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ENGLISH NEWSPAPER AND WWII: THE WAR REPORTING
OF *THE SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST* IN BRITISH COLONIAL
HONG KONG

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ABSTRACT

There are numerous studies on China's Resistance War against Japan, most of which focus on mainland China. By contrast, there is very limited knowledge on the role of Hong Kong in the Anti-Japanese War in the 1930s. My research uncovers that the contribution of a British colonial English newspaper, the South China Morning Post in the anti-Japanese war has been largely neglected. I argue that while China had been invaded by Japanese military forces, the journalists, readers and lots of advertisers of the South China Morning Post focused on the pro-China reporting and essentially supported China's Resistance. Within the article, I disclosed how the board members and editors debated about the press freedom and the business profit issues, as well as the connections of the South China Morning Post with political parties such as the China Communist Party and the China Nationalist Party. As result of unique social position of the South China Morning Post, it became a flagship newspaper of the anti-Japanese invasion. As a result, international and local newspapers quoted and reprinted the South China Morning Post's war news and editorials. In brief, the South China Morning Post has a pivotal role in the history of China's Resistance War against Japanese invasion, which had been largely neglected in previous studies.

Keywords: China, Hong Kong, press, Japan, Anti-Japanese War, WWII, South China Morning Post

UN GIORNALE INGLESE E LA SECONDA GUERRA MONDIALE: LE
CRONACHE DI GUERRA DEL *SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST* NELLA
HONG KONG AI TEMPI DEL COLONIALISMO BRITANNICO

SINTESI

Molti studi affrontano il problema della resistenza cinese all'invasione giapponese e la maggior parte di questi si concentra sull'area della Cina continentale. Ci sono poche informazioni, invece, sul ruolo di Hong Kong nella guerra contro i giapponesi negli

anni '30. La mia ricerca rivela che il contributo del giornale britannico coloniale in lingua inglese, il *South China Morning Post* nella guerra contro il Giappone era stato ampiamente trascurato. Sostengo che mentre la Cina era stata invasa dalle forze militari giapponesi, i giornalisti, i lettori e molti inserzionisti del *South China Morning Post* si sono concentrati sui rapporti filocinesi e hanno così sostanzialmente sostenuto la guerra di resistenza cinese. Nell'articolo metto in evidenza di come i membri del consiglio di amministrazione e gli editori discutevano sulla libertà di stampa e sui problemi del profitto aziendale, inoltre, descrivo i collegamenti del *South China Morning Post* con i partiti politici come per es. il Partito comunista cinese e il Partito nazionalista cinese. Grazie alla sua posizione sociale il *South China Morning Post* divenne un giornale di punta durante l'invasione anti-giapponese. Di conseguenza, i giornali internazionali e locali avevano citato e ristampato le notizie di guerra e gli editoriali del *South China Morning Post*. In breve, il *South China Morning Post* aveva svolto un ruolo chiave nella storia della Guerra di resistenza cinese contro l'invasione giapponese che però era stato largamente trascurato negli studi precedenti

Parole chiave: Cina, Hong Kong, stampa, Giappone, Guerra contro il Giappone, Seconda guerra mondiale, *South China Morning Post*

INTRODUCTION

There are numerous studies on China's Resistance War against Japan, most of which focus on mainland Chinese parties and military forces. By contrast, there is very limited knowledge on how Hong Kong people participated in the Anti-Japanese War in the 1930s (Qi, 1989; Zhang, 1995; Zeng, 1999; Rong, 2005). The existing scholarship about Hong Kong anti-Japanese mass movement mainly sheds light on patriotic Chinese bourgeoisie, Chinese communist guerrillas or Chinese language press (Chan, 2009; Chu, 2010). My research uncovers that the contribution of a British colonial English newspaper, the *South China Morning Post* (SCMP) in the anti-Japanese war has been largely neglected. Few people know that while China had been invaded by Japanese military forces, the journalists, readers and lots of advertisers of the SCMP focused on the pro-China reporting and essentially supported China's Resistance War against Japan. Particularly, I have to highlight that the SCMP made various pragmatic business decisions and were not in full control of China government or political parties; nevertheless, it still see things more or less from a Chinese patriotic perspective irrespective of who was paying the bills, which shows the notion of editorial independence in the international conflicts.

Scholars have discussed a lot about the importance of Hong Kong during the period of China's Resistance War against Japan. Li Gucheng thought that before the fall of Guangzhou, Hong Kong Chinese press were conservative, non-political or with amorous content because they were supervised and suppressed by the Hong Kong government. After the fall of Guangzhou, many anti-Japanese newspapers crowded into Hong Kong. Hong Kong became the base of the Anti-Japanese War (Li, 2000). However, Wang Xi-aolan's research on the Anti-Japanese War reporting strategy of the China Nationalist Government pointed out the anti-Japanese propaganda in Hong Kong was not satisfying, viz., there were still significant media in Hong Kong supporting Japan until May 1941; As a result, the China Nationalist Government sent a memorandum to the British Embassy in China about this matter (Wang, 1998). Both Li and Wang focused on the Chinese press studies and arrived at different conclusions. I have to highlight that their research neglected the English press studies and I argue that the SCMP gradually paid more and more attention to the anti-Japanese news reporting and finally supported the China's Resistance War against Japan until the fall of Hong Kong in 1941. The SCMP also improved the anti-Japanese reporting Hong Kong, which evidenced Li's finding. The importance of the SCMP in Hong Kong could also be proved in Wang's argument, viz., the SCMP showed its independent and pro-China stance when the British Hong Kong colonial government and some private media were of vagueness or even support to Japanese invasion in China.

In addition, the role of the SCMP in China's Resistance War against Japan is important because the international media were indifferent toward Japanese invasion in China. Scholars did some context analysis about reporting on the Sino-Japanese conflicts in the 1930s. They noticed that *The Times* was not friendly to China and Chinese people, which obviously meant the newspaper did not sympathize with China nor did it criticize the Japanese invasion in China (Zhang, 2007; Chen, 2012). As a result, in February 1939, a representative of the China Nationalist Government visited the general manager of *The Times* to remind him not to support Japan with Japanese news sources and that they should use more China government news sources. Thereafter, *The Times* expressed that it would adjust its content as required (Wang, 1998, 119).

