few examples, Wong Tet San and K.C. Chan jointly contributed \$100,000 for the Sungai Buluh scheme of the Selangor OCA, while Ng Teong Kiat and two others of Selangor contributed a further \$250,000.⁷¹ In August 1945 the Penang OCA made plans to collect \$18,000,000 from its members for the Penang Emigrant Settlers' Fund, but the Fund ceased operation at the end of the month owing to the Japanese surrender.⁷²

Hawkers, trishaw peddlers, shop assistants, importers and exporters and so on were regarded as non-essential workers in towns, and were persuaded to participate in the schemes.⁷³ Tens of thousands of urban Chinese were thus resettled in rural areas to plant padi, tapioca, sweet potato, ragi and the like. Most of them had a harsh life and were unable to achieve self-sufficiency.

As for forced resettlement, three cases were reported just after the war: Sungai Way and Kuala Kubu Baru (both in Selangor), and

⁷⁰ *Asahi Shinbun*, 2 Feb. 1944.

⁷¹ *The Malai Sinpo*, 29 May 1944 and 11 Jun. 1944.

⁷² *The Penang Shimbun*, 11, 31 Aug. 1945.

⁷³ *The Malai Sinpo*, 20 Jun. 1944.

Lenggong (in Perak). All were caused by JMA suspicions that residents were supporting the MPAJA. In the first case, more than one thousand residents of sections six and seven of Ampang were forced to resettle in the Seaport Estate of Sungai Way in March 1943. The settlement was called New Nanyang village.⁷⁴ In the second case, the Japanese army burned all the houses of a portion of Kuala Kubu Baru and resettled the residents in its suburbs. The place was called Kuala Kubu Baru New Village.⁷⁵ In the third case, all the residents of Lenggong were settled in a new village (Daqu according to its Mandarin pronunciation; the correct name cannot be identified).⁷⁶ These new villages were surrounded by fences and guarded by the Japanese army. Another village, Sungai Besar in Selangor, was also fenced in.⁷⁷ These forced resettlements call to mind the new villages created by the British army in the late 1940s and 1950s. There is no direct evidence that the British army used the model provided by the Japanese army. However, Malayan Chinese deported to China by the British authorities in 1950 wrote that "subjugation bases" of the British were modelled on the "pacification policy" of the Japanese.⁷⁸ The New Village policy implemented by the British caused many severe problems to the Chinese community. In fact, it appears that these problems originated with the JMA's policy.

After the war almost all of those resettled, whether voluntarily or by force, had to leave their new villages, either because living conditions were harsh and the land was not fertile, or because the previous land owners demanded their evacuation. At Bukit Badung, Selangor, Badung New Village (where more than two thousand people were living in 1947) was realienated to Malays.⁷⁹ New Nanyang village was realienated to a Chinese businessman to develop a tin mine.⁸⁰ In most

⁷⁴ *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*, 21 Oct. 1947.

⁷⁵ *Min Sheng Pao*, 5 Jul. 1947.

⁷⁶ The Southeast Asia Federation of China Relief Funds (ed.), *Dazhan yu Nanqiao*, p. 211.

⁷⁷ Xinma Qiaoyou Hui (ed.), [Selected Historical Materials], pp. 120, 121.

⁷⁸ Returned Overseas Chinese Friendship Association, *Kangyi Yingdi Pohai Malaiya Guiqiao* [Protest against British Imperialist's Persecution of Malayan Chinese] (Beijing, 1951), p. 87.

⁷⁹ *Min Sheng Pao*, 4 Sep. 1946; 26 May 1947.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 18 Jul. 1946.

cases, the villagers appealed either to the Chinese Consul General in Singapore or in Kuala Lumpur, or to Chinese Consuls stationed in Penang, Ipoh and Malacca, because at that time no other authorities represented Malayan Chinese interests. However, due to internal as well as international circumstances, the Chinese envoys were powerless to solve these problems. This situation contributed to the formation of the locally-oriented political party, the Malayan Chinese Association (MCA), a few years later.⁸¹

Conclusion

Most of the leaders of the anti-Japanese movement were young Chinese who had come to Malaya from China. On the other hand, most of the leaders of pro-Japanese Chinese bodies were older businessmen born in Malaya. The events of the occupation widened the rift between the recent arrivals, with their close ties to China, and the longer established local Chinese community, whose links to China had become attenuated. Though many top leaders both of the MCP and the MPAJA were killed by the JMA due to the betrayal of their supreme leader, Lai Tek, the anti-Japanese movement developed soundly and steadily. Its China-oriented mentality was not diluted by the war, and this had two major consequences. The majority of the MCP members had little interest in pursuing an anti-British war after 1945. That might be one of the main reasons why the minority leaders of the MCP failed to persuade the Party to wage an anti-British war in 1945. MCP leaders disappeared from legal politics three years later, having failed to take advantage of the might and prestige derived from their wartime activities. With a few exceptions, the leaders of the pro-Japanese bodies resumed their social, economic and even political activities after the war. The war did not alter the leading personnel of the Chinese community much.

As for the relocation of the Chinese, some squatters settled in the jungle without government approval, some in private settlement projects conducted by businessmen, and some in government schemes. These

⁸¹ For details of this process, see Hara Fujio (ed.), *Tonan Asia Kakyō to Chugoku* [China and Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia] (Tokyo: Institute of Developing Economies, 1993).

settlements had an enormous influence on the Chinese community. After the war, most of those who were resettled had to find other means of living mainly due to deteriorating conditions. The only representation they had at that time, the Chinese consuls, proved unable to assist them, and this situation played a part in reorientating the identity of Chinese settlers from China to Malaya. In this sense, Japan contributed to affirming the Malayan identity of the Chinese.

Appendix A Top Leaders of the MPAJA

- Notes:** * Killed or arrested by the Japanese authorities
 + Surrendered to the Japanese authorities or betrayed the MPAJA.
 # Returned to China either by deportation or voluntarily.

1st Regiment (Independent Force) Operational Area: Selangor Date of Establishment: 1 Jan. 1942		
Name	Tenure	Vitalc
<i>Party Representatives</i>		
*Xu Qing Biao	Jan.-Sep. 1942	Died in the Batu Caves Incident on 1 Sep. 1942. Hokkien.
Wu Liang Ming	Late 1942-Early 1943?	
Lau Yew (Liu Yau)	Early 1944-1945	Born in Hainan, China in 1915. Came to Singapore in 1936. Died in battle against Britain on 18 Jul. 1948.
<i>Commanders</i>		
*Chen Tian Qing	4 Jan. 1942-Early 1943	Died in battle. Hokkien.
Shi Wei	Early 1944-1945	
<i>Deputy Commanders</i>		
+Liao Yi Lin	- Nov. 1942 ?	Arrested and surrendered. Killed by MPAJA members in Mar. 1943. Hakka.
Liu Guang	Early 1944-1945	
Open Corps (Formed in April 1945)		
<i>Commander</i> Chow Yam Peng (Zhou Yang Bin)		Surrendered to the British Army in 1948.
<i>Deputy Commander</i> #Chen Da Zhi		Hainanese. Arrested by the British Army in 1957. Deported to China in 1959. Died in 1989.

2nd Regiment Operational Area: Negeri Sembilan Date of Establishment: 15 March 1942** (No distinction between Secret and Open Corps.)		
Name	Tenure	Vitae
<i>Party Representatives</i>		
+Wong Kok Ping (Huang Guo Ping)	End of Dec. 1941- Jan. 1942, and Jul.-Sep. 1942	Arrested on way to Batu Caves Conference on 1 Sep. 1942, then surrendered.
*Lai Lai Fu (Lai Lai Fuk) (@ Du Long Shan)	Jan.-Jul. 1942	Born in Sitiawan, Perak, in 1922. Transferred to the 5th Reg't in Jul. 1942.
#Zeng Guan Biao (@ Ma Ding)	Sep. 1942-	Hakka. Born in Guangdong in 1922. Returned to China after the War. Living in China in 1991.
<i>Commanders</i>		
*Lai Lai Fu	End of Dec. 1941- Jan. 1942	
+Wong Kok Ping	Jan.-Jul. 1942	
#Zeng Guan Biao	Jul. 1942-Spring 1945	
Deng Fu Long (@ Chen Qun)	Spring 1945-	Dep. Chairman, Negri Sembilan Federation for Peace & Democracy in China, Jul. 1947-Jun. 1948.
<i>Deputy Commanders</i>		
*Liu Guan Wen	End of Dec. 1941-	Died in battle.
#Si Ke (@ Xiao Ke Ke)	Spring 1945-	Living in China in 1991.

**Ordered to dissolve by the Central Committee of the MCP in May 1942; re-established at the end of 1944.

3rd Regiment Operational Area: North Johor and Malacca Date of Establishment: 20 Jan. 1942		
Name	Tenure	Vitae
<i>Party Representatives</i> *Chen Shu (@ Chen Wei Gang)	Jan.-Sep. 1942	Died in the Batu Caves Incident on 1 Sep. 1942.
Xiao Lin (@ Wu Mong Chao)	End of 1942-	
<i>Commander</i> Xiao Yang (@ Wu Ke Xiong)	Jan. 1942-	Died in battle against Britain on 18 Jul. 1948.
<i>Deputy Commander</i> Yuan Zhi Ying	Jan. 1942-	
Open Corps (Formed in Aug. 1945)		
<i>Commander</i> Lin Chang or Lin Tian	Aug.-Dec. 1945	Living in China in 1991.
<i>Deputy Commander</i> #Wang Xiang Fu	Aug.-Dec. 1945	

4th Regiment Operational Area: South Johor Date of Establishment: 30 Jan. 1942		
Name	Tenure	Vitae
<i>Party Representatives</i> Chen Lu (@ Hu Tian Bao)	Jan.-Apr. 1942	Secretary General of the PMFTU, Feb. 1947-Jun. 1948.
*Zhu Lao (@ Zhu Ri Guang)	Apr.-Sep. 1942	Died in the Batu Caves Incident on 1 Sep. 1942.
Jia Lei	Early 1944-	
<i>Commanders</i> *A Fu (@ Yu Hong)	Jan.-Sep. 1942	Died in the Batu Caves Incident on 1 Sep. 1942.
Chen Pei Nong	Sep. 1942-(Early 1944?)	
#Chen Tian (@ Gao Cai Jie)	Early 1944-	Born in Singapore in 1923. Cantonese. Went to China in 1961.
<i>Deputy Commanders</i> Chen Pei Nong	Jan.-Sep. 1942	
#Loh Seng (Lu Cheng)	Early 1944-	Chairman of the Pan Malayan General Labour Union. Feb.-Apr. 1946. Deported to China in Apr. 1946. Died in Beijing in 1991.
Open Corps (Formed in the Early 1945)		
<i>Commander</i> #Chen Tian	Early 1945-Dec. 1945	
<i>Deputy Commander</i> Zhang Tian He (@ Nan Xue)		

5th Regiment Operational Area: Perak, Kelantan (Interior) Date of Establishment: 1 Dec. 1942 (Headquarters established in May 1942)		
Name	Tenure	Vitae
<i>Party Representatives</i>		
*Zhang Qi Sheng (@ Zhang Lang Ping @ Xu Qing)	May-Sep. 1942	Died in the Batu Caves Incident on 1 Sep. 1942.
Liao Wei Zhong	Sep. 1942-May 1945	
Liang Zhao Bei	May-Aug. 1945	
<i>Commanders</i>		
*Lai Lai Fu (Lai Lai Fuk)	July 1942-July 1943	Arrested in July 1943 by the Japanese Military Police and executed by hanging.
Si Ke	Late 1943-45	
<i>Deputy Commander</i>		
Wong Lup (Huang Li)	May 1942-45	
Open Corps		
<i>Commander</i>		
Liao Wei Zhong	May-Dec. 1945	Chairman of the MPAJA Ex-Comrades Assn. of Perak, Dec. 1945-May 1947. Disappeared in Jul. 1947. Arrested on 13 Jul. 1948.
<i>Deputy Commander</i>		
Yang Lin	May-Dec. 1945	

6th Regiment Operational Area: West Pahang Date of Establishment: 13 Aug. 1943 (Originally formed in Feb. 1942 as the Upper Pahang People's Anti-Japanese Army)		
Name	Tenure	Vitae
<i>Party Representatives</i>		
*Huang Chun (@ Huang Zi Yan @ Chen Qing)	Feb. 1942-(1943 ?)	Arrested in 1943 (?).
Zhang Chuang Qing (@ Xiao Zhang @ Feng Yun)	Aug. 1943-	
<i>Commanders</i>		
*Chen Hao (@ Lao Gao)	Feb. 1942-Aug. 1943	Died in Battle in Aug. 1943.
#Zeng Guan Biao	Aug. 1943-	
Secret Corps (May-25 Aug. 1945)		
<i>Political Commissar</i> #Chin Peng (@ Wang Wen Hua)		Hokkien. Born in 1922 in Sitiawan. Went to China in 1961.
Open Corps (Formed in May 1945 ?)		
<i>Commanders</i> Wu Liang Ming	May-Jun. 1945	Born in China in 1921. Came to Malaya in 1927. Left the MCP in 1948, now living in Singapore.
#Wang Qing	Jun.-Dec. 1945	Went to China in the 1970s. Living in China in 1991.
<i>Deputy Commander</i> Wang Jie		

7th Regiment		
Operational Area: East Pahang, Kelantan (Coastal Area), Trengganu		
Date of Establishment: 1 Sep. 1944		
(Originally formed in May 1942 as the East Pahang and Kuantan Anti-Japanese Guerrilla Force)		
Name	Tenure	Vitae
<i>Party Representatives</i>		
#Zhuang Qing (@ Xu Zhi Rong)	May 1942-(1945 ?)	Hokkien. Living in China in 1991.
Shi Dong Fang	1945 (?)	
<i>Commander</i>		
Zhang Qi	May 1942-1945	
<i>Deputy Commander</i>		
Yang Qing	May 1942-1945	
Open Corps		
<i>Commander</i>		
#Zhuang Qing		
<i>Deputy Commander</i>		
Zhang Qi		

8th Regiment		
Operational Area: Kedah		
Date of Establishment: Sep. 1945		
(Originally formed as the Kedah Anti-Japanese Guerrilla Force in early 1943; changed its name three times as follows: Mar. 1945, Kedah People's Anti-Japanese Army; 21 Aug. 1945, Kedah People's Liberation Army; Sep. 1945, 8th Regiment of the MPAJA)		
Name	Tenure	Vitae
<i>Party Representative</i> Liu Rong Guang	Early 1943-	
<i>Commanders</i> Yang Guo Zhang	Early 1943-(1945 ?)	
He Xiao Li (@ Xiao Li @ He Tian Xin)	Sep.-Dec. 1945	
<i>Deputy Commanders</i> Zhang Jiang Hai (@ Jiang Yan)	Sep.-Dec. 1945	
Bai Si Mu	Sep.-Dec. 1945	Commander, 8th Regiment of the National Liberation Army. Died in 1991.

Sources for Appendix A:

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Appendix B
Leaders of Organizations that Collaborated with the Japanese Military Administration in Selangor, Penang and Perak

Selangor						
	Birth/Death Dates	Place of Birth	Dialect Group	Year of Coming to Malaya	Main Business	Main Positions After the War (CM: Committee Member) (SCCC: Selangor Chinese Chamber of Commerce) (SCAH: Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall)
Peace Maintenance Committee (Formed in late Jan. 1942) Chairman Lai Tet Loke Vice Chairman Wong Tet San Committee Members: Yap Bean Klay Low Kee Boo Tan Chin Siang	c.1880-c.1950	?	Hakka	?	Tin Mining	CM, SCCC, 1957-58; CM, Tung Shin Hospital, 1951. CM, SCAH, 1945.
	c.1890-15 Jan. 1945 ¹ ? ?; 1945	?	Hakka	?	Tin Mining	CM, SCAH, 1946-?; CM, SCCC, 1948-49; Director, Selangor Division of the China Democratic League, 1946-47; CM, Selangor Hokkien Assn., 1946-?; CM, SCAH, 1945-?; CM, SCCC, 1946-47.
Gift Presentation Committee (Formed 8 Apr. 1942) Chairman Wong Tet San Vice Chairmen Ng Teong Kiat Low Kee Boo	See Above	Fujian	Hokkien	Infancy	Rubber Factory, Sawmill, Farming	CM, SCAH, 1946-?; CM, SCCC, 1946-49; President, Kuala Lumpur Chong Hwa High School, 1946-?.

Selangor (cont.)						
	Birth/Death Dates	Place of Birth	Dialect Group	Year of Coming to Malaya	Main Business	Main Positions After the War (CM: Committee Member) (SCCAH: Selangor Chinese Chamber of Commerce) (SCAH: Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall)
Overseas Chinese Association (Formed on 10 Jul. 1942) President Wong Tai San (Jul. 1942-15 Jan. 1945) Choo Kia Peng (14 Jan. 1945-)	See Above c.1875-c.1946	Perak	Teochew		Merchant, Property, Tin Mining	
Vice President Choo Kia Peng (Jul. 1942-15 Jan. 1945) Tan Jin Luan (Jul. 1942-) Treasurer Cheong Yoke Choy	See Above 1870-1958	Guangdong	Cantonese	1879	Tin Mining, Property, Kwong Yik Bank	CM, SCAH, 1946-7; CM, SCCC, 1946-47 President SCAH, 1941-48; Treasurer, SCCC, 1946-58; Chairman, Selangor Kwong Chau Assn., 1949-7; CM, SCCC, 1946-47.
General Secretary Au Yong Su Fong Assistant Secretary Chue Yew Fai						Standing CM, SCAH, 1941-54; Vice President, SCAH, 1954-58; CM, SCCC, 1946-64; Chairman, Selangor Kwong Chau Assn., early 1960s-.

Selangor (cont.)						
	Birth/Death Dates	Place of Birth	Dialect Group	Year of Coming to Malaya	Main Business	Main Positions After the War (CM - Committee Member) (SCCC: Selangor Chinese Chamber of Commerce) (SCAH: Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall)
	See Above					
	<p>Syon Kai (Pacification Committee) (Formed 19 Feb. 1944) President</p> <p>Wong Tet San (Feb. 1944-15 Jan. 1945)</p> <p>Tan Jia Luan (Jan.-Mar. 1945)</p> <p>Choe Yew Fai (Mar. 1945-)</p> <p>General Secretary Wong Voon Fah</p> <p>Director cum Adviser Nagata (g. Chong Teck Chong) (Members included Ng Teong Kiat, Cheong Yoke Choy, Choe Yew Fai, Au Yong Su Fong, Choo Kia Peng)</p> <p>Sanjai Kai (Advisory Council) (Formed in Dec. 1943) (Chinese Members)</p> <p>Choo Kia Peng</p> <p>Wong Tet San</p> <p>Goh Hock Huat</p> <p>Yong Shook Lin</p>	Taiwan	Hakka Hakka			Supreme Court Judge; Lawyer.
	(There were also 4 Malay and 4 Indian members)					Disappeared soon after the war.

Penang						
	Birth/Death Dates	Place of Birth	Dialect Group	Year of Coming to Malaya	Main Business	Main Positions After the War (CM: Committee Member) (PCCC: Penang Chinese Chamber of Commerce) (PCTH: PENANGChinese Assembly Hall)
Peace Preservation Committee (Formed on 22 Dec. 1941) Chairman Heah Joo Seang	1899-1962	Penang	Teeohew		Rubber Trade, Rubber Plantation, Pharmacy	President, Fed. of Malaya Rubber Trade Assn.; CM, PCCC, 1958-59; President, Penang Branch of the Malayan Chinese Assn. (MCA), 1-1962.
Oversea Chinese Association (Formed 1 Apr. 1942) Chairman Heah Joo Seang	See Above					
Deputy Chairmen Soon Eng Kung Lim Cheng Teik	1892-? 1883-1978	Perai Penang	Canonese Hokkien		Rubber Plantation Rice Mill Property	CM, PCTH. Hon. Chairman of Chung Ling High School.
Hon. Secretary Koh Sim Hock	1898-1966	Penang	Hokkien		Banking, Rubber Plantations	Vice Pres., PCCC, 1950-54; Member of the State Legislative Council, 1957-59.
Hon. Treasurer Soon Cheng Sun					Property	Council Member of Malayan Estate Owners Assn.

2 Elder brother of well-known lawyer, Lim Cheng Ean (1889-1982).

Penang (cont.)						
	Birth/Death Dates	Place of Birth	Dialect Group	Year of Coming to Malaya	Main Business	Main Positions After the War (CM: Committee Member) (PCCC: Penang Chinese Chamber of Commerce) (PCTH: PENANGChinese Assembly Hall)
<p><i>Grow-More-Food Committee</i> (Formed in Oct. 1942) Standing Committee Members Heah Joo Seang Soon Eng Kong Lim Lean Teng</p>	<p>See Above See Above 1870-1963</p>	Guangdong	Tocheu	1893 (Penang)	Shipping, Liquor Distillery, Rubber Plantation.	Chairman, Kwong Wah Jit Peh, 1946; Director, Overseas Union Bank, 1940-early 1960s; President, Penang Tocheu Assn., 1949-?; President, Fed. of Tocheu Assns, Malaya, 9-?; Ex-Officio, PCCC, 1946-52; CM, PCCC, 1953-66.
<p>Lim Eow Thoon</p>	1886-1976	Penang	Hokkien		Rice Mill, Rubber Factory. Rice Mill, Property	
<p>Koh Sin Hock Chowng Lye Hock Chowng Lye Hin</p>					Rice Mill, Oil Mill, Property. Oil Mill.	President, PCCC, 1950-54, 1958-62; Vice Pres., PCCC, 1962-66; President, MCA Penang Branch. President, PCTH, 1927-64
<p>Ng Sui Cam</p>	1900-1972	Guangdong	Cantonese	c.1910	Property	
<p>Kho Sian Ewe</p>	1886-1964	Malacca	Hokkien		Rubber Plantation	CM, PCTH, 1936-48.
<p>Sooi Kai (Advisory Council) (Formed in Dec. 1943) Heah Joo Seang Lim Cheng Teik Koo Sian Ewe Ng Sun Kam (Ng Sun Cam?) Lim Eow Thoon Heah Song What Ooi Kiang Koh</p>	1893-1952	Perai	Tocheu			
(There were also 5 Malay and 3 Indian members)						

Perak						
	Birth/Death Dates	Place of Birth	Dialect Group	Year of Coming to Malaya	Main Business	Main Positions After the War (CM, Committee Member) (PACCC; Perak Chinese Chamber of Commerce)
Peace Committee (Formed in Jan. 1942) President K.C.Chan ³	1888-1950s					
Gift Presentation Committee (Formed in early Jan. 1942) President K.C.Chan	See above	Penang	Canlinese		Lawyer, Rubber Plantation, Tin Mine.	
Vice President Ong Khong Oon General Secretary Fong Seong			Canlinese			CM, PACCC, 1946-72; Director, Overseas Union Bank, 1963-70; CM, Perak Kwang Tung Asso.

³ Eldest brother of Chan Peik Kwan (Chen Bi Jun), wife of the President of the pro-Japanese Nanjing Government, Wang Qing Wei.

Perak (cont.)						
	Birth/Death Dates	Place of Birth	Dialect Group	Year of Coming to Malaya	Main Business	Main Positions After the War (CM: Committee Member) (PACCC: Perak Chinese Chamber of Commerce)
<p>Oversea Chinese Association (Formed in mid-1942) President K.C.Chan</p> <p>Vice Pres. (North Perak) Ong Khong On</p> <p>Vice Pres. (South Perak) Wong Chan Thong (Dec. 1942-1945)</p> <p>General Secretary Fong Seong (Mid. 1942-Dec. 1942)</p> <p>Hon. Secretary Lau Ek Ching (Dec. 1942-1945)</p> <p>Hon. Treasurers Foo Chong Yit Lee Kwoe Foh</p> <p>General Affairs Fong Seong (Dec. 1942-1945)</p> <p>Sarji Kai (Advisory Council) (Formed in Dec. 1942) Chinese Members K.C. Chan Teh Eng Hoe Wong Chin Thong K.T. Khong</p> <p>(There were also 12 Malay members)</p>	See Above		Hakka			CM, PACCC, 1946-54; Dep'y. President, Perak Kayang Assn., 1950-51; President, Perak Kayang Assn., 1952-53.

Sources for Appendix B:

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The Malai Sinbun, 9, 10, 13 Dec. 1943; 9, 13 Jun.; 27 Aug.; 5, 10 Sep. 1944; 6, 18 Feb.; 7, 25 Mar.; 28 Apr.; 11, 18 May 1945.

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Wen Gu Zhi, *Jilongpo Huaren Shihua* [Historical Episode of the Chinese in Kuala Lumpur] (Kuala Lumpur: Brilliant Publications, 1984).

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Appendix C
Chinese Settlement Schemes Promoted by the Japanese Military Administration.

