

BRITISH WRITERS AND THE MALAYS: TWO SIDES TO A COIN

(PERBEZAAN PERSPEKTIF PENULIS BRITISH DAN ORANG MELAYU)

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Abstract

The Tanah Melayu, or land of the Malays, was one of the colonies conquered by the British as early as the 17th century. The historical impact of colonialism on the social, economic and cultural experiences of the native Malays has been well-documented. This paper attempts to explore several ideas of organic intellectuals and the subjugation of the Malays from the perspective of the colonialists. For this study, various literary works penned by British scholars and commoners were analysed. These works were then divided into a few sub-themes encompassing the sociological

aspects of the Malays. The findings were empirically inaccurate due to the lack of suitable approaches to fortify analyses of the Malays. In some cases, the scholars' opinions are almost intangible and amateurish, which could cause confusion and prejudice. The British writers were also found to have produced literary works about the Malays based on what they had seen in specific locations, which may not have shown the full perspective of the ethnic group. The writers also might have ignored certain ethical points during writing. The study also unmasked the motives and British discourse on the Malays. This can provide a better understanding of European intellect toward the integrity of the Malays.

Keywords: *British, British writers, Malays, images, colonials.*

Abstrak

Tanah Melayu merupakan salah satu dari tanah jajahan British sejak awal abad ke-17. Sejarah serta kesan penjajahan sama ada dalam bentuk pengalaman sosial, ekonomi dan budaya penduduk asal Melayu didokumentasikan dengan baik dalam karya bertulis. Makalah ini membincangkan berkaitan beberapa idea golongan intelektual organik Melayu daripada perspektif penjajah. Beberapa karya sastera yang ditulis oleh sarjana British dan rakyat biasa juga dianalisis dalam kajian ini. Karya-karya tersebut dibahagikan kepada beberapa subtema yang merangkumi aspek sosiologi Melayu. Secara empirikal, penemuan kajian kurang tepat disebabkan kekurangan pendekatan terhadap bahan yang amat diperlukan bagi menguatkan analisis subjek, iaitu orang Melayu. Dalam sesetengah kes, pendapat itu hampir tidak ketara serta banyak mengelirukan dan menimbulkan prejudis. Penulis British menulis berdasarkan sesuatu yang mereka lihat di kawasan tertentu dan tidak mewakili keseluruhan penduduk. Beberapa prinsip moral yang mengawal tingkah laku etika dalam penulisan mungkin diabaikan. Selain itu, makalah ini juga menyingkap motif dan asas wacana British tentang orang Melayu yang boleh memberi pemahaman yang lebih baik tentang tindak balas intelektual Eropah terhadap kewibawaan orang Melayu.

Kata Kunci: British, penulis British, orang Melayu, imej, kolonial.

Introduction

Due to the lack of accessible study, it is hard to trace the growth of The Malay World as a term, which refers to the Archipelago. It appears that European colonizers shaped the concept of The Malay World, the widest regional bounce of the Malay community. Ismail Hussein, a Malaysian expert on Malay literature, acknowledges that the broader concept of "Malay" is in essence a colonial product though advocating Pan-Malay solidarity in the Malay world. Ismail hints the role of the Spanish since the 17th century and The British since the 18th century in identifying the Archipelago as The Malay World (Hussein, 1993). Meanwhile, Reid (1997) points out that Thomas Stamford Raffles "should probably be regarded as the most important voice in projecting the idea of a Malay race or nation, not limited to the traditional "Raja-raja Melayu" or even their supporters but embracing a large if unspecified part of the Archipelago". Marsden (1986), another British "merchant-scientist", classifies

the populaces of the Archipelago as The Malays, grounded on religion (Islam), language (Malay) and origin (the kingdom of Minangkabau).

The British enjoyed their stay in Malay land and wrote their experience here. As they write, the presentation of Malay characters was brought in their stories. Some writers might have mixed feelings in their work – more sympathetic rather than irrational and arrogance. The next part of this article looks at how far their work reflects the validity and reliability of Malays' representation. Briefly, their work reflects an attitude of describing and explaining the east as the opposite of the west- in common daily aspects-social, politics and economics.