During the 1930s, the SCMP served the British and Chinese bourgeoisie audiences and thus enjoyed the status of being one of the most influential newspapers in Hong Kong. At the very beginning, the SCMP management worried that reporting on Sino-Japanese conflicts would be offensive to British readers, some of whom did not like the Chinese to attack Japanese residents in Hong Kong. More importantly, they were concerned that Japanese advertisers might abandon the SCMP and advertise in other newspapers. However, if the SCMP did not report the Anti-Japanese War sentiment or how China bravely battled Japan, Chinese readers might abandon the SCMP, which would be a disaster for it too. Although Chinese and British readers had different interests in Hong Kong, which were reflected in the SCMP, nevertheless, the management finally realized they had to publish Anti-Japanese War reports if they wanted to make long-term profits. The SCMP Ltd. formed almost a monopoly in the Hong Kong English press. Therefore, Japanese advertisers had to place their advertisements in the SCMP if they wanted good results. Even if the Chinese readers boycotted the Japanese advertisements, there were

still British and other foreign readers. The SCMP still had a good advertising value. The editor and the board reached an agreement to report anti-Japanese War news and the strategy meeting the demand of Chinese readers' patriotic sentiment in Hong Kong prior to December 1941 became very profitable, as a result, the income and circulation showed unexpected rise.

THE SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST MANAGEMENT AND JOURNALISTS

Between 1939 and 1940, Hong Kong suffered pressure from Japan. Mentioning words like “Japanese invasion”, “War Atrocities” publicly in the Chinese language newspapers was not allowed (Sa, 1985). After Chinese newspapers were asked to delete the anti-Japanese words and reports, the SCMP still reported such news to encourage an anti-Japanese spirit. From the perspective of the editor, Henry Ching thought it was wrong for the Japanese to invade China and slaughter Chinese civilians.¹ In addition, he thought anti-Japanese reporting could better attract Chinese readers (Hutcheon, 1983). As a result, he decided that the SCMP should execute an Anti-Japanese War reporting policy. From the perspective of the SCMP management, they worried about the possible detrimental impact of anti-Japanese reporting to the SCMP, but they chose finally to acquiesce (Hutcheon, 1983).

Fortunately for the SCMP income, Japanese advertisers especially had no better options after the other morning paper, the *Hong Kong Daily Press*, became the fortune of the Chinese Nationalist Government.² This acquisition would make the *Hong Kong Daily Press* a “pro-British and pro-Chinese” newspaper; viz., a newspaper working with the Hong Kong government and the Chinese Nationalist Government.³ China Nationalist Government General Wu Teh Cheng and Madame Sun Yatsen made former United Press journalist Israel Epstein an editor of the *Hong Kong Daily Press*.⁴ As Madame Sun Yatsen's friend and partner in the Chinese Defence League, Israel Epstein later became the assistant editor at the SCMP because of the unpopularity of the *Hong Kong Daily Press* (Epstein, 2004). Israel Epstein was not Chinese, but he dared to write articles to criticize the Japanese invasion. When the Japanese occupied Hong Kong, the British were sent to an internment camp. Before the fall of Hong Kong, the CCP Hong Kong branch believed the Japanese would arrest and kill Epstein, who had a Westerner's face and wrote lots of anti-Japanese propaganda in a British newspaper (Epstein, 2005, 145). Liao Chengzhi, CCP representative in Hong Kong managed to fabricate Epstein's death and another communist journalist, Yang Gang, sent him to a safe house. Although Epstein was arrested later, he finally fled to Macau after the Japanese took over Hong Kong in 1941 (Epstein, 2005, 160). Israel Epstein's articles appeared in both the SCMP and *China*

1 I interviewed with the son of editor in chief Henry Ching, Henry Ching Jr. via e-mail communication on 4. 3. 2013.

2 SLMB, Volume K, H. Guard to G.M. of the SCMP on 10. 7. 1939.

3 SLMB, Volume K, H. Guard to G.M. of the SCMP on 10. 7. 1939.

4 SLMB, Volume K, H. Guard to G.M. of the SCMP on 10. 7. 1939.

Defence League Correspondence (Epstein, 2005, 144). His main theme was to call for help for the Chinese people to resist the Japanese invasion.

Cooperating with the SCMP met the best interests of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank (HSBC) during the anti-Japanese invasion period. The evidence of this assertion is seen in the paper's rejection of one director's advice. In 1933, a HSBC and SCMP director argued that anti-Japanese reporting would "do harm to the company's newspaper interests" and actions should be taken "to refrain from inserting any further" anti-Japanese reporting (Hutcheon, 1983, 76). However, the dual directors in HSBC and SCMP Ltd., R. G. Shewan and A. L. Shield, did not interfere with anti-Japanese reporting after the HSBC formed its position toward the Sino-Japanese war: to support China against the Japanese (King, 1988, 358). The SCMP attempted to retain some long-term Japanese advertisements; at the same time, the SCMP printed Anti-Japanese War reporting in a big scale.

As the Hong Kong English newspaper with the largest readership, the SCMP played the most important role in the Anti-Japanese War movement because the editor, Henry Ching, negotiated with the board chairman, John Scott Harston, on the issue of Anti-Japanese War reporting. Henry Ching shared the Chinese sense of nationalism and their indignation against Japanese aggression (Hutcheon, 1983, 77); in addition, he resisted pressure, insisted his editorial freedom and debated with the board chairman (Hutcheon, 1983, 76). In the end, Ching made Anti-Japanese War reporting the main theme of the news reporting in the 1930s.

Henry Ching was the backbone of the SCMP. In Robin Hutcheon's *SCMP: The First Eighty Years*, Ching was depicted as a man who possessed "Britishness" and Chinese nationalism. Profoundly influenced by Japanese invasion topics among his Chinese friends, Ching told the board that Chinese readers to pay extremely close attention to this momentous event (Hutcheon, 1983, 76). The board finally realized its best strategy was non-interference to the editor's decision: namely, to enjoy the increased circulation figure, and accept advertisements from pro-China or China government advertisers, as well as Japanese advertisements, which had been declined by the Hong Kong Chinese press and later by the *Hong Kong Daily Press*.⁵ As a result, for 1939, the paper's net profit increased about 300 percent over that of 1936 (Hutcheon, 1983, 78–84). The increase was high partly because the profit of 1936 was very low because of economic depreciation.