State	Place and Village Name	Month Launched	Average		No. of Settlers	
			Planned	Achieved	Planned	Achieved
Johor	Air Hitam Endau ⁷	Dec. 1943	1,000		200F	
		Oct. 1943	300,000		300,000	12,000
Negri Sembilan ²	Gemas, Serling Hilir (Bahau), Serling Ulu and Air Kerling [Bahau] ⁵ Labu ⁶ Sg. Raya ⁷ Kg. Sawal ⁸ Gemencheh, Siliau and Kg. Jenang ⁹ Sg. Jimah ¹⁰		150,000	10,600	1,000	2,200F
				6,525		—
			2,500	1,334		760F
			4,000	1,385		651F
			1,200	970		347F
			1,200	600		270F
		Mar. 1944				
Selangor	Puchong ¹¹ Tg. Karang ¹² [Sekincan] ¹³ Sg. Labu ¹⁴ Bk. Baling (Badung New Village) ¹⁵ Sg. Beluh ¹⁶ Klang Gates ¹⁷ Kuala Kubu Baru (Kuala Kubu Baru New Village) ¹⁸ Seaport, Sg. Way (New Nanyang Village) ¹⁹	Jun. 1943		800	350F	250
		May 1944	25,000	15,000	2,000F	2,300
			2,500	50		15F
		Jan. 1943	5,000	3,000	1,200F	3,000
		May 1944		600	350F	2,000
		Mid-1944	3,000	500		
		Aug. 1944		640		
Perak	Cangkat Jong ²⁰ Sg. Manak ²¹ Lenggong ²²	Sep. 1942	6,200		400F	1,000
		Jan. 1944				

State	Place and Village Name	Month Launched	Average		No. of Settlers		
			Planned	Achieved	Planned	Achieved	
Penang ¹⁷	Bertam ¹⁸	Jun. 1944		2,000		2,600	
	Alma ¹⁹	Jun. 1944		1,250		800	
	Juru ²⁰	Jun. 1944		850		850	
	Simpang ²¹	Jun. 1944		1,050		650	
	Caledonia ²²	Oct. 1942	2,000				
	Malakoff ²³	Oct. 1944	2,000				
	Mayfield ²⁴	Nov. 1944	1,000				
	Lunas ²⁵	Sep. 1944	300				
	Byram & 3 ²⁶	Nov. 1944					
	Krian ²⁷	Aug. 1945		852			
	Wellesley ²⁸	Aug. 1945		815			
	Simpah & 2 ²⁹	Aug. 1945		681			
	Singapore	Pasir Panjang (Ping Min New Village) ³⁰					

Notes: F refers to the number of families rather than the number of individuals.

Notes for Appendix C

- 1 Ghazali Bin Mayudin, *Johor Semasa Pendudukan Jepun, 1942-1945*, (Bangi: Jabatan Sejarah, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia).
- 2 Shinozaki Mamoru, *Singapore. Senryo Hiroku* [Occupation of Singapore; A Secret Document], (Tokyo: Hara Shobo, 1976).
- 3 As of January 1944 altogether 14 schemes covering 165,000 acres of land had been implemented in the state. Of these, 35,000 acres had been allotted to 16,000 settlers of 5,000 families, 27,477 acres reclaimed and 20,783 acres planted. *The Malai Sinpo*, 21 Jan. 1944.
- 4 The Malai Sinpo, 17 Dec. 1943 and 21 Jan. 1944. The Bahau scheme was for Catholics, including Chinese Catholics.
- 5 The Malai Sinpo, 17 Dec. 1943; Iwatake Teruhiko, *Nanpo Gunsei Ka No Keizai Shisaku* [Economic Policy of the Southern Military Administration] (Tokyo: Kyuko Shoin, 1981).
- 6 *The Malai Sinpo*, 21 Jan. 1944.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 21 Jan. 1944.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 21 Jan. 1944.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 21 Jan. 1944.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 1 Apr. 1944.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 9 Jun. 1943., 8 Dec. 1943., 23 May 1944.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 23 May 1944., 11 Sep. 1944. Settlement schemes here involved not only Chinese but also Malays, Indians. In Tanjung Karang, three schemes were implemented, that is, Sungai Buring for Indians, Sawah Sempadan for Malays and Sekincan for Chinese.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 11 Sep. 1944. According to *The Penang Daily News* of 5 Nov. 1942, 5,100 acres had been allotted to the Chinese community and 457 persons settled there.
- 14 *The Malai Sinpo*, 27 Oct. 1944.
- 15 *Ibid.*, 23 May 1944; *Min Sheng Pao*, 4 May 1946, 26 May 1947.
- 16 *The Malai Sinpo*, 29 May 1944., 11 Jun. 1944., 24 Feb. 1945.
- 17 *Ibid.*, 15 Oct. 1944.

- 18 *Min Sheng Pao*, 5 Jul. 1947, Xinma Qiaoyou Hui (ed.), *Malaya Renmin Kangri Douzheng Shiliao Xian ji* [Selected Historical Materials of the Malayan Peoples' Anti-Japanese Struggle] (Hong Kong: Witness Publish Co., 1992), p. 127. Kuala Kubu Baru New Village was created by a forced military operation.
- 19 *Nan Chiau Ju Pao*, 21 Oct. 1947; *Min Sheng Pao*, 1 Nov. 1947. New Nanyang Village was settled by a forced military operation.
- 20 *The Penang Daily News*, 4 Sep. 1942.
- 21 Shimatani Torao (ed.), *Marat no Kaifō* [Reminiscence of Malat], (Tokyo: Marat wo Kataru Kai, 1976), p. 111.
- 22 The Southeast Asia Federation of China Relief Funds (ed.), *Dazhan yu Nanqiao* [World War and the South Sea Chinese], (Singapore: Xin Nanyang Chubun She, 1947), p. 211. Resettlement was forced by a military operation.
- 23 Settlements in Penang were located on European-owned estates in Province Wellesley (Seberang Perai).
- 24 *The Penang Shimban*, 23 Jun. 1945. According to *The Straits Times* of 7 Jun. 1947, 3,000 Chinese settlers remained at that time.
- 25 *The Penang Shimban*, 23 Jun. 1945.
- 26 *Ibid.*, 23 Jun. 1945.
- 27 *Ibid.*, 23 Jun. 1945.
- 28 *The Penang Daily News*, 20 Oct. 1942.; *The Penang Shimban*, 11 Nov. 1944.
- 29 *The Penang Shimban*, 30 Sep. 1944, 6, 18 Oct. 1944, 13 Aug. 1945.
- 30 *Ibid.*, 30 Sep. 1944, 10 Nov. 1944.
- 31 *Ibid.*, 30 Sep. 1944, 10 Nov. 1944.
- 32 *Ibid.*, 10 Nov. 1944.
- 33 *Ibid.*, 13 Aug. 1945.
- 34 *Ibid.*, 13 Aug. 1945.
- 35 *Ibid.*, 13 Aug. 1945.
- 36 Khoo Shin Min (Qiu Xin Min), *Zhaonan Shidai Shihua* [Historical Episode of Syonan Era], (Singapore: Youth Book Co., 1991), p. 84.

Appendix D. Chinese Names

Italicized names reflect Mandarin pronunciations of names for which local spellings are not available.

<i>A Fu</i>	阿 福	<i>Chen Pei Qing</i>	陳培青
(@ <i>Yu Hong</i>	余洪)	(@ <i>Xiao Lu</i>	小路)
<i>A Nian</i>	阿 年	(@ ? <i>Xiao Luo</i>	小羅)
(@ <i>A Ning</i>	阿寧)	<i>Chen Shu</i>	陳 書
(@ <i>Zheng Sheng Lie</i>	鄭聲烈)	(@ <i>Chen Wei Gang</i>	陳韋崗)
<i>A Qiu</i>	阿 丘	<i>Chen Tian</i>	陳 田
(@ <i>Qiu Lian Jie</i>	邱聯傑)	(@ <i>Gao Cai Jie</i>	高才傑)
<i>Au Yong Su Fong</i>	歐陽雪峰	<i>Chen Tian Qing</i>	陳天慶
		(Tan Chen King ?)	
<i>Bai Si Mu</i>	白絲木	<i>Cheong Yoke Choy</i>	張郁才
<i>Bai Yi</i>	白衣	<i>Chin Peng</i>	陳 平
(@ <i>Li Xue Feng</i>	李雪峰)	(<i>Chen Ping</i>)	
(@ <i>Li Liang</i>	李良)	(@ <i>Wang Wen Hua</i>	王文華)
<i>Bing Hong</i>	炳 紅	<i>Choe Yew Fai</i>	曹堯輝
(@ <i>Chen Bing Hong</i>	陳炳宏)	<i>Choo Kia Peng</i>	朱嘉炳
		<i>Choong Lye Hin</i>	莊來興
<i>K.C. Chan</i>	陳鑑祖	<i>Choong Lye Hock</i>	莊來福
<i>Chan Peik Kwan</i>	陳璧君	<i>Chow Yam Peng</i>	周洋濱
(<i>Chen Bi Jun</i>)		(<i>Zhou Yang Bin</i>)	
<i>Chang Ming Ching</i>	張明今		
<i>Chen Da Zhi</i>	陳大智	<i>Deng Fu Long</i>	鄧福龍 (降)
<i>Chen Hao</i>	陳 豪	(@ <i>Chen Qun</i>	陳群)
(@ <i>Lao Gao</i>	老高)		
<i>Chen Lu</i>	陳 路	<i>Foong Seong</i>	馮 相
(@ <i>Hu Tian Bao</i>	胡天保)		
<i>Chen Pei Nong</i>	陳培農	<i>Goh Hock Huat</i>	吳福發

<i>He Xiao Li</i>	何小力	<i>Lau Yew (Liu Yau)</i>	劉堯
(@ <i>Xiao Li</i>	繭力)	<i>Lee Kwee Foh</i>	李桂和
(@ <i>He Tian Xin</i>	何添信)	<i>Liang Zhao Bei</i>	梁朝北
<i>Heah Joo Seang</i>	連裕祥	<i>Liao Wei Zhong</i>	廖偉中
<i>Heah Seng Whatt</i>	連成發	<i>Liao Yi Lin</i>	廖奕林
<i>Huang Cheng</i>	黃成・黃誠	<i>Lim Cheng Teik</i>	林清德
(@ <i>Huang Shi</i>	黃石)	<i>Lim Eow Thoon</i>	林耀祐
<i>Huang Chun</i>	黃春	<i>Lim Kang Sek</i>	林江石
(@ <i>Huang Zi Yan</i>	黃紫焰)	(<i>Lin Jiang Shi</i>)	
(@ <i>Chen Qing</i>	陳清)	(@ <i>Huang Bo Sui</i>	黃伯燧)
<i>Huang Ya Lu</i>	黃耶魯	<i>Lim Lean Teng</i>	林連登
(@ <i>Wee Mong Cheng</i>	黃望青)	<i>Lin Chang</i>	林昌
		(or <i>Lin Tian</i>	林田)
<i>Jia Lei</i>	家雷	<i>Liu Guan Wen</i>	劉冠文
		<i>Liu Guang</i>	劉光
<i>Ke Min</i>	客民	<i>Liu Rong Guang</i>	劉榮光
(@ <i>Cai Ke Ming</i>	蔡克明)	<i>Liu Wen</i>	劉文
<i>Ke Ping</i>	客平	(@ <i>Zhong Bu Qing</i>	鍾步青)
(@ <i>Gao Ke Ping</i>	高克平)	(@ <i>Ya Wen</i>	亞文)
<i>Kho Sian Ewe</i>	邱善佑	<i>Loh Seng (Lu Cheng)</i>	盧成
<i>Koh Sin Hock</i>	辜承福	(@ <i>Mo Ze Xiang</i>	莫澤香)
		<i>Loong Lek Yue</i>	龍歷橋
<i>Lai Lai Fu</i>	賴來福	<i>Low Kee Boo</i>	劉基武
(@ <i>Du Long Shan</i>	杜龍山)		
<i>Lai Tek</i>	萊特	<i>Nagata</i>	長田義人
(@ <i>Huang Shao Dong</i>	黃紹東)	(@ <i>Chong Teck Chong</i>)	張德中
(@ <i>Hoang A Nhac</i>	黃阿五)	<i>Ng Sui Cam</i>	伍瑞琴
<i>Lai Tet Loke</i>	黎德祿	<i>Ng Teong Kiat</i>	黃重吉
<i>Lao Zhang</i>	老張		
(@ <i>Zhang Jin Zhang</i>	張錦章)	<i>Phang Sau Shoong</i>	彭少雄
		(<i>Peng Shao Xiong</i>)	

<i>Shi Dong Fang</i>	史東帆	<i>Xiao Zhong</i>	小中・小忠
<i>Shi Wei</i>	石韋	(@ <i>Li Zhen Zong</i>)	李振宗)
<i>Si Ke</i>	斯科	<i>Xu Qing Biao</i>	許慶彪
(@ <i>Xiao Ke Ke</i>)	肖克科)	<i>Ya Ye</i>	葉葉
<i>Soon Cheng Sun</i>	孫清山	(@ <i>Ye Li Tian</i>)	葉立天)
<i>Soon Eng Kong</i>	孫榮光	<i>Ya Zhong</i>	亞仲
<i>Tan Chin Siong</i>	陳植祥	(@ <i>Wu Tian</i>)	吳田)
<i>Tan Jin Luan</i>	陳仁麟	<i>Yang Guo Zhang</i>	楊國璋
<i>Tu Yue</i>	土月	<i>Yang Lin</i>	楊林
(@ <i>Huang Shi Rui</i>)	黃式銳)	<i>Yang Qing</i>	楊青
<i>Wang Hai Zhi</i>	王海志	<i>Yap Bean Khay</i>	葉錦徽
<i>Wang Jie</i>	王傑	<i>Yong Shook Lin</i>	楊旭齡
<i>Wang Qing</i>	汪清	<i>Yuan Zhi Ying</i>	袁治英
<i>Wang Xiang Fu</i>	王香甫	<i>Zeng Guan Biao</i>	曾冠彪
<i>Wong Chin Thong</i>	王振東	(@ <i>Ma Ding</i>)	馬丁)
<i>Wong Kok Ping</i>	黃國平	<i>Zhang Chuan Qing</i>	章傳慶
(<i>Huang Guo Ping</i>)		(@ <i>Xiao Zhang</i>)	小張)
<i>Wong Lap (Huang Li)</i>	黃立)	(@ <i>Feng Yun</i>)	峰雲)
<i>Wong Tet San</i>	黃鐵珊	<i>Zhang Jiang Hai</i>	張江海
<i>Wong Voon Fah</i>	黃懋華	(@ <i>Jiang Yan</i>)	江雁)
<i>Wu Liang Ming</i>	吳堯明	<i>Zhang Qi</i>	張棋
<i>Xiao Hei</i>	小黑	<i>Zhang Qi Sheng</i>	張奇生
<i>Xiao Lin</i>	小林	(@ <i>Zhang Lang Ping</i>)	張浪平)
(@ <i>Wu Mong Chao</i>)	吳夢超)	(@ <i>Xu Qing</i>)	徐清)
<i>Xiao Ping</i>	小平	<i>Zhang Tian He</i>	張天和
(@ <i>Lin Wang Sheng</i>)	林旺生)	(@ <i>Nan Xue</i>)	南學)
<i>Xiao Yang</i>	小楊	<i>Zhu Lao</i>	朱佬
(@ <i>Wu Ke Xiong</i>)	吳科雄)	(@ <i>Zhu Ri Guang</i>)	朱日光)
		<i>Zhuang Qing</i>	莊清
		(@ <i>Xu Zhi Rong</i>)	徐志榮)

The Anti-Japanese Movement in Perak During the Japanese Occupation, 1941-45

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Perak, situated in the north-central part of Peninsular Malaya, borders on Thailand in the north, Kedah and Penang in the northwest, Kelantan and Pahang in the east, and Selangor in the south, and faces the Malacca Straits on the west. (See Map 2.) In the northern and eastern parts of the state, mountain ranges covered with dense jungle run northward and southward, dividing the peninsula and constituting the watershed of the Perak River, the largest river in Malaya, which meanders through the state and flows into the Malacca Straits. This jungle-covered mountainous terrain was ideal for hit-and-run guerrilla warfare of the sort resorted to by the Communists against the Japanese during wartime.

Before the Second World War, Perak was a major tin and rubber producing and exporting state; it attracted tens of thousands of immigrant labourers from China and India as tin miners and rubber plantation workers. As a result, the Chinese and Indian populations (42 per cent and 14 per cent, respectively) in the state outnumbered indigenous Malays, and major urban centres like Ipoh and Taiping were predominantly Chinese (72 per cent and 55 per cent, respectively).¹

A majority of the Chinese in Perak were men whose national identity and loyalty were with China. The unification of China under the Kuomintang (KMT - the Nationalist Party), and the emergence of a Chinese nationalism built on the *San Min Zhu Yi* (three principles of democracy) ideology of Sun Yat-sen, the founding father of Republican China, strengthened their sense of national identity. These feelings were

¹ Tamura Hideyuki, *Gunseika no Perashu keisatsu—Taiheiyo senso no kiroku* [The Perak State Police during the Japanese Military Administration] (Tokyo: Privately Published, 1980), p. 44.

encouraged by the Chinese government, and Japan's aggression in China in the late 1920s and early 1930s added fuel to the flame of nationalism among overseas Chinese, who responded by boycotting Japanese goods. In 1930 the birth in Singapore of the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) helped radicalise the Nanyang (south seas) Chinese anti-Japanese national salvation movement.²

Following the outbreak of Sino-Japanese hostilities in 1937, the Chinese in Perak boycotted Japanese merchandise, harassed Japanese residents, and raised funds to support the war effort of the KMT government.³ They also remitted money to the non-occupied zone of China to help stabilise the Chinese economy, and many young men returned to China for voluntary service to assist the motherland's war of resistance against Japan. For these anti-Japanese activities they were to suffer much pain during the Japanese Occupation period.

The outbreak of war on 8 December 1941 and the landing of Japanese troops at Kota Bahru in Kelantan and Singora and Patani in southern Thailand took the Chinese by complete surprise. The rapid southward onslaught of the Japanese forces threw them into panic. Many Chinese took refuge in the jungles, and those unable to do so remained in their houses, shutting the doors and holding their breath.

By 15 December an advance unit of the invading armies had reached Kroh; on the 23rd a contingent of the Japanese forces entered Taiping; three days later they reached Ipoh. Most of Perak had fallen into Japanese hands by the first week of January 1942. On the heels of the assault forces, the 25th Army temporarily set up a military government detachment at Taiping to restore law and order and secure provisions and supplies. The arrival in March of the newly appointed

² Yoji Akashi, *Nanyang Chinese Anti-Japanese National Salvation Movement, 1937-1941* (Lawrence, Kansas: Center for East Asian Studies, University of Kansas, 1970); Stephen M.Y. Leong, "Sources, Agencies and Manifestations of Overseas Chinese Nationalism in Malaya, 1937-1941", Part 1 (Ph.D. diss., University of California at Los Angeles, 1976).

³ Minami manshu tetsudo kabushiki kaisha Shanhai jimusho chosabu (ed.), *Kakyo chosa iho* [Collected reports on Overseas Chinese] (Shanghai: MMTKK Shanhai jimusho chosabu, 1940), p. 72. The Chinese in Perak contributed \$1.6 million in cash, and subscribed a further \$1.7 million in the form of Patriot Bonds.

governor, Kubota Taosa, an Internal Affairs Ministry bureaucrat, marked the establishment of the state government of Perak (*Shu Seicho*); in July the seat of government was transferred to Ipoh. Under Kubota's governorship the new *Shu Seicho* was inaugurated with four departments—general affairs, industry, legal affairs, and police affairs—headed by Japanese officials.

The first police chief was Kunichika Takashi, a graduate of the Osaka College of Foreign Languages (where he studied Malay) and a former representative of Suntory Company stationed in pre-war Singapore.⁴ He had no experience in police affairs, and was appointed to the post solely because of his fluency in the Malay language and his familiarity with Singapore and Malaya. Upon his appointment in May, Kunichika sent out notices to pre-war policemen to report to their offices for work. From amongst the approximately 1,000 police officers who reported for duty, Kunichika appointed 14 former senior officers to be chiefs of police stations, posts they held until the end of 1943 when most were replaced by Japanese officers.⁵ In the meantime, a Police Department composed of three sections—police affairs, economic affairs and political affairs—was set up and administered by Japanese officials.

Bolstering the under-strength police force were a military police unit (*kempeitai*) of the 2nd Field Military Police attached to the 25th Army that conquered Malaya and Singapore under the command of Lt. General Yamashita Tomoyuki,⁶ and contingents of battle-tested

⁴ Tamura, [The Perak State Police], pp. 45, 50-51. Kunichika became an interpreter for the Perak Police Department in February 1943 when Tamura replaced him. Ibid., pp. 57-58.

⁶ A field military police was attached to each army operating in the southern regions. There were four field military police units at the time of the opening of hostilities in December 1941. For instance, the 1st Field Military Police (FMP) was attached to the 14th Army (the Philippines), the 2nd FMP to the 25th Army (Malaya and Sumatra), the 3rd FMP to the 16th Army (Java), and the 4th FMP to the 15th Army (Burma). Following the redeployment of the 25th Army to Sumatra in March 1943, the Southern Expeditionary Army organized the 3rd Military Police Force (in April 1943), dividing it into two units which were made responsible for maintaining law and order in Syonan (Singapore) and Johore, and in peninsular Malaya, respectively. The Syonan Military Police came under the command of the 7th Area Army in Syonan in March 1944 whilst the Malay Military Police came under the 29th Army in Taiping in January 1945, which was under 7th Area Army command.

soldiers of the 5th Division.⁷ Their task was to maintain security against the Communists, who were active in guerrilla warfare in hill districts. Perak, particularly in areas with dense jungle and mountainous terrain, was a security-risk state where anti-Japanese elements, mostly Chinese, were active. On 25 February they organized a first patrol of 65 men at Ulu Slim, and on the 28th a second patrol of 60 men at Chemor armed with firearms and supplies abandoned at Slim River by retreating British soldiers.⁸ At the core of these guerrilla forces were Chinese who had "fled Japanese oppression, seeking security in the jungles".⁹ Because the Central Military Committee was not yet formed at the time, the Perak patrols were under the command of the Perak Military Committee of the MCP. In May the MCP underwent reorganization¹⁰ in order to rebuild the Party, which had sustained setbacks in March and April that cost it a number of cadres in Singapore.¹¹ It also created a Central Military Committee to unify anti-Japanese resistance under a single command, and in August the patrol units operating at Ulu Slim, Chemor, Papan (formed in June), and Pulai (established in August) were all brought under this committee. The fast expanding guerrilla forces in Perak became a model for similar organizations in other states.

In July the Central Military Committee organized the Perak guerrilla forces into the 5th Independent Force of the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA). The Perak Force deployed its troops for guerrilla warfare in the territory covering the northern part of the state along with an area adjacent to Penang and the hill districts of

⁷ The 5th Division had fought in China for years before joining the 25th Army that conquered Malaya and Singapore.

⁸ Hai Shang Ou, *Malaya Renmin Kangri Jun* [Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army] (Singapore: Huaqiao chubanshe, 1945), p. 45. Caution should be taken in using this source because it contains many inaccuracies. The author tends to exaggerate claims of MCP/MPAJA battle achievements.

⁹ Gene Z. Hanrahan, *The Communist Struggle in Malaya* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1971), p. 70.

¹⁰ Tomi shudan shireibu, *25-gun joho kiroku* [25th Army Intelligence Record] No. 62 (28 May 1942) covering the 10-20 May period, np.

¹¹ See my article, "Lai Teck, Secretary General of the Malayan Communist Party, 1939-1947", in *Journal of the South Seas Society* 49 (1994): 57-103.

northwestern Kelantan. At the outset, the 5th Independent Force consisted of four companies located at Chemor, Sungei Siput, and Simpang Pulai in northern Perak and Bidor/Tanjong Malim in southern Perak. In the course of 1942 several more companies at Bidor, Cameron Highlands, Gopeng, Kopisan, Lintang, Salak North, Taiping, Tehks¹² and Ulu Slim. A typical company, was headed by a chairman assisted by a deputy chairman, and under their command were five departments: general affairs, communication, propaganda, special service, orderly and guard duty.¹³

The 5th Independent Force had its first base in the recesses of the jungles of the mountains near Chemor, but under the pressure of Japanese military and police attacks moved its headquarters deep into the jungle near Tapah/Bidor, and remained in this area till the end of the war. The 5th Independent Force commanded 63 squads with a total effective strength of 820 supported by 400 reservists.¹⁴ It was headed by Lau Chung, who represented the MCP. Lieh Yang and Hung Q'ing were respectively in charge of political and military affairs, and military operations were directed by Da Chi, the acting commander, perhaps as a result of the Batu Caves massacres of 1 September in which the force commander, Xu Qing, died.¹⁵ At the 3 November meeting, according to a confessed statement by Lim O'ing, a member of the 5th Independent Force who was arrested by the Japanese, Han Hui replaced Da Chi, who became head of the Military Affairs Department.¹⁶ Lai Lai Fuk (Fook) succeeded Han Hui and commanded the Force until

¹² The local name of this location, here transliterated from the Japanese *katakana*, cannot be determined.