Tracing back history, the main reason of British intervention in this Malay land was to conquer the people and the economic resources, and at the same time backing up The British Empire from other European power(s) (Jabatan Penerangan Malaysia, 2017). Seen in a positive light, some of The British had provided "historical witnesses" in the true sense of the term because they wrote about events, landscapes, people and personalities that they professed and appraised. Besides, the process of witnessing is strongly affected by the individual's power of perception and the influences that govern his/her perceptions. Writers can be prisoners of their traits, inmates of their cultures and products of their times. For example, Clifford, in his literary writings shows to cast light on, inter alia, the thoughts, attitudes, preconceptions and motivations of the isolated European administrator in early Malaya (Saw, 1969).

It is not an easy work also to write about certain characters, identities or culture of a man especially if the subjects chosen are new. One needs to understand, observe and more importantly bring oneself to the targeted subject to get a better view and perspective (Raja Masittah Raja Ariffin, 2013). Not only that, one needs to be sensitive and able to grasp the deep meaning of the root of the subjected area, thus the right ideas can be conveyed regarding certain issues. The same notion appears when the subject or the Malays are discussed throughout this paper. It is an attempt to fill the gap by examining in detail of the British writers' discursive descriptions on the Malays during colonial era which can be seen from few perspectives.

Objective

This paper intends to show few ideas of organic intellectuals and subjugation allays of the Malays from the colonial perspectives through their written work.

Methodology

This paper uses a methodological systematic review of the literature, mainly works of social anthropologists in microhistory, a study of events and insignificant people with the object of validating and/ or refuting the subject or the Malays. It is conducted to identify existing guidance and recommended practice in conducting and reporting the discourse on the Malay people during the colonial times. Certain key focus or sub-themes of the social life of the Malays become the meta-ethnography analytic

synthesis phases, which are complex yet drew the answers to the objective of this study.

Predisposition of the Malay Identity

When the British empire started its presence in the Malay land, it did not mean the coming of the British officers solely (Marzali, 2021). British investors, were attracted to Malaya's potential mineral wealth, and started their exploration here too. Not to forget, some of the lay man and ordinary people came all the way from Britain to experience what the local Malays could offer, which they penned on the experience.

Frank Swettenham for example was a British colonial official in Malaya who was highly influential in shaping British policy and the structure of British administration in the Malay Peninsula during the British colonialism here. Of the so many writers, Swettenham could be considered a more successful intermediary between The British government and the local Malays. In his book, *Malay Sketches*, he outlines a strategy for getting to understand the people:

“In order to understand the Malay, one should stay in Malaya, speaks the Malay language, respect the customs and culture of The Malays. One also needs to have the interest what enthused by the Malay, their jokes and even help them when they are in grievances or sorrows. Then only one can win the hearts and trust of The Malays”.

(Swettenham, 1895, p. 43)

This is agreed by Wilkinson who argues that The Malays did not throw off old elements of former historical stages. All the historical stages were accumulated and constituted in Malay history.

In another writing on Malay life and customs, he explains this stratification of Malay history in the following terms:

“... he [the Malay] keeps the old while adopting the new. He has gone on preserving custom after custom and ceremony after ceremony till his whole life is a sort of museum of ancient customs-an ill-kept and ill-designed museum in which no exhibit is dated, labelled or explained”.

(Wilkinson, 1925, p. 42)

Like Swettenham too in order to understand Malay customs, Wilkinson (1925) says:

“We must work historically. We can best begin by eliminating the modern Moslem elements ... of the Hindu elements we cannot speak so positively ... But, when we have eliminated these Hindu and Moslem details, we are still far from the bedrock of Indonesian

custom; we have to distinguish between essentials and accessories”.

Here Wilkinson presents his notion of Malay history in which Islamic and Hindu elements piled up on indigenous ones or what he calls the "*bedrock of Indonesian custom.*"

Another writer that contributes his work about The Malays in the nineteenth century is Hugh Clifford. Hugh Clifford was no stranger in the administration of the British colonized land. He travelled to Malaya in 1887 at the age of 17 and started his career as a cadet in the Strait States. He completed his work in 1929 as a Governor and High Commissioner of Malaya and died in London at the age of 81 in 1941. It was when Malaya was attacked by Japan in the Second World War.