The SCMP employed what would now be called a diverse staff. When Violet Sweet Haven worked for the SCMP in 1940, there were only nineteen men for the two newspapers – the morning paper SCMP and SCMP's afternoon paper *Hong Kong Telegraph* – and she was the only female journalist in the Hong Kong newspaper industry. They were two Australians, three Australian-Chinese, six Englishmen, four English-Eurasians, one Scot, one Chinese, one Indian and one New Zealander. Half of the editors and the majority of the SCMP staff were Chinese. Some of the journalists had graduated from Yenching University (Yanjingyanjiuyuan, 2001, 87). Henry Ching, the editor of the SCMP, played cricket with other Chinese in his spare time. All the close connections with the Chinese

5 SCMP, 26. 9. 1931: Action by Chinese Newspapers: Japanese Advertisements to be refused, 13; SLMB, Volume K, H. Guard to General Manager of the SCMP on 10. 7. 1939.

made it understandable that the SCMP's reports positively portrayed Chinese nationhood. The British, Australian, and New Zealander editors disliked the Japanese invasion and also supported the Chinese people. Their feelings toward the invasion may have been different, however, from their Chinese counterparts: they might have been sympathetic toward the plight of the Chinese in the war, while the Chinese editors were angry.

Reporting the Sino-Japanese disputes was a correct ethical and financial decision for the SCMP, and this act of showing loyalty to the British Empire was not limited to publishing anti-Japanese articles. Henry Ching also wrote articles from time to time on the subjects of St George's Day, Empire Day, or Anzac Day with an easy fluency that came spontaneously from a sense of natural pride and commitment (Hutcheon, 1983, 76).

THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES

The SCMP had not been strictly censored before because of the different censorship policy toward English newspapers. During the 1930s, the China Defence League and the Nationalist Party (KMT) were trying their best to get financial and international support from Westerners and overseas Chinese in Hong Kong. An English newspaper that had a powerful influence and was immune to the censorship restriction would be helpful for anti-Japanese reporting.

Both the CCP and KMT had connections with the SCMP in the 1930s and 1940s Anti-Japanese War period. Chiang Kai-shek sent his representative Chen Qiyu to Hong Kong to meet Tse Tsan Tai, the founder of the SCMP, who still participated in the business activities of it.⁶ The KMT hoped Tse would use his influence to persuade the SCMP to support the KMT's Anti-Japanese War. Tse Tsan Tai said he would help (Yang, 1955, 58). Tse Tsan Tai wrote articles for the SCMP, and called on different political powers in China to unite to fight against the Japanese (Yang 1955, 58; Wang, 2003).

The SCMP sometimes printed books compiled by the Nationalist Government. After Japan invaded China, the SCMP subscriptions in Chinese cities had fallen, though this was compensated by increasing numbers of readers in Hong Kong who escaped from the Mainland. Still, the SCMP did not print as many newspapers as before and the advertisement income dropped too. For example, in 1939, the advertisement income dropped 22 percent and the newsprint use dropped 18 percent. Unexpectedly, the SCMP income dropped only 4 percent.⁷ The explanation was that the SCMP had new printing orders from the China Defence League and the China Nationalist Government. When SCMP profits had declined due to the war, it found a way to stop the profit losses through doing business with anti-Japanese parties. Between 1938 and 1941, the SCMP printed pamphlets entitled *Japanese Trample on Foreign Rights in China*, *Sino-Japanese Hostilities in North China*, *Can China Win?* (China Information Committee, 1938a; China Information Committee, 1938b). These pamphlets were edited by the China Information Committee, which was an international department of the Nationalist government founded for the purpose of anti-Japanese propaganda. Accord-

6 SLMB, 1920s–1930s.

7 SLMB, Volume L, Report of General Manager Ben Wylie to the Board of Directors on 19. 12. 1939.

ing to Wang Xiaolan's research, the Nationalist government decided to found its own media and cooperated with international media to produce anti-Japanese propaganda beginning in 1937 (Wang, 1998, 112–122). In 1938, the SCMP started to print pamphlets by the China Information Committee (Wu, 1990, 125). Most importantly, the SCMP actively took part in cooperating with Chinese resistance against the Japanese invasion, which called on Hong Kong to support Chinese industry in the war.⁸

Furthermore, the SCMP printed the publications of the China Defence League, a powerful anti-Japanese organization in Hong Kong and mainland China chaired by Madam Soong Ching Ling. The *China Defence League Correspondence* actually became a co-publication of the SCMP; the editor Israel Epstein wrote articles for it and the SCMP printed them. The circulation increased from one thousand to two thousand copies per issue worldwide (Gan, 2004, 98–101). Reporting differences between the two publications were not obvious after 1940.

The decision to work for anti-Japanese propaganda publishers brought new business orders but endangered the lives of SCMP journalists. Epstein was one heroic example of a SCMP journalist who supported the Anti-Japanese War. These journalists worked with KMT in spreading important information to the world. For example, in a 1938 editorial, it sent a warning to the United States and Britain that Japan had finally abandoned hope of diplomatic or other assistance from Great Britain and no longer cared whether she provoked Britain by trespassing in the Hong Kong area.⁹ It had important influence in the international media when some news agencies such as the United Press International focused on Japan instead of China or Hong Kong after 1938 because the United Press International believed the Chinese war was in a “strategic stalemate” and spent more of its budget on reporting about Japan (Epstein, 2005, 118).

ANTI-JAPANESE BANKING ADVERTISERS

The SCMP had long-term banking advertisers in its finance section, including the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, Bank of China, the Bank of Canton, and the Bank of East Asia. All of them were assets or important partners of the Republic of China government. The HSBC had participated in the Chinese government's loans and economic development since the late nineteenth century (King, 1998, 278). The HSBC was particularly involved in national affairs: “Throughout the 1930s, in keeping with its long-standing connections with government finance in China, the bank took a leading part in efforts to stabilise the Chinese national currency” (HSBC Holdings Plc., 2009).

Frank H. H. King studied how the HSBC cooperated with and supported Chinese governments closely and vigorously. He pointed out that after 1937 the HSBC changed its policy from “active support for China” to “opposition to Japan” (King, 1998, 358), other banks' influences were slightly less direct. The Bank of Canton was owned by overseas Chinese reformer and patriot Li Yutang, who funded Sun Yatsen's revolutionary activi-

8 Mason City Globe Gazette, 21. 7. 1939: Chinese Industrial Co-op Move is Supported by British, 6.

9 The Zanesville Signal, 13. 10. 1938: Chinese Rush Troops into Danger Zone, 1.

ties, the Bank of China and the Bank of Kwangsi (Hong Kong Branch) were owned by the China Nationalist Government, and the Bank of East Asia was a Hong Kong Chinese merchant-owned bank. All of these banks targeted Chinese clients and advertised in the SCMP to attract higher class Chinese to open accounts and do business with them. The HSBC did not target common Chinese clients, thus the Bank of Canton and the Bank of East Asia covered many Chinese bank account holders in Hong Kong. The Bank of China was located in the building of the Bank of Canton after 1938 (Yao, 1968, 31), and was in close cooperation with the Bank of East Asia (Sinn, 1994, 49–50). These banks all had clear anti-Japanese attitudes (Zhongguo Yinhang Zonghang, Zhongguo Di'er Lishi Dang'an'guan, 1991, 1586–1587);¹⁰ the SCMP had to pay attention to these advertisers' reactions when it reported news.

