ABSTRACT

Since the first Chinese periodical, "Chinese Monthly Magazine" (《察世俗每月统记传》), was published in Malacca in 1815, the history of the Chinese printed media in Peninsular Malaysia has entered its 180th year. Subsequently, Singapore became the centre for the Chinese printed media in the Singapore-Malaysian region. Hence, most scholars did not put much emphasis on exploring such a topic in the context of Peninsular Malaysia. I venture onto this topic, therefore, in order to fill the gap in this area of research.

The year 1957 was a watershed in the history of the Chinese printed media in Peninsular Malaysia because Malaya gained its independence in 1957 and became part of Malaysia in 1963. Furthermore, the year 1957 also symbolizes the turning point from the "overseas Chinese press" ["qiao min bao kan" (侨民报刊)] to the "national press" ["guo min bao kan" (国民报刊)] in the development of the local Chinese printed media.

This thesis uses a quantitative approach in analyzing the Chinese printed media in Peninsular Malaysia from 1957 to 1994 so as to give readers a clearer view of its development in quantitative terms.

The scope of this thesis covers newspapers, periodicals and special magazines. Traditionally, "Chinese printed media" includes newspapers and periodicals only. The numerous special magazines found during the course of data collection show that this is also an area worth analyzing.
Since quantity is the most important factor for analysis in this thesis, data collection was the first step taken. The data collected in this thesis comes from four main sources: firstly, the listings of the Chinese printed media in Peninsular Malaysia contained in related materials such as books and articles found in the NUS Chinese library; secondly, the collection of Chinese printed media in the NUS Chinese library and Dr. Wong Hong Teng’s personal collection of Chinese periodicals; thirdly, newspapers and magazines seen on newspaper stands located in Singapore and Johor Bahru and lastly, the collection of Chinese printed media, mainly special magazines, in the library of Foon Yew Secondary School in Johor Bahru.

This study shows that in terms of quantity, special magazines came first with 650 titles, or 81.45% out of a total of 798 titles listed in this thesis, while periodicals and newspapers came second and third in position with 104 titles or 13.03% and 44 titles or 5.52% respectively. This study also shows that in terms of states, Selangor, Johore, Penang and Perak are the four main states that published the largest number of Chinese printed media from 1957 to 1994. In terms of cities, Penang, Kuala Lumpur, Johor Bahru and Ipoh are the four main cities that topped the list in publishing the largest number of Chinese printed media during the above-mentioned period.