¹³ Hai, [Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army], p. 45; [25th Army Intelligence Record] No. 62, np.

¹⁴ Yap Hong Kuan, "Perak under the Japanese" (B.A. Hons. thesis, University of Malaya, 1957), p. 44.

¹⁵ Hara Fujio, "Maraya kyosanto to ko-Nichi senso" [The Malayan Communist Party and the Anti-Japanese War], *Ajia keizai* 19,8 (1978): 20.

¹⁶ [25th Army Intelligence Record] No. 78 (30 Dec. 1942) covering the 11-30 Nov. period, np.

July 1943, when Colonel Itu (Liao Wei Chung)¹⁷ succeeded him. Colonel Itu remained in command until 1948 when the British arrested him. Second in command to Itu was Wong Lup; and the secretary in charge of political affairs was Lau Mah, alias Ah Chung, alias Chin Wei Seong.¹⁸ Lau Mah was believed to be the second ranking member in the MCP Perak State Committee.¹⁹

In the first several months of occupation in 1942, the MCP and MPAJA forces suffered severe setbacks with losses of cadres and rank-and-file members, culminating in the Batu Caves incident in which the Japanese army killed 29 Communists and arrested 15 others. For the MCP and the MPAJA, the first year of occupation was a year of struggle for survival, of lying low and avoiding as much as possible major engagements with the Japanese while they tried to rebuild their battered Party and reorganize it under a new leadership, a task which was reported to have been completed by mid-May 1943, as shown in Appendix I.²⁰

The following is an account of Communist anti-Japanese guerrilla activities in Perak drawn from MCP/MPAJA sources and Japanese army

¹⁷ Yap, "Perak", pp. 33-34. Col. Richard Broome and Lt. Col. John Davis, British Force 136 officers, called Itu "uncle" because he was 43 years old. he was one of the 17 MPAJA leaders decorated by Lord Admiral Louis Mountbatten, supreme commander of South East Asia Command, at Singapore on 6 Jan. 1946 for his distinguished wartime service. In 1948 during the Emergency Itu was arrested and detained in Ipoh Detention Camp.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 44. Lau Mah alias Ah Chung, born in China in 1915, became a member of the North Perak District Committee (Sungei Siput) in 1940, and a member of the South Perak District Committee (Kampar) in 1941. After having served the State Secretary of Selangor from 1941 to 1943, he was transferred to the Perak State Committee and in 1945 was appointed the Perak State Secretary succeeding Lo Li, who was Da Chi's deputy commander in 1942. He died of tuberculosis in 1952 somewhere in southern Thailand. Special Branch, Singapore, in Yap, "Perak", App. XIII.

¹⁹ Unpublished manuscript of Richard Broome, in *ibid.*, p. 44.

²⁰ [25th Army Intelligence Record] No. 62, np.; interview with Kumakawa Juzo (a Perak police inspector, 1942-45), 12 Nov. 1978; interview with Kubota Taosa (governor of Perak, 1942-43), 17 Mar. 1978.

intelligence reports of 1942.²¹

The first large scale attack by an army garrison of Japan's 5th Division was carried out on 2 May against the Slim River Squad at Ulu Slim, four miles from Slim River. Guided by Malay informers, 500 Japanese troops attacked the camp. Thirteen guerrillas joined by four stay-behind British soldiers fought four days against the battle-tested Japanese soldiers before abandoning the Ulu Slim base and retreating into the Chemor Hills.²² It was in the Chemor Hills that the guerrillas first published *Rendao Bao* [Humanity], an irregular weekly paper that was to become the official bulletin of the 5th Independent Force.²³

Once the guerrillas had regrouped, they resorted throughout May, June, July and August to harassment of the Japanese with sporadic hit-and-run attacks, while recruiting sympathizers and establishing supporting associations. They assaulted Japanese and local policemen, attacked police stations and substations, burglarised Chinese and Malay residences to obtain money, food and supplies, struck at trains, disseminated propaganda handouts and slogans, and abducted or murdered collaborators and informers.²⁴ A Japanese military

²¹ [25th Army Intelligence Record] Nos. 62, 63, 68, 69, 71, 73, 78, 79; Hai, [Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army], pp. 45-48; Tamura, [The Perak State Police], pp. 86-96.

²² Hai, [Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army], p. 46.

²³ *Ibid.*; Tamura, [The Perak State Police], pp. 84-86; Syonan gunsei kambu keimubu, *Marai ni okeru chianjo no ichi kosatsu; Bessatsu 1* [A Study of Security Problems in Malaya], App. 1, 27 Nov. 1942 (Top secret), np. Hai said the paper's title was *Kuan Ming Bao* [Bright News]. There was no newspaper with that title, whilst Japanese sources cite the above mentioned *Rendao Bao*. Besides the *Rendao Bao*, the MCP in Perak published *Renmin Bao*, *Renmin Kangri Ribao*, *Jiefang Bao*, and *Kuan Chuo Bao*. According to Tamura, *Rendao Bao* contained accurate reports, deriving its information from New Delhi, India, through shortwave radio broadcasts and also from informers and sympathizers.

²⁴ [25th Army Intelligence Record] No. 62, No. 63 (6 June 1942, covering the 20-31 May period), No. 68 (25 Aug. 1942, covering 11-31 July period); Tomi shudan shireibu, *Senji geppo (gunsei kankei)* [Wartime monthly report (Military administration)], Aug. 1942; Tamura, [The Perak State Police], p. 80. He said that there were frequent attacks on police stations, almost 10 such incidents every week.

intelligence report noted that beginning in July the Communists appeared to have shifted their tactics and were bent on assassinating pro-Japanese residents and local policemen, and recruiting members for the Party. In the period between 11 and 30 July, five incidents were reported in which two Chinese who provided the Japanese police with information about Communist activities were kidnapped or murdered and three local policemen were shot to death. The report also recorded that the MCP had established a branch in Salak North and a sub-branch at Enggor with fifty newly recruited members, and that the Party had organized a North Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Union (MPAJU) at Taiping.²⁵

To deal with these pin-pricking harassments, Japanese army and police forces conducted all-out counter-attacks with such thoroughness that more than 500 guerrillas were reported to have surrendered as they lost the spirit for resistance. Some of them were said to have begun serving the Japanese to induce their former colleagues in the jungles to defect from the Party and guerrilla forces.²⁶ As a result of these punitive expeditions, fewer incidents occurred in August.

Japanese intelligence, however, noted that the 5th Independent Force had restructured its organization by 3 September into a fighting unit which now became known as the 5th Independent Battalion, strengthening the fighting capability of its troops with military training and using Communist ideology to uplift their anti-Japanese spirit. Under the acting commander, Da Chi (later Han Hui), the Battalion was composed of six platoons, including one entirely made up of teenage girls. Practically all of the platoon members were less than 30 years old (see Appendix II). The reorganization called for winning the support of reservists and the MPAJU in order to procure arms and raise funds.

Before the Communists could recoup their losses and consolidate their strength, the Japanese army garrison subjected them to unremitting attack. Following up on the successful assault of 1 September against MCP leaders assembled at Batu Caves, it mounted a relentless month-

²⁵ [25th Army Intelligence Record], No. 68, np.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

long campaign against the 5th MPAJA Battalion. Guided by informers, two battalions of the Nishihara regiment, assisted by 13 *kempeitai* (military police) officers and 250 policemen encircled and attacked MPAJA camps in the Ipoh/Chemor and Ipoh/Pusing areas on 4 September. Under heavy pressure the guerrillas retreated to Rimba Panjang and then to Ampang Bahru, where the Japanese carried out a white terror exercise which reduced the village to ashes, according to MPAJA sources. The 5th Battalion re-established its headquarters at Simpang Pulai.²⁷ In this engagement, the Japanese forces killed 12 and arrested 3 guerrillas and burned 24 barracks in the guerrilla camps.²⁸

Contingents of the Otsuka regiment also carried out systematic anti-Communist operations throughout the State from 22 to 24 September, attacking guerrilla bases at Tanjong Rambutan, Ulu Malim and Lenggong. The MPAJA sustained six casualties and abandoned hundreds of weapons and large amounts of ammunition. Coordinating with the army garrison, the *kempeitai* mounted mopping-up operations to ferret out MPAJU sympathizers in Chemor, Salak North, Ipoh and Gopeng, making five arrests. The campaigns in September dislodged Communist cadres from their bases, forcing them to take flight to Batu Gajah, Kampar, Slim River, Tanjong Malim, and areas south of Ipoh, while rank-and-file members went to Kuala Kangsar and areas along the lower Perak River in the southern part of the state.²⁹

Though the MPAJA Communists suffered severe damage in September they were still persistent in harassing the Japanese by attacking Chinese homes and trains, cutting telephone lines and murdering local policemen and informers. In the period between 21 and 30 September, the 25th Army intelligence reported 10 assaults, second only in the Malay states to Johore's fourteen cases.³⁰ Also, several British stragglers were said to have been helping the Communists to stir up anti-Japanese activities in Grik and Kuala Kangsar.³¹

²⁷ Ibid., No. 71 (2 Oct. 1942) covering the 1-10 September period, np.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid., No. 73 (23 Oct. 1942) covering the 21-30 September period, np.

³¹ Ibid.

It became known to the army garrison in mid-November that the Perak MPAJA, now headed by Han Hui, with its headquarters at Chemor, had deployed several companies at principal cities and organized MPAJU units, armed reservist forces, and guerrilla armies in kampongs (villages) in order to carry on anti-Japanese activities.³² The Japanese army secured additional information from one Ah Li, a ranking member of the Perak MCP and chairman of the MPAJU in north Perak. Under interrogation after he was arrested, Ah Li reported that the 5th Independent Battalion had been reinforcing its units since early November, and that it had held a meeting of the presidium on 10 November at which the Perak MPAJA leader addressed cadres. He said the Malayan situation offered a "revolutionary opportunity similar to that of the October Revolution experienced by the Soviets" and urged his followers to fight Japanese fascism by emulating the spirit of the Bolshevik Revolution.³³ Having suffered heavy losses at the hands of the combined forces of the Japanese army garrison and the police, the Communists obviously faced a multitude of difficulties, particularly in connection with morale and discipline. The presidium meeting was an attempt to rectify the problems that had been identified by the party leadership.

In a captured document that was prepared for the Batu Caves meeting on 1 September, a Perak representative had pointed out various weaknesses of the Party, saying that it was facing a crisis because (1) the political standard was low; (2) there was much disagreement within the Party with a consequent inability to reach a consensus; and (3) the acute food problem created so much uncertainty that many Party members were deserting the camp.³⁴ Other documents issued by the chairmen of the MCP Central Military Committee called upon Party members for absolute obedience and discipline as well as re-education in ideology in order to raise their morale.³⁵

³² *Ibid.*, No. 78 (30 Dec. 1942) covering the 11-30 Nov. period, np.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Gunsei kambu keimubu, [A Study of Security Problems in Malaya], App. I, np.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, App. II, IV, V. 36 [25th Army Intelligence Record], No. 78, np.

An additional problem raised at the presidium meeting was securing and organizing popular support. In another captured document, the Perak representative mentioned that Party propaganda was not concrete enough to attract the support of people. At the November conference the Party leader appealed to his cadres to devote themselves to winning popular support with propaganda to build up people's organizations in order to wage the war to the end against the Japanese.³⁶

The third problem discussed at the presidium meeting was that of raising funds. Though Japanese intelligence materials did not specify how the money was to be collected, it became clear from subsequent incidents that the Communists meant to do it partly through theft and extortion. They raided homes of Chinese and Malays, taking money and jewellery. Twenty such incidents were reported in the period between 11 and 30 November.

During the same period MPAJU and reservist forces, supported by the Perak MPAJA, mounted subversive activities along the Kinta River Valley in Kuala Kangsar, Sungei Siput, Ipoh, Batu Gajah, Telok Anson, Gopeng, Kampar, Tapah, and Bidor. Describing the security problem in the second half of November, army intelligence reported that the Communists were "most active in Johore and Perak" in disturbing peace and order with anti-Japanese activities and with burglary and extortion. The garrison, working in cooperation with military police and ordinary policemen, was ordered out seven times during this period to deal with anti-Japanese harassments at Kopisan, Selibin, Kroh, Kampar, Ampang, Ipoh, Chemor, Pusing, Pasir Puteh, Taiping, Batu Gajah and Bukit Kroh, and they arrested scores of Communist reservists and sympathizers.³⁷

The security situation in Perak, particularly on the fringe of the jungles and in hill districts, became so serious that the military administration in Syonan (Singapore) in early November sent 11 trained specialists to advise the police force in Perak and other states in restoring law and order.³⁸ They arrived in Perak at a time when the Perak MCP

³⁶ [25th Army Intelligence Record], No. 78, np.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Syonan gunsei kambu, *Gunsei Junpo* [Ten-day report] No. 21 (Nov. 1942), np. This measure was taken on 19 October when the Syonan Military Administration drafted "Principles dealing with security in Malaya".

and MPAJA were undergoing reorganization, a process which began in early November and was completed on 1 December. The reorganized 5th Independent Battalion, composed of four companies (280 men each) deployed at Tehks, Lentang, Kopisan, and Bidor was ordered to launch a campaign which included attacks on police stations and policemen, assassination of informers and betrayers, burglary and extortion, and dissemination of propaganda materials. Fifty-three such incidents were reported for Perak in December, the highest figure for all the Malay states.³⁹

On the military side, the Perak MPAJA supported by armed reservists and the MPAJU was reported to have been reinforced. According to an MPAJA source, they engaged "1,000 Japanese soldiers" who attacked their camp at Simpang Pulai. The Japanese attacked from three directions. Alerted by gunfire, the Communist guerrillas, divided themselves into three groups—one carried away the sick while the other two groups faced the Japanese troops. On the second day, reinforced by "2,000 soldiers", the Japanese charged up the hills. The Communist guerrillas withdrew after inflicting "about 360 casualties on the enemy, including six lieutenants", and started a 17-day march to join the Gopeng squad encamped on the top of Gopeng Hill.⁴⁰

Directed by the MPAJA decision of December, the Communists, in cooperation with the MPAJU, continued to strike at police stations to replenish arms and ammunition and at Chinese and Malay homes to extort food and money while instigating anti-Japanese sentiments amongst the populace.⁴¹ In January the Japanese planned to blockade the Chemor Hills area leading to Sungei Siput to choke off supply and communication lines between guerrillas and MPAJU sympathizers. To gather the necessary information from villagers in the area, the Japanese detained thousands of people at Batu Gajah Prison and Chungshan

³⁹ [25th Army Intelligence Record], No. 79 (31 Jan. 1943) covering the 1-31 Dec. 1942.

⁴⁰ Hai, [Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army], p. 46.

⁴¹ Tomi shudan shireibu, [Wartime monthly report], Jan. 1943, np.

Theatre for two months before releasing them. Tipped off by informers, the Communists vanished from the vicinity and foiled the Japanese plan, according to an MCP/MPAJA account. The arrests for interrogation only engendered bitter anti-Japanese feelings in the minds of the villagers.⁴²

Maintaining security in Perak became more and more difficult after December, when the battle-tested soldiers of the Japanese 5th Division were re-deployed to the area north of Australia and replaced by a *shubitai* (defence garrison) consisting of inadequately trained reservists. After March 1943, the former Police Chief for Perak recalls, the security situation worsened, so much so that there were no less than ten attacks on police stations every week.⁴³ The Perak police and military forces were kept on the run pursuing the elusive Communists, which became the principal task of the security forces. Emulating Mao Zedong's guerrilla tactics,⁴⁴ MPAJA soldiers retreated into the depths of the jungle when they faced superior forces, and hit back at the enemy when the latter withdrew, or struck at the enemy's weakest positions at unexpected moments.

All indications were that by March the Perak MPAJA had recovered from the setbacks of the first year. Almost every day Police Department headquarters was receiving reports from Chemor, Sungei Siput, Tronoh, and even from the areas around Ipoh of guerrilla attacks on police stations and substations. After the spring of 1943, the

⁴² Hai, [Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army], p. 47.

⁴³ Tamura, [The Perak State Police], pp. 80, 88.

⁴⁴ MCP Secretary General Lai Tek established in the 6th Independent Battalion (northern Pahang) a People's University for the ideological indoctrination of MCP cadres. The principal of the University was Chien Kuang who completed his training at a guerrilla school operated by the 8th Road Army of the Chinese Communist Party, and textbooks used at the school were brought back by former soldiers of the 8th Road Army and the New 4th Army. Syonan gunsei kambu keimubu. *Marci ni okeru chian* App. II *Chuo gunji iinkai tsukoku* Central Military Committee Notice No. 1, 25 Jul. 1942; np.; Hai, [Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army], p. 49. For schooling at the camp of the 6th Independent Battalion, see F. Spencer Chapman, *The Jungle is Neutral* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1949), Ch. 8.

frequency of attacks increased monthly and anti-Japanese activities became so rampant that Perak was designated the worst security-risk state in all Malaya.⁴⁵

To cope with the security problem, the Japanese army organized in April a Third *Kempeitai* Unit of some 410 men at Syonan under the command of Col. (later Maj. General) Kojima Masanori, a veteran kempei officer.⁴⁶ One special significance of the organization was the presence of a *beppan* (mobile unit) of the Special Police Force. The *beppan* consisted of some thirty experienced *kempei* who were free to operate as occasion demanded anywhere in Malaya for the specific task of fighting anti-Japanese forces. It set up its headquarters in the Tapah-Bidor area, a place known to be a "hot spot" infested by bandits and believed to be where the 5th Battalion's base was located in the jungles of Blantan. The *beppan* was commanded by Capt. (later Major) Onishi Satoru, a veteran *kempei* officer who master-minded the treachery against the MCP using Lai Tek, MCP Secretary General, as a double agent.

The Perak *Shu Seicho* (state government) also strengthened its police force by recruiting additional seasoned officers, raising their number from 4 to 16 by June, and these officers gradually replaced local police chiefs. Furthermore, the Police Department created a special police unit, which like the *beppan*, was a mobile unit of 180 local policemen specifically trained for anti-guerrilla warfare.⁴⁷ Supplementing the police force were *jikeidan* (vigilance committees) organized in every city, town and village to support the police. The *jikeidan* were to cooperate with the police to maintain law and order in their respective communities and to provide information to authorities leading to the apprehension of people suspected of engaging in anti-Japanese subversive activities.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Tamura, [The Perak State Police], p. 87.

⁴⁶ Taipinkai (ed.), *Marai yo harukanuri* [Far Away Malaya] (Tokyo: Privately Published, 1989), pp. 242-43.

⁴⁷ Tamura, [The Perak State Police], pp. 76-76.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 78-79.

The Perak police force, strengthened by the newly arrived officers and working with the *heppan* and vigilance committees, became a formidable threat to the Communists, and soon achieved results. In April, the attempted assassination by guerrillas of a high-ranking Japanese official travelling in a car led to a police investigation and the arrest of a telephone operator working for the Perak *Shu Seicho*. An interrogation revealed that he was a planted informer bribed by a Communist agent, who paid him 50 dollars every month for inside information. In a subsequent search of a Communist hideout, special police officers seized a copy of the *Rendao Bao* in which they discovered names of high ranking Japanese officials to be assassinated along with descriptions of their physical appearance and the licence plate numbers of their official cars.⁴⁹ The revelation brought home to the police how deeply the Communists had infiltrated the state government to obtain inside information.

As the Perak MPAJA had regained its strength and was ready to launch a counter-attack, a Japanese *shubitai* made up of "6,000 troops from Selangor supported by 500 machine-gunners", according to an MPAJA source, mounted a fierce attack on 11 June against a guerrilla base in the Gopeng Hills. The Japanese struck the camp from two directions, coordinating the action by radio communication from a command post located at the premises of a French tin mining company. "The 100 members, of which fifty were on the sick list" fought with coolness, though they faced almost certain death. After engaging the Japanese for "six days", the guerrillas retreated to another base, breaking away from the encirclement.⁵⁰

The greatest success of the anti-Communist campaign by the Perak police force was the arrest of Lai Lai Fuk, commander of the 5th Battalion, in July. Acting on a tip-off obtained while scouting a village in the hills of Batu Gajah that a ranking MCP cadre would visit the kampong, Inspector Taoka Masaki laid an ambush and captured Lai Lai Fuk. Before he was executed, Lai revealed information about the

⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 93-94.

⁵⁰ Hai, [Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army], p. 47.

MCP organization hitherto unknown to the Japanese.⁵¹ The deaths of Xu Qing at Batu Caves in September 1942 and of Ah So (alias Ah Nam), Perak State Committee Secretary in late 1942,⁵² and now Lai Lai Fuk's arrest delivered a serious blow to the 5th Battalion. To restore morale, Chin Peng, the Perak MCP's Secretary General, personally took command of the Battalion for a time.

A series of arrests of Party cadres and frequent attacks on MCP camps in the past several months had aroused suspicion amongst Party leaders that someone was supplying information to the Japanese. To deal with traitors, the 5th Battalion in December 1942 created "killer squads" specializing in ambush. "The men selected were of a higher calibre than those in the rank- and-file. They were also noted for their daring and initiative." They were organized at Ipoh and Kampar.⁵³

The Ipoh "killer squad" avenged the arrest of Lai Lai Fuk with a successful ambush against the Japanese police force. Inspector Taoka, the man who captured Lai, was returning with his men from a successful raid on a communist base in the jungles of Batu Gajah. Violating the iron rule that an expedition should never take the same road on the way back, the Taoka party returned by the route it had taken on the way to the raid. The "killer squad" waited in ambush and mowed the party down with machine guns, annihilating 20 men, including Taoka and another Japanese inspector. The Kampong Sumi Massacre of 27 August was the most successful ambush by the Communists during the Occupation period.⁵⁴

By this time the British, in cooperation with the Chinese government, had organized Force 136 to send in agents, most of whom

⁵¹ Yap, "Perak", p. 33; Tamura, [The Perak State Police], pp. 95-96.

⁵² Yap, "Perak", p. 33; Hara, "Maraya kyosanto", *Ajia keizai* 19,8 (1978): 20.

⁵³ Yap, "Perak", p. 33; OF A/1/31/(Y) No. 31, pt. V in *Ibid.* p. 43; Cheah Boon Kheng, *Red Star over Malaya*, 2nd ed. (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1983), p. 61. MCP cadres were unaware until 1947 that their own leader, Lai Tek, had betrayed them.

⁵⁴ Tamura, [The Perak State Police], pp. 97-98.

were Chinese.⁵⁵ This mission was known in English as Operation Gustavus, and had the Chinese code-name Dragon. The first group, led by Lt. Col. John Davis, included Wu Chye Sin assuming the name of Ng Koon Hooi, Lung Chiu Ying assuming the name of Ah Eng, Li Han Kwang who took the name of Lee Cheng, and Tan Sian Tang who went as Han Lay Boon. On 24 May 1943 they landed at Tanjong Hantu in the Dindings Channel, four miles off the northernmost point of Pangkor Island, and vanished into Ipoh, Lumut, Pangkor, and Segari to engage in intelligence-gathering operations under the cover of doing business. Wu Chye Sin, for example, began his activities around Lumut and later moved to Ipoh where he opened a rice shop and "within a month our rice business, through its trading networks throughout Malaya, became so successful that we were able to make enormous profit. As a result, we won the confidence of government servants, so much so that many Japanese government officials attended our receptions. We gathered much valuable intelligence from them and passed it to Allied headquarters".⁵⁶

Gustavus I was followed in succession by Gustavus II, III, IV, V and VI. Gustavus II made a successful rendezvous on 26 June with a junk at a position north of Pulau Pangkor to pick up Davis, who was suffering from a skin disease, in order to take him back to Ceylon. There was no landing of personnel on this mission. Gustavus III landed Liang Yung Ming, Tan Chong Tee, and Yee Tien Song under the assumed names of Lee Choon (radio operator), Ah Lim, and Sek Fu, respectively, along with Davis. They left on 27 July and made a successful junk rendezvous on 4 August south of the Sembilans. The junk helped the four men go ashore at a North Pangkor landing zone,

⁵⁵ Ian Trenowden, *Operations Most Secret. SOE: The Malayan Theatre* (London: W. Kimber, 1978), ch. 5 and 6; Tan Chong Tee, *Wo yu 136 pu-tui* [Force 136 and I] (Singapore: Hait'ian, 1994); Shu Yun-Ts'ian and Chua Ser-Koon (eds.), *Sin-Ma-Hua jen-min k'ang-jih shih-liao 1937-1945* [Singapore and Malayan Chinese People's Anti-Japanese Historical Materials] (Singapore: Cultural and Historical Publishing House, 1984), pp. 642-96.