JAPANESE ADVERTISEMENTS

Chinese newspapers had united activities against the Japanese invasion as early as 1931. That is, all the local Chinese newspapers in Hong Kong had a meeting to announce their decision to reject all Japanese advertisements and shipping news.¹¹ However, Japanese shipping firms had advertised in the SCMP since its founding. In 1907, an editor published anti-Japanese editorials in the SCMP and Japanese shipping advertisements were withdrawn by a Chinese agent. As a result, the journalist had been warned, “Care has always to be exercised so as to avoid if possible the rendering of any such boycott possible” (Hutcheon, 1983, 29). As a result, the Japanese shipping advertisements appeared in the SCMP. They were with the Anti-Japanese War reporting in the 1930s until Japan took over Hong Kong.¹² The explanation is simple: the SCMP had important advertising value and the Japanese shipping companies did not want to abandon it. There would be potential clients in the British and even some Chinese readers. Thus, the SCMP still collaborated with the Japanese merchants for profit.

Until July 1941, the sole agent of Asahi Beer, Mitsui Bussan Kaisha, Ltd., still advertised in the SCMP, although few other Japanese commercial advertisements were printed alongside the SCMP's anti-Japanese articles. The SCMP criticized the Japanese invasion but accepted advertisements from a Japanese beer company. However, the SCMP Asahi Beer advertisement changed its look; for example, the picture of the Japanese flag on the Asahi beer bottle disappeared, as did the beer bottle, and only a glass of beer with an indication of the Asahi brand showed in the SCMP.¹³ The SCMP did not like to miss any opportunities to make money, especially from a long-term client.

The SCMP editors were worried about an invasion by the Japanese. One journalist recorded, “the Japanese are on the boarder [sic] thirty miles away. If they bomb Hong Kong it would be wholesale slaughter, and we, sitting here in this newspaper office, are

10 Huazi Ribao (Chinese Mail), 3. 12. 1939.

11 SCMP, 9. 26. 1931: Action by Chinese Newspapers: Japanese Advertisements to be refused, 13.

12 SCMP Shipping Advertisements in 1930s.

13 SCMP, 1. 7. 1941: Advertisement, 15.

in the centre of the most densely populated square mile on earth. It would go up in flames like paper” (Haven, 1944, 154). Placing Japanese advertisements showed the SCMP management wanted to keep its income stable and benefit from Japanese advertising income and Chinese reader subscription. In a word, the SCMP management had a different attitude than the editor, Henry Ching. However, Ching still had a big family to feed with his salary, which meant he had to work for the SCMP; otherwise, he could not find such a good job with HK\$1400 per month, which was partly from the Japanese advertisers.¹⁴

The SCMP kept Japanese shipping and consumption advertisements while it did abundant anti-Japanese reporting. In the tough wartime economy, Japanese advertising income was important for the SCMP and the practice was accepted. For example, Japanese shipping advertisements occupied 10 percent to 20 percent of the SCMP shipping advertising columns. However, the remaining advertisers still expected Chinese readers, who were no less than 30 percent of the SCMP audiences, and who liked to read Anti-Japanese War reporting, to support them by buying their products. Furthermore, the British audience, some of whom had businesses in China, also needed to check the SCMP Anti-Japanese War news. The SCMP was the rare medium accepting Japanese advertisements in Hong Kong. Therefore, whatever Anti-Japanese War reporting the SCMP did, Japanese advertisers had no say in the cooperation with the SCMP. Thus, the SCMP had no pressure to worry about the Japanese advertisers and could appeal to Chinese readers with numerous Anti-Japanese War reporting.

READERS

From 1931 to 1941, the population in Hong Kong doubled because of war in China. The majority of the immigrants were civilian refugees who had difficulties making a living in Hong Kong. The minority of these immigrants or refugees were businesspeople and celebrities (Zhang, 1994). Those business people and celebrities were similar to the existing Chinese readers who were bourgeoisie, or the “better class”, as the SCMP called them. The new Chinese audiences could help the SCMP slightly offset the decreased circulation in China’s cities lost to the Japanese army.¹⁵ Meanwhile, the thousands of British and other European refugees could bring more potential audiences and advertisers to the SCMP.¹⁶ As a result, the “circulations generally have shown a steady increase”.¹⁷

The SCMP was not keen on an anti-Japanese reporting at the beginning of the 1930s. As the Chinese in Hong Kong became angrier about the Japanese invasion, the SCMP brought the facts of the Japanese invasion and anti-Japanese activities to the attention of Chinese and Westerners in Hong Kong. The SCMP was independent; reporting the crimes of the Japanese army was also a brave decision because Japan had a good relationship with Britain. The paper reported boycotts, attacks, and riots against Japanese in China and

14 SLMB, Volume L, 19. 12. 1939.

15 SLMB, Volume K, 15. 12. 1938, 173.

16 SCMP, 20. 8. 1937: List of Refugees, 14.

17 SLMB, Volume K, 15. 12. 1938, 173.

Hong Kong.¹⁸ The SCMP also portrayed the humiliation of the Chinese and their nationalism via many editorials on the KMT government's Anti-Japanese War activities and the local Chinese community's hatred toward the Japanese. For example, the SCMP reported the half-mast flags on Chinese Humiliation Day.¹⁹ In addition, they also reported the slogans calling for Chinese to unite to fight against Japanese on the Hong Kong streets.²⁰

The SCMP also cared about its Western readers' demands for security during the anti-Japanese riots in turbulent Hong Kong. For example, in 1931 it published a letter from a reader called "Englishman" who supported the Japanese suppression of Chinese anti-Japanese movements:

How many right-thinking Chinese must bow his head in shame after the disgusting incidents of the past week-end? A very appropriate "Humiliation Day" might be held now (they are very good at holding such days it seems). These events bring us back to the events of the past few years which have been one long string of murders and worse, i.e.,

The Nanking Outrage 1927.

