ABSTRACT

The aim of this Academic Exercise was twofold. Firstly, it encompasses an overall study of Chinese language newspapers and periodicals that were published in Singapore from 1937 when the Sino-Japanese War broke out to 1941 before the fall of Singapore to Japanese Occupation. Secondly, it focuses on how the Chinese language newspapers and periodicals responded to the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War and how they influenced the social and cultural transformation of Singapore Chinese during that period.

Since the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in July 1937, Chinese language newspapers and periodicals in Singapore gave constant publicity to the events occurring in China and the reactions of the Singapore Chinese to those events. As Singapore Chinese anxiety over the war events increased, there resulted in a boom in the publication of Chinese language newspapers and periodicals immediately after the occurrence of the war.

As a result, there were 6 Chinese dailies and at least 77 periodicals of all kinds (excluding imported ones) published in Singapore from 1937 to 1941. Among the 6 Chinese language newspapers, 5 of them, with morning and evening issues had mass circulation and were considered to be very informative and influential. They were namely the Union Times (总汇报), Sin Kuo Min Jit Poh (新国民日报), Nanyang Siang Pau (南洋商报), Sin Chew Jit Poh (星洲日报), and Sin Chung Jit Poh (星中日报).
These dailies coupled with the periodicals were major instruments for arousing Chinese patriotism. They urged the Singapore Chinese to discard parochialism over dialects and clans so as to participate in the National Salvation activities such as relief campaigns, fund raising and anti-traitorism. Besides, they also encouraged the development of Malayan Chinese Literature with the objective of arousing patriotism and nationalism in Singapore Chinese in order to bring local Chinese culture in constant and instant communion with that of China.