⁵⁶ Shu Yung-Ts'ian and Chua Ser-Koon (eds.), [Singapore and Malayan Chinese People's Anti-Japanese Historical Materials], p. 650.

and the party set up a base in the Segari hills. Gustavus IV brought Lt. Col. Richard Broome, and completed its mission by landing him off Pulau Lalang on 20 September to join Davis.

On 25 October submarine O-24 sailed for the Gustavus V mission. It carried Lt. Col. Claude Fenner as conducting officer, Capt. F.P.W. Harrison, and the regional commander of Force 136, Col. Lim Bo Seng (assuming the name of Tan Choon Lim), along with his deputy, Chuang Hui Tsuan. All except Chuang landed off Pulau Lalang on 2 November. Broome had planned to meet Lim Bo Seng, but he was ill and Japanese patrols were so active in the landing area that it was extremely risky for a white man to go there. Chin Peng received the landing party, which had brought with it seven machine-guns, 1,000 bullets, four revolvers, a large quantity of medicine (quinine and vitamins), and two radio sets. The Gustavus V team, however, had to leave stores of arms and the transmitters at the beach for later retrieval. Chin Peng quietly whisked Lim Bo Seng into the jungle. He had been designated the leader of Force 136 to help Chinese agents set up a Malaya-wide intelligence network because his prestige and influence could "provide the leadership and obtain the necessary local support and funds".⁵⁷

In late October or early November Onishi's *kempeitai* received information from Lai Tek, the MCP Secretary General who served the *kempeitai* as a double agent, that Force 136 agents, including Davis, Broome and several Chinese, had landed and were engaging in subversive operations alongside the Perak MCP guerrillas. Immediately, Onishi ordered Nakano Tomoji, *kempei* Warrant Officer of the *beppan*, and his 16 men to proceed to Tapah, and *kempei* sergeant Ishibe Toshiro, also of the *beppan*, accompanied by two Chinese detectives, to go to

⁵⁷ Trenowden, *Operations Most Secret*, p. 101.

Telok Anson.⁵⁸ After setting up a base at a location three miles south of Telok Anson along the Perak River, Ishibe scoured the area for suspects and in February 1944 arrested a Communist sympathizer, who confessed that in August of the previous year he had helped British and Chinese agents carrying rifles, pistols, and wireless sets. He said that after staying at his house for a few days these men, aided by a prominent Chinese in Pangkor, had sailed up the Perak River towards Bidor and Ipoh to join their colleagues.⁵⁹

Having obtained this information, Ishibe set up bases in Ipoh and in Lumut, across from Pangkor Island, to hunt down enemy agents. His investigation brought to light the fact that the man who provided assistance to the Allied agents was Chua Koon Ying, who operated an export-import business. On the 22nd of March, Ishibe and his men apprehended Chua, who admitted that (1) sometime in May of the previous year Li Han Kwang (Lee Cheng or Ah Tsing), an army lieutenant of the Nationalist Chinese Army, visited him for assistance and offered a remuneration of Y20,000; (2) he had helped the agents land their arms three times with his own boat; (3) Lee Cheng and his agents had established a joint business with Cheng Chu Nung, president of Kian Aik Chan, a rice importing firm at 77 Market Street, Ipoh; (4) Lee Cheng and his men were staying at Asia Hotel near Kian Aik Chan; (5) caches of the arms they brought with them were hidden in the jungle

⁵⁸ Onishi Satoru, *Hiroku Shonah kakyo shukusei kiroku* [An Untold History of the Massacres of Chinese in Singapore] (Tokyo: Kongo Shuppan, 1978), pp. 163-64; Zenkoku kenyukai rengokai (ed.), *Nippon kempei seishi* [The Authorised History of the Japanese Military Police] (Tokyo, 1981), pp. 987-88; Ishibe Toshiro, *Seishun kempei Ishibe memo* [Youthful Days of Military Police: Ishibe Memoirs] (Osaka: Privately Published, 1990), pp. 82-83. One of the Chinese detectives was Huang Tui-mien. Ishibe arrested Huang in Kota Tinggi, Johore, and induced him to serve as a *kempeitai* agent. Huang was in charge of propaganda for the MCP Johore district. Huang helped Ishibe arrest Ah Fan, cadre of the MCP Central Committee, in March 1943 at Layang Layang Station, Johore. Ah Fan killed himself by biting his tongue whilst he was detained. Ishibe, [Ishibe Memoirs], pp. 52-60. Huang is said to have been murdered after the war.

⁵⁹ Ishibe, [Ishibe Memoirs], pp. 82-90.

near Lumut beach. Chua agreed to cooperate with the *kempeitai* by taking them to Kian Aik Chan and the Asia Hotel.⁶⁰

Onishi at once ordered a *kempeitai* unit deployed in Tapah to join Ishibe in a raid on two places in Ipoh. On the 24th, Ishibe arrested Lee Cheng, identified by Chua Koon Ying, at the Asia Hotel. Ishibe's interrogation, which mixed threats with cajolery, induced the tight-lipped Lee Cheng to reveal his true name and rank; the identity of his superiors, Davis and Lim Bo Seng; the location of hideouts of other agents such as Wu Chye Sin, Tan Chong Tee, and Yee Tien Song and what they were doing; his association with Cheng Chu Nung of Kian Aik Chan and Chua Koon Ying of Pangkor; and the address in Kuala Lumpur that was Wu Chye Sin's contact point.⁶¹

While Ishibe and his men congratulated themselves at a neighbourhood restaurant on the arrest of Lee Cheng, whom Ishibe planned to use as a double agent, Lee Cheng himself escaped from his cell through a bathroom window and made a run for Bidor.⁶² Fearing that Lee Cheng would expose the *kempeitai*'s covert operations against Communist agents, Onishi ordered all available *kempeitai* forces to converge upon Ipoh to raid Kian Aik Chan. On the 26th they swooped upon the rice shop and arrested Cheng Chu Nung and Tan Chong Tee.⁶³ Their arrest was reported to Sek Fu, another agent who was staying at the Yan Woh Hotel, by Mook Cheng, a reporter working for the Japanese in the Information Department who had been recruited as an informer by the Communists.⁶⁴ Sek Fu instructed Mook Cheng to inform Lim Bo Seng of what had happened to the agents in Ipoh. Thinking

⁶⁰ Ibid., pp. 91-92.

⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 93-97; Yap, "Perak", p. 65; Tan, [Force 136 and I], pp. 204-205. Lee Cheng was a dyed-in-the-wool intelligence officer who at first, with a derisive smile, refused to respond to Ishibe's interrogation and then suddenly became cooperative. His change of attitude, it turned out, was a tactic to throw the *kempeitai* off guard in order to escape from detention.

⁶² Ishibe, [Ishibe Memoirs], p. 97; Yap, "Perak", p. 65; Tan, [Force 136 and I], pp. 204-205.

⁶³ Ishibe, [Ishibe Memoirs], p. 98.

⁶⁴ Yap, "Perak", p. 64; Tan, [Force 136 and I], pp. 77-78.

the men had been apprehended for business irregularities, Lim Bo Seng replied that he would investigate the incident before attempting to escape and said that Sek Fu "should not return to Tapah until the 27th when a new instruction would be sent".⁶⁵

Lim Bo Seng decided to escape with Mook Cheng from his hideout at No. 9 Connolly Road, Ipoh.⁶⁶ They travelled by car to Bidor, but the *kempeitai* had already set up roadblocks at all junctions, and seven miles south of Ipoh at the Sen Liu junction, where a branch road leads to Batu Gajah, their car was stopped. Lim Bo Seng's vague replies to questioning aroused suspicion, which was further deepened when Sergeant Nakayama Mitsuo⁶⁷ discovered that he was wearing a brand new wristwatch of a kind not found in Malaya and Singapore. When Bo Seng tried to bribe the *kempeitai* officer with a stack of money,⁶⁸ Nakayama arrested the two men and took them to Ipoh for interrogation.

Sek Fu, having received no word from Bo Seng, decided to try to reach the Bidor camp, but he had to return to Ipoh because a curfew was in force. Whilst he was asleep at a hotel, *kempeitai* officers and policemen surrounded the building. In the early morning hours of the

⁶⁵ Yap, "Perak", p. 65; Tan, [Force 136 and I], p. 179. Lim Bo Seng came down from camp to Ipoh to go to Singapore to contact Lau Bo Ten, a friend of Tan Kah Kee, a Chinese community leader who fled Singapore and hid himself in Java during the war, in order to raise funds. Bo Seng's Force 136 group lacked funds because of a breakdown in wireless communication, a result of leaving transmitters at the beach near Lumut where he landed in Nov. 1943.

⁶⁶ Tan, [Force 136 and I], p. 207.

⁶⁷ Interviews with Nakayama on 25 Mar. and 23 Oct. 1993; Ishibe, [Ishibe Memoirs], pp. 98-99; Tan, [Force 136 and I], p. 212. Sergeant Nakayama arrested Lai Tek, the MCP Secretary General, in Singapore during March 1942. The *kempeitai* detained Bo Seng to see whether he could be used as a double agent for he was a cooperative prisoner, but he died in the Batu Gajah Prison in June 1944 (of dysentery, not of torture as the Chinese widely believed).

⁶⁸ Yap, "Perak", p. 65.

28th, they seized Sek Fu and locked him up at the Tapah Police Station.⁶⁹ The *kempeitai* also closed in upon Wu Chye Sin, a Chinese army lieutenant, whose intelligence activities were based at Kian Aik Chan in Ipoh and who was responsible for setting up similar intelligence operations at principal cities in order to organize an intelligence network throughout Malaya. Having obtained information from Lee Cheng that Wu Chye Sin was staying in Kuala Lumpur at a contact place on High Street, Ishibe arrested him there on the 30th.⁷⁰

Whilst Wu was detained at *kempeitai* headquarters in Kuala Lumpur for questioning, he tried to commit suicide by hitting his head against the prison wall. A blood transfusion given by Ishibe and emergency medical care saved his life and he recovered his health after a few days. He was then transferred to an army hospital in Ipoh for further treatment and recuperation. Obviously "touched by the generous medical attention, Wu appeared to have changed the rebellious attitude that he showed at the time of his arrest and became cooperative with interrogation". His confession substantiated those of other arrested agents, but he furnished new information that was of considerable interest to the *kempeitai*: he said that a British submarine would "arrive around the 20th of every month carrying agents, arms, and food supplies", and that as a liaison officer he had had "contact with a submarine three times by a junk rented from Chua Koon Ying". He

⁶⁹ Ishibe, [Ishibe Memoirs], pp. 99-103; Shu and Chua, [Singapore and Malayan Chinese People's Anti-Japanese Historical Materials], pp. 649-51. Wu Chye Sin (alias Ng Koon Hooi) said that he obtained a travel permit under a false name from one Nakamura, said to be chief of the Marine Affairs Department, Malay Military Administration, who knew Wu through his business dealings. Nakamura was said to have been detained by the *kempeitai* for issuing the permit. Contrary to what Wu said in his statement, he became a *kempeitai* agent and double-crossed his Force 136 comrades by guiding Ishibe for a rendezvous with a British submarine (see below). Nor was he imprisoned at the Batu Gajah Prison, as he said in this statement ([Singapore and Malayan Chinese People's Anti-Japanese Historical Materials], p. 651). Ishibe said Wu's statement in this volume was a fiction for self-protection. According to Ishibe, the *kempeitai* gave him money after the war and advised him to go into hiding ([Ishibe Memoirs], p. 111).

⁷⁰ Ishibe, [Ishibe Memoirs], p. 101; Shu and Chua, [Singapore and Malayan Chinese People's Anti-Japanese Historical Materials], p. 650.

volunteered to "guide Ishibe out to sea for a rendezvous with the submarine".⁷¹

Cross-checking his statement with those of other arrested agents, including Lim Bo Seng, Ishibe concluded that Wu's information was reliable. After securing approval from Onishi, Ishibe made an arrangement with the Navy in Penang to coordinate an attack on an enemy submarine. Accompanied by two Chinese detectives and Wu, he sailed out to sea off Jarak Island, one of the southernmost of the Sembilan Islands, a few miles from the mouth of the Perak River. When the periscope of a submarine was sighted a seaplane emerged from hiding behind Jarak Island and dropped anti-submarine charges. Naval Air Base headquarters at Penang, according to Ishibe, informed Onishi that the attack was successful in sinking the submarine.⁷²

Having rounded up most of the Chinese agents (Chua Koon Ying, Cheng Chu Nung, Mook Cheng, Wu Chye Sin, Tan Choon Tee, Yee Tien Song, Li Han Kwang and Lim Bo Seng), Onishi led his unit of 20 men to the area near Lumut where, according to statements extracted from the captured agents, Force 136 agents had left caches of arms and radio transmitters at Jenderata for later retrieval. The Onishi *Kempeitai* unearthed a large quantity of rifles (automatic rifles and Colt hand guns) and several hundred rounds of ammunition as well as radio sets. The seizure of these arms and ammunition and transmitters delivered a crippling blow to Force 136 operations in the jungles. For several months Davis and Broome were unable to make contact with SEAC (South-East Asia Command) headquarters at Colombo, Ceylon, where they were presumed to have been arrested or killed.⁷³ Force 136 agents were thus completely isolated from their headquarters and had to depend upon the MCP/MPAJA for intelligence until January or February 1945,

⁷¹ Ishibe, [Ishibe Memoirs], p. 103.

⁷² Ibid., pp. 104-106. There is no report of a British submarine sunk by an air attack, though the submarine used for Remarkable V, which could be the one involved, was reported to have been "heavily attacked". Trenowden, *Operations Most Secret*, p. 149.

⁷³ Trenowden, *Operations Most Secret*, p. 149.

when Force 136 parachuted in agents and transmitters with B-24s.⁷⁴ Cut off from SEAC headquarters, the isolated agents also suffered from acute shortages of food and medicine, as well as funds lost when the Japanese attacked their camp at Blantan.⁷⁵ The MPAJA was in no better shape, as the Japanese stepped up their harassment.

To rescue the isolated Force 136 agents, SEAC organized the Operation Remarkable series. Five attempts were made, but the result was "a very unpleasant one". Only Remarkable III was successful, but it could not send back information as it was unable to contact Ceylon. "After the fifth sortie, when the submarine was heavily attacked, further attempts at contact were abandoned."⁷⁶

By the end of 1944, the *kempeitai* had succeeded in capturing stores of ammunition and transmitters and 8 out of 13 agents, including members of Force 136 who had infiltrated in the Gustavus I, III, and V operations. The arrest of Lim Bo Seng had the most serious effect upon the morale of Force 136 soldiers, and it made the "keeping of the Remarkable rendezvous impossible".⁷⁷ All in all, the *kempeitai* had a stretch of luck in destroying, though temporarily, the operations of Force 136 in 1943 and 1944. None the less, the *kempeitai* was disappointed that it was unable to capture the British agents, particularly Davis and Broome.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Interview with Tsan Jan Nam by Tan Kim Hong, 11 Oct. 1984 in *Force 136* (1) (Penang: Jawatankuasa Sejarah Lisan dan Perpustakaan, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 1991), p. 16; Shu and Chua, [Singapore and Malayan Chinese People's Anti-Japanese Historical Materials], p. 73. The latter source said that the sixth batch of Force 136 agents was airlifted to Malaya on 29 February 1945. Broome was sent back to Ceylon because of illness.

⁷⁵ Chapman graphically described his life of illness, hunger, and mounting frustration in the jungle during this period in *The Jungle Is Neutral*, Ch. 17.

⁷⁶ Trenowden, *Operations Most Secret*, p. 149.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

⁷⁸ Intelligence report No. 9, 18 May 1945, in Shu and Chua, [Singapore and Malayan Chinese People's Anti-Japanese Historical Materials], p. 731. It is said that the reason the *kempeitai* was unable to arrest any of the British officers was that Lai Tek did not betray them. Intending to cooperate with the British in post-war years as he had in pre-war years, Lai Tek wanted to maintain good relations. Broome and Davis had "an extremely charitable view of Lai Tek's role as a Japanese informer". Broome said: "In fact I think with regard to our mission Lai Tek worked perfectly genuinely, in spite of all that has been revealed". Cheah, *Red Star*, pp. 93-94. Chapman was captured by a Japanese patrol at the Larek-Chemor watershed on 11 Mar. 1944, though the arrest was not due to Lai Tek's treachery. Chapman managed to escape. Chapman, *The Jungle Is Neutral*, pp. 264-74.

Chinese agents of Force 136 and their guerrilla forces did not enjoy harmonious relations with their counterparts in the Perak MPAJA. Mutually exclusive in their political ideology and suspicious of each other, though fighting a common enemy, they did not get along. In spring 1944, for instance, a clash occurred, according to a Force 136 intelligence report, after Communists attacked Nationalist Chinese guerrillas at Kampar and captured their soldiers and guns. Refusal by the Communists to release the prisoners and the weapons resulted in a skirmish. Though the matter was settled through negotiations, friction between the two parties continued without let-up thereafter, to the detriment of the Allied war effort.⁷⁹

Whilst Force 136 was experiencing setbacks and having trouble with the Communists, MPAJA guerrillas continued their campaign of harassment, assaulting *kempeitai*, special police, and collaborators.⁸⁰ To cope with the security problem, the *Shu Seicho* authorities encouraged the creation of local *jikeidan*, as mentioned above, for maintaining vigilance against subversive activities. Soon they discovered that "the Jikeidan in small towns and villages were actually hand in glove with 'communists', giving them active cooperation and even financial support". When there was evidence of collaboration between the *jikeidan* and the Communists, the Japanese military and police authorities exacted a harsh punishment. For instance, after an incident at Kampong Ampang in Ulu Kinta district in which a number of Japanese were killed, they arrested headmen of the Chinese Association and the *jikeidan*, executed sympathizers, and burned the whole village.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Marei gunsei kambu, *Senji geppo*, Jun., Jul., Sep., Oct. 1943; Feb., Mar. 1944.

⁸⁰ Chin Kee Onn, *Malaya Upside Down* (Singapore: Federal Publications, 1976; orig. publ. Singapore: Jitts, 1946), p. 105; Tamura, [The Perak State Police], p. 79.

⁸¹ Chin, *Malaya Upside Down*, pp. 105-106. Villagers of Kampong Ampang were punished for failing to report guerrilla activities in the village, for allowing the Communists to hide in their houses, for failing to cooperate with investigations after the incident in which special policemen were shot, and for keeping Communist literature.

The *Shu Seicho* and military authorities also tried a policy of pacification. They issued a statement promising to grant "full pardon, full protection and ample remuneration to communists who would surrender, reject communism and take the oath of allegiance to Dai Nippon".⁸² This offer had, however, little effect upon MPAJA soldiers, who had vowed to fight Japanese fascism, nor upon the Chinese population as a whole, which was hostile to the Japanese because of the massacres and forced contributions. Daily privations resulting from acute shortages of food and other necessities, and the spiralling inflation rate, were other factors that added to their alienation.

Though military and police forces conducted mopping-up operations, they were unable to apprehend the elusive guerrillas, who took advantage of their familiarity with the jungles to avoid full-scale confrontations with the enemy. On the other hand, MPAJA guerrillas managed to carry out persistent hit-and-run attacks against the Japanese, much to the latter's annoyance. To deal with the deteriorating security situation, the Japanese strengthened their police force with additional personnel. By mid-1944, the Perak Police Department had built up its strength to 39 Japanese officers, the largest number in any state in Malaya, and they were supported by local policemen who had received special training at a police training institute at Kuala Lumpur, because Perak was the state which posed the greatest security risk.⁸³

By this time, MCP/MPAJA guerrillas had recovered their strength after the reverses of the first year, and throughout 1944 and 1945, until the end of the war, MPAJA guerrillas stepped up their attacks on police stations and their sub-stations, killing police chiefs and policemen. Attacks were reported at Gopeng (June 1944), Kampong Langkap (August 1944), Sungei Siput (June, July 1945), Lenggong (July 1945),

⁸² Ibid., p. 106.

⁸³ Tamura, [The Perak State Police], pp. 49, 81, 103; Marai gunsei kambu, *Senji geppo*, Feb.-Mar. 1944. On 15 Feb. 1944, the second anniversary of the fall of Singapore, designated as the Day of the Birth of New Malaya, Communists threw a hand grenade, wounding 17 Chinese at a gambling centre, and started a fire in Ipoh. In March guerrillas attacked Chinese and Malay villages, carrying away food and kidnapping construction workers. Four new police stations were established at Bagan Datoh, Parit, Grik and Pangkor.

and Kuala Kangsar (July 1945). The Kuala Kangsar raid was a tragic one, with 10 local policemen shot to death.⁸⁴ The guerrillas became even more daring in their assassination attempts; they shot Onishi, wounding him slightly, in broad daylight in Bidor in April 1945, and two other *kempei* officers near Tapah in August.⁸⁵

Contact with Force 136 in 1943 and with SEAC in Ceylon through Force 136 following meetings with Davis, Broome and Chapman in January and March 1944 ended the MCP's isolation from the outside world. Lai Tek, MCP Secretary General, and Chin Peng, Perak State Secretary, were assured by the Allies of funds, arms and medicine in return for their cooperation with the British during the war with Japan and in the period of British military occupation thereafter.⁸⁶ Beginning in January 1945, Force 136 carried out a systematic programme of parachuting agents into the northern and central parts of Perak.

It was becoming imperative for the Japanese to eradicate the communist threat, particularly in view of the deteriorating war situation. Japanese forces were retreating in disorder from Burma after the failure of the Imphal operations, and the Allied Powers were reported to be preparing to invade Malaya. To destroy the 5th Battalion guerrilla force

⁸⁴ Tamura, [The Perak State Police], pp. 109-112; [Ishibe Memoirs], p. 123. One police chief at Telok Anson died of poison, but the circumstances of his death are unknown.

⁸⁵ Onishi, [An untold history], p. 169; Taipinkai, [Far Away Malaya], p. 261; Zenkoku kenyukai rengokai (ed.), *Nippon kempei gaishi* [Unofficial History of the Kempeitai] (Tokyo, 1983), p. 1017. Another *kempei* sergeant was shot to death at Malim Nawar in January 1945 (ibid., p. 1016). It eventually came to light that Sulmoh Singh, former police chief of the Ipoh Station from May 1942 to June 1943 and after that deputy chief of the Station following the arrival of a Japanese police chief, was a "stay-behind" agent of the British. An undercover agent told the Ipoh Police Department chief that Singh was working with Force 136, rendering assistance to its airborne operations, and that he guided parachute supply drops in the Sungei Siput area in July 1945. Confronted by the evidence, Singh admitted that Davis, his former superior, asked him to serve as a "stay-behind" agent. He also disclosed that a former police chief of the Sungei Siput Station and another Chinese policeman at Police Department headquarters were also agents. Singh was allowed to remain on the job. Tamura, [The Perak State Police], pp. 113-15.

⁸⁶ Chapman, *The Jungle Is Neutral*, p. 223.

and secure north-south communication lines in peninsular Malaya,⁸⁷ the new 29th Army in February 1944 deployed Operation *Sa-go* in early May, concentrating its troops in the Sungei Siput area along the Perak River. As usual the guerrillas vanished into the jungle before the Japanese attack, but the *kempeitai* apprehended 150 sympathizers and collected rifles abandoned by the enemy. Though the operation did not inflict serious casualties on the MPAJA forces, it achieved its objective of dislodging them from the Sungei Siput area, and restored law and order there until the end of the war.⁸⁸

Operation *Sa-go* was followed in August by another operation mounted in co-ordination with *shubitai*, *kempeitai*, and police forces. It was a massive campaign deployed throughout Perak. Before the operation was over, 800 anti-Japanese elements were said to have been captured — the largest haul ever achieved in the campaign against the Communists in Perak.⁸⁹

Force 136 continued to supply men and arms for the Operation Funnel sortie, dropping them into the Grik and Bidor areas. The Ipoh *Kempeitai* learned that two British agents had been dropped into the Grik area in March 1945, and that one of them might be Capt. Chrystal who led his men to join forces with Maj. G.P.J. Dobree, who had parachuted into Perak on 16 December 1944 and had established contact with the 17th Platoon of the Overseas Chinese Anti-Japanese Army (Nationalist China) in Grik. These two British officers were said to have been training Malays and Chinese in anticipation of the forthcoming operation to recapture Malaya. Able to pinpoint from a captured document the location of an enemy camp, *kempeitai*, *shubitai* and police forces mounted an attack on the site, which was in the jungle some 20 kilometres east of Kuala Temengor. Between 24 and 28 April, the Japanese surrounded and attacked the guerrilla force formed by Dobree,

⁸⁷ When the invasion of Malaya took place, Hannah, commanding 800 soldiers for the 5th Battalion, planned to attack Japanese troops moving between the north and the south. Trenowden, *Operations Most Secret*, p. 198.