The Hankow incident 1927.

The Tsman affair where again innocent Japanese were murdered.

The murder of Priests in Hupeh.

The murder of missionaries all over China on different dates.

The affair of JOHN THORBURN which every Briton must justly feel ashamed of the inability of his own Government to obtain satisfaction over. The Japanese it seems are the only nation who have the courage to try and put a stop to all this fool beastliness. I wonder what would be the reaction if Chinese were murdered by mobs in Britain?

ENGLISHMAN.²¹

The newspaper could select and publish letters from readers, but this case exhibited that the SCMP still had no exclusive policy to support the Chinese anti-Japanese sentiments at that time. In particular, this letter reflected that the British residents feared Chinese anti-foreign activities and stood with the Japanese army which invaded China. Overall, the SCMP mistakenly evaluated the potential influence of this reader's letter. The SCMP just wanted to represent the needs of British residents who advocated a safe and stable Hong Kong, and no Chinese rose up to kill British in uprisings. This tone of calmness was evident upon occasion in the SCMP. In 1931, the SCMP recriminated against the Chinese community in editorials indicating the British were intolerant of the anti-Japanese riots in Hong Kong, and Chinese nationalists were regarded as hooligans:

18 SCMP, 29. 9. 1931: Further Rioting, Boycott Leaflets, 13; SCMP, 24. 9. 1931: Wanchai Riot: Chinese Attack on Japanese Shops; Hong Kong Feeling: Flags Half-Masted on Chinese Buildings, 13.

19 SCMP, 24. 9. 1931: Hong Kong Feeling: Flags Half-Masted on Chinese Buildings, 13.

20 SCMP, 29. 9. 1931: Further Rioting, Boycott Leaflets, 13.

21 SCMP, 29. 9. 1931: Englishman, "Colony's Shame", 9.

*The air is full of recrimination and the Editor's box is choked with letters [from British], all anonymous all indignant, almost all making personal attacks on this or that official [...] Let it be stated again also that the attitude of the Chinese community and its leaders calls for condemnation. The rioting, looting and killing were, of course, the work of hooligans; but the great majority of Chinese residents regarded the excesses with complete tolerance, even amusement and gloating, entirely oblivious to the human suffering and to the moral and political considerations involved [...] A taunt in many letters directed against the Chinese members of Council is of undue timidity; but it is surely cowardly to abuse them from behind the shelter of assumed names. We agree that the Chinese members were not effective. A suggestion made in one letter is that they could easily have broadcast by radio their condemnation of the riots and their appeals for order. That would probably have been of much help to Government; and if the advice did not reach the hooligan understanding it might at least have brought about a different outlook among the better classes and saved the Chinese community generally from the heavy reproach which now lies upon it [...] Responsible comment we shall publish, but we shall not print letters which are offensively recriminatory and abusive. The crisis is too recent to permit any encouragement of verbal brickbats to add to the damage.*²²

The permanent policy of the SCMP was to make a profit from the Chinese and British audiences in a peaceful Hong Kong. From the foresaid editorial, the SCMP clearly stated its stance: it wanted to be a judge and tool to stabilize Hong Kong through “a recrimination”. It blamed the Chinese bourgeoisie readers, their leaders, and even the Chinese community, though it also took a punch at the indignant British readers for criticizing Chinese leaders.²³ The SCMP respected Chinese readers and protected them when they were attacked. This showed that the SCMP realized that it should maintain a peaceful relationship with the Chinese community, especially Chinese leaders. Irritating Chinese audiences was not in the best interest of the SCMP.

The SCMP at that time still encouraged people to respect Japanese civilians and boycott any anti-Japanese activities in Hong Kong. It also wanted to win the trust and favour of both Chinese and British audiences by its judgement; in other words, it criticized the Chinese overall, so that British audiences would be satisfied. Similarly, it reprimanded angry British audiences. Nevertheless, it was not easy to find a balance at that time between Chinese and British audiences. In particular, in a British reader letter published in the SCMP, the Japanese invasion was said to be a kind of “courage”, the Chinese rising had been considered “fool beastliness” and Chinese were expected to be “murdered”.²⁴ As a result, Chinese audiences showed their resentment about the SCMP's stance. A Chinese named P. Chan sent a protest to the SCMP the next day:

22 SCMP, 29. 9. 1931: Recrimination, 10.

23 SCMP, 29. 9. 1931: Recrimination, 10.

24 SCMP, 29. 9. 1931: Englishman, Colony's Shame, 9.

*Your leading article of this morning calls for a word of protest from the Chinese community [...] No doubt, the Chinese members of Council who you say have been attacked anonymously are equally capable of defending themselves, should they wish to do so. What seems to me to call for an answer from me is your remark [...] I say that you had absolutely no reason for it... Your sweeping statement was as unfair as it was mischievous [...] The Chinese, while being indignant over the high-handed action of the Japanese in Manchuria, are all for the preservation of good order in the Colony [...] Your remark is libellous, and I think that the least you can do is to withdraw it.*²⁵

More Chinese readers sent letters to the SCMP to require the SCMP to withdraw the previous editorials. The SCMP had to clarify that they had never suggested that the better class Chinese residents approved of the outbreaks, and they regretted if their comment could be so interpreted.²⁶ Another Chinese claimed that the Germans were badly treated by the British in the World War I, and he asked the SCMP why it did not report much on the wholesale massacre of Chinese people in Korea and in Manchuria while stating the Japanese must not be molested in Hong Kong.²⁷ The editor of the SCMP explained that local incidents concerned the SCMP more than external news in the neutral British colony.²⁸

During the anti-Japanese riot in 1931, Chinese leaders did not react, and condemned Chinese discord immediately. They did not prevent such movements in time, obviously, because they had their specific concerns, which included understanding Chinese patriotism and even indignation that they could not speak out in the public. In other words, silence was a kind of acquiescence. However, British community leaders were not happy about this and suggested they take further and effective action. Lieutenant Colonel T. A. Robertson claimed, “A punishment of HK\$5.00 or seven days to an offender seems futile”.²⁹ Members of the “Reform” Club “proposed, seconded and carried unanimously that arrangements be made to hold an emergency meeting of the Executive and Legislative Councils” immediately and to “stand in solemn silence with bowed heads and hands firmly on the Board table, for one minute” before the meeting.³⁰ On the same page, the *SCMP* also printed the declaration of the Hong Kong Government that “Sections 7-14 of the Peace Preservation Ordinance 1886 are in force”, so it was “the citizen’s duty” to “keep off the streets” because arrests were on the way.³¹