He records the history of The Malays: their way of life, traits and personalities. Clifford took the pains to socialize with The Malays and studied their language and culture deeply. His work was written with a full appreciation towards the native Malays which came from their native point of view.

The following parts of this paper will discuss about the representation of Malay from the British writers' perspectives. The representations are clustered according to a few sub-themes. The sources discussed in this paper are extracted from books written by the British who engaged themselves in the Malay land during British empire colonialism.

Findings

i) Language

As he spoke Malay well, Swettenham came out with a dictionary "Vocabulary of English and Malay language". Clifford also did a lot of researches about the origin of the Malay language. Twenty years was a long time to recognize a nation, and Clifford witnessed the growth of Malaya with his own eyes since the age of 21 and when he left the country at the age of 41. He also compared the ancient Malay language to classical Malay language and concluded that both languages have some things in common: pronunciation and spelling forms. The findings flourished the expansion of Malay language in this region, Malaya particularly. Clifford (1899, p. 134) writes:

“...and as I chanced to be inspired by a devouring curiosity, I acquired what, at a distance of time, I think I am justified in describing as well-nigh unique knowledge and understanding of the people, of their language, customs, prejudices and methods of thoughts”.

ii) Physical Appearance

The excerpts from the "*Malay Sketches*", Swettenham (1895, p. 97) describes physical appearance of The Malays according to genders:

“The real Malay is a short, thick-set, well-built man, with straight black hair, a dark brown complexion, thick nose and lips, and bright intelligent eyes. In his youth, the Malay boy is often beautiful, bathing of wonderful eye. Those eyes, which are extraordinarily large and clear, seemed with a pained wonder. The Malay girl-child is not usually as attractive in appearance as the boy, and less consideration is shown to her. When fifteen or sixteen, she is often almost interesting; very shy, very fond of pretty clothes and ornaments, not uncommonly much fairer in complexion than the Malay man, with small hands and feet, a happy smiling face, good teeth, and wonderful eyes and eyebrows the eyes of the little Malay boy”.

On the contrary, Clifford has more engagement with the Malays and his description on them is more personal through such relationship. The characters and the sources of the stories actually enrich his credibility as an author.

And since he was rather diligent, then his characters also showed a fair range of colours, including a girl who is deprived by her leader, a chippy, violent Kulop who never knows of being afraid, a gambler and also a murderer. He is described as mysterious, lonely with a big ambition without friends or family.

“Kulop is ugly and only values adventure, was absolutely fearless, and was moreover, a good man with his hands. . . and as he did not share with the majority of his race their instinctive dread of traveling alone in the jungle, he alone decided on making a raid into the Sakai country”.

(p. 64).

Clifford describes Kulop as a typical Malay existed as a human being who was not bothered by his wits or conscience or not even by the people that boycotted him. "He, of course felt absolutely no twinges of conscience, for you must not look for principle in the rank and file of the race to which belong the chippy Kulop". For Clifford, like most Malays, Kulop earned his own respect due to his own courage yet being primitive. Such attitude somehow would make him being destroyed.

iii) Islam as a Belief

Another feature of The Malays that is being highlighted by British writers is Islam as a belief. Before the arrival of Islam to the Malay world, many parts of the region were under the Kingdom of Srivijaya, between the seventh and the fourteenth century (George & Charles, 1992). The Kingdom of Srivijaya was greatly influenced by Hindu-Buddhist traditions. The Indian merchants from India came to Southeast Asia as early as the fourth century and continued their trading activities within the regions occupied by the Kingdom of Srivijaya until the 14th century (Haron, 1989). In fact, the spread of Buddhism and Indian traditions contributed towards the growth of commerce and trade across the Malay world (Rajantharan, 1999). Thus, the Malay civilization before Islam set foot was characterized by Hindu and Buddhist influences (Moorehead, 1957).

The arrival of Islam to the Malay world was through Pasai, a state in northern Sumatra in the 12th century brought by the Arab traders from Saudi Arabia (Hamka, 1954). While Pasai is recognized as the pioneering state to accept Islam, it is generally accepted that it was Malacca that provided the impetus for Islamic leadership and administration of the Malay states in the region.

