

## **Malaysian press: A brief account of newspapers published in British Malaya**

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### **Introduction**

The press system in Malaysia today is a legacy of the colonial past. The introduction of printing press and newspaper industry in British Malaya in early nineteenth century set the foundation for a press system in Malaysia. In the early years of newspaper publishing business in Malaysia, the people who benefited from the newspaper industry were the privileged few due to the low rate of literacy of the people. Although printing press was Western in origin, yet other communities in Malaya had exploited its potential for the benefit of their cultural, political, and economic interests through the publication of vernacular newspapers. This paper attempts to highlight the involvement of different communities and ethnic groups in the various languages (English, Malay, Chinese, and Tamil) of the newspaper industry during the colonial period of Malaya.

This paper focuses on the development of Malaysian newspapers<sup>1</sup> in four phases: (1) the formative years of the nineteenth century, (2) the period before World War II, (3) the Japanese occupation, and (4) the pre-independence period.

### **The Formative Years**

Modern mass media in Malaysia came along with the British colonial government in late nineteenth century. It began with the introduction of newspapers in the

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Straits Settlements.<sup>2</sup> The first newspaper, the *Government Gazette*,<sup>3</sup> was printed in Pulau Pinang<sup>4</sup> in 1806. This was followed by *Singapore Chronicle and Commercial Register* in 1824, and *Malacca Observer* in 1826. One of the most important and prestigious newspapers in Malaysia and Singapore today, *Straits Times* (Singapore) and *New Straits Times* (Malaysia) was published on July 15, 1845 under the name of *Straits Times and Singapore Journal of Commerce*.

The *Times* was published by a merchant, Marthenius Thaddeus, who later sold it to Catchick Moses, owner of American Sarkies and Moses Company. Moses then sold it to the editor, Robert Car Wood in 1858, thirteen years after its founding. The paper changed hands several times. It was renamed *Daily Times* when W. Wynter bought it in 1860, but later reverted to its former title (see Kennard 1970 and also Mohd. Dahari 1982).

When the British intervened in the affairs of other Malay states (the Federated Malay States),<sup>5</sup> newspapers began to emerge there. *Perak Pioneer and Native States Advertiser* was the first English newspaper to appear in the Federated Malay States in 1894, followed by *Malay Mail* in 1896 in Selangor.<sup>6</sup> The *Perak Pioneer* was produced in Taiping by a Malayo-Arab, Syed Abdul Hassan Ibnay Burhan. Taiping was then the capital of Perak state. By 1901 the paper was published three times a week, and by March 1905, daily. The paper lasted no more than twelve years. Syed Abdul Hassan also published two Malay language papers, *Seri Perak* and *Jajahan Melayu*, as well as a Tamil paper, *Perak Varthamanan*. The *Malay Mail* was edited by J. H. M. Robson, who was also its co-owner, and later by S. C. Yeomans, a Cambridge graduate (Khoo 1988).

During the nineteenth century, more than 40 English-language newspapers appeared in the Malay Peninsula. Most of them had a short life span. They were produced to satisfy the commercial needs of European communities in the colony, especially those residing in the larger cities, such as Pulau Pinang, Singapore, and Melaka. Therefore, a large part of the contents of these newspapers were commercial news and advertisements. The front pages of these newspapers were filled with advertisements. Other pages were filled with news which were reprinted from British or Indian newspapers. Local news, often focused on local crimes and schedules of ship arrivals and departures (together with lists of passengers), took a very small portion of the news columns (Mohd. Dahari 1989).

The newspapers and news magazines in Malaya were also published in three other major languages (Chinese, Malay, and Tamil) of the country. The first Chinese-language news magazine was the *Chinese Monthly Magazine* published in Melaka in 1815. Produced by the London Missionary Society, the magazine was meant to be circulated in mainland China. After the Manchu government banned Christian missionary activities in China, William Milne, its publisher, found Melaka to be an appropriate place to print the magazine. Writers and editors, brought from China, helped produce the magazine. Publication ended in early 1822 (Teik 1988).