Under such a pressure, the three Chinese Legislative Council members, Robert Kotewall, Shou Son Chow and S. Y. Tso, arranged a meeting with the SCMP reporter. These three Chinese leaders hoped the SCMP would pass some messages to the Chinese community: firstly, they had already informed the Chinese press of “condemning the unfortunate incidents of the last few days and advising the Chinese to observe the law”;

25 SCMP, 30. 9. 1931: Chinese Protest, 9.

26 SCMP, 30. 9. 1931: Chinese Protest, 9.

27 SCMP, 30. 9. 1931: Chinese Protest, 9.

28 SCMP, 30. 9. 1931: Chinese Protest, 9.

29 SCMP, 28. 9. 1931: The Anti-Japanese Riots, 10.

30 SCMP, 28. 9. 1931: Hongkong’s Disgrace, 10.

31 SCMP, 28. 9. 1931: Keep off the streets, 10.

Secondly, the Chinese leaders did not berate Chinese residents but criticized “the real agitators generally go unpunished by remaining in the background”; Thirdly, instead of deploring the Japanese victims, Chinese leaders showed their concern about Chinese residents, hoping Chinese residents would not suffer from disturbances and agitation. In particular, there were “more Chinese residents in Japan than there [we]re Japanese living in Hongkong”, so it would not be wise to continue to injure and kill Japanese; Finally, Chinese leaders told the SCMP, “Love of country is a virtue we all cherish, but we serve our country best by pursuing the right course”.³²

In brief, the three Chinese leaders held the same opinion that “the Government could not have done anything to prevent people from showing their [patriotic] feelings, provided that nothing was done to disturb the peace of the Colony”.³³ Chinese leaders showed tolerance for Chinese residents and attributed the riots to unknown agitators even if the police had arrested some Chinese residents had been arrested. Chinese residents in the eyes of Chinese leaders were not mobs and the SCMP portrayed an image of responsible and patriotic Chinese leaders. Although patriotism in the eyes of Chinese leaders was obeying the law with buried feelings, nevertheless, it was more progressive than the neutral position of the Hong Kong government. As a result, their support of the SCMP protected not only Chinese national esteem but also improved Chinese social position because they tried to build a consensus that Chinese feelings should be respected though riots were not accepted.

The SCMP made periodic attempts to report anti-Japanese news. This stance formed under the pressure of the SCMP Chinese readers. The *SCMP* had to treat their Chinese readers with respect because most of them were bourgeoisie. In fact, days before the Chinese audiences’ protest, the SCMP had already pointed out that the “Chinese [man] is not so much cowardly as discreet as peace loving: he fights ferociously when he is sufficiently angered.”³⁴ However, this was still far from enough. A stance of “sympathizing with Chinese” should be changed to “anti-Japanese invasion” to meet the needs of its Chinese readers. In particular, the change of the SCMP stance rested with a series of complex and integrated factors of management, readers, editor, advertisers and political parties, which have been previously elaborated upon.

While some international newspapers were still uncertain about the nature of Sino-Japanese conflicts after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, a Chinese reader pointed out in the SCMP that the newspaper “can be taken to represent the views [of] practically every thinking Chinese”. Obviously, the audience had such an impression because the editor of the SCMP was seriously influenced by the Chinese community in Hong Kong and the SCMP had to report Anti-Japanese War news more frequently (Hutcheon, 1983, 76). In addition, Chinese readers had been granted the power to criticize the Japanese invasion and even Western powers that did not help China during the war. In particular, the SCMP also became a place where Chinese audiences supported “Chinese people who have al-

32 SCMP, 28. 9. 1931: Sound Advice by Chinese members of Council, 14.

33 SCMP, 28. 9. 1931: Sound Advice by Chinese members of Council, 14.

34 SCMP, 24. 9. 1931: China and Japan, 10.

ready reached their last limits of endurance” and had “no alternatives except to meet force with forces in an endeavour to preserve their existence as a race on the surface of this earth which they have learnt to love and treasure for more than four thousand years”.³⁵ Although the SCMP was a British colony paper, it was bold to publish Chinese audiences’ voices such as labelling “governments of both Europe and America” as responsible for the invasion of Japan.³⁶ Not only had the SCMP achieved its goal of ingratiating itself with the Chinese audience to make a profit, the SCMP also tried to maintain Chinese “territorial integrity and national independence in the face of an alien invasion” via its pages; for example:

*Today the Chinese people are united as one man behind the Central government and are resolved to wage a war of prolonged resistance against their insatiable invaders who are by far superior to them in modern equipment of war on three fronts – physical, spiritual and intellectual, while the world Powers apparently look on and are merely concerned over the evacuation of their own nationals and the International Settlement and the Concessions [...] It is to be hoped, therefore, that all the sane peoples of the world will give China at least their moral, if not material, support for furthering her noble mission.*³⁷

Furthermore, in its editorials the SCMP showed a solid support to Chinese people and asserted that Japan would lose the war and the Chinese would win. Such a stance was much more progressive than British mainstream newspapers such as *The Times*, which did not report the Sino-Japanese War in a big scale and showed an indifferent attitude. By doing so, the SCMP differentiated itself from Western English media, which at the very beginning, did not understand the nature of the Japanese aggression and the justice of Chinese resistance, let alone the SCMP’s affinity with Chinese audiences, which the Western media did not own.

The Japanese invasion unambiguously damaged Hong Kong Chinese merchants’ normal trade and manufacture. Therefore, Hong Kong Chinese merchants had a strong anti-Japanese motive. Thus, although the management once hesitated, they finally acquiesced to the readers regarding the Anti-Japanese War reporting. Moreover, the SCMP even published a War Edition for a short time after 1937. Nevertheless, the limited Chinese readers themselves could not support the SCMP’s new venture and finally it became a failure. This case showed that the SCMP had been tempted by the profitable combined reporting strategy, viz., attracting Chinese and British readers. Without the Anti-Japanese War reporting, Chinese readers would not be happy. However, if the SCMP emphasized the same topic too much, it would not help get more sales in the British community.³⁸

35 SCMP, 18. 8. 1937: A Chinese Observer, “China at Bay”, 9.

36 SCMP, 18. 8. 1937: A Chinese Observer, “China at Bay”, 9.

37 SCMP, 18. 8. 1937: A Chinese Observer, “China at Bay”, 9.

38 SLMB, Volume K, Franklin to the Board on 12. 10. 1939.

When Hong Kong was attacked by the Japanese army, Madam Sun Yatsen published a statement in the SCMP calling on all Chinese to unite to expel the Japanese.³⁹

In the same day's SCMP, a Chinese reader named Walter Hanming Chen pointed out the hypocrisy of Japan's "sincerity" and "real desire for peace", and asserted "Japan will regret this day for the mighty forces of America, Britain and China will bring about her extermination".⁴⁰ The SCMP had no choice but to exhibit a clear anti-Japanese attitude, whether from the perspective of justice or the perspective of business.