The emergence and spread of Islamic civilization from West Asia has a profound impact on the Malay world. A very strong factor for the quick spread of Islam in the Malay world is the aspect of equality of man. Wertheim (1964, p. 37) writes:

“Islam gave the small man a sense of individual worth as the member of the Islamic community. According to the Hindu ideology he was merely a creature of lower order than the members of the higher castes. Under Islam he could, as it were, feel himself their equal, or even, in his equality as a Muslim, the superior of such of them as were not Muslims themselves, even though he still occupied a subordinate position in the social structure”.

Islamic religious tenets and principles are the main source of guidance among The Malays. While the basic principles and practices as instructed by the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* have remained, there are elaborations according to the Malay traditional practices. The most important fundamental religious practices followed rigidly by The Malays are the performance of “Pillars of Islam”. The Malays observed all the basic tenets of Islam and during The British time Malays were seen as being proud of their identity and traditions, not to forget their Islamic practices that were very strong. Priority to that it was very difficult for the Christian missionary to develop the faith among The Malays. Swettenham (1895, p. 40) mentions these:

“He is a Muhammadan and a fatalist. ...He never drinks intoxicants; he is rarely an opium smoker. ...He is often studious even, and duly learns to read the Koran in a language he does not understand”.

He is impregnated with the doctrines of Islam, in spite of his sensitive honour and his proneness to revenge, and in spite of his desire to keep his own women (when young and attractive) away from the prying eyes of other men, he yet holds this uncommon faith.

“He is not a bigot ...he has a sublime faith in god. ...Christian missionaries of all denominations have apparently abandoned the hope of his conversion”.

(Swettenham, 1895, p. 42)

Another personality to be highlighted with the same tone is John Crawford (1783– 1868). Like others, Crawford was proficient in Malay and became Resident of Yogyakarta in 1811. Crawford is, however, known more for his appointment as the second Resident of Singapore in 1823. Crawford wrote voluminous works on The

Malays. Crawford regards Islam as a positive element in the lives of The Malays. In Crawford's appreciation, Islam had brought forth an interest towards the writing of history and an enhancement in rational thought, which he perceived as lacking during the Hindu-Buddhist past. In his own words:

“Previous to the introduction of Mahomedanism (Islam), the Javanese made no attempt to write history, and we were as ignorant of chronology as the Hindus, with whom they were so intimately connected. The Mahomedan religion brought with it, as it did in India, a manlier and sober style of thinking, and since the era of conversion, we are possessed of a tolerably connected and circumstantial narrative, improving in detail and to common sense as we descend”.

(Crawford, 1967, p. 27)

Crawford opines that spectres of Hinduism linger within the various customs and rituals of the Javanese and such synthesis were attributed to the excellent proselytizing of early Muslim missionaries. Having written in a lucid way, it is worthwhile to quote Crawford at length:

“In most Mahomedan institutions of the Javanese, we discover marks of Hinduism. The institutions of the latter have been rather modified and built upon rather than destroyed, and in viewing them, we cannot withhold the tribute of our applause to the discreet and artful conduct of the first Mahomedan teachers, whose temperate zeal is always marked by a politic and wise forbearance”.

(Crawford, 1967, p. 266)

The Arabic phrases,” *La ilahaila'lah.*” ...God knows best. *Allahualam* depicted the influence of Islam in the Malay life at that time. To certain extent, they became a parcel of their linguistics intelligence. Some of the phrases were even familiar among the colonial which made them copied the phrases in their work.

iv) Loyalty

Loyalty is a value that exists among the Malays and they are very loyal to their leaders and kings. The British was expecting the same loyalty given to them as they developed the authority over the Malays. This was penned by Swettenham (1956, p. 54) in his book, “*The Malay Sketches*”:

“Above all things, he is conservative to a degree, is proud and fond of his country and his people, venerates his ancient customs and traditions, fears his Rajas, and has a proper respect for constituted authority" while he looks askance on all innovations, and will resist their sudden introduction. He is courteous and expects courtesy in return, and he understands only one method of avenging personal insults. The spirit of the clan is also strong in him. He acknowledges the necessity of carrying out, even blindly, the

orders of his hereditary chief, while he will protect his own relatives at all costs and make their quarrel his own”.

Meanwhile Clifford (1966) portrays the rulers of the Malays as someone who are arrogant like “*Sihamid*” who did a lot of killing and getting bizarre or amuck. Yet, the coming of The British has limited his acts.