Like the *Chinese Monthly Magazine*, most Chinese newspapers during the early period in Malaysia were produced by British individuals. Following the

*Chinese Monthly Magazine Universal Gazette* was also published in Melaka in 1828/29 by Samuel Kidd who was a headmaster of Anglo-Chinese College in Melaka. Thomas W. Smith produced another Chinese weekly, *Jit Sheng* (Rising Sun), in Singapore in 1858 (Teik 1988). However, by the end of the century, the Chinese community in Malaya began to read newspapers produced by the Chinese themselves. The first was *Lai Pao* published in Singapore in 1881 by a businessman, See Ewe Lay. It survived for 51 years, until 1932. It was followed by *Thien Nan Shin Pao* (1885-1905). The contents of the early Chinese newspapers indicated their attachment to the homeland. News and articles from newspapers in the mainland (especially from *Peking Gazette*) and Hong Kong were reprinted in the local papers, especially by the *Thien Nam Shin Pao* (Mohd. Dahari 1989).

The Malay- and Tamil-language newspapers began to appear during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The first Tamil newspaper, *Singai Warthamaani*<sup>7</sup> was claimed to have been published by S. K. Masuthum in Singapore in 1875. But it did not survive long. Masuthum then produced *Thangai Nesan*, *Nyanya Sooriyan*, and *Singai Nisan*. These were followed by *Tejhabimani* in 1896 in Perak, and *Pinanggu Wartamani* in 1897 in Pulau Pinang. In 1877 A. M. Marakkayar produced *Ulaga Nesan* (Krishnan 1988).<sup>8</sup> *Ulaga Nesan*, *Singai Nesan*, and *Hindu Nesan* survived until the end of nineteenth century.

Generally, the Non-Malays—the Indian Muslims, the Arabs, and the Baba Chinese<sup>9</sup>—pioneered the early Malay journalism in Malaysia. Munshi Muhammad bin Dada Mohidin, a Straits-born Indian Muslim, published *Jawi Peranakan* (1876-1895), a weekly, in Singapore.<sup>10</sup> It was the first newspaper in Malay language. Then the *Najumu'l Fajar* (1877-?), a weekly, the *Shamsu'l Kamar* (1877-?); the *Sekola Melayu* (1888-1893), produced and edited by Munshi Muhammad Ali bin Ghulam Al-Hindi; and the *Peranakan* (1891-?) appeared also in Singapore.<sup>11</sup> The first Malay weekly to appear in the Federated Malay States was *Seri Perak* (1893). It was produced in Ipoh, Perak and edited by Haji Abdul Kadir Setia Raja. *Bintang Timur* (1894-1895), published in Singapore, was the first Baba Chinese newspaper. By the end of the century at least seventeen Malay-language newspapers and magazines appeared in Malaya<sup>12</sup> (see Iskandar 1980).

Publication of most of the pioneer newspapers was not solely motivated by monetary gains. The English-language newspapers were produced to keep the European business community informed of the economic and political events in Europe, America, India, Japan, and China. Compounded by a lack of local correspondents, local news coverage by these newspapers was limited. However, the dearth of local news coverage was compensated by letters from readers, a common feature of the early English newspapers in Malaysia.<sup>13</sup> There appeared to be little control imposed by the British authorities on newspaper contents as could be seen in the contents of newspaper and editorials which were sometimes critical of the government policies in the colony. Most of these newspapers were active in promoting arts and culture of the respective ethnic groups. Toward the end of the century, the Chinese papers focused on the political activities in China (Mohd. Dahari 1989).

## The Period Before World War II

The first half of the twentieth century saw the emergence of many more newspapers, and the demise and the merger of some of the old papers. The first English newspaper for the century was *Straits Echo*. It was produced in 1904 by Criterion Press, owned by the family of Lim Hua Chiam. In 1883 Lim started a commercial lithographic press, which was later managed by his son, Lim Seng Ho. The Criterion Press also printed a Chinese daily, *Pinang Sin Poe* in 1894 and a Malay weekly, *Chahyah Pulau Pinang*, in 1900.<sup>14</sup> Chesney Duncan, who had had considerable newspaper experience in Hong Kong, edited the English paper (Khoo 1988). In the Federated Malay States, the *Times of Malaya and Planters' and Miners' Gazette* was introduced in Ipoh in 1904, edited by Silas C. Penny, and then by J. A. S. Jennings from Singapore. After Jennings's death in 1936 the *Times* faced some financial difficulties, forcing it to merge with the *Straits Echo* to become the *Straits Echo and Times of Malaya*. Next came the *Malaya Tribune* in 1915, published in Singapore by Lim Boon Keng and Alexander W. Westerhout, a European of Portuguese descent (Khoo 1988).