⁸⁸ *Zenkoku kenyukai rengokai*, [Authorised History of the Japanese Military Police], pp. 186-87.

⁸⁹ Tamura, [The Perak State Police], p. 103.

destroying the camp and driving out all the members of the force; only 13 soldiers managed to remain with Dobree in his retreat. The Japanese seized stores of arms and ammunition but failed to apprehend any enemy agents.⁹⁰

Airborne drops for Operation Funnel were also made in the central part of Perak — the first group parachuting on 12 May into the Bidor area where Col. J.P. Hannah had been dropped, and the second one on 6 July into an area a few miles east-southeast of the Bidor-Tapah road.⁹¹ Receiving intelligence that Force 136 agents were in the Bidor-Tapah area, Onishi led his men to the top of a hill overlooking the town of Tapah on 23 July. When they sighted a B-24 dropping parachutes, Onishi immediately dispatched his men to seize the enemy agents and supplies. The search developed into a confused skirmish in which one Japanese soldier was killed and five others wounded.⁹² It was the *kempeitai's* last battle of the war.

The end of the war, with the announcement of the Imperial Rescript of surrender to the Allied Powers, came like a bolt from the blue on 15 August. Many Japanese only learned of this development several days after the actual surrender announcement.⁹³ On the other hand, Force 136 and MPAJA agents heard the news on their shortwave radio and immediately came out of the jungle.⁹⁴

Col. Hannah, the senior leader of Force 136 in the field, received instructions from SEAC to contact local Japanese headquarters to “convey certain directives and make arrangements with the Japanese” regarding the maintenance of law and order, and to take over areas

⁹⁰ Zenkoku kenyūkai rengokai, [Authorised History of the Japanese Military Police]; Taipinkai, [Far Away Malaya], pp. 255-59; Shu and Chua, [Singapore and Malayan Chinese People's Anti-Japanese Historical Materials], p. 74.

⁹¹ Trenowden, *Operations Most Secret*, pp. 188-89. Hannah and Davis greeted the first group.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 189; Taipinkai, [Far Away Malaya], pp. 260-61, 265-66.

⁹³ Tamura, [The Perak State Police], pp. 122, 145, 150; Taipinkai, [Far Away Malaya], p. 266.

⁹⁴ The Overseas Chinese Anti-Japanese Army of Nationalist China received the news of the Japanese surrender on 9 August. Shu and Chua, [Singapore and Malayan Chinese People's Anti-Japanese Historical Materials], p. 74.

from which the Japanese military and police units had withdrawn. Hannah met Onishi at *kempeitai* headquarters in Tapah, and Onishi took him to Ipoh.⁹⁵ An arrangement was concluded between Hannah, the Japanese military commanders, and the governor of Perak whereby the Japanese assured Hannah that "they would not hand out any arms to any unauthorised persons". Hannah also managed to obtain, over vigorous protests from the *kempeitai*, "personal diaries of both kempei chiefs in Ipoh and Tapah and they made most interesting reading". During the conference at Forest Lodge he had an interesting conversation with Kawamura Naooka, governor of Perak. Kawamura said: "Colonel, I will relinquish my position here with regret. I have done my best for these people but they refused to co-operate with us, even for their own good. Those few that have done so are of a type worthless to any administration. The people are pig-headed and deceitful and strong measures are the only things they understand. You are very welcome to them." Hannah shot back in reply: "It is your system of administration that is responsible, for the people were not like that before. Under the democratic form of government, such as existed here before you came, the decent people had freedom of thought and action, and co-operated fully, one with the other and with the administration, for the common good, as they will once again, now that your regime is at an end."⁹⁶

A few days after the surrender MPAJA soldiers occupied a number of police stations and sub-stations in small towns and hoisted flags bearing three stars. Less than a week after the surrender they entered Ipoh, where the Chinese put out the Union Jack and Nationalist Chinese

⁹⁵ Trenowden, *Operations Most Secret*, pp. 200-201; Onishi, [An untold history], p. 171; Yap, "Perak", p. 79. The meeting between Hannah and Onishi was unpleasant from the beginning. Hannah refused to shake hands with Onishi, who, humiliated by defeat, was glum. The two men had exchanged shots some ten days before in an ambush in Bidor. Hannah was so distrustful of Onishi, who was to escort him to Ipoh, that he left instructions with his junior officer saying that: "If I did not return from Ipoh by midnight, he was to attack and capture the sixty odd kempei in Tapah and hold them as hostages for my safe return". (Hannah's statement submitted to SEAC in Yap, "Perak", App. IV, p. 79.)

⁹⁶ Hannah's statement submitted to SEAC in Yap, "Perak", App. IV, p. 80.

flags and built a huge victory arch in the main street that was hung with bunting saying "Welcome to the MPAJA".⁹⁷

Japanese army garrisons withdrew from outlying towns and districts on 22 and 23 August, but British troops only reached Penang on 3 September and did not enter Perak until several days later, by which time public order was fast breaking down in the smaller towns. A "reign of terror" brought retribution against collaborators: "reprisals were meted out by guerrillas to police officers, detectives, and *kempeitai* informers. Even ordinary *mata mata* (policemen) were vulnerable to anyone seeking revenge for the slightest insult or injury suffered from the heyday of Japanese power."⁹⁸ On the other hand, some MPAJA units demanded that the Japanese army and police hand over arms and ammunition in peaceful negotiations. Only if talks failed did they resort to force. The MPAJA obviously wanted to get hold of Japanese weapons in preparation for a future struggle against the British, who were to become its principal enemy, and to seize power in order to establish a government of the people's republic.

A few days after Japan's surrender, Kumakawa Juzo, the police chief at Kuala Kangsar, had a visit from a young man representing Bai Qing, said to be the commander of guerrillas of the 5th Battalion. The young man requested that Kumakawa meet his commander to negotiate the transfer of arms and ammunition. On the following day, another representative visited Kumakawa and demanded that he (1) surrender the arms and ammunition stored at the police station; (2) arrange negotiations for the handover of all ammunition kept at police stations in Perak; and (3) arrange a meeting with the MPAJA commander. Kumakawa asked him to return in a few days for an official reply from higher authorities in Ipoh. After listening to Kumakawa's report, the Governor of Perak, Kawamura Naooka, gave him discretionary powers to deal with demands (1) and (3). Ignoring instructions to keep stores of arms and ammunition intact and only hand them over to

⁹⁷ Tamura, [The Perak State Police], pp. 122, 134; Onishi, [An untold history], p. 172.

⁹⁸ Tamura, [The Perak State Police], pp. 138-39, 144-45, 156-65, 169, 170; Cheah, *Red Star*, p. 133.

representatives of the Allied Powers, Kumakawa and the *shubitai* commander decided to give the Communists all of the stored weapons and ammunition, including 10 machine guns surrendered in March 1945 by disarmed French soldiers in French Indochina. These arms were ostensibly "abandoned" at the police station and taken away by the MPAJA rather than being given to them.

On the next day, the same young soldier guided Kumakawa to a coffee shop in a kampong along the Perak River about 20 kilometres downstream from Kuala Kangsar. There Kumakawa met Bai Qing, who wore the uniform of the 8th Road Army of Red China and a pentagon-shaped hat, and greeted him with a smile, saying "*kawan kawan*" (friends). Bai Qing, much to Kumakawa's surprise, was a person Kumakawa had released from prison only a few days earlier.⁹⁹

On 19 August Capt. Nakamura Fumio, commander of the Ipoh *Kempeitai*, received a visit from Chua Ying, chairwoman of the Women's Department, MCP Perak, whom the *kempeitai* had set free on the 16th. Presenting a letter of credentials from the MCP Perak State Committee, she explained the purpose of her visit. Chua demanded the transfer of arms and ammunition, the immediate release of convicted and other prisoners, and the turning over of food and medical supplies. Having no authority to negotiate the demands, Nakamura informed her that he would reply to her requests only after getting instructions from the commander of the 29th Army, who alone had such authority. As a testimony of his sincerity for further talks, Nakamura presented his personal pistol to Chua.

Nakamura and Chua had an interesting conversation about the MCP's policy towards the Japanese and the British. Saying that the Japanese *kempeitai* had "fought the MCP and its guerrillas as the principal adversary harassing the rear of the Japanese forces" and that the *kempeitai* would not "take up arms except for self defence against MCP/MPAJA troops because the *kempeitai*'s duties for maintaining law and order were over with the termination of the war", Nakamura asked Chua about the MCP's policy. She replied that the MCP/MPAJA

⁹⁹ Tamura, [The Perak State Police], pp. 135-38.

would "fight the British army as the next enemy". She assured Nakamura that her soldiers would henceforth not "attack the Japanese", and she indicated that she would like to see the earliest repatriation of Japanese troops. Interrupting her, Nakamura pointed out that "subversive activities, such as destruction of telecommunication and telephone lines, roads, and railroads had been reported after 15 August". She replied that those incidents were happening because "orders from headquarters had not reached or had not been observed by rank-and-file on the lower levels", and she assured him that "the confusion would soon be restored when the policy of headquarters was understood by the soldiers". As Chua had indicated, the security situation improved greatly in a few days, allowing isolated Japanese troops to communicate with one another.¹⁰⁰

On 22 August Nakamura reported the gist of his conversation with Chua Ying to Maj. General Kawahara Naoichi, chief of staff of the 29th Army, seeking further instructions. Kawahara rejected all three demands, except for the release of prisoners convicted of violating "military orders declared by the commander-in-chief".

Nakamura regretfully conveyed Kawahara's instructions to Chua, and she returned to her base after having understood Nakamura's explanation. Nakamura's *kempeitai* prepared for possible retaliation from MCP/MPAJA troops, but the Communist soldiers left the Japanese unharmed, even though they had fiercely fought the Japanese until just a week earlier.¹⁰¹ Nakamura had nothing but high regard for their strict military discipline.

Onishi also had a similar experience with the Communists. The commander of the Tapah Platoon, accompanied by his comrades, requested a meeting with Onishi at his Tapah headquarters on 30

¹⁰⁰ Taipinkai, [Far Away Malaya], p. 225. Chua Ying was the widow of Lai Lai Fuk, commander of the 5th Battalion, who was executed following his arrest in July 1943. Lai Fuk was a fanatical Communist who came to the MPAJA from a wealthy background in Sitiawan, Perak, accompanied by his attractive wife. Richard Gough, *Special Operations Singapore 1941-42* (London: W. Kimber, 1985; reissued Singapore: Heinemann, 1985), p. 106.

¹⁰¹ Taipinkai, [Far Away Malaya], p. 226.

August. The commander likewise asked for the transfer of arms and ammunition stored at *kempeitai* and garrison headquarters, saying that the "MPAJA was preparing to fight the British". Onishi, however, refused to comply with the demand on grounds that the *kempeitai* and the garrison had been ordered by the Allied Powers to preserve law and order until the arrival of the British forces. Seeing that Onishi would not budge from his position and would fight if necessary, the MPAJA commander withdrew quietly. Onishi's men and garrison troops were prepared for a retaliatory attack that night but nothing happened.¹⁰²

On the other hand, Oishi Kotaro, police chief of the Slim River Station, came close to death when he refused to comply with a Communist demand to surrender eight policemen. The two-day negotiations ended in an impasse on 23 August. In a last-minute desperate attempt to avert a blood bath, Oishi, assisted by an Indian deputy police chief, arranged for families to escape, whilst Oishi and his men prepared to die to save the lives of the fleeing people. Several minutes after fighting began, armoured troops happened to pass by the police station and helped drive away the Communist soldiers. The latter thus failed to capture arms and ammunition from the Slim River Police Station in the face of the resistance put up by Oishi, but two mediators from the Chinese Association and the *jikeidan* fell victim to the gunfire.¹⁰³

Conclusion

Perak was the state where the strongest and best trained MPAJA force, the 5th Battalion, waged guerrilla warfare. The Battalion's strength had grown by August 1945 to between 800 and 1,000 men divided

¹⁰² Ibid., pp. 228-29; Onishi, [An untold history], pp. 172-73. The commander could have been Lau Tze Chong.

¹⁰³ Tamura, [The Perak State Police], pp. 150-65. The 5th Battalion sent its representative to 29th Army headquarters and the Perak Shu Seicho to negotiate the transfer of arms and ammunition. Interview with Sasaki Teruhisa, 29 Sept. 1993. Interview with Seki Michisuke, 15 Oct. 1993. Sasaki was an official of the Malay Military Administration at Taiping. He was selected as a liaison officer because of his fluency in Chinese. Seki was a sergeant assigned to the 29th Army *Kempeitai*.

into six platoons. Able leaders such as Chin Peng, the Perak State Secretary, Col. Itu (Liao Wei Chung), commander of the 5th Battalion (with Broome handling its tactical command), directed MCP/MPAJA activities. Their headquarters was believed to be at Blantan in the jungles near Bidor. The 5th Battalion had excellent intelligence networks in the cities and towns and an extensive web of informers and sympathizers.¹⁰⁴ Throughout the Occupation period, its armed guerrillas constantly and persistently harassed the Japanese with pin-pricking warfare, sending the latter on wild goose chases. They were an irritating nuisance, like a bone stuck in the throat. As a former *kempeitai* sergeant reminisced, he spent "four years of his prime life in Malaya, trifled with by the Communists, burning up his youthful ardour in mopping-up operations".¹⁰⁵

How successful were MCP/MPAJA forces in Perak against the Japanese? According to MCP/MPAJA sources, the 5th Battalion engaged in 19 battles; it carried out 4 large-scale attacks, repulsed 10 massive enemy assaults, and attacked 5 police stations; it killed 476 Japanese including 2 captains, 11 lieutenants, 2 corporals, 1 *kempei* officer, 2 *kempei* sergeants and 2 special police officers. It also killed 242 Malay policemen and some 700 traitors. In doing so, according to these sources, the 5th Battalion sustained only 7 casualties—3 killed and 4 wounded.¹⁰⁶ These reports of damage inflicted on the Japanese are exaggerated, and understate the casualties sustained by the Battalion. The records of the Syonan/Malay Kempeitai, and 29th Army and the Perak Police Department show that 7 *kempeitai* officers and NCOs and 5 police officers died in action and approximately 30 local policemen were killed.¹⁰⁷ The records also show 150 MCP/MPAJA killed and 400 arrested in period between February 1944 and August 1945 alone in

¹⁰⁴ Zenkoku ken'yukai rengokai, [Unofficial History of the Kempeitai], p. 1018.

¹⁰⁵ Hai, [Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army], pp. 54-55.

¹⁰⁶ Tamura, [The Perak State Police], p. 81; Taipinkai, [Far Away Malaya], pp. 324-29, 355-57.

¹⁰⁷ Cheah, *Red Star*, App. B, p. 304. The report on casualty statistics was submitted by the 29th Army to SEAC.

the area under the 29th Army command.¹⁰⁸ The Japanese figures appear to be closer to the truth.

To sum up, the 5th Battalion of the MCP/MPAJA, with its skilful guerrilla manoeuvres, took advantage of a thoroughly familiar terrain to wage a hit-and-run battle against great odds. To the Japanese security forces, the armed guerrillas were a thorn in the flesh but not a major threat. For the leaders and rank-and-file members of the MPAJA, the experience they gained in jungle guerrilla tactics and warfare while fighting against the Japanese enabled them to resist 40,000 British troops for 12 years during the Emergency after 1948.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ Onishi, while he was serving his prison sentence, was summoned by Maj. R.J. Isaacs of Field Security Section. He asked Onishi about the MPAJA forces seeking his opinion as to how to deal with them. Onishi had the impression that the British were getting their fingers burned dealing with the Communists. Onishi, [An untold history], pp. 173-74.

¹⁰⁹ See Anthony Short, *The Communist Insurrection in Malaya 1948-60* (London: Frederick Muller, 1975); Hanrahan, *The Communist Struggle*.

APPENDIX I

THE RECONSTRUCTED MALAYAN COMMUNIST PARTY, MAY 1942

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Xiao Hei*

Chairman, Syonan Town Committee. Former CEC member and Penang Town Committee member. (Hiding in Syonan.)

K'o Ping

Former CEC member. Directing guerrillas in Malaya. Hiding in Syonan. Slated to become chairman of Syonan Town Committee.

Hsueh Feng

Former Singapore Town Committee member. (Hiding in Malaya.)

?

Slated to become chairman of Syonan Town Committee. (Hiding in Syonan).

Ah Fook

Former CEC member. (Hiding in Syonan)

Xiao Yang

Former Singapore Town Committee member.

Ah Wen

Chairman, Central Committee Dept. Former CEC member. Johore Bahru District Comm. member. (Hiding in Syonan, maintaining liaison with Johore Bahru.)

Wang Chih Hui

Kuala Lumpur District

(@ Lao Hui.

member. (Directing guerrillas

@ Lo Wen)

in Kuala Lumpur.)

Ah Hui

Kuantan District Committee.

STANDING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Ah Wang

Secretary General Former

(Huang Shao-tung?)

CEC member. (Active in Syonan.)

Xiao Chung

Former CEC member. (Active in

Syonan.) Chairman, Propaganda

Department.

K'e Min*

Former CEC member Chairman,

Organization Department.

* There seem to be a few members named Xiao Hei and K'e Min, because the *kempetai* arrested at least one X'iao Hei and one K'e Min in April 1942.

Source: 25-gun shireibu, 25-gun joho kiroku [25th Army Intelligence Record], No. 62 (28 May 1942).

APPENDIX II
PERAK ANTI-JAPANESE FORCES ORGANIZATION CHART,
SEPTEMBER 1942

PERAK ANTI-JAPANESE FORCES HEADQUARTERS

Lao Chung (23) MCP Representative	Lieh Yang (22) Political Dept.	Hung Qing (25) Armed Dept.	Chen Yang Chun (28) Liang Yu (24) Medical Dept. Maintenance	?	Propaganda Dept.
Peng Szu Wen (32) 1st Platoon Commander	Mien Cheng (18) Second Platoon Commander	Gao Hui (32) 3rd Platoon Commander	Chih Wen (27) 4th Platoon Commander	Pao Nin (19) 5th Platoon Commander	Xiao Chen (19) 6th Platoon Commander
Hsin Chih (30) Political Officer	Chi Ch'en (20) Political Officer	Xiao Wen (19) Political Officer	Feng Feng (25) Political Officer	Tu Sha Fei (19) Political Officer	
	Principal, Anti-Japanese Resistance School and British Stay-Behind Agents	Da Chi (28) Commander Lan Tsan (28) Deputy Commander	Chen Yang Chun* Head, Medical School Yang Ts'ai (20) Lueh Hua (20) Nurses		

Source: 25-gun shireibu, 25-gun joho kiroku [25th Army Intelligence Record], No. 71 (1 Sep. 1942).

Notes: Numbers in the bracket are ages.

*Chen Yang Chun had been arrested by the *kempetai* and was serving as its double agent.

Memoirs of War in Malaya

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Autobiographies and Memoirs

This article examines the memories of war in Malaya (now Peninsular Malaysia and Singapore), as recollected in the autobiographies and memoirs of men and women who lived through the Japanese Occupation. By studying the memories of individuals, it is hoped that some sense of a collective memory may be found. In the context of the Second World War in Malaya, autobiographies and memoirs take on an enhanced value because of the general lack of historical sources for the period.

As the intention is to probe the Malayan recollections of war, I have confined myself to the autobiographies and memoirs of the local population, and have omitted the personal narratives of the other protagonists, the officers and men of the British and Australian military forces and the European civilian internees. These form a distinct and considerable group of materials but they recount a different and an expatriate experience. For the same reason, I have omitted Japanese accounts.

The body of autobiographical writing is not large. The literature search for this paper turned up some fifty-odd volumes published in Malay and English. Malaysians and Singaporeans, like many Asians, are not much given to the writing of autobiographies and there is a paucity of autobiographical accounts in this part of the world.¹ The view

¹ In a paper entitled "The Reconstruction of Life Histories" (forthcoming), I offer some explanations for the lack of autobiographical and biographical writing among the Chinese in Malaysia and Singapore. William R. Roff and A.C. Milner have also discussed the role of autobiography and biography in Malay historical writing. See William R. Roff, *Autobiography and Biography in Malay Historical Studies* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1972); and A.C. Milner, "Post-modern Perspectives in Malay Biography", *Kajian Malaysia* 9,2 (1991): 24-38.

expressed by Tunku Abdul Rahman reflects the sentiments of many would-have-been authors:

I have often been asked why it was that I did not write my autobiography. It is difficult for me to write about myself. Firstly, I cannot say anything too good or too bad about myself. Secondly, I have been so long in the public eye and Malaysians know me for what I am.²

I have confined myself to publications that are written as autobiographies and have excluded semi-biographical writings such as literary works or travel accounts which contain autobiographical elements. An autobiography is defined as a narrative of a person's life written by himself or herself. The terms "autobiography" and "memoir" are often used interchangeably but I use "autobiography" to refer to a narrative of a whole life and to the genre of autobiographical writing generally, and "memoir" to refer to a part of a life. Churchill's account of the Second World War is the most obvious example that comes to mind of the memoirs of an author who has written extensively about himself.

Autobiographies are usually self-generated, that is to say, family and friends may urge and encourage but there has to be a response to such prodding, an impetus that comes from within the author himself. In some cases, such encouragement may take a formal institutional character. The Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia has promoted the writing of autobiographies by prominent Malays through a Guest Writers programme of the Institute of Malay Language, Literature and Culture (IBKKM).³ Similarly, the National Institute of Public Administration (INTAN) and the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka have also

² Tunku Abdul Rahman, "My Kedah Days", p. 223. Tunku Abdul Rahman did not write an autobiography as such but he contributed a weekly column to *The Star* from 1974-90 that recounted many episodes in his life. These articles have been collected and published in several volumes under different titles.

³ IBKKM is now Institut Alam dan Tamadun Melayu (ATMA) [Institute of the Malay World and Civilization].

encouraged well known personalities to write their memoirs. The institutional support given to such autobiographical writing is an indication of the value of the personal narrative.

Autobiography is important for several reasons. Firstly, it serves as a historical record, a chronicle of the past that supplements official records. It is a primary source as it consists of the recollections of a participant or observer, and as such, it is invaluable for the light it may cast on the events. An account of the discussions behind decisions taken, the feelings and circumstances surrounding an issue, and the positions taken by the personalities involved, can fill in the larger picture and lead to a better understanding of events. Lastly, it is a view from within.

Notwithstanding institutional support and friendly encouragement, the autobiography remains an author's own narrative. It is his own reconstruction of his past.

The Autobiographical Impulse

If an autobiography is defined as a narrative of the author's own life, it would be worth looking at the motives that prompt him to take up his pen. These motives will of course vary. As an autobiography is often written long after the event, the author will have had time to reflect on and mull over the past and to place a certain construction on his life experiences. This self-analysis and self-synthesis is a natural process of living as we endeavour to make sense out of our experiences and give meaning to our lives. Memory acts as a sieve that retains, or discards, as the case may be, those recollections that fit into the meaning that we have constructed.

The autobiographer's intentions set out in the preface help the reader understand not only the particular publication but also this genre of publications as a whole. Nostalgia, for example, does not appear to be an important motive. But the need to set down the past, the urge to write of the past so that it will not be forgotten in a rapidly changing world, is mentioned by several authors.

This sense of the past, of the need to document what has taken place, and the desire perhaps "to set the record straight", is felt more strongly by those who have played significant roles in the making of that past. In this regard the autobiographies of civil servants deserve

to be mentioned. As civil servants they have stayed dutifully in the background; they have been neutral but involved; they have worked within the system and kept the wheels turning. Most important of all, they have had the benefit of time because their careers often span several decades. In both Malaysia and Singapore, the past generation of civil servants includes men who served through several administrations, from colonialism to Japanese, and finally, to independent government.

One of these civil servants was Abdul Aziz bin Zakaria who began his career as an Assistant District Officer in Perak during the Japanese Occupation and ultimately became Director of the Public Services Department for Malaysia. The title of his autobiography, *British, Japanese and Independent Malaysia: A Memoir*, in itself underscores this length of memory. Another such civil servant was Lee Siow Mong who joined the Straits Settlements Civil Service before the war, continued through the Japanese Occupation, and had the distinction of serving in a senior capacity under independent governments both in Singapore and Malaysia. His motives for writing are clearly stated:

The reason for writing this book is to put on record the things that I have experienced and seen in a long career in the public service. I have yet another objective for writing, and it is a critical one. The events and experiences recorded in this book are, for what they are worth, to enable contemporaries and posterity alike to judge for themselves what should be done or should not be done in the public service, or indeed in our lives.⁴

It is however, the memoirs of politicians and political activists that are the most interesting from the historical point of view because they provide insights into the authors' personalities and political beliefs, and the events in which they were involved. For Abdul Aziz Ishak, Malayan Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries from 1955 to 1963, writing his memoirs was an opportunity to recount the part he played in the political struggle before and after independence. Aishah

⁴ Lee Siow Mong, *Words Cannot Equal Experience* (Petaling Jaya: Pelanduk, 1985), p. ix.