“The thought of the old, free, lawless days, when it suddenly recurs to a Malayan raja of the old school, whose claws have been cut by The British government, is to him like a raging tooth. ...It goads him to a maddened restlessness, and obliterates, for the time being, all other sensations”.

The lawless days among the Malays were being discussed by Wilkinson (1971 [1923]) who presents the view that The British, who originally intended to pursue commercial interests, inevitably intervened in the Malay states as a benevolent protector for The Malays. As Sir Henry pointed out, the whole Peninsula was in the hands of the lawless and the turbulent. He argues further that British intervention was welcomed by local societies. According to him, "local feeling was all in favour of intervention" (Wilkinson, 1971 [1923]).

British colonial paternalism is noted in the following passage: The policy laid down by that Governor Sir Andrew Clarke in his dispatch on the Pangkor Treaty can be summed up in his words: "The Malays, like every other rude Eastern nation, require to be treated much more like children, and to be taught." (Wilkinson, 1971 [1923]).

The perspective of British regarding The Malays and their loyalty towards the rulers is true. Mohd Shazwan Mokhtar (2017) states that, the Malays are well known for being loyal to their leaders. Long before the arrival of Islam, The Malays were Hindu who put or place the rulers at the highest level. They regarded the rulers as God. Thus, the idea and practice of worshipping rulers or raja continues even when they have converted to the Islamic faith.

In line with the position taken by Milner (1982, p. 113):

“...entails an understanding of political experience which does not fit comfortably into Western categories.... Neither Raja nor subject is shown to be motivated by power or wealth or any other “practical” objective.... The Raja is not only the “key institution” but the only institution, and the role he plays in the lives of his subjects is as much moral and religious as political. Malays believed service to the ruler offered the opportunity for social and spiritual advancement”.

“They understood that their position in this life and the next depended on the Raja; he was the bond holding men together, and the idiom through which the community experienced the world. Men were not so much subjects as extensions of the Raja”.

Comparing to the British perspectives of kingship is that of the constitutional monarchy, the Malay system constitutes an infinite monarchy. In the contemporary British understanding, queen is the head of the royal state and a governance is carried out based on a constitution (Hoffman, 2015). Moreover, the goal of said governance is to see the rights and the well-being of individual citizens within the country. This stands in contrast with the Malay idea of self, defines mostly as a subject of the Raja and the Kerajaan Malays put the kingship as above of everything, in such a way the king has supreme power and can not be touched.

v) The Malay Image

To Swettenham and Clifford, there are parts of the Malays that have in general make them progressive in civilization. There is no doubt that Swettenham and Clifford's views of the Malays in a positive manner has a great effect on the imagining of English speakers. They should be regarded as the most important voice projecting the idea of a Malay. Like a tossing coin, there are some good traits of the Malays portrayed by the two imperialists:

“His disposition is generally kindly; his manners are polite and easy. ...He is courageous and trustworthy in the discharge of an undertaking. ...He is a good talker, speaks in parables, quotes proverbs and wise saws, has a strong sense of humour, and is very fond of a good joke. ...He is by nature a sportsman, catches and tames elephants, is a skilful fisherman, and thoroughly at home in a boat...he is a good imitative learner, and, when he has energy and ambition enough for the task, makes a good mechanic”.

(“Two Imperialist: A Study of Sir Frank Swettenham and Sir Hugh Clifford”, 1964)

Somehow, at certain point, Swettenham's conception of the Malay character is considerably modified compared to some earlier writers. He does not agree in characterizing The Malays as treacherous. "The Malay has often been called treacherous. I question whether he deserves the reproach more than other men." (Swettenham, 1895).

The discussion on Clifford's work is centralized more on the characters of his work. As a writer, he approaches them with his own feelings, full of humanity and not as a British or colonial official. He is not trying to alter the characters but let them develop by their own based on what he sees. As Clifford says, the worldview of the Malays is having more precedent than his power as an author.

Clifford also often favours The Malays, and saw Malays as someone who are more sensitive, subtler and a real human. He also supports The Malays who are against the Dutch. He occasionally shows his British “superiority” in his work. Comparing to other British writers, Clifford gives a balanced, and perhaps more severe views to The Malays. Although he is a "convinced imperialist" but as a writer he is more sensitive and more humane. Even the Malays sometimes are portrayed to own "half-savage" attitudes and they are generally portrayed as people who have

sensitivities, and rather quiet. Laziness is always associated with The Malays prior to the warm weather.