On the eve of World War II, there were six English newspapers, two of which merged and survived until the coming of the Japanese occupation of Malaya in early 1942 (see Khoo 1988). The character of the English papers, especially in the first quarter of the twentieth century, changed very little from the previous era. Khoo (1988) wrote:

Malayan English newspapers before World war II, in general, could be said to be primarily economic journals. Established by the commercial sector of the population, the papers contained daily news on the progress of the industries of greatest relevance to Malaya. Meetings of major companies and chambers of commerce as well as other commercial associations were faithfully reported.

News of Europe and America continues to dominate the pages of the newspapers in the period. However, a fair amount of attention was given to Asian affairs, especially news of China, India, Ceylon, Japan, and Thailand (Siam) in line with economic interests of the readers. Khoo (1988) wrote:

The local English press followed faithfully political and constitutional development in those countries. The 1932 revolution in Siam, for example, was covered in great detail.

The readers column, one of the most significant feature of the nineteenth century English newspapers, was retained throughout this period. The column became more important, especially in 1930s onward, as a forum for the non-Malays to defend their interests in facing the advent of Malay nationalism.

In the first half of twentieth century, before the Japanese occupation, Malaya

saw a proliferation of vernacular newspapers and magazines. At least ten Malay newspapers appeared in the first quarter of the century. The first Malay paper to appear during the period was *Jambangan Warta* (1901-?) and then *Taman Pengetahuan* (1904-?). The *Jambangan Warta*, a weekly, was published in Batu Gajah, Perak. It was edited by Abdul Ghani bin Mohd. Kassim. The *Taman Pengetahuan*, also a weekly, published, first by Alwi bin Abdul Kadir Al-Hindi, and then by Syed Alwee Alhindi. Both papers had a very short life span.

*Utusan Melayu* (1907-21)<sup>15</sup> and *Lembaga Malaya* (1914-1931) seemed to be the only Malay newspapers of the period that lasted longer than ten years. The *Utusan Melayu*, the Malay language version of the English language *Singapore Free Press*, had four editors throughout its life. It was produced triweekly and then, beginning September, 1915, daily. The *Lembaga Malaya* was the Malay language version for the English language *Malaya Tribune*. The first Malay language daily (*the Utusan Melayu*) was edited by Mohd. Yunus bin Abdullah. Both papers were published in Singapore.

One important development of Malay journalism during this period was the appearance of Islamic religious magazines, although most of them, except for *Pengasuh* (1918-1937)(1946-1968), were short-lived. The *Pengasuh* was a newspaper-cum-magazine, published by Kelantan Islamic Religious and Malay Customs Council. First it was published biweekly, then weekly, and then monthly. The paper ceased production in 1937 but reproduced in 1946. The Islamic magazines were mostly published by Islamic reformists, especially the West Asian<sup>16</sup> university (including the prestigious Egyptian Al-Azhar University in Cairo) graduates. Many of the Egyptian Malay graduates of that time were influenced by reformist ideas of Muhammad Abduh of Egypt, who was the editor of *Al-Manar* from 1905 onward (Roff 1967). These Malay reformists were known as *Kaum Muda* (Young Group) as opposed to *Kaum Tua* (Old Group), the traditional *ulama* who studied Islam from local religious institutions, especially the *pondoks* in the *kampung*s.

The first of these magazines was *Al-Imam* which focused on Islam and the need for the Malays to change their attitudes on education and economy. Roff (1967:56) wrote:

Its aims as expressed in Shaykh Mohd. Salim Al-Kalali's introductory editorial were "to remind those who are forgetful, arouse those who sleep, guide those who stray, and give a voice to those who speak with wisdom." One of its first article consisted of a kind of colloquy on "The Proper Task: What is Most Needed for Our People." Beginning by asserting that it is the job of a people's leaders to diagnose and prescribe for their ills, the writer goes on: "Perhaps it may be said that we are most in need of skills of craftsmanship and agriculture, or knowledge of how to preserve our country from its enemies, or that we need education to rescue us from the slough of apathy and indolence, or that we

must learn to unite for the common good...All this is true. But the one thing that will strengthen and realise all our desires is knowledge of the commands of *our religion*. For religion is the *proven cure* for all *the ills* of our community." (Italics are added).