Chen Junbao, the librarian of the Hong Kong University Library, pointed out that anti-Japanese reporting was beneficial and the Hong Kong and Guangdong students would like to use the SCMP to call for support to the mainland Chinese resistance against the Japanese; In addition, he asserted the SCMP provided detailed and accurate Anti-Japanese War news, while Chinese newspapers avoided mentioning some news (Chen & Xie, 1999, 341). In a word, the SCMP was cooperative under demands of Chinese readers and provided a platform for anti-Japanese reporting.

The present analysis of the SCMP news on Sino-Japanese conflicts in the 1930s revealed the SCMP had the following characteristics in reporting anti-Japanese news. First, the SCMP retained a freedom of the press policy and reported the truth of the Japanese invasion of China, even under pressure from the Hong Kong government and the board of the SCMP in the colony, which remained neutral. Next, although the SCMP did not like communists for a long time, it still reported the CCP's cooperation with the central government of China to fight against the Japanese. Third, the SCMP criticized the non-interference policy of Western powers from time to time. Fourth, the SCMP reported events like the boycott against Japanese and murders of Japanese in a quasi-indifferent tone; in other words, it did not criticize these kinds of terrorist behaviours, but displayed an attitude of *schadenfreude*. Finally, after 1938, the SCMP started to encourage the mainland China anti-Japanese movement, criticized the Japanese frequently, and wished for the success of the Chinese in the Anti-Japanese War, though the Chinese suffered failures most of the time. That is to say, based on the demands and requests of Chinese readers and various nationalist parties, the SCMP published anti-Japanese reporting.

THE WIDE INFLUENCE OF *THE SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST* ANTI-JAPANESE REPORTING

The SCMP was the most influential anti-Japanese reporting medium in Hong Kong though it was considered a very conservative British newspaper (Haven, 1944, 151). The unmatched position of the SCMP in Anti-Japanese War reporting not only attracted a Chinese audience, but also increased its popularity worldwide, which was potentially beneficial for its business. In other words, the SCMP built up a positive public image of supporting the Anti-Japanese War movement, which helped its branding.

39 SCMP, 9. 12. 1941: Soong Ching Ling's Letter, np.

40 SCMP, 9. 12. 1941: Japan's Sincerity, np.

The SCMP's influence was not only noticed by the China Defence League and KMT, political moderates also considered the SCMP's support in their anti-Japanese reporting. *Ta Kung Pao*, a newspaper for Chinese moderates, said in an editorial that all the Hong Kong English newspapers sympathized with China and the SCMP was the most powerful. Therefore, the SCMP's comments had an important influence in encouraging the anti-Japanese movement and Chinese nationalism in Hong Kong.⁴¹ Some of its encouraging editorials were translated elsewhere, and Chinese nationals were greatly encouraged.

Hong Kong local newspapers like *The Industrial & Commercial Daily*, *Chinese Mail* and *Ta Kung Pao* reprinted SCMP editorials from time to time. In the reporting of the Wang Jingwei incident, the American appeasement policy, and in regard to the notorious Japanese invasion of mainland China, the SCMP was the flagship firing at Japan and the puppet Wang Jingwei government.⁴² The *Chinese Mail* stated that the SCMP's editorials encouraged anti-Japanese parties and advocated Chinese nationalism.⁴³ The effect was magnified by the Hong Kong Chinese newspapers and mainland Chinese newspapers like the *New China Daily*. Therefore, in January 1939, Liao Chengzhi said that the SCMP represented powerful British persons and looked down upon the Chinese Nationalist Party traitor Wang Jingwei through its editorials (Liao, 1990, 61). As a result, the SCMP's reporting of anti-Japanese news brought it big fame and grew its circulation and advertising business.

Greedy and ugly images of the Japanese appeared in the SCMP and other Chinese newspapers after 1937. After the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, the Japanese invasion was respectively criticized by the SCMP, whose articles were reprinted in Chinese in *The Industrial & Commercial Daily*. The SCMP pointed out that it was illegal for the Japanese to blockade the China coast; it also decried the uselessness of international law and regulations. The Chinese were doing their best to cope with this difficult situation. This editorial also highlighted that Hong Kong played an important role in assisting the Anti-Japanese War effort during this period, as long as Japan did not blockade Hong Kong's sea transportation.⁴⁴ *The Industrial & Commercial Daily* considered the SCMP an impartial medium while the SCMP depicted the Japanese as clowns.⁴⁵ Furthermore, the SCMP predicted that the Japanese policy of enticing the Kuo Min Tang to capitulate was unbelievable in the views of the Chinese army and government. *The Industrial & Commercial Daily* used the translated SCMP reports more than a dozen times a year on average between 1938 and 1941. For example, it would reprint or retell the SCMP editorials that described the British public's dislike of the Japanese, the Japanese atrocities in China and the international conflicts caused by the Japanese. The newspapers told its readers that Japan would regret what they did to China.⁴⁶

41 *Ta Kung Pao*, 19. 8. 1938: Editorial: Comment on Reading the South China Morning Post, np.

42 *Ta Kung Pao*, 26. 1. 1940: Nanhua Zaobao Youmo Xiaoping, 3.

43 Huazi Ribao (Chinese Mail), 14. 1. 1937: Heping zhi Daijia, Nanhua Zaobao Shenxu Woguo Kangzhan Jingshen (The Cost of Peace, The SCMP Greatly Praised Chinese Anti-Japanese Spirit), np.

44 *The Industrial & Commercial Daily*, 28. 8. 1937: Japan Blockades China Coast, 9.

45 *The Industrial & Commercial Daily*, 28. 8. 1937: Japan Blockades China Coast, 9.

46 *The Industrial & Commercial Daily*, 29. 8. 1937: Japanese Bomber Seriously Hurt British Ambassador Outside of War Zone, 9.