The laziness, peasantry and idleness of the Malays are found in abundance in most of the British written works. The earlier British newspapers like The Strait Echoes, Penang Gazette and Prince of Wales Island Gazette never failed to mention these Malay features. Such features can be a great excuse for the colonialism on the Malay land. It legalizes the act of colonialism (The Map Room: South East Asia: Malaya, 2020).

vi) Negative Traits

In their excessively negative portrayal of The Malays, both writers; Clifford and Swettenham see The Malays in few categories. Clifford sees the Pahang people as “irreligious, ignorant and unintellectual”, compared to the one in Terengganu whom he gives a positive tone. Somehow, Swettenham (1966) has more negative things to say about The Malays:

“...he is extravagant, fond of borrowing money, and very slow in repaying it. ...He takes an interest in the affairs of his neighbours and is consequently a gossip. ...he is fond of gambling, cock-fighting, and kindred sports. ...He is, however, lazy to a degree, is without method or order of any kind, knows no regularity even in the hours of his meals, and considers time as of no importance. His house is untidy, even dirty. ...The Malay has often been called treacherous. ...runs away with his neighbour’s wife, and generally asserts himself”.

The issue of Malays and idleness has been discussed for so long. Windstedt (1956) says, it is this disinclination to become a tool in the production system of colonial capitalism which made The Malays are a repute of being indolent. This is a factor in the creation of the image of the indolent Malay.

“Because he is an independent farmer with no need to work for hire, the Malay has got an undeserved reputation for idleness, which his Asiatic competitors take care to foster”.

(Winstedt, 1956, p. 17)

This is further elaborated by Alatas (1977) who claims that The Malays do not come into a close purposeful interaction with the Europeans who are mostly focused on the town regions. They have very little involvement with The Malays attending them. In most places like bars, houses, hotels, shops, The Malays do not serve the Europeans. The most which they do are driving and gardening. The Malays are also not involved in the modern private capitalist sector of the economy like construction labour, in road building and in clerical estate work. In general, The Malays are confined to economic areas which do not bring The Malays into direct and regular contact with the European colonial community. Prior to that, their services are not appreciated. The Malays do not function in the total life pattern of colonial capitalism. Because of that they were claimed idle.

Discussion

The first part of this paper, has shown how the images of the Malays are drawn from different angles and perspectives. When the British writers penned on their work about the Malays, they knew the powerful effects in their write up. There are factors that strengthen or mitigate their effects, which can be a vacuum of organizational and institutional dynamics.

What they write can be public perception of importance of major national issues. Readers will think the issues emphasized on the media important for the public, while regarding the issues neglected in the media as unimportant. Nicholas (2014) adds that the literary work will tell its readers what to think about. The public will tend to think that the issues that are most covered by what they wrote will be considered as something important for the country while issues that are less likely covered by media is unimportant. The authors will select the news that they intended to show to the audience and broadcast it frequently to give the illusion of the news portrayed is much more important since it covers the most compared to other news.

Besides, what they write also becomes the main determinant of the truth from the public eyes. Sometimes, the written work had the added flavours which adds the colors to the content of the truth (Milton,2000). This is because of their ability to transfer the two important element; awareness and information to the public were put aside, hence directing them awareness and attention to the issues deemed important by them.

From the paper, there are two basic assumptions underlying from what the British writers worked towards the native Malays:

- (i) The news and issues published by what they wrote do not reflect reality as the writers filtered and exaggerated issues. This is common in the world of fictional or nonfictional literature especially to gain the excitement and interests among the readers.
- (ii) The writers fixate only on certain issues causing other news to be neglected. The domain of the issues are based on writers' interest that could spark the interest among the readers or public later on.

British writers manage to shape the image or picture of the Malays as presented in their work, this means that the works later hold huge responsibility on what people think and influence public perceptions about what is considered important. This is line with Mc. Combs and Shaw (1972) who alliterate:

“The impact of the media in the ability to cause cognitive changes among individuals. Herein lies the communication effects, the most important media's ability to mould the world for us”.