The essence of the Kaum Muda movement is summarized in the first issue of the magazine, that is, in order to remove the *ills* the Malays must command good knowledge of the Islamic religion.. Roff believes that *Al-Munir*, an Egyptian magazine, had considerable influence on the thought of the *Al-Islam* editors. Roff (1967:59-60) wrote:

An examination of the contents of the Cairo journal, as detailed by Charles C. Adams in his *Islam and Modernism in Egypt*, makes clear the extent to which *Al-Imam* was modeled on it, and the Malay journal contains an abundance of references to and excerpts from its predecessor. Prominent among the small group of men who started *Al-Imam* in 1906 were four members of the urban Malayo-Muslim community of Singapore who had had extensive contacts with the Middle East. They were Shaykh Mohd. Tahir b. Jalaluddin Al-Azhari from Minangkabau, the first editor; Sayyid Shaykh b. Ahmad Al-Hadi, a Malacca-born Malay-Arab who was a frequent and pungent contributor; Haji Abbas b. Mohd. Taha of Singapore, the second editor; and Shaykh Mohd. Salim Al-Kalali, an Achehnese merchant who was director of *Al-Imam* during its first two years.

More Malay newspapers and magazines appeared in the second quarter of the twentieth century. Like their predecessors, these newspapers lived a short life, generally from several months to three years. There were several important papers published during this period. At least four appeared for more than ten years, until the Japanese occupation. *Saudara* (1928-1941) was a Pulau Pinang-based weekly, published by Syed Alwi bin Syed Sheikh Ahmad Al-Hindi and edited by Mohd. Yunos bin Abdul Hamid until 1931. After Mohd. Yunos there were nine more editors. From 1932 to 1941 *Saudara* appeared biweekly. Then came *Warta Malaya* (1930-1942). It was published by a wealthy Arab merchant, Syed Hussein Ali Alsagoff, and edited by Datuk Onn bin Jaafar, a son of a Johor state chief minister, until 1933. Datuk Onn later became a prominent Malay nationalist, and was the first president of UMNO. He was succeeded by twelve editors. The 1930s saw the emergence of a prominent nationalist newspaper, *Utusan Melayu* (1939- ) and its Sunday edition, *Utusan Zaman* (1939- ), published by Utusan Melayu Press Limited. The newspapers were edited by Yusoff Ishak.<sup>17</sup> These were two of the few pre-World War II newspapers which are still published today.

20th Century

The content of Chinese newspapers published in early twentieth century was similar to that of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. A significant portion of news space was given to news about China or reprinted from mainland Chinese newspapers. It was a reflection of the political situation in China. The political struggle between Kuomintang (the nationalists) and the reformists, triggered the establishment of partisan newspapers in Malaya to support the views of either side. The Kuomintang was pro-revolution and the reformists were pro-emperor.

The leaders of the reformists, Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, fled China after the failure of Reformation in 1898. They set up 170 branches of Defence of the Emperor Party in America, Asia, and Australia. The party found its support from the Chinese in Malaya, leading to the publication of two dailies, the *Thien Nan Shin Pao* (1898-1905) in Singapore and *Penang Sin Pao* (1895-1941).<sup>18</sup>

The revolutionists, too, published their own papers—*Thoe Lam Jit Poh* (1904-1906) by Teo Eng Hock and Tan Chor Lam. An organization, Tongmenghui (Chinese General Alliance Union), was formed in Tokyo in 1905 to propagate revolutionary ideology amongst overseas Chinese. It published official union newspapers in Southeast Asia—*Chong Shing Yit Pao* (1907-1910) in Singapore, *Kwong Wah Yit Poh* (1908-1910) in Rangoon, Burma and in Pulau Pinang (1910-) respectively (Teik 1988).