One SCMP editorial could be reprinted in several Chinese newspapers at the same time, which would generate a heavy influence on the anti-Japanese movement in Hong Kong. The SCMP constantly condemned the cruelty and violence of Japanese air raids, which wounded the British Ambassador and killed Chinese soldiers and common citizens. The SCMP not only criticized the Japanese; it also criticized the Western powers that compromised with Japan on the China issue. The SCMP expressed its position that it would not compromise with Japan.⁴⁷

The SCMP portrayed a harsh image of the national traitor Wang Jingwei, the president of the puppet Nanjing Nationalist Government. These reports were reproduced on a large scale by Hong Kong Chinese newspapers, and the *SCMP* pointed out that Nationalist government leader Wang Jingwei had caused serious damage to China.⁴⁸ The SCMP commented that the Chinese Nationals could not tolerate Wang Jingwei's traitorous behaviour and he would be abandoned by his Chinese friends.⁴⁹

The SCMP praised the Chinese Anti-Japanese War spirit and encouraged China to fight Japan to the end. The SCMP claimed that China, as the sole nation to fought Japan at that moment, would never surrender.⁵⁰ The SCMP also highlighted its faith that China would defeat Japan in the end. It reported on Japan's trouble in China and the success of the Chinese army.⁵¹ Numerous such reports increased nationalism in Hong Kong and the reproduction of the *SCMP* anti-Japanese editorials in Chinese newspapers elevated the position of the *SCMP* in the Anti-Japanese War reports.

Through cooperation and compromise with social organizations, including political parties, advertisers, and the SCMP staff, the SCMP became one of the most important English media outlets that transmitted Sino-Japanese war news to the international community. At that time, the Nationalist government opened up an anti-Japanese propaganda office in Hong Kong and provided war information to English newspapers in Hong Kong (Wu, 1990, 125). The SCMP valued such a free information source and cooperated with the Nationalist government. When the *SCMP* reported Japanese atrocities in 1937, some newspapers could not believe these stories and accused the *SCMP* of fabrication.⁵² The effect of the *SCMP*'s reports on the international understanding of what was taking place in China was important because there were many "neutrality" and "isolation" voices in the United States. The *New York Times* of that era supported the Chinese Anti-Japanese War and reported Japanese atrocities to American fortunes in China.⁵³ Even though President Roosevelt proclaimed, "Isolation is not protection" to the public, the anti-war attitude in the American public did not change much.⁵⁴

47 Chinese Mail, 25. 11. 1937: South China Morning Post Criticized the Western Powers' Hesitation and Delaying, 8.

48 Ta Kung Pao, 2. 12. 1940: Comment on the Treaty between Wang Jingwei and Japan, 17.

49 Chinese Mail, 24. 1. 1940, English Newspaper Criticized Wang Jingwei, 8.

50 Chinese Mail, 14. 11. 1937, South China Morning Post Denounced the Conditions of Peace of Japanese, 8.

51 Ta Kung Pao, 3. 9. 1938: SCMP Said China Must Win, 4.

52 The Clearfield Progress, 5. 10. 1937, 4.

53 New York Times, 28. 9. 1937: Britain Reasserts Protest at Tokyo, 12; New York Times, 28. 9. 1937, American Hospital in China Destroyed by Japanese Bombs, 12.

54 Chronicle Telegram, 5. 10. 1937: Isolation Not Protection Says President, 1.

CONCLUSION

The SCMP achieved its goal of making profits through Anti-Japanese War reporting and supporting China when it met its Chinese audience's expectations. This was not the original intention of the SCMP Ltd. Nevertheless, the SCMP editorial staff, advertisers, editors and staff pushed the SCMP to stand on the side of the anti-Japanese camp. Meanwhile, the SCMP enjoyed much press freedom in Hong Kong, so it could publish sentimental comments of Chinese readers against the Japanese invasion and thus contributed to the war propaganda for China. I have to highlight that the SCMP as a British colonial newspaper contributed unexpectedly to the Chinese Resistance against Japanese Invasion in the period of WWII.

In addition, the stances of the SCMP editors in a complex wartime situation should be commended. It faced pressure from the British colonial Hong Kong government and even British readers to avoid report anti-Japanese war reporting, its board members worried too much about the potential dissatisfaction from Japanese advertisers. Particularly, the SCMP had also been approached by various political parties in China and it was indeed involved some business deals with them, which was essentially different from being fully controlled by political parties or KMT. Nevertheless, the SCMP was in an independent position and chose to do its reporting with a pro-China perspective irrespective who sponsored its business.

ANGLEŠKI ČASOPIS IN DRUGA SVETOVNA VOJNA: VOJNO POROČANJE
ČASOPISA *SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST* IN BRITANSKI HONG KONG

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POVZETEK

Mnogo študij obravnava vprašanje kitajskega odpora proti japonski invaziji in med temi se večina študij osredotoča na območje celinske Kitajske. Malo pa je podatkov o vlogi Hong Konga v proti-japonski vojni v tridesetih letih 20. stoletja. Pričujoča raziskava prikaže, kako so bili prispevki angleškega časopisa *South China Morning Post* v proti-japonski vojni v glavnem prezrti. Avtor je analiziral pisanje časopisa in pregledal zapisnike uredništva ter nekatere redke objave iz tridesetih let.

Ugotovil je, da so se med invazijo japonskih vojaških sil novinarji, bralci in velika večina oglaševalcev časopisa *South China Morning Post* osredotočali na prokitajsko poročanje, in tako v bistvu podpirali kitajski upor proti Japonski. Avtor tudi razkriva, kako so člani odbora in uredniki razpravljali o težavah svobodnega novinarstva in poslovnega dobička, obenem, kakšne so bile povezave med časopisom in političnimi strankami, na primer Kitajsko komunistično partijo in Kitajsko nacionalistično stranko. Časopisu je uspelo obdržati poseben socialen status, zato je postal najpomembnejši časopis v času proti-japonske invazije. Posledično so mednarodni in lokalni časopisi večkrat citirali oziroma ponatisnili njegove vojne novice in tudi uvodnike. Skratka, list *South China Morning Post* se je postavil na odločilni položaj v zgodovini kitajskega odpora proti japonski invaziji, njegov vpliv pa je bil v dosedanjih študijah pogostokrat zanemarjen.

Ključne besede: Kitajska, Hong Kong, tisk, Japonska, proti-japonska vojna, druga svetovna vojna, *South China Morning Post*

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