Kohn (2017) suggests there are some assumptions that the writers through their work will filter the news, articles, and posts which will be broadcast. Every event or issue is given some certain criteria that must be followed which are; the length of the presentation (in term of space in the article), and how popular the news or story is.

Easy to say, what being written by the British writers' functions to propagate the mind of readers and it is not only limited to political and economy related aspects, but in some other field as well (Norman, 2017; Lynn Hollen, 2017). It is suggested that the written work could be influential to the other people, most likely the other British to believe with the images of the native Malays; how weak the Malays are in every aspect of life.

British writers penned on their work about the Malays they knew powerful effects in their write up. There are factors that strengthen or mitigate their effects, which can be a vacuum of organizational and institutional dynamics (Ness, Immanuel et al., 2015; Vijay, 2007).

Whatever being written by the British writers' functions to propagate the mind of readers and it is not only limited to political and economy related aspects, but in some other field as well. It is suggested that the written work could be influential to the other people, most likely the other British to believe with the images of the native Malays; how weak are they in every aspect of life. Throughout the work, there is a desire to seek out the methods of imperialist power through the language that is used. The identification of the colonisers and the colonised: For example, they are given masculine criteria. The Englishmen are portrayed as macho, sturdy, ingenious and valiant whilst the natives are depicted as stupid, lazy, feeble, gutless, and even effeminate. It is argued that it is so powerful and be addressed as "colonial discourse", it has changed not only the way of thinking of the colonisers, but also of the colonised. It has set the two different standards and is perpetuated from century to another. There is a huge probability that The British uses the images in embedding their ideas to propagate The Malays during colonial times. The propagation is basically an idea by the colonist towards the colonized people (Panda, 2019).

Referring to such accusation towards The Malays, Alatas (1977) emphasizes some critical foci that led to such remarks. First, that the governmental issues and the development of racial classes and racial generalizations are never unintentional yet are procedural on a very basic level embedded to the working of (racialized) power. Second, that the colonial enterprise needs an ethical affection that is allowed by the development of suitable "instrumental fictions" (to capture Edward Said's expression) which supports such venture. Third, that the propagation and proliferation of such classes of character and contrast are running similar to the workings of racialized colonial capitalism and that the two support each other, subsequently making the very divisive and uneven 'plural economies' so normal in numerous colonial backgrounds.

Furthermore, fourth, that the heritage of colonial capitalism, having entrenched itself in the racialized governmental issues of distinction and sectarianism in numerous colonies, would be difficult to destroy even after the departure of the colonial power for the nearby local elites themselves would have, by then, come to discover that the extremely same instruments of partition and rule could be utilized by them to sustain such power differentials later on.

Alatas (1977) also discusses this ideology that the negative image of the societies deliberated by Western colonial powers, which portrays the colonial philosophy and shows in the articles highlighted in this study, is drawn on the

foundation of superficial interpretations, occasionally with robust built-in biases, or erroneous and wrong approaches. For him, the general negative image is not the result of scholarship. Those who proclaimed the people of the area indolent, dull, treacherous, and childish, are generally not scholars.

Prior to what being discussed above, the bad images on Malays by British writers legalised colonialism; the colonised people need to be helped. More studies on this aspect need to be done by referring to sources written by the British people towards the native Malays.

Conclusion

Literary works set in the British empire like *The Malay land* forms a significant part of the literary history and, in their time, some of the bests are both wildly popular and are trailblazers (Roger, 2005 & Lorenzo, 2010). No matter whether it is a complex or casual issue that was brought in their work, the cheer leading for colonialism, is imbued with an unthinking assumption of the racial superiority of the white colonial adventurer over the colonized native. Such literature allows us to access these issues in a deeply personal and meaningful way.

Some of the images of The Malays drawn by The British are based on rapid generalities rather than on a comprehensive approach and firm scholarship. It is partially created by lack of empathy or cultural misunderstanding to fulfil ideological and rationalization of colonial power. These images have been disseminated among countless thousands of minds more than four centuries by hundreds of books and endless verbal communications. The worse, these images still have a substantial impact after the independence. It is bewildering that no thoughtful work has been done to study the roots and allegations of such images. To adjourn this last sentence, this paper perhaps is one of the starting points towards that effort.

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