Ghani, Malaysian Minister of Welfare Services, and leader of Wanita UMNO from 1972 to 1984, also writes of the political struggle but with special reference to women's issues, and the women's movement within UMNO. Her autobiography, which she entitled *Memoir Seorang Pejuang* [Memoirs of a Fighter], recalls her struggles as a woman, a journalist and a politician. Such recollections, she hopes, will be useful to future generations who do not have the benefit of such experiences.

... saya berpendapat peristiwa-peristiwa yang akan saya rakamkan dalam memoir itu mungkin berfaedah kepada generasi muda yang tidak akan mengalami peristiwa-peristiwa seperti itu dalam hidup mereka.⁵

[... I feel that the events which I will record in that memoir might be of benefit to the younger generation which will not experience such events in their own lives.]

This sense of the passing of time is accompanied by a sense of the inadequacies of human memory and a need to capture those memories before they fade away. This is best expressed by Lee Khoo Choy, Minister of State in Singapore during the late 1960s:

I have lived through a period of history which, more than any other, has made Singapore what it is today. I want to put down all that I can still remember before my memory fades.⁶

A fading memory is only one of the many problems facing an autobiographer. With disarming candour, A. Samad Ismail describes his advancing age and the diminishing sharpness of his mind (a judgement with which many readers will disagree) and goes on to discuss some of the choices he has had to make. Many of these choices revolve around the question of historical integrity. How much should

⁵ Aishah Ghani, *Memoir Seorang Pejuang* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1992), Foreword.

⁶ Lee Khoo Choy, *On the Beat to the Hustings: an Autobiography* (Singapore: Times Books International, 1988), Preface.

he reveal or conceal? What is his responsibility to persons involved in his revelations? What is his own role in the narrative? His compromise was to leave many gaps which is a reminder that what is unsaid can be just as interesting as what is revealed. In making this compromise, he has drawn our attention to the invisible party involved in the writing of an autobiography — the reader. It is the reader whom the author is addressing. In a sense, all authors show something of themselves in their writings but an autobiographer reveals more than others. When a person writes about his own life, he is relinquishing his privacy, and becomes extremely conscious of his audience. Arena Wati points to an inevitable tension between the author and the reader. If the biography is to have any value, he has said, it should be complete and it should be candid. At the same time, the autobiographer will not wish to appear as if he were justifying his past actions nor to expose himself to criticism and ridicule.

Objectivity is therefore difficult, and to Mohamad Yusoff “almost impossible”. However, problems with objectivity should not obscure what we look for in a personal narrative which is the individual experience and perspective. We therefore turn to the contents of the autobiographies to see what they tell us about the memories of war.

Memories of War

The recollections of war in Malaya fall into three broad clusters of experience corresponding to the following periods:

1. Warfare and invasion;
2. Enemy occupation;
3. End of the war and its aftermath.

The period of warfare and invasion began with the Japanese attack on Malaya on 8 December 1941 and continued for some weeks after the fall of Singapore on 15 February 1942. For the civilian population, this was their first encounter with war and the events of this period made a deep and indelible impression. For many authors, these memories remain the most vivid of the war. They write of the fear of death and destruction from bombing and warfare as well as the panic

and confusion that followed in the wake of British military defeat and the collapse of civil administration.

Many families hastily evacuated from their homes in fear of the advancing Japanese. In the Peninsula, Abdul Aziz bin Zakaria moved from Gopeng to a hut in the jungle; Sybil Kathigasu went from Ipoh to the village of Papan; Ruth Ho left Malacca for Singapore; and Mohamad Yusoff Haji Ahmad returned to his kampong when, as a government officer in Seremban, he was ordered to disperse and leave the town open.

In Singapore, families fled from their homes to find refuge in other parts of the city where they felt safer. Mehervan Singh moved to an evacuation camp built by an Indian philanthropist; Thio Chan Bee left his home in Bukit Timah Road for Tan Tock Seng Hospital; and about 2,000 refugees took shelter in the King Edward VII College of Medicine, including Aisha Akbar, John Bertram van Cuylenburg and A.A. Sandosham. Like others who had connections in the Peninsula, Thaathaa Suppiah evacuated to a rubber estate in Johor. Chen Su Lan and Janet Lim managed to leave Singapore by ship, only to be bombed and shipwrecked.

In these recollections, we find two kinds of experiences described, the urban and the rural. In the cities, the memory is of bombing and bombardment, fires burning unchecked, death in the streets, and people crowded together in makeshift air-raid shelters; and in Singapore towards the end, the incessant sound of gunfire, the pall of black smoke from the burning oil storage tanks and thousands of refugees packed willy-nilly into the evacuation centres.

But in the rural areas, there was emptiness and at night, darkness, as people fled from their kampongs into the shelter of the jungle. Abdul Aziz bin Zakaria and his family evacuated to a remote kampong but when Japanese troops came to the kampong they fled in the middle of the night to seek refuge in the jungle. The rural people too saw the Japanese army on the move, fortunately, in too much of a hurry at the time to bother them. Mohd. Yusoff Haji Ahmad remembers seeing Japanese soldiers pedalling their bicycles at great speed with belts of ammunition slung over their bare bodies. He also saw the onrush of Japanese lorries and tanks driving past, sometimes barely half an hour behind retreating British troops.

War was an unprecedented experience, and produced unprecedented responses. Men of courage and daring rose to the occasion in situations which they could not have foreseen. One of the most famous episodes of the war is the story of how Tunku Abdul Rahman "kidnapped" his own father from under the noses of his British escorts.⁷ The Tunku was the youngest son of the Sultan of Kedah, and was serving as the District Officer of Kulim when war broke out. As Kedah was in the direct line of the Japanese advance, the British decided to evacuate the aged Sultan and his family to Singapore. However, the Tunku felt that the Sultan should stay with his people, and brought him to Kulim to be sheltered in a kampong. In doing this, he was not only defying the orders of the British but also the authority of his brother the Regent. The Tunku had also prepared evacuation camps for the people and with the aid of civil defence volunteers, was able to maintain law and order so that no looting or violence occurred in his district. In fact, he was asked to take over the responsibility for maintaining law and order in Province Wellesley (now Seberang Perai) as well.

Another extraordinary situation arose in Penang which pushed Manicasothy Saravanamuttu, the editor of *The Straits Echo*, into prominence. On Thursday, 11 December 1941, three days after the Japanese landed at Kota Bharu, Penang was heavily bombed and the civil administration disintegrated. Looting began and fires burnt unchecked. On Friday, all European women and children were evacuated, on Sunday the troops, and on Tuesday the entire male European population. No attempt was made to inform the local population and no provisions were made to maintain essential services.

Saravanamuttu called a meeting which was attended by 500 people, and the gathering elected a Penang Service Committee comprising representatives of the various communities. Saravanamuttu was elected chairman. He recalls:

The next three days, December 17th, 18th and 19th, were three of the busiest and most hectic days of my life. As Chairman of this Committee, which we named the Penang Service Committee,

⁷ Tunku Abdul Rahman, "Memories"; also "The War Years".

I had the job of making decisions and issuing orders to restore order to a town and island that had been abandoned by the British authorities in a state of chaos.⁸

For three days, he virtually ran Penang, maintaining law and order and providing essential services and supplies until the Japanese arrived.

The maintenance of law and order was a primary concern and the protection of women from rape and violence was uppermost in people's minds. Only a few, like Saravanamuttu and Sandosham, were able to send their families away before the hostilities began. Many girls cut their hair to pass as boys, others were hastily married off in the belief that they would be safer married. Families went to great lengths in order to protect their women and there are many stories of narrow escapes. However, the autobiographies contain no actual case of rape having been committed on a member of the author's family or circle of friends. Rape is always mentioned as having happened to others.

Fear of the Japanese was not unfounded because news of their atrocities had preceded them. There are innumerable accounts of people arbitrarily slaughtered, and many authors recall with horror the sight of decapitated heads displayed in prominent positions. The Chinese were the target of the harshest treatment. Lee Khoo Choy tells us that 200 students from Chung Ling High School in Penang were lined up and shot. Elsewhere in Malaya thousands of Chinese were massacred in the *sook ching* exercise which was most ferocious in Singapore. Ruth Ho remembers the long walk to the concentration centres, the roads packed with tired hungry people, spending the night on the road as best they could. N.I. Low writes of the hardships suffered by his family during *sook ching* and also retells the story of a man who survived the massacre. Monuments to civilian victims of Japanese atrocities can be found in Singapore and almost every Malayan town where there is a sizeable Chinese population. What caused much sorrow to the families of the victims was not knowing what their fate was. Wong Moh Keed wrote of her grandmother and grandfather:

⁸ Saravanamuttu, M., *The Sara Saga* (Penang: Printed at Cathay Printers, n.d.), pp. 87-88.

She told my sister, Bette, that she never thought of him as dead. "I just waited and waited and waited for him to come home, thinking he would be there the next day, but when I realised that he was dead, it was much too late to mourn."⁹

However, this time of fear and chaos was also a time of courage and compassion. In Kulim and Penang, violence was moderated by the Tunku's and Saravanamuttu's appeals to Japanese officers to confine the men to their billets, while in Batu Pahat Mrs Chelvasingam-MacIntyre obtained protection notices from the local commandant for the 30 or so Malay women and girls sheltering in her house. It was also a time of kindness and help generously given. People opened their homes and shops to strangers, evacuees made room somehow for fellow-sufferers in already overcrowded evacuation centres. Chen Su Lan and Janet Lim recall with gratitude the help given by the islanders who rescued them after they were shipwrecked, and Saravanamuttu remembers the kindness of the warders and prison doctor during his detention.

As the convulsions of warfare and conquest subsided, the civilian population adjusted itself to life under enemy occupation. Government officers were ordered to report for work, teachers were called back for duty and schools reopened but now teaching Japanese. Banks and shops resumed operations; evacuees returned to their homes and endeavoured to cope.

On the surface, life continued as before. In Penang, the amusement places and dance halls reopened and the Penang Turf Club held monthly race meetings. In Singapore, the Great World Amusement Park opened as soon as people began to move about, and the New World Dance Hall, which was destroyed by a bomb, reopened in 1943. Van Cuylenburg recalls the amazing array of luxury goods, such as chocolates, cigarettes, and tinned provisions, displayed at the stalls in these amusement parks.

During the first few weeks of the occupation there was an

⁹ Wong Moh Keed (ed.), *To My Heart with Smiles: The Love Letters of Siew Fung Fong & Wan Kwai Pik, 1920-1941* (Singapore: Landmark Books, 1988), p. 123.

abundance of goods as looters disposed of their booty. However, it did not take long for shops to run down their reserves of stock, and a flourishing black market soon appeared. As shortages became more widespread, prices rose and inflation set in. N.I. Low notes that the price of a pikul (133 1/3 pounds) of rice rose from \$5 in December 1941 to \$5,000 in June 1945. Chelvasingam-MacIntyre sold a turkey in 1945 for \$1,200. Chin Kee Onn's book *Malaya Upside Down* shows labour charges and the prices of a wide range of important commodities during the occupation.¹⁰

In the face of shortages and high prices, the local population turned to the cultivation of food. Gardens and available open ground were dug up for cultivation. Rice had become a luxury and even those who could afford it, cooked it mixed with sweet potatoes or maize. Tapioca and sweet potato became the more common staples. Bread made from tapioca or maize flour was heavy and hard like a brick but bread made from *ragi* or millet was more palatable. For van Cuylenburg, who was amongst those who went to the agricultural settlement at Bahau, life was a constant struggle against the jungle, poor living conditions and shortage of basic necessities.

Almost all the authors touch on the hardships and privations of this period. There was not only a shortage of food but also of work. Indian labourers seemed to have been the worst affected, and many came into the towns to look for employment only to die of starvation. Others signed up for work in Thailand as labourers for the railways in the belief that they would at least be fed. Thaathaa Suppiah was one of those who signed up for work but he fell sick in Thailand and managed to persuade the Japanese authorities to allow him to return to Singapore.

The occupation years were not entirely a period of unmitigated gloom. There was a natural resilience of the human spirit and people found comfort, in spite of themselves, in the small joys of life. In the enforced need to produce food, people who had never worked with their hands rediscovered the pleasures of making things grow and

¹⁰ Chin Kee Onn, *Malaya Upside Down*, 3rd ed. (Singapore: Federal Publications, 1976).

rearing animals. Peter Wee recalls the rustic life with nostalgia, Ruth Ho remembers the family's herd of goats with fondness, while He Wen-Lit writes of Peter, barnyard personality and king of the roosters. Aisha Akbar was able to enjoy music lessons and performed in concerts. In Bahau, van Cuylenburg was still able to admire the sunset.

For a few, the unforeseen experiences that resulted from war had the taste of adventure. Aishah Ghani's journey home from Padang, Sumatra, where she had been studying, was one such adventure. It was not until 1943 that she was able to return home to Malaya together with a group of other women students. The journey to the coast took 26 days because their small boat could only travel at ebb tide. They then transferred to a motorboat which was never intended to carry passengers and put them in constant danger of being thrown overboard. The three-day journey across the straits was slow and uncomfortable, as they were unable to carry food and only had a small supply of drinking water.

Yap Pheng Geck's most memorable experience was being sent by the Japanese to persuade a group of armed robbers to surrender. What followed was a safari into the jungles of Johor and a journey back to the world of his childhood in Wah Peng Kang, a riverside settlement where his grandfather used to be *kangchu*. As he made his way slowly through the jungle and the small villages by the river, he recalls with feeling the picture postcard scenery of beautiful clear waters, his camps on sandbanks at night, and the serenity he felt in those idyllic surroundings.

Others like Gerald de Cruz and Tunku Abdul Rahman found consolation in the joys of friendship. Indeed, the Tunku was able to say:

The period of the Japanese Occupation was a period of uncertainty, and one had to make the best of it. I had many friends who never gave me a dull moment, so I can say I had quite a good time.¹¹

¹¹ Tunku Abdul Rahman, "Two Hours Ahead", p. 125.

However, they were the lucky ones. For most people, life was a harsh struggle for existence. While the onslaught of war induced feelings of compassion towards fellow-sufferers, the pressures for survival could also bring out the worst in human nature. Many autobiographers commented on the decline in moral standards. N.I. Low laments:

There was a woeful falling off in morals, public and private.

We played the sycophants of Nips, not shamefacedly, but as men glorying in the successful pursuit of what deserves the approbation, and even the envy, of their fellows.¹²

Tan Kok Seng was appalled by his neighbours' unfriendly behaviour to a child who had stolen some rice: "Never had Chinese neighbours had to behave to each other like this."¹³

There was also the dark side of corruption and graft in which the Japanese were involved. State lotteries were held every month and the gambling farms which had been abolished for decades, were re-introduced. In Saravanamuttu's opinion:

Worse than all, corruption was rife and graft rampant, even Japanese in high office not being immune to the lure of Mammon while morality was conspicuous by its absence. Women, as in Japan, were relegated to a very inferior position and Malaya, that was never noted for its strict moral standards, became looser than ever.... It is no exaggeration to say that three and a half years of Japanese rule put Malaya back, as far as the character of the people were concerned, at least half a century.¹⁴

Underlying all this was an undercurrent of fear, particularly of the *kempeitai* and its network of spies and informers. Careless or unguarded remarks could be reported and lead to arrest and torture.

¹² N.I. Low, *When Singapore Was Syonan-to* (Singapore: Eastern Universities Press, 1973), p. 107.

¹³ Tan Kok Seng, *Son of Singapore* (Singapore: Heinemann Asia, 1990), p. 8.

¹⁴ Saravanamuttu, *The Sara Saga*, p. 115.

Saravanamuttu comments that "hardly a day passed without some report of this happening to one or other of our friends and acquaintances. It was a case of living from day-to-day, not knowing what would happen the next day...."¹⁵ Ruth Ho remembers, "What we felt most of all during the Japanese Occupation was constant fear of the Japanese. It is not an exaggeration to say that we lived in terror for three and a half years."¹⁶

This tension was only relieved when news of Japan's surrender filtered through. However, although Japan surrendered on 15 August 1945, the British forces only landed in Penang on 3 September and in Singapore on 5 September. During the period of invasion and occupation, people of all races helped each other without question, but during this post-surrender interregnum, inter-racial tensions came to the fore when the guerrilla units of the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA) quickly moved in to fill the vacuum.¹⁷

In Taiping, the MPAJA made arrests and carried out executions to settle old scores. Abdul Aziz bin Zakaria was asked to join a committee whose job was to ensure that the Malays did not oppose the Three Stars.

Things were very uncertain and there were also rumours that the Allied Forces would not be landing after all and that the Three Star guerrillas (sic) would be ruling the country. This was a period of uncertainty for the whole country.¹⁸

Reprisals carried out against Malays led to local disturbances which degenerated into inter-racial clashes. Two of the worst of these clashes occurred in Sungai Manik, Perak, and in Batu Pahat, Johor, where the District Officer of Kluang was killed. Chelvasingam-

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 114.

¹⁶ Ruth Ho, *Rainbow Round My Shoulder* (Singapore: Eastern Universities Press, 1975), p. 164.

¹⁷ See Cheah Boon Kheng, *Red Star Over Malaya: Resistance and Social Conflict during and after the Japanese Occupation, 1941-1946* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1983), ch. 5, for a discussion of the post-surrender interregnum.

¹⁸ Abdul Aziz bin Zakaria, *British, Japanese and Independent Malaysia: A Memoir* (Kuala Lumpur: National Institute of Public Administration, 1989), p. 27.

MacIntyre, who lived in Batu Pahat for part of the Occupation, refers to this period as the MPAJA's "campaign of terror".

In Kedah, Tunku Abdul Rahman was determined to prevent the MPAJA from entering Alor Star even though they had surrounded the town. He sent an urgent message to the Japanese garrison commander to hold the situation and another message to Colonel Hasler, commander of the nearest Force 136 unit at Kuala Nerang. He then met Hasler and his officers and brought them to the Balai Besar to meet the Sultan and officially take over Alor Star.¹⁹

In Singapore too, there was a breakdown in law and order when the MPAJA moved in on their mission of reprisals. Both Yap Pheng Geck and N.I. Low mention the vengeance wreaked on Japanese collaborators. However, this is a subject that few Chinese authors touch on. It is not so much that they avoid the issue as that it did not enter deeply into their consciousness. Another explanation could be that they did not live in the rural areas where most of the clashes took place. Most probably, they would have agreed with the views of Khor Cheang Kee, a Penang journalist, that the informers and collaborators deserved their fate.²⁰

The disturbances were not seen by the Chinese as inter-racial clashes but as just retribution. But for the Malays, the post-surrender interregnum was another period of terror and left a bitter aftermath.

War and Autobiography

For most people who have lived through the war, the three and half years of invasion and enemy occupation must have been a life-threatening situation of the highest magnitude that they would ever encounter in their lives. We would expect some of that life-threatening trauma to be reflected in their autobiographies and we would also expect their narratives to give some attention to their wartime experiences.

Surprisingly, that does not appear to be the case as many of the autobiographies make only a passing reference to the war. For example,

¹⁹ Abdul Rahman, Tunku, "My Kedah Days" and "The Admiral's Sword".

²⁰ Cheah, *Red Star*, p. 144.

Tan Chee Khoon's autobiography is a publication of 331 pages but only 11 pages are about the war, mostly describing his experiences as a medical student in Singapore. Even his return home to Cheras near Kuala Lumpur, a journey taken northwards three days after the fall of Singapore, is recounted in a matter-of-fact manner in one page, although the journey must have been a test for the nerves and filled with the sights and drama of war.

There are a number of reasons which could explain why war is not featured more prominently. The following observations come to mind:

1. *The passage of time.* Most of the autobiographies cited were written more than 25 years after the war, and were published mostly in the 1980s and 1990s. The sharp edges of pain and suffering are blurred when recalled so long after the event. Anger too, cannot be sustained over such a long period. The emotions the war generated, T.J. Danaraj admits, have not survived the passage of time and the rapprochement of peoples and nations who now live in peace. There is, in any case, a decay in the memory due to age.
2. *Youthfulness.* Some of the authors were children or adolescents at the time of the war. While children are not immune from pain, they are often protected by parents and by their young age from the full impact of suffering.
3. *The immediacy of suffering.* Atrocities are less painful if they were not suffered by ourselves or by persons close to us. In the midst of the general dislocation and turmoil, these were some whose lives were only lightly touched by war. Tan Chee Khoon managed to make a successful living as a broker and seems to have spent most of the war years reading military history. A.A. Sandosham's work on malariology was much appreciated by the Japanese and his definitive work on the subject was written during this period.
4. *The intensity of suffering.* Memory is affected by the nature of the pain suffered. While everyone suffered from war and deprivation, not everyone suffered directly from Japanese brutality. Yap Pheng Geck and Saravanamuttu were both arrested

but do not appear to have been badly treated. On the other hand, Sybil Kathigasu and Tan Thoon Lip were both tortured and their narratives bear the marks of great intensity of emotion. Sybil Kathigasu's book was written before she died in 1949 from injuries received, and Tan Thoon Lip's recollections were published in 1946 when memories were still fresh. Elizabeth Choy was also tortured but her account is more dispassionate, possibly because it was not published until 1973, 28 years after the war ended.

5. *Experiences too painful to recall.* Because of the stigma associated with sexual violence it has been shown by the experience of those who work with the victims that very few women will admit to rape. As already mentioned, none of the authors describe rape within their family or circle of friends, and only a few cases of comfort women have been identified although the comfort stations are known and some estimates of the numbers involved have been made.²¹ Violence against women is often not articulated.
6. *War seen in the totality of the whole life experience.* If the author did not suffer incapacitating effects resulting from war, then the war years become, over time, a mere interruption in the business of living. Other events will occur that will have a larger bearing on his or her life. Within a lifespan of say three score and ten, three-and-a-half years of war gradually recede in significance. Tan Chee Khoo and A.A. Sandosham went back to their medical careers; Yap Pheng Geck resumed life as a banker; while Ahmad Boestaman, Abdul Aziz Ishak and Aishah Ghani turned to politics. He Wen-Lit refers to this period as "an interval, a hiatus or an interlude" in his life.
7. *War experiences transferred into literary expression.* Some writers have chosen to write about their feelings and experiences of war in a literary rather than an autobiographical form. Two novels by the Malay writer A. Samad Said, *Salinah* and *Lazy River*, have

²¹ See George Hicks, *The Comfort Women: Sex Slaves of the Japanese Imperial Forces* (Singapore: Heinemann Asia, 1995).

war as the background. Similarly, Lim Thean Soo and Goh Sin Tub are writers who have published fictional works about the war in English.

Even though some of the recollections of war are only briefly recalled in the autobiographies discussed, their brevity does not necessarily mean insignificance. They still tell us something about the war and the way it is remembered and add collectively to the memory of war in Malaya.

Collective Memory of the Occupation in Malaya

An autobiography comprises the recollections of an individual but taken together the autobiographies of a number of individuals give us some sense of a collective memory. Several features of this collective memory for Malaya are discussed below.

Firstly, the autobiographies discussed are the recollections of civilians. They are the memories of a defenceless population suffering under the oppression of a conquering army. Only Ibrahim bin Ismail, who subsequently rose to the position of Chief of Armed Forces Staff, Malaysia, was a professional soldier. Mohamad Yusoff was a member of the Malayan Volunteer Infantry but does not appear to have been called up for service. Yap Pheng Geck was an officer in the Straits Settlements Volunteer Force but saw no action because the Volunteers were deployed at beach defences for a seaward attack that never materialised. These narratives do not relate stories of heroic battles or deeds of daring, but of the quiet courage of endurance and the struggle for survival.

Secondly, the question of who was the enemy is not as straightforward as it may seem.

For the Chinese, the answer is ostensibly quite clear. Before the war, the Chinese in Malaya were politically and culturally oriented towards China. When Japan attacked China in 1937, Malayan Chinese boycotted Japanese goods and raised funds for war relief. The Dalforce, a poorly armed and hastily assembled unit, was made up of local Chinese volunteers who put up a fierce resistance in the defence of Singapore. The *sook ching* operation was aimed at the Chinese and the

“gift of atonement” of 50 million dollars was imposed on the Chinese. They were treated with greater suspicion and brutality than the other communities.

The Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA), which was controlled by the Malayan Communist Party (MCP), was the largest and most effectively organized resistance against the Japanese.²² The MPAJA and MCP were supported mainly by the Chinese-speaking Chinese but the English-speaking Chinese were less concerned with the war in China and did not harbour as deep an animosity against the Japanese. The Japanese too, were aware of this distinction. Yap Pheng Geck was treated as a gentleman-soldier even though he wore the uniform of the British armed forces. Civil servants like Lee Siow Mong were called back to work under Japanese superiors. Tan Chee Khoon and his friends were in one of at least three groups of medical students who were given permission to leave Singapore more or less at the time the *sook ching* operation was mounted.