The Tongmenghui members in Malaya published *Kuala Lumpur Daily* (1909-1910), *Xingzhou Chen Bao* (1909-1910), and *Nan Qiao Ri Bao* (1910), all of which were published in Kuala Lumpur. In Singapore, in addition to the *Thien Nam Shin Pao*, there was *Chong Shing Yit Pao* (1907-1910). The political rhetoric between the reformists and the revolutionists was particularly intensified in 1907-1908 in Singapore, especially, between *Chong Shing Yit Pao* and the *Union Times*. The *Union Times* supported the reformists ideology. It was first published by Teo Eng Hock, but was later taken over by the pro-reformist group (see Teik 1988, Huen 1970, and Hock 1967).

After the 1911 revolution, the local Chinese newspapers changed their focus to commerce. This was reflected in the newspapers that appeared between then and 1942, represented by *Nanyang Siang Pau* (1923-) and *Sin Chew Jit Poh* (1929-). The *Nanyang* was published in Singapore by a business tycoon, Tan Kah Kee. Because he found it too expensive to advertise his merchandise in the local newspapers, he founded his own paper. The newspaper prospered and has been published continuously, except during the Japanese occupation.

The *Sin Chew* was also founded in Singapore by the Aw Boon Haw family for a similar reason. Aw was a merchant who published the paper as a vehicle to promote his company's product, the *Tiger Balm*, a brand name for a skin ointment.<sup>19</sup>

Singapore and Pulau Pinang seemed to be the center of Chinese newspapers during this period. But, there were smaller papers published in Kuala Lumpur and Ipoh. In 1919 *Yi Qun Bao* was published in Kuala Lumpur. It changed its name to *Xing Yin Qun Bao* in 1935, but stopped publication in 1936. *Zhong Hua Shang* (1925-32) and *Ma Hua Ri Bao* (1937-1941) were published in Kuala

Lumpur. In Ipoh there were *Pi Hua Ri Bao* (1934-) and *Kin Kwok Daily News* (1940) (Teik 1988).

The Tamil newspapers began the twentieth century with many more publication of new titles. Krishnan (1988) listed thirteen papers that appeared in the first quarter of the century, but did not specify their life span.<sup>20</sup> Of these newspapers, *Tamil Nesan* (1923- ) continues its publication until today. These newspapers carried information about local and national affairs, news about the war, and about India. The local news focused on social problems and oppressions experienced by Indian labourers in rubber estates in the country. The *Sinthamani* was published by V. Balammal specifically for women. The *Kaliyugam*, produced by V. Govindasamy, advised its readers to adopt Malaya as their own country.

A dozen of new Tamil papers entered the market in the second quarter of the century. These include *Phoenix Gazette*, *Tamilan*, *Malaya Poothan*, *Malaya Mithran*, *Jana Warthamani*, *Navaneetham*, *Tamiltontan*, *Samudaya Solian*, *Baratha Mithran*, *Inba Nilayam*, *Putu Yugam*, *Travida Kesari*, *Tamil Murasu*, *Baratha Nesan*, *Janma bumi* and *Tamil Kodi*.

The period after the 1930s witnessed a dramatic change in the attitudes of the Indians in Malaya. According to Krishnan (1988) this was the reformation period. Newspapers campaigned to Indian readers to remain and become citizens of Malaya.<sup>21</sup> The Indians began to realize the need to have an organization that would represent their interests. In 1930, M\$60,000 was collected to form a Pan-Malaya Tamil Publishing Organization. The result was the publication of the *Tamilan* in 1931. Its primary aim was to foster awareness among the Indians toward reformation, to change their attitudes toward Malaya. Like most immigrants in Malaya during the colonial era, the Indians came to the colony to work and then return to live in India. Other papers, such as the *Tamil Nesan*, the *Samudaya Oolin*, and the *Bharata Mithran*, expressed the same views as the *Tamilan* that the Indians should consider Malaya as their country of residence.

In addition, the newspaper published local news, especially on the problems of the plantation workers. To promote Tamil literature, these newspapers encouraged readers to contribute short stories and other forms of creative writings. They also organized short story competitions.