The MPAJA demanded food and support from the rural population but did not fully appreciate the position of the latter, who faced pressures from the guerrillas on the one hand and the Japanese on the other. When they carried out reprisals against the local Chinese, they lost some of the popular support that a resistance movement could expect to receive from the community at large. And when they carried out reprisals against Malay villages and Malay rural officials at the end of the war, they created inter-racial tensions. Their activities degenerated into a reign of terror for many Malays and also aroused fears of a communist takeover.²³ Only Sybil Kathigasu writes of the MPAJA with some warmth. To her, they were the brave guerrillas for whom she suffered so much.

The MPAJA participated in the victory parade held in Kuala Lumpur, but when they returned to the jungle and launched an armed movement against the government, they became insurgents threatening national security. The guerrillas who began as resistance fighters against the Japanese invaders, the heroes of the war, had deteriorated into the

²² See Cheah, *Red Star*, ch. 3, for a discussion of the MCP and the anti-Japanese movement.

²³ See *ibid.*, chs. 5-7, for a discussion of the complex events of the period.

villains of the peace. They had become the enemy.

The Indian attitude to the war was somewhat mixed as exemplified by the opening paragraph from a short story by Lloyd Fernando:

Surja Singh was twenty-eight when he died. When I heard of his death, I was not surprised. He was a patriot in the old style, and that kind doesn't last. I'm not saying this to excuse what I did. But he knew which country he was fighting for. We were in the same army but I didn't know which country I was fighting for.²⁴

Japanese policy towards the Indians was conciliatory because they sought Indian cooperation as part of their plans for the invasion of India. Soon after the fall of Singapore, the Indian Independence League was formed and the Indian Swaraj Institute set up in Penang to train young men for action in India. An Indian National Army (INA) was organized, large contributions of money and jewellery were donated, and "Onward to Delhi" became the battle-cry. However, friction arose as a result of the differences between the Japanese and the Indian perceptions of the role of the INA. Even so, the INA fought with the Japanese in Burma but after the defeat at Imphal, the enthusiasm lost some of its steam in the sober realisation that the fortunes of war were turning against the Japanese.

The idea of fighting to free India had a wide appeal, and both Mehervan Singh and Chelvasingam-MacIntyre threw themselves heartily into working for the INA, but the movement was not supported whole-heartedly by all Indians. Saravanamuttu, for example, had serious doubts about its effectiveness. Indian opinion was also adversely affected by the thousands of Indians labourers who were forced to provide labour on the "Death Railway" and at other work sites. For those who were strongly anti-Japanese, the exploits of Gurchan Singh were a reflection of their sentiments. Gurchan Singh organized what was essentially a one-man inspired resistance movement which he named Singa. Aided by a small group of seven, he printed anti-Japanese posters and leaflets and distributed them throughout the country up to

²⁴ "Surja Singh", *New Straits Times* (15 Feb. 1995).

1944. Among the Indians, therefore, there were those who were anti-British and prepared to work with the Japanese in the cause of Indian independence, and others who were anti-Japanese.

The Malay response to the war was also somewhat mixed although Japanese policy was kinder towards the indigenous population.²⁵ The Kesatuan Melayu Muda (KMM) group led by Ibrahim Yaacob was openly pro-Japanese and some members of its members acted as guides and interpreters to the invading Japanese army. KMM support was given in expectation of Japanese support for Malay independence, an expectation which was not to be fulfilled. On the contrary, the KMM was banned in June 1942 when the Japanese decided against supporting indigenous nationalist groups. The sultans were sidelined as heads of their respective states when a Japanese governor was appointed for each Malay state. Divisions among the royal houses occurred when Japanese appointees succeeded to the throne in several states. The authority of the sultans as heads of religion in their territories was to some degree curtailed. Malay administrators and government officers were, by and large, retained in their positions, but the Malay officials in the rural areas, the district officers, the *penghulu* and the *ketua kampong*, became caught in the middle between the local population and the demands of the Japanese. Tunku Abdul Rahman recounts how as District Officer of Kulim, he was removed from his position by the Japanese military governor when he refused to comply with demands to supply forced labour. Malay officials also had to contend with the pressures from the MPAJA already described. They were construed to be collaborating with the Japanese and some fell victim to MPAJA reprisals. They were therefore victims of war in a double sense.

There were also Malays who fought against the Japanese. The Malay Regiment fought valiantly in the battle for Singapore, while officers in India like Ibrahim bin Ismail and Tunku Osman Jawa returned to work in the resistance. Malay units of Force 136 were active in Perak and Pahang.

²⁵ See Halinah Bamadhaj, "The Impact of the Japanese Occupation of Malaya on Malay Society and Politics, 1941-1945" (M.A. thesis, Univ. of Auckland, 1975), and Cheah Boon Kheng, *Red Star*, chs. 2 and 4, for fuller discussions of this issue.

The case of the Eurasian community was the simplest. Because of their part-European descent, they were perceived to be sympathetic to the British, as indeed many of them were. Some Eurasians were interned with the European civilians while others joined the settlement in Bahau, which was less successful than the Chinese settlement in Endau, and many who went there died from disease and malnutrition.

The memories of war in Malaya are not at all simple or straightforward. Perceptions of friend and foe vary from community to community and from time to time depending on the individual and his circumstances. We see a strange situation where an enemy was sometimes a friend, and a friend could become an enemy.

Conclusion

Malayan narratives of the occupation tell a story of disillusionment. The shock of invasion was soon followed by the shock of British defeat. A population brought up to think in terms of the might of empire and the superiority of the white man was stunned by the rapidity of the Japanese advance and the undignified manner of the British retreat. With the end of colonial rule came a greater awareness of ethnicity and self-identity, and with this a sense of anger at being caught between British military ineptitude and Japanese aggression as expressed by Mohamad Yusoff: "I must say that my feelings were somewhat mixed, hatred for the Japanese and anger at the British."²⁶ Implicit in his words is another sentiment, that he had been caught up in a war that was not his war. Japan's war in Malaya was directed against Britain; Malaysians were victims of this war, not protagonists.²⁷

Lastly and most importantly, when we look over the volumes of autobiographies, the most enduring memory of the three-and-a-half

²⁶ Mohamad Yusoff Haji Ahmad, *Decades of Change (Malaysia, 1910s-1970s)* (Kuala Lumpur: Pesaka, 1983), p. 205.

²⁷ A much stronger sense of this sentiment is expressed in Geoffrey M. White, "The Politics of Remembering: Notes on a Pacific Conference", in *Rereading Cultural Anthropology*, ed. George E. Marcus (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1992), pp. 77-86. One of the Melanesian participants in this conference said: "I would like to ask this conference to resolve that World War II was not our war. It was the war of two countries that came to fight on our land..." (p. 83).

years of Japanese Occupation is the memory of suffering and the Japanese as the perpetrators of that suffering. This theme runs consistently through all the publications as the common experience of all communities despite differences in the perceptions of the war and variations in the nature of the pain suffered.

Fifty years have passed since the war came to an end but the memory of suffering remains and has passed into folklore and into collective consciousness. This memory is revived every time a Japanese Prime Minister visits Malaysia and Singapore even though feelings about the war are not openly expressed as they are in other countries such as Korea and the Philippines. Since only a half-hearted acknowledgement of the pain inflicted has been made, Japan's inability to confront its past makes it difficult for others to put the past to rest.²⁸

In this paper on the memories of war in Malaya, I have only discussed the autobiographies that have been published. What I have not touched on are the memories that have not been articulated. Silence speaks of another experience and a different memory of war.

²⁸ Ian Buruma in his book *The Wages of Guilt: Memories of War in Germany and Japan* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1994), argues that the Japanese do not remember the sufferings they have inflicted but only remember what they themselves have suffered.

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Japan Remembers the Malaya Campaign

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The Malaya campaign is a well-known story. A recent bibliography on the fall and occupation of Singapore lists 168 books in English, 30 in Chinese, 15 in Malay, and three in Tamil.¹ The British have, of course, most to say about their biggest defeat in history; Australian authors still debate the correctness of General Gordon Bennett's escape after the surrender;² the Chinese reminisce as the prime victims of Japanese reprisals and revenge,³ and Malay and Tamil sources reflect fewer problems with the Japanese who sought to woo these peoples. Just about every nationality present in colonial Singapore later told in bookform about the traumatic fall of the British Empire, including Fritz Arbenz, the Swiss consul, whose posthumously published diary details the *Singapore Saga*⁴ of a collapsing age.

What strikes one as odd in this fascinating literature is the paucity of detail on the Japanese side. They "advance by brigade groups", "outflank the defence", "sustain many casualties", and remain altogether a largely faceless mass bicycling their way down to Singapore. The reader wonders, have not the Japanese their own stock of books that

¹ *From Singapore to Syonan-to 1941-1945* (Singapore: National Library Singapore, 1992).

² A. B. Lodge, *The Fall of General of Gordon Bennett* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1986); Mark Clisby, *Guilty or Innocent: The Gordon Bennett Case* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1992).

³ Erstwhile bystanders in the war, and armed only at the end to help the desperate British cause a few weeks before surrender, the Chinese vanished into a limbo of suspicion as the Japanese sought to castigate them and keep them in line through massacres on a large scale in Singapore and unland Malaya following the British surrender in February and March 1942.

⁴ Annelies Crone-Arbenz, *Singapore Saga* (Canberra: Thomas Rowland Publishers, 1988).

could be exploited to balance the lop-sided Allied histories? One is curious to know how Japan has remembered the Malaya campaign. With equal emotion? In as many books?

Japan does have its own literature on the Malaya campaign. A Japanese bibliography published in the same year as the one mentioned above lists 62 books and 15 articles on Japan's involvement in Malaya during the Pacific War.⁵ If it cannot compare in quantity, it has one quality. Scanning this literature over the past half century, we notice a progression in the Japanese historiography of the Malaya campaign from recollections that once stressed only fame to memories also of shame. Where earlier Japanese histories remembered the victories, recent reminiscences now talk about war guilt as well. This paper examines the Malaya campaign in Japanese historical writings by observing how the former general staff recalls mainly the fame, soldiers remember the fighting, intellectuals today debate the killings, and social science recommends an interdisciplinary approach to promote objectivity in the recording of Japan's Malayan past.

The General Staff Recalls

Just as had happened after the First World War, military leaders sat down again to explain their victories or justify their losses in the Pacific during the Second World War. In 1944 Gordon Bennett, the controversial Australian General who slipped out of Singapore just before the surrender, published his account of *Why Singapore Fell* (and he escaped); the commanding general, A. E. Percival, detailed the military disaster four years later in *The War in Malaya*; in 1951 Winston Churchill characterized Britain's loss of Singapore as "the worst military defeat in her history".⁶

⁵ See 'Malaysia' in Ota Hirotake, "Nanpo ni okeru Nihon gunsei kankei no bunken mukuroku" [Bibliography on the Japanese military administration in the southern regions]. *Gunji Shigaku* [The Journal of Military History], ed. *Gunjishi Gakkai* [The Military History Society of Japan] 28, 3 (Dec. 1992): 91-93.

⁶ Sir Winston Churchill, *History of World War II: The Hinge of Fate* (London: Cassell, 1951).

"Wishing to reply to Mr. Churchill's memoirs, holdly...", the architect of the fall of Singapore, Tsuji Masanobu, borrowed Churchill's subtitle in the following year for his own version *Shingaporu: Unmei no tenki* [Singapore: The Hinge of Fate].⁷ While the book offers valuable insights into the stratagems of Japanese army planning and factional strife by the man who knew best, its author is a controversial figure. The former Colonel tells only part of the story. He omits the infamous purge of the Overseas Chinese, an operation intricately involved with the Malaya campaign. In Japanese war history circles, moreover, Tsuji, the Director of Military Operations for the 25th Army, has long been pinpointed as the man who planned the mass liquidations of Chinese in the wake of the British surrender of Singapore in February 1942.⁸ Just like a timetable, his book stops conveniently at the time of surrender on 15 February. In 1961, Tsuji Masanobu vanished mysteriously into the jungles of Vietnam.

Twelve years after his disappearance, Shinozaki Mamoru referred to him in his memoirs as "the one who made the plan for the Chinese massacre".⁹ Shinozaki had been an embassy official in pre-war Singapore. After it fell, he became an advisor to headquarters in the renamed city of Syonan-to (Light of the Southern Islands). Destiny made him play an equally fateful role in the Malaya campaign. The

⁷ In English this volume first appeared as *Singapore: The Japanese Version* (Sydney: Ure Smith, 1960). The cited material appear on p. xxi. Oxford University Press ressed the book as a paperback in 1988 re-titled *Singapore 1941-1942: The Japanese Version of the Malayan Campaign of World War II* (Singapore: Oxford University Press), p. xxi.

⁸ The *sook ching* operation (in Japanese the *shuku sei* operation) was planned by the Operation Staff of the 25th Army and carried out under an order issued in the name of General Yamashita, the directive being transmitted from Yamashita through his chief of staff, L.-G. Suzuki Sosaku to Defence headquarters under Major General Kawamura Saburo, commander of the Syonan-to garrison, who in turn delegated the task of carrying out the purge to the *kempeitai*. About 6,000 Chinese were killed in the large-scale purge operation (the Chinese side gives the figure of 50,000). See Yoji Akashi, "Japanese Policy Towards the Malayan Chinese 1941-1945", *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 1, 2 (Sept. 1970): 66-68.

⁹ Mamoru Shinozaki, *My Wartime Experiences in Singapore* (Singapore: Insitute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1973), Oral History Programme Series No. 3, p. 15.

antithesis of Tsuji, Shinozaki is today favourably remembered for having freely issued "Good Citizen" passes that saved thousands of Chinese lives at the time of the purge. He also played a key role in starting the Overseas Chinese Association as a shield behind which many found protection. Writing with an objectivity nurtured by regret, his *Syonan—My Story: The Japanese Occupation of Singapore*¹⁰ is unadorned, straightforward and creditable.

One hard-liner Shinozaki had to contend with in particular, was Colonel Watanabe Wataru. He was the chief military administrator who gained notoriety for his "government by bayonet" (*budan gunsei*) from March 1942 - March 1943. Watanabe's five volume diary (December 1941 to March 1942) still awaits exploitation. But his shorter piece "Daitoa senso ni okeru Nanpo gunsei no kaiko" [Recollections of the military administration in the southern region during the Greater East Asia War] throws light on the rationale that guided Japanese high circles at that moment. It is an often vague and unbending document. While he is aware that the Singapore massacre ranks third after Nanking and Manila, he apparently knew nothing about it then, confined as he was to his workplace all the time.¹¹ He is not of the brooding kind. If his Chinese generation in Malaya still remembers with pain the 50 million dollars levied from the Overseas Chinese communities in Malaya, Watanabe glosses over this brainchild of his as "a life saving device"¹² to compensate the Japanese military in Malaya. He ends his soliloquy: "Necessity is the mother of invention." When people meet with hardship, as in this war many did, their self-healing power is sharpened. Like weeds, they stretch to overcome any obstacle, waxing ever more luxuriant."¹³

¹⁰ Mamoru Shinozaki, *Syonan — My Story: The Japanese Occupation of Singapore* (Singapore: Asia Pacific Press, 1975; republished by Times Book International, 1982, reprinted 1984, 1992).

¹¹ Watanabe Wataru, "Daitoa senso ni okeru Nanpo gunsei no kaiko: Naki Yamashita shogun o shinobu" [Recollections of the military administration in the southern region during the Greater East Asia War: Remembering the deceased General Yamashita], in *Gunji Shigaku* [The Journal of Military History], ed. *Gunjishi Gakkai* [The Military History Society of Japan], 28, 3 (Dec. 1992): 69.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 66.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

Out of this mixed bag of memories grew Japan's official war histories, drawing heavily on diaries, official and personal military papers, and general staff records deposited after the war. Many of these records were written originally by former officers of the Japanese armed forces for the Historical Records Section of the First (Army) and Second (Navy) Demobilization Bureaus of the Japanese Government. A great number were translated by the Military Intelligence Service Group attached to the Headquarters of the United States Army's Far East Command, and exist as a monograph series.¹⁴ Some of the relevant monographs that detail Malaya operations are: "Malaya Operations Record, Nov. 1941-March 1942; Outline of Administration in Occupied Areas, 1941-1945; Malaya Invasion Naval Operations; Southwest Area Operations Record, April 1944-August 1945; Malaya Operations Record: 29th Army, January 1944-August 1945.

It is this huge body of material, sifted and gathered into 104 volumes, that underlies Japan's official Pacific War history, compiled by the National Self Defence College between 1966 and 1985. The first volume, *Maree shinko sakusen*¹⁵ [The Malaya Campaign; 1966], recorded the timetable of the Malaya campaign and provided maps to trace troop movements. *Nanpo no gunsei* [The Military Administration in the Southern Region; 1985], the last volume to appear in the series, supplemented it with a large collection of policy utterances from Tokyo.¹⁶ Both are excellent guides to primary sources at the Japanese Defense Agency,¹⁷ and complement superbly Major-General S.

¹⁴ The writer thanks Dr Paul Kratoska for kindly pointing out and providing copies of the relevant monograph material.

¹⁵ Boei-cho, Boeikenshujo, Senshishitsu [Self-defense Agency, National Defense College, War History Office], *Nanpo no gunsei* (Tokyo: Asagumo Shinbunsha, 1985), Vol. 104.

¹⁶ Three other volumes in the series deal partially with the Malaya campaign: *Hito/Maree homen kaigun hinko sakusen* [Naval offensive operations in the Philippines and Malaya], Vol. 24, *Nanpo shinko rikugun koku sakusen* [Offensive operations of the Army Air Force in the southern areas], Vol. 34, and *Nansei homen rikugun sakusen: Marei Ran'in no boei* [Army operations in the Southwest: Philippines and Malaya naval offensive operations], Vol. 92.

¹⁷ London, 1957.

Woodburn Kirby's official *War Against Japan: The Loss of Singapore*.

But as with Britain's official war history, they are essentially "battle pieces" that endorse prevailing General Staff doctrine about the proper conduct of war. As in Tsuji's work, the compilers drop their pens when they reach the surrender of Singapore. How the Japanese army handled the Chinese population lies again conveniently outside the sphere of their first volume. And only if we read *Nanpo no gunsei* with other relevant material, can we understand how policies couched harmlessly at home could lead to killings in the field. When for example the Diet called for strict control over Overseas Chinese in Malaya on the eve of the fall of Singapore on 14 February 1942,¹⁸ the politicians probably meant camp control: in the field it meant rooting out obstruction by dealing out swift death to suspects.

Scholars working independently have used the official material to develop more penetrating insights into the background of the Malaya campaign. Long before the completion of the official history, Akashi Yoji was pioneering careful studies in English using primary material supplemented with interviews of former general staff officers to produce an unbiased view of Japan's uneasy Malaya years. His seminal "Japanese Policy Towards the Malayan Chinese 1941-1945" explains how high-handed men such as Watanabe Wataru caused permanent damage by reversing the initially positive policies towards the Malayan Chinese. His other work embraces Imperial Japan's administrative, educational, and cultural policies towards its multicultural subjects in Malaya.¹⁹ It shows how research in Japanese archives can effectively

¹⁸ "Kakyo taisaku yoko" [Outline of policy toward the Chinese], in *ibid.*, p. 108.

¹⁹ Yoji Akashi, "Japanese Policy Towards the Malayan Chinese", "Bureaucracy and the Japanese Military Administration, with Specific Reference to Malaya", in William H. Newell *Japan in Asia* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1981), pp. 46-82; "Japanese Cultural Policy in Malaya and Singapore, 1942-45" in *Japanese Cultural Policies in Southeast Asia during World War 2* in Grant K. Goodman, ed., (New York: St Martin's Press, 1991), pp. 117-172; "Japanese Military Administration in Malayan: Its Formation and Evolution in Reference to the Stans, the Islamic Region and the Moslem Malays, 1941-45", *Asian Studies* 7, 1 (Apr. 1969). Lieutenant-General Fujiwara Iwaichi, Trans. by Akashi Yoji, *F-Kikan: Japanese Army Intelligence Operations in Southeast Asia during World War II* (Hong Kong: Heinemann Asia, 1983).

balance the Sino-European version of the Malaya campaign.

The Singapore municipal administration worked closely with the General Staff. In 1986, 60 veteran administrators put together their own recollections in *Shonan tokubetsu-shi shi: Senjichu no Shingaporu* [History of the Shonan municipality: Singapore during wartime].²⁰ Their work bristles with vignettes showing how 300 of them kept the city of 800,000 going until the bitter end. Often at loggerheads with the General Staff, the former administrative clerks firmly distance themselves from the military, and speculate how different things would have been had myopic army policy not sullied government with the stains of violence and extortion.

At the highest level, then, Japanese participants have been remembering the Malaya campaign with both repentance and intransigence.²¹ We miss one important memoir—that of the conqueror of Singapore, who was hanged in Manila in 1946. How would Lieutenant-General Yamashita Tomoyuki have written the story Generals Bennett and Percival did live to write? Lacking published testimony from the so-called ‘Tiger of Malaya’, we move on to the recollections of the men who fought his brilliant and brutal campaign.

Ordinary Soldiers Remember

Just three weeks after the fall of Singapore Tsukushi Jiro completed the first book-length account of the Malaya campaign. The censor removed from his history names, units involved and strategic locations, since at the time of writing assault troops were still in the field. Tsukushi’s narrative is from the perspective of an infantry officer in

²⁰ Shingaporu Shisei Kai, *Shonan tokubetsu-shi shi: Senjichu no Shingaporu* (Tokyo: Nihon-Shingaporu Kyokai, 1986).

²¹ For an extensive annotated bibliographic survey on published and unpublished memoirs of many more Japanese participants at this level, see Akashi Yoji, *JCC Bulletin*, Japan, Japan Cultural Centre, Kuala Lumpur (The Japan Foundation) 23 (May 1994): 1-4; *JCC Bulletin* 24 (Aug. 1994): 1-7.

the 5th Division, who has come straight down the peninsula.²² The table of contents in *Shingaporu koryaku ki* [History of the Conquest of Singapore] applauds everything the Japanese accomplished in the invasion: "Brilliant beginning of hostilities", "Landing Operation at Kota Bahru", "Flinging human bullets at the pill boxes", "Capturing the aerodrome of Kota Bahru", etc.²³ Their troops had been received with pleasure everywhere, he exults, and 2,000 natives on one little offshore island even welcomed them as heavenly envoys.²⁴

So fresh is this instant history that it often reads like a travelogue. Tsukushi describes the various delicacies the soldiers sampled en route down the peninsula, the divine coconut water, squalls experienced, moon viewing, or gazing into a large mirror in a sequestered house, musing what his family would say if they could see father now. He rejoices in the news of success on all fronts: missions accomplished in Burma, Borneo, and the Philippines, the fall of Hong Kong on Christmas day; and he wonders how long it would be before they could rip down the Union Jack at the tip of the Malayan peninsula.²⁵

Tsukushi's book was, of course, meant for home consumption, to tell folks how well the war had gone and how valiantly they had behaved towards the vanquished. If it was not yet objective history, it communicates accurately the soldiers' pride in their successful invasion and their feeling of invincibility, blind as yet to any notion of defeat.

A very similar book, and possibly the second oldest history on the subject, is *Malaya Campaign 1941-1942* by Yokoyama Ryuichi.

²² One must read him with care, though. In his other books Tsukushi, who seems to have been an army aviator, gives the impression he was a participant in the events he describes, although he was apparently not involved in actual fighting and but based his accounts on hearsay. The writer gratefully acknowledges this comment on his paper from Professor Hata Ikuhiko at the Forum on the Japanese Occupation of Malaya and Singapore, 22 Oct. 1994.

²³ Completed on 10 March, Tsukushi Jiro's *Shingaporu koryaku ki* (Tokyo: Jidai Sha) was published on 8 May 1942, the day that Japan's southward advance met its first reversal in the Battle of the Coral Sea.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 134-36.

It is a long way from these warped epics to Tsuchikane Tominosuke's *Shingaporu e no michi: Aru Konoe hei no kiroku* [Road to Singapore: The records of an Imperial Guard] written in 1977.²⁶ His view from the ordinary soldier's dug-out looks back on the Malaya campaign with more detachment than the apothotic battle pieces described above. Human development characterizes Tsuchikane's straightforward narrative. In his pages we see a boy grow into a man, a civilian into a warrior. His metamorphosis describes scenes from his childhood, to the day he is proudly conscripted into the elite Imperial Guards, saddening mother and father; his first taste of war in China, where he asks his seniors why he must burn down the house of a Chinese woman fleeing with an infant in her arms; and his amazement at the French boulevards and large colonial houses in North Vietnam. He remembers savouring British rations — the so-called "Churchill supplies" left behind — the asparagus, cheese and biscuits, a tin of which he kept like a precious souvenir from a trip abroad, all through later captivity.²⁷ He tells of plundering in Alor Star and being reprimanded by the *kempeitai*. He also describes his first killing of a white soldier—in plainer language than William Manchester uses to describe his first Japanese victim in his autobiographical *Goodbye to Darkness*—without sentimentality, just moving on, constantly taking pictures of the events on the war path, focusing and filing, focusing and filing.