### **The Japanese Occupation 1942-1945**

Virtually all pre-war newspapers stopped publication when Malaya was occupied by the Japanese army which published its own papers for propaganda purposes in 1942.<sup>22</sup> Huen (1970) listed four titles of the English papers published during the war: *Malai Simpo* (1943-1945) in Kuala Lumpur, *Penang Daily News* (1942), *Penang Shimbun* (1942-1945) in Pulau Pinang, and *Shonan Shimbun* (1942-1945) which was published by Shonan Times in Singapore. The *Penang Daily News* was superseded by the *Penang Shimbun*.

The Malay-language Japanese newspapers published during the occupation



were *Penang Shimbun*, *Semangat Asia*, *Berita Malai*, and *Berita Perak*. Perhaps the *Penang Shimbun* (1942-?) was the Malay version of the English of the same title, but it had its own Malay editor, Ibrahim Mahmud. The *Semangat Asia* was published by Malai Shimbun Sya Singapore in 1943 until 1944. It was edited by Ishak Haji Muhammad and Abdullah Kamel. The *Berita Malai* (1943-1945) was also published by Malai Shimbun Sya Singapore, and edited by Abdul Rahim Kajai and Ishak Haji Muhammad. The *Berita Perak* (*Perak Shimbun*) (1944-1945) was published by Syonan Shimbun Kai in Ipoh.

In the Chinese-language, there were *Syonan Shimbun* (1942-1945), and *Melaka New Newspaper* (May-September, 1942). Most Tamil and other Indian-language newspapers were published by the Indian Independence League, formed by Netaji Subash Chandra Bose, an Indian nationalist, in collaboration with the Japanese authorities in Malaya. The papers became a platform to campaign for Indian independence. The newspapers produced by this group were *Sutandira India*, *Sutandirodayam*, *Yuvabharatham* (all in Tamil); *Azad hind* and *Young India* in English; *Sutandra Bharatham* in Malayalam and *Azad hind* in Hindustani. In addition, the youth division of the Indian Independence League published *Bala Bharatham* and *Punaswaraj* in Pulau Pinang.

In addition to the activities of the Indian Independence League, there were Indian newspapers produced by others in different regions of the country. These include *Jaya Bharatam* and *Zindabad* in Pulau Pinang; *Putu Utakam*, *Ilangkatir*, and *Ilampirai* in Ipoh; *Idi Mulakkam* in Kampar; *Udaya Sooriyan* in Taiping, *Jeyamani* and *Islamiya Ilainyan* in Kuala Lumpur; and *Seremban Seithy*. Most of these papers published news, creative literary work, and lessons in the Japanese language (Krishnan 1988).

### **Toward Independence 1945-57**

The period after the war marked the apex of Malay nationalism. Malay nationalism which had been building up since the 1930s reached its height after the conclusion of the Second World War, especially after the British administration in Malaya proposed the formation of Malayan Union. The Malays realised that if the Malayan Union were to materialise the Malays would lose their control on political and economic affairs of the country as they were overwhelmed by the threat of colonial economic and political policies and the influx of Chinese and Indian immigrant workers to Malaya. These fears were demonstrated through publication of anti-Chinese and anti-Indian sentiments by Malay newspapers, which claimed that the Malays had a rightful place in the country. Malay elites were envious of the economic progress of the immigrants while the Malays were left in the *kampung*s in poverty under the British administration.

The British government was sympathetic with the position of the Malays. It assured the Malays that their interests would be given special attention, and the Malays welcomed the government's effort. However, implementation of the programmes, such as the decentralization of the administration, was not moving

fast enough as expected. The Malays saw that the decentralization program would provide more administrative power to the Malay Sultan in each individual states. The delay frustrated them and the Malay-language newspapers began to voice their dissatisfactions.

The non-Malays, through the English and other vernacular language newspapers, became critical of the pro-Malay attitude of the British administration in the 1930s. The fight for factional interests in the country was prominent in the newspapers of the thirties and forties.

After the war some of the stronger pre-war newspapers reappeared in the market. The Malay Mail, the Straits Times, the Straits Echo, and the Malaya Tribune were re-published and competition for readership was rift among them. The *Malaya Tribune*, the strongest competitor of the *Straits Times*, could not survive the stiff competition and had to stop publication in 1951. The *Malay Mail* was bought over by the Straits Times Press in 1952. The *Straits Echo* was still a strong paper in Pulau Pinang.