The actual battle of Singapore gets more detailed coverage in *Shingaporu senki* [Singapore: A war record] by Arai Mitsuo, a book he completed in 1983 at the age of 71. Born in the southern city of Fukuoka in Kyushu, Arai joined the infantry and arrived with the 18th Division at Johore Bahru on 30 January. They were surprised to see American Fords and Chevrolets in this part of the world, and he remembers the communication problems they had, the scarce food, and how they were looking forward to better fare in Singapore.²⁸

²⁶ Tsuchikane Tominosuke, *Shingaporu e no michi: aru Konoe hei no kiroku* (Tokyo: Sogeisha, 1977), 2 Vols.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 129-30.

²⁸ Arai Mitsuo, *Shingaporu senki* (Tokyo: Tosho Shuppan Sha, 1984), pp. 31, 40, 45-46.

Swiftly preparing for the assault, they felled rain trees in the jungle to use as launch pads for their Regiment's 70 pontoons to ferry 1200 infantrymen and their tanks across the waterway. At 4:30 on 8 February they saw the Straits for the first time: "At this point it was of no use to think about life or death. In battle only fate counted. The curtain had fallen on the first act of my Malaya campaign experience. The next act would be quite different. For a brief moment I saw our house in my home town."²⁹ After viewing the moon at eleven, they began their ferocious and successful landing against Australian held lines. Arai offers a rare glimpse of what it was like to take Hill 200 in the fiercest of battles surrounding Bukit Timah. The focal point there was the three way crossing where today stands a dazzling MacDonald's. In four days they lost two hundred men to reach that position on 12 February.³⁰ The fall of Singapore was then only a matter of time.

Onishi Satoru offers a more soul-searching version of the Malayan campaign from the angle of the *kempeitai* (military police). His *Hiroku: Shonan Kakyo shukusei jiken* [Secret record: The Shonanto purge incident] squarely addresses the problem of killing a large number of mainly male non-combatants *after* the Commonwealth troops' surrender. It is a wound that never closed, and the one that fuels the question of how to view the Malaya campaign. As a tool of that tragedy, the former *kempeitai* chief wants to set the record straight.

He describes the glory he felt as a *kempeitai* to ride into conquered Singapore, their difficulty with having been ordered to screen the Chinese population in only three days, and their mortifying appearance in the docks during the post-surrender war crime trials held in Singapore in 1946. Remorse wafts through his pages as he discusses the "three big stains of the army in Shonan": the public display of severed heads, the purge incident, and the money extortion.³¹ His problem-oriented military history offers a unique reminiscence of a nightmarish past. Sobered by time, how do people remember their dark deeds committed once in the name of self defence and for one's country?

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 49-50.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

³¹ Onishi Satoru, *Hiroku: Shonan Kakyo shukusei jiken* (Tokyo: Kameoka Shuppan, 1977), pp. 144-50.

This is a different kind of military history the Japanese are also writing; the bitter recollection of what otherwise would have been a singular victory to look back on. It inhibits remembrance of the fall of Singapore in as glorious terms as, say, the British remember Waterloo, the French the Napoleonic wars, or the Allies D-Day—despite the fact that Japan's strategic victory substantially helped define the present post-war world order in Southeast Asia.

Although in the end Japan lost the war and England managed to hang on to Singapore for another generation, Great Britain had lost forever. The Overseas Chinese in Singapore had experienced a loss they would not tolerate in the long run. As one Chinese observer, Lee Kip Lin, recalls when seeing the British soldiers disembark at Tanjong Pagar docks on 5 September 1945: "There was a lot of cheering ... over these white faces pouring into the city in lorries.... But ... it annoyed me to see the arrogant faces of some of the British officers. It was the same old arrogance that you saw before the war."³²

Oral testimonies such as Lee's add another dimension to the memory of the Malayan campaign. His observations originate from a Singapore project that between 1981 and 1986 recorded 178 eye-witness accounts of local inhabitants and some Allied personnel. Fortunately, the Oral History Department of Singapore is now extending its project to include the Japanese view and presently includes around 10 Japanese interviews.

Tsujimoto Sanosuke recalls his boredom as part of a group of poorly compensated soldiers doing warehouse duties, and their anguish at the time of the Japanese surrender and repatriation.³³ In another interview, Nagase Takashi talks about his experiences as an Army interpreter attached to Headquarters at Raffles College. There he lived separately with 200 other interpreters, drawing higher allowances to the great envy of the ordinary soldiers. On days off, they would wander off to the comfort women houses downtown. For a short period he

³² Lee Geok Boi, *Syonan: Singapore Under the Japanese 1942-1945* (Singapore: Landmark Books, 1992), p. 121.

³³ Oral History Department of Singapore. Interview with Tsujimoto Sanosuke, Accession No. B 000119/03.

was posted as Japanese language instructor to the harbour Island of Sentosa. Twelve Korean girls had been unloaded there and he remembers how the virgins were all reserved for the notorious commanding officer, Lieutenant Miki, "who first tasted each one by one". He tells of the girls' sorrow in their sad language classes, and in the end he weeps and whispers: "I am very, very sorry for what we have done here during the war time."³⁴

Intellectuals Debate

Nagase was apologizing in Singapore at a time when various intellectuals back home were beginning to scrutinize the history of the Malaya campaign. His remorse was the kind of response historian Ienaga Saburo had been trying to educe from his government ever since he rose to prominence in the mid-1960s as Japan's foremost war guilt writer with his widely read *The Pacific War*, which pointed out the darker sides of Japanese expansion into the Asia-Pacific region 1941-45. In 1985 he bolstered this work with *Senso sekinin* [War guilt],³⁵ a meticulous catalogue of the various brutalities that took place in each war theatre, country by country.

Ienaga's books drew circles in the pond. They stimulated critical writers to investigate Nanking, Manila, and the end phase of the Malaya campaign, with the shattering fall of Singapore and concomitant atrocities. But Ienaga's accusations stirred also those who took the view that all wars are cruel and who saw no reason why Japan should be taken to task for what had happened in a major human catastrophe. In the unfolding debate, these various standpoints added complexity to the conventional ways of writing military history. Together they explain how the Malaya Campaign can be remembered with both fame and shame.

A year after Ienaga's clarion call, two books detailed the Chinese killing fields at the end of the Malaya campaign. Kobayashi Masahiro,

³⁴ Oral History Department of Singapore. Interview with Nagase Takashi, 8 June 1987, Accession No. 000789.

³⁵ Ienaga Saburo, *Senso sekinin* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1985).

a primary schoolteacher attached to the Japanese School in Singapore from 1983 to 1986, published *Singaporu no Nihon gun* [The Japanese army in Singapore].³⁶ This book explains how Singaporeans learn at school about the purge operation and ensuing harsh occupation, and argues that postwar Japanese have an obligation to know about those events as well. Four months later followed a similar book, *Nihon senryo jo no Singaporu* [Singapore under the Japanese],³⁷ an abridged version of an encyclopedic work edited by Xu Yun Jiao and Cai Shi Jun and entitled *Xin Ma Hua Ren Kang Ri Shi Liao* [Malayan Resistance to Japan 1937-1945: Selected Source Material]. The book introduces the Chinese view of the suffering inflicted on the Malayan Chinese in 1942. Like Ienaga's work, the book addresses the question of war guilt and accepts higher estimates of the number of massacre victims.

One of Ienaga's students was Takashima Nobuyoshi, a high school geography teacher in Tokyo. After the textbook issue broke in 1982, Takashima intensified his research into Japanese troop behaviour in Southeast Asia, specifically in Malaysia. He began to investigate various sites in Malaya where massacres had been carried out in connection with the Singapore purge in February and March 1942. Takashima travelled to the various villages and established contact with the victims' families. He obtained from them an account of the large scale slayings in the province of Negri Sembilan in March 1942. Published by the Negri Sembilan Chinese Assembly Hall in January 1988, the volume featured photographs of victims showing bayonet wounds they had suffered as children when, left for dead, they miraculously survived the massacres. Takashima had the book translated, and it was published the following year as *Maraya no Nihon gun: Neguri Sembiran shu ni okeru Kajin gyakusatsu* [Japanese soldiers in Malaya: The Chinese massacres in Negri Sembilan province].³⁸

³⁶ Kobayashi Masahiro, *Singaporu no Nihon gun* (Tokyo: Heiwa Bunka, April 1986).

³⁷ Xu Yun Jiao and Cai Shi Jun (eds.), Transl. by Tanaka Hiroshi and Fukunaga Hei, *Nihon senryo Jo no Shingaporu* (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, August 1986).

³⁸ Takashima Nobuyoshi and Hayashi Hirofumi (eds.), Murakami Ikuzo, tr., *Maraya no Nihon gun: Neguri Sembiran ni okeru Kajin gyakusatsu* (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, June 1989).

Today Takashima flies groups of 10 to 15 Japanese to Malaysia twice a year. Between Kuala Lumpur and Singapore Takashima lectures his countrymen on their recent past in Southeast Asia as their bus takes them to various memorial sites, where they visit the graves of the victims (*ohaka mairi*) and meet with survivors or their siblings. Communication takes place, as descendants of the former foe listen to those who survived. A glimmer of understanding sparks up, as the Chinese Malaysians strain to overcome the past. They may forgive, but do not forget.³⁹

Takashima's book appeared in the same month that the Society To Engrave In Our Hearts The Victims Of War published *Nihon gun no Mareesia jumin gyakusatsu* [The Civilian Massacres of the Japanese Army in Malaya]. This well researched work relates how in March 1942 Japanese soldiers wiped out more than 4,260 people in 27 places in the state of Negri Sembilan.⁴⁰ It was the Society's third volume in their *Ajia no koe* [Voice of Asia] series. Together with the even more prolific Society of Asian Women's *Kyokasho kakarenakatta senso* [The War They Did Not Teach Us About] series, they castigate Japan's inroads made in 1941-45 by inviting former victims to speak up about their wartime experiences. Both series have been publishing into the 1990s, and have provided brutally frank material for yet another genre of war publications. Five unequivocal war histories in comic book form (*manga*) address the young. These utterly non-comical books include *Kogane iro no kaze* [Golden Wind], the pictorial biography of a recruit forced to participate in the atrocities in Manchuria and Nanking, and *Jufa no sora* [Sky of Vermillion Flowers] which criticizes in gory graphics the massacres in Malaya.⁴¹

³⁹ Writer's impression during the "6th Study Tour To Research Japan's War Experience On The Southern Part Of The Malayan Peninsula" at the grave sites in Sungei Lui, Negri Sembilan, 10 Aug. 1991.

⁴⁰ *Senso giseisha o kokoro ni itonamu kai hen* [Society To Engrave In Our Hearts The Victims Of War], *Nihon gun no Mareesia jumin gyakusatsu* (Tokyo: Toho Shuppan, 1989), Vol. 3. The Society convened the first Forum in Osaka on 15 August 1986 and publishes the conference results every following July.

⁴¹ Fujiwara Akira, Writer, and Hayashi Sota, Illustator, *Kogane iro no Kaze*, War Series Vol. 3 (Tokyo: Sodo Bunka, 8 December 1991). Fujiwara Akira, Writer, and Yatsurugi Hiroki, Kichijoji Kazuya, Illustrators, *Jufa no sora*. War Series Vol. 4 (Tokyo: Sodo Bunka, 8 December 1991).

At each turn these highly critical works were matched by books that glorified Japan's Malaya campaign. As if in response to Ienaga's accusations, *Shingaporu koryakusen: Shashin de miru Taiheiyo senso* [The Singapore Invasion: The Pacific War through Photographs] entered its ninth printing when the textbook scandal broke in 1982. Authored by Tominaga Kenko, a former navy officer, and Ito Shunichiro, an ex-army officer, the pictorial textbook for highschool students focuses on three outstanding accomplishments of Japan's Malayan *blitz* operation: first, the rapid advance of the army down the Malayan peninsula with tanks and bicycles; second, the singular naval victories off the east coast of Malaya; and third, the glorious airborne invasion of Palembang to secure Sumatra's oil fields. Rich in technical detail on how the army overcame strategic and tactical obstacles in the jungle, the textbook says nothing about how they dealt with the Overseas Chinese problem.⁴²

Another partially slanted work is *Nihonjin yo! Arigato: Mareesia wa koshite dokuritsu shita* [Thank You Japanese! This is How Malaysia Became Independent] by Habu Yoshiki, alias Haji Abu Hurairah Habu Abdullah, a Japanese Muslim who went on the Haj to Mecca in 1984. He bases his account of how Malaya reached independence on interviews with Raja Dato Nonchiku, a Malay who sided with the Japanese during the invasion and later went to Japan as an exchange student. But his historical narrative of the Malayan campaign omits vital points, as when he states that the conquest of Penang was a bloodless and successful operation. While it is true that the Japanese army suffered no casualties, 2,000 civilians perished in the bombardment.⁴³

Among the books defending the Imperial Army, Nakajima Michi's work stands out. A journalist and commentator, she had been successfully publishing on issues such as cancer prevention. As the

⁴² Tominaga Kenko and Ito Shunichiro, *Shingaporu koryakusen: Shashin de miru Taiheiyo senso*, Vol. 2 (Tokyo: Akita Shoten, 1972, 1982).

⁴³ Haji Abu Hurairah Habu Abdullah (Habu Yoshiki), *Nihonjin yo! Arigato: Mareesia wa koshite dokuritsu shita* (Tokyo: Nihon Kyoiku Shimbunsha, 1989, 1990 3rd printing).

daughter-in-law of General Matsui Takuro, Commander of the crucial 5th Division that spearheaded the glorious campaign, she condemned the kind of research Takashima Nobuyuki was conducting with historian Hayashi Hirofumi in the late 1980s, which exposed the army purges and smeared the honour of the 5th Division soldiers from Hiroshima. Nakajima decided to travel to Malaya to clarify the March purges of 1942. Retracing the moves of the 5th Division, she interviewed a survivor of the massacre and turned the fruit of her research into a book *Nitchu senso imada owarazu: Maree "gyakusatsu" no nazo* ["Massacre" Riddles in Malaya: The Sino-Japanese War Has Still Not Ended].⁴⁴ Nakajima disputes the massacre numbers, taking issue, for example, with reports that 990 were killed in Titi and Ironron, two villages wiped out completely by the Japanese army on 18 March 1942. She explains that it was impossible for the death squads to have been in the alleged massacre places on the said dates.⁴⁵ Her own research suggests no more than 200 victims killed. Those killed, she argues, were guerrillas and bad types, who had to be eliminated for the security of the Malayan campaign.

Such minimizing prompted Hayashi Hirofumi to reply with further detailed research that has taken him many times back to Malaysia, as well as to the Japanese military history archives in Tokyo. In his book published 10 months later, *Kakyo gyakusatsu: Nihongun shihaika no Maree hanto* [The Massacres of Overseas Chinese: The Malay Peninsula under the Japanese Military],⁴⁶ he documents painstakingly the various killing fields in the province of Negri Sembilan. He backs his narrative with Imperial Army diaries documenting the slayings (unearthed at the Tokyo Military archives and published in 1988)⁴⁷ that tally with local accounts of Chinese Malay survivors.

⁴⁴ Nakajima Michi, *Nitchu senso imada owarazu: Maree "gyakusatsu" no nazo* (Tokyo: Bungei Shunju, July 1991).

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 127-40.

⁴⁶ Hayashi Hirofumi, *Kakyo gyakusatsu: Nihongun shihaika no Maree hanto* (Tokyo: Suzusawa Shoten, 1992).

⁴⁷ *Shiryō: Maree ni okeru Nihongun no jūmin gyakusatsu* [Documents: The Japanese army's civilian massacres in Malaya] (Tokyo: Travel Association to Think About Southeast Asia, 1988).

Hayashi examines in particular the 5th Division's 11th Infantry Regiment's 7th Squad. While Nakajima's account refers only to guerrillas and 200 other such bad elements, even the army diaries mention the elimination of all: the old, the young, men, women and children. Hayashi matches killing for killing, basing his research on testimony from survivors of the massacres and on Imperial infantry accounts. In a related video reportage, for example, former infantryman, Miyake Genjiro, 79, remembers today with grief and repentance how he had to participate in the bayonetting of around 400 Chinese prisoners near Kuala Lumpur.⁴⁸

At this stage, the historiography of the Malaya campaign is caught up in polemics that have spilled into newspapers and intellectual magazines like *Sekai*. Claims and counter-claims that could fill a book feed the question of how Japan should remember the Malaya campaign. Fame or shame? As part of the larger question how to put Japan's recent past into history textbooks, the dichotomous question is presently bogging down a more objective evaluation of the Malaya campaign.

Postscript: Towards Mature Historiography

New approaches are needed to liberate the discussion from its black-and-white fetters. The ideal to strive for would be a mature memory that can chronicle both the stupendous victory won as well as the sad atrocities that accompanied it. Such historiography of the Malaya campaign could be pursued with the data of a new breed of "war historians"—cultural anthropologists, sociologists, and psychologists,⁴⁹—who since the mid-1970s have been analyzing

⁴⁸ Video production by Eizo Bunka Kyokai, *Shinryaku - Maree hanto: Oshierarenakatta senso* [Aggression on the Malayan Peninsula: The war they did not teach us about]; Tokyo: 1992, 110 mins.

⁴⁹ Norman Dixon, *On the Psychology of Military Incompetence* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1976); Richard Holmes, *Acts of War: The Behaviour of Men in Battle* (New York: The Free Press, 1985); Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (New York: The Free Press, 1971); Gwynne Dyer, *War* (New York: Crown Publishers Inc., 1985); Paul Fussell, *Wartime: Understanding and Behaviour in the Second World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

military behaviour in the two World Wars, as well as the more recent ones in Vietnam, the Falkland Islands, Israel, Yugoslavia, etc.

We find in their comparative studies themes that are relevant for a better understanding of the Japanese soldier fighting his Pacific War. Chaim Shatan's prize-winning research on basic training in U.S. barracks, for example, furnishes psychoanalytic data on "incessant humiliation and degradation" that provides a useful social scientific framework for Tsuchikane Tominosuke's description of his traumatic experience as a recruit in pre-war Japan.⁵⁰ When in "Masks and Soldiering: The Israeli Army and the Palestinian Uprising" Eyal Ben-Ari conceptualizes as "masquerade" the Israeli reservists' night time arrests of Palestinians, or their practice of making their victims wait for hours in the hot sun,⁵¹ we think again of the Japanese infantryman and how he behaved in Malaya. But we take a step back to judge him from a more universalistic angle, from a cultural anthropological vantage, as a temporarily "disguised" person, who for the duration of his wearing a uniform could express hostility with impunity because he was "not himself".⁵²

And is not Paul Fussell broaching the issue of comfort women when he writes in *The Great War and Modern Memory*: "That a successful campaign promises rape as well as looting has been understood from the beginning. Prolonged sexual deprivation will necessitate official brothels—in the Great War, "Blue Lights" for officers, "Red Lights" for Other Ranks; ... sexual activity behind the lines ... is the counterpart to the work of carnage which takes place at the front."⁵³ How anomalous was it to institute brothels for an army that had shown incredible excesses four years earlier at Nanking in 1937? How was one to keep indoctrinated infantrymen of the Japanese

⁵⁰ Chaim F. Shatan, "Bogus Manhood, Bogus Honor: The Surrender and Transfiguration in the United States Marine Corps", *Psychoanalytic Review* 64 (1977): 594, 605.

⁵¹ See Eyal Ben-Ari, "Masks and Soldiering: The Israeli Army and the Palestinian Uprising", *Cultural Anthropology* 4 (1989): 379.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 378.

⁵³ Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 270-71.

military machine, deprived and daring, yet often inhuman battlers, under control? One way, and for those forced into prostitution it was perhaps the greatest cruelty short of death, was to institute pleasure houses on a large scale—for Japan expanding on a large scale—to avoid a repetition of the horrible excesses of 1937.

Supplementing the Malaya campaign reports with this interdisciplinary social scientific data, we probe grimmer events. We turn to the Alexandra Hospital massacre in Singapore. In our comparative frame of mind, we try to understand events from the recollections of a British survivor, a Japanese participant, and the behavioural scientist's point of view. On the last day of the Malayan campaign, Japanese combat soldiers entered the hospital and bayoneted at least five officers between 2:30 and 3:30pm. Later they led away around 200 staff and patients and allegedly massacred them.

Major Bull, a British survivor, recalls:

On reaching the foot of the stairs we found the recently dead body of one of the Medical Officers who had obviously been bayoneted. Along the passage was another, similarly treated ... evidently ... the first wave of Japanese troops had entered the hospital and committed these murders Later in the day it transpired that Japanese troops led away some two hundred odd individuals from the hospital the victorious troops entered the hospital and looted it. Watches were removed from patients and staff alike and any valuables which appealed to the looters.⁵⁴

One of the participants on the Japanese side, Arai Mitsuo, whose 114th Regiment entered Gilman (Alexandra) Hospital, remembers the exasperation on that last day before the fall of Singapore. New casualties in their ranks had just been reported. The frustrated soldiers stormed the hospital, upset in particular because there seemed to be

⁵⁴ Public Record Office, London, Affidavit "In the Matter of Japanese War Crimes and in the Matter of Massacre by Japanese Troops in Alexandra Military Hospital, Singapore", No. 189115, WO 325/88.

sniper fire from one of the balconies. Was the building being used to shelter fit soldiers? A language problem with the hospital officer in charge aggravated the tense situation. Slappings occurred and no mercy was shown.⁵⁵

The behavioural scientist, Charles C. Moskos, comments on assault situations in war:

The combat soldier, as an absolutely deprived person, responds to direct situational exigencies.... Deadening fear intermingles with acts of bravery ..

*..If enemy prisoners are taken, they may be subjected to atrocities in the rage of battle or its immediate aftermath. The soldier's distaste of endangering civilians is overcome by his fear that [the enemy], of any age or sex, can be responsible for his own death. Where the opportunity arises, looting often occurs. War souvenirs are frequently collected either to be kept personally or later sold to rear-echelon servicemen.*⁵⁶ (Italics added)

Moskos was writing about American combat soldiers in Vietnam, but his sociological assessment of combat behaviour can also be of use to the historian working on the Malayan campaign.

The above examples are not meant as apologia for Japanese war atrocities. They should stimulate a re-thinking, within a wider comparative analytical framework, of what happens to whom in war, and why. There is today sufficient historical data on the Japanese side that can be gathered, translated, and evaluated in the light of these penetrating studies by psychologists, cultural anthropologists, and sociologists, to produce a mature history.

We have here in mind the ordinary Japanese soldiers' frank recollections of their days in Malaya. The writings of Tsuchikane and Onishi, and the oral testimony of Nagase, show that many middle echelon participants continue to be bothered about the past. Their testimony is amplified by the bold revelations of other veterans invited

⁵⁵ Arai, *Shingaporu senki*, pp. 183-86.

⁵⁶ Charles C. Moskos, Jr., "The American Combat Soldier in Vietnam", *Journal of Social Issues* 31, 4 (1975): 28-29.

to speak out at forums organized in Japan by various groups. At such peace rallies these rare old soldiers talk freely about their wartime experiences—not to sensationalize their past, but to waken the young that never again should Japan show that inhuman face.

Their front-line evidence is a healthy variation in military history. It is the kind of testimony war historian John Keegan has been seeking to draw from in his narration of Western warfare. Their experiences tell about the realities of battle not from the platform of the strategists in the general staff, but from the trenches where the ordinary soldier did the fighting.⁵⁷ An examination of accounts by Japanese infantrymen would yield a better history of the Malayan campaign.

To conclude, we have seen that the massive literature on the Allied side is matched in Japan by a revealing number of books on the Malayan campaign. If veterans in the former Japanese General Staff have tended to look back with feelings more of pride, and intellectuals today debate the campaign in favour of either glory or shame, it is the testimony of the ordinary soldier that comes closest to revealing the realities of the Malayan campaign.

Analyzing the wealth of largely unexploited Japanese material by junior participants in the Malaya campaign, and evaluating this data in the light of interdisciplinary studies in social sciences, would raise Japanese historiography to a more mature level. Not only would it lead Japan's polemical reporting out of its "black-or-white" ravine, and close a gap in the Allied histories; it would also provide the Asia Pacific with that kind of history Singapore educator Goh Sin Tub had in mind when he told a group of housewives researching their Nipponese past at the Japanese Club in Singapore:

Japan cannot be like an ostrich, nor need it be. Not all was bad in bygone days, nor all good. Don't shy away from your recent history, tell it as it was. We are not looking for an apology, but we do want you to teach your children about the past fairly and squarely.

⁵⁷ See John Keegan, *The Face of Battle: A Study of Agincourt, Waterloo & The Somme* (New York: Vintage Books, 1976).

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