The *Sin Chew Jit Poh* and the *Nanyang Siang Pau* (merged with the *Union Times*) began publication again in Singapore, and *Sing Pin Jin Pao* in Pulau Pinang. The *Tamil Nesan* and *Tamil Murasu* also appeared again. For the Malay papers, the *Utusan Melayu* and its Sunday edition, *Utusan Zaman*, resumed publication. In the post-war period, *Utusan Melayu* saw the emergence of a new challenger, *Warta Negara* (1945-?), produced in Pulau Pinang. There were new English, Malay, Chinese, and Tamil papers published after the war, but some survived for several months and others for several years.

The aim of many of these newspapers was to prepare themselves and the people for self-government in Malaya. The newspapers saw the importance of Kuala Lumpur as the future administrative center for independent Malaya. Many of the larger Singapore papers either moved their headquarters to or establish branch offices in Kuala Lumpur. The first to move to Kuala Lumpur was the *Utusan Melayu* in 1956. The *Straits Times* began publishing its Kuala Lumpur edition in 1956 and completed building its headquarters, Balai Berita, in Jalan Riong in 1967. The *Nanyang Siang Pau* published its Kuala Lumpur edition in 1962 and *Sin Chew Jit Poh* in 1966. The *Malay Mail* and the *Tamil Nesan* were already in Kuala Lumpur.

## Conclusion

The publication of newspapers to promote trade, culture, and political ideology of a cross section of the population can be clearly seen since the beginning of the newspaper industry in Malaysia. The British traders and colonial officials pioneered the printing of English language newspapers, especially in the Straits Settlements to accommodate commercial news and commercials as well as to maintain contact with their homeland. While merchants predominantly initiated the production of other vernacular press in Malaysia, in the beginning Christian Missionary played an important part in producing the Chinese language newspa-

pers and magazines. The early Malay language newspapers virtually were in the hands of the Jawi Peranakan. Expectedly, the publishing of newspapers began in the Straits Settlements due to the cosmopolitan nature of their population and their position as regional trading centres.

Throughout these years the contents of the Chinese and Tamil newspapers produced in Malaya reflected the cultural, emotional, and political attachment of the people to their homelands. News from China and India, either sent by readers or reprinted from other newspapers from home countries, predominated the news pages of the time. However, a slight shift of news contents was shown by these newspapers as many of the immigrants decided to make home this country in the early twentieth century. Newspapers began to show greater interest in local events that have some impact on their readers. In fact, some Tamil newspapers campaigned to encourage Indians to remain in Malaya and to consider it their own country. On the other hand, the English press at the same times, promoted its image as the defender of the interest of the immigrants in light of the growing forces of Malay nationalism as championed by the Malay press, especially after the Second World War and before independence. During the Japanese occupation of Malaya almost all newspapers were transformed into a propaganda machine of the Japanese Imperial Army.

#### Notes

- 1 This paper discusses the development of newspapers in Peninsular Malaysia only.
- 2 The British East India Company acquired Pulau Pinang in 1786 and Singapura in 1819 from the Malay sultans, and Melaka from the Dutch in 1824. These settlements, together with Perai and Dinding, subsequently became one administrative colony, administered from India in 1826. It was called the Straits Settlements under the jurisdiction of of the British East India Company government in Calcutta, India until 1857. Then the British India government took over the administration of the settlements. In 1867 it became a separate colony administered directly by the Colonial Office in London (Bunge 1985).
- 3 The paper was printed by A. B. Bone. Its name changed twice during its 21-year life, first to the *Prince of Wales Island Government Gazette* in June, then it dropped the word "Government" from the title in October 1907. Pulau Pinang was referred to as the Prince of Wales Island during that time (Mohd. Dahari 1989).
- 4 Pulau Pinang is also known as Penang.
- 5 The Malay states began to accept indirect British rule under a Residential System after the Treaty of Pangkor in 1874 with the ruler of Perak. Under the treaty the Sultan agreed to allow the colonial government to appoint a British Resident to advice the ruler in the running of the affairs of the state, except in matters involving Malay custom and religion. Subsequently, three

other states (Selangor, Negeri Sembilan, and Pahang) were forced to accept the system. In 1896 the four states became a federation (by the Treaty of Federation) which was administered by a Resident General in Kuala Lumpur. The Unfederated Malay States consisted of Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan, Terengganu, and Johor. The latter four states came under the influence of the Kingdom of Siam (Thailand). By the Treaty of Bangkok in 1909, these territories were transferred to British suzerainty. Each states received a British adviser who had no defacto executive power as their counterparts in the Federated Malay States. Johor remained independence until 1909 when it accepted a British financial adviser. Therefore, the British sphere of influence in Malaya was divided into three groups: The Straits Settlements, the Federated Malay States, and the Unfederated Malay States until the formation of the Federation of Malaya in 1957 which centralized all the states, except Singapura, into a Federation.

- 6 Prior to *Perak Pioneer* there was the *Selangor Journal*, published in 1892 by the government printer and two young administrators, J. H. M. Robson and W. W. Skeat, but it was considered not quite a newspaper by some historians (see Khoo 1988).
- 7 Scholars have different opinions on which of the Tamil newspapers was the first to appear in Malaya. According to Krishnan (1988), *Singai Warthamaani* was the first.
- 8 The editor of *Ulagu Nesan*, A. M. Marakkayar, also claimed that before the *Ulagu Nesan* appeared in 1877, he had to close a Malay newspaper and three Tamil newspapers because he was unable to collect subscription money, which amounted to M\$10,000 (Krishnan 1988).
- 9 The Indian Muslims were also known as Jawi Peranakan, i.e., local-born Indian Muslims, some with mixed Malay parentage. Some of the Arabs also had a mixed Malay parentage. The Baba Chinese were those who had settled in the Straits Settlements, especially in Melaka, long before the coming of the Europeans, and some had mixed Malay parentage. Many of them were fluent in Malay language because of their long connection with the local people.
- 10 The local name for Singapore is Singapura.
- 11 The name of the editor and the date for the end of publication of *Nujumu'l Fajar*, *Shamsu'l Kamar*, and *Peranakan* are unknown.
- 12 This number excludes the two Christian Missionary bimonthly bulletins, *Pungutan Segala Remeh Pengetahuan* (1852) and *Chermin Mata* (1857) (see Iskandar 1980).
- 13 Most of the vernacular newspapers had similar contents, perhaps because of their habit of reprinting news and articles from other local or foreign newspapers. The local news was either written by the editors or by their readers. As in the English papers, letters-to-the-editor columns and editorials were important features in vernacular papers.
- 14 The *Chahyah Pulau Pinang* was produced six years after *Pinang Sin Poe*.

- It was four years according to Khoo (1988).
- 15 The *Utusan Melayu* is a different entity from the one that appeared later in 1939.
- 16 Same as the Middle East or Arab countries.
- 17 Yusoff Ishak became the first President of the Republic of Singapura in 1965.
- 18 The *Penang Sin Pao* merged with *Kwong Wah Yit Poh* in 1936.
- 19 Besides the *Sin Chew Jit Poh*, Aw Boon Har also published *Rangoon Daily* and *Rangoon Morning* in Burma; *Xing Hua Ri Bao* (1931) in Swatow, and *Xing Guang Ri Bao* in Amoy, China; *Xing Dao Ri Bao* (1938) in Hong Kong; *Xiang Bao* (small paper) in Singapura; and *Sing Pin Jih Poh* (1939-) in Pulau Pinang.
- 20 They were *Warthamanan*, *Vijayan*, *Nyanasoorian*, *Janobhakari*, *Mahayudtha Samasaram*, *Sathyaman*, *Pathukavalan*, *Potujana Mithiran*, *Sinthamani*, *Kaliyuga Nanban*, *Munetram*, and *Tamil Nesan*.
- 21 Prior to this the Indians and other immigrants came to Malaya to make a quick fortune, then returned to their former countries.
- 22 Some of the pre-war press and papers were converted to Japanese propaganda papers. For example, *Utusan Malayu* and its press were used to published *Berita Malai*.

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