

Malayans Must Know History First, Before Malaysians Can Understand Malaysia

By Matthias Chang – Future Fast-Forward

Intellectual Masturbation

Before you condemn me for using “such language” please Google, which provides, inter-alia:

Intellectual Masturbation Rubs Me The Wrong Way

Intellectual masturbation is a big problem on campus. Every class I go to, there's one or two people with no shame. They don't hesitate doing it in front of everybody who is there trying to learn. The time has come to take a long, hard look at intellectual masturbation and examine how it affects our campus. Intellectual masturbation can be defined as: The act of satisfying one's ego through statements intended only to show off one's intelligence.

Intellectual masturbation is generally used as a pejorative expression.

Guy 1: Hey dude! How was that class debate? Guy 2: It was freaking awesome. It was pure intellectual Masturbation.

Politicians generally are the biggest culprits but, people are too polite to call them out. Now we can proceed with some serious stuff!

Some History Lessons

History is derived from “HIS” and “STORY” - history. (1)

Queen Victoria reigned for exactly sixty-three years, seven months, and two days (20 June 1837 - 22 January 1901). Her rule is the second longest after Queen Elizabeth II.

The Straits Settlements originally consisted of the four individual settlements of Penang, Singapore, Malacca, and Dinding.

Penang, Malacca and Singapore, was an administrative unit of the East India Company (1826–1867) and later the British Colonial Office (1867–1946). It was formed in 1826 as a presidency under the administration of the East India Company in India.

The East India Company (EIC) was an English and later British, joint-stock company founded in 1600 and dissolved in 1874. It was formed to trade in the Indian Ocean region, initially with the East Indies (the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia), and later with East Asia.

The company gained control of large parts of the Indian sub-continent and colonised parts of Southeast Asia and Hong Kong. At its peak, the company was the largest corporation in the world by various measures and had its own

armed forces in the form of the company's three presidency armies, totalling about 260,000 soldiers, twice the size of the British army at the time.

Originally chartered as the "Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading into the East-Indies", the company rose to account for half of the world's trade during the mid-1700s and early 1800s, particularly in basic commodities including cotton, silk, indigo dye, sugar, salt, spices, saltpetre, tea, and later, opium. The company also initiated the beginnings of the British Empire in India.

In 1511, Malacca fell into the hands of the Portuguese and that was the beginning of the colonial era in Malaya. After that, Malaya fell into the hands of the Dutch in 1641 and British in 1824 through the Anglo–Dutch Treaty.

Penang was founded in 1786 by Captain Francis Light, and thereafter, Catholic communities from Southern Siam and Kuala Kedah resettled in Penang. In 1819, British statesman Stamford Raffles negotiated a treaty whereby Johor would allow the British to locate a trading port on the island, ultimately leading to the establishment of the Crown colony of Singapore in 1867.

Interesting Facts You Forgot

Dindings

The Dindings — named after the Dinding River in present-day Manjung District — which comprised Pangkor Island and the town of Lumut on the mainland, were ceded by Perak to the British government under the Pangkor Treaty of 1874. Hopes that its excellent natural harbour would prove to be valuable were doomed to disappointment, and the territory sparsely inhabited and altogether unimportant both politically and financially was returned to and administered by the government of Perak in February 1935.

Malacca

The Dutch colony of Malacca was ceded to the British in the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824 in exchange for the British possession of Bencoolen and for British rights in Sumatra. Malacca's importance was in establishing an exclusive British zone of influence in the region, and it was overshadowed as a trading post by Penang, and later, Singapore.

Penang and Province Wellesley

The first settlement was the Penang territory, in 1786. This originally comprised Penang Island, then known as the 'Prince of Wales Island'. This was later extended to encompass an area of the mainland, which became known as Province Wellesley (now Seberang Perai). The first grant was in 1800, followed by another in 1831. Further adjustments to Province Wellesley's border were made in 1859 and with the Treaty of Pangkor in 1874. Province Wellesley, on the mainland opposite the island of Penang, was ceded to Great Britain in 1800

by the Sultan of Kedah on its northern and eastern border; Perak lies to the south. The boundary with Kedah was rectified by treaty with Siam (now Thailand) in 1867.

Singapore

Singapore became the site of a British trading post in 1819 after its founder, Stamford Raffles, successfully involved the East India Company in a dynastic struggle for the throne of Johore. Thereafter the British came to control the entire island of Singapore, which was developed into a thriving colony and port. In 1824, the Dutch conceded any rights they had to the island in the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824, and from 1832, Singapore was the seat of government of the Straits Settlements for 114 years until its dissolution in 1946.

The word, “Founded” means founded for the British Crown. It is not as if before the Brits, there were no people living in Penang or Singapore. Ditto in the current propaganda for the creation of Israel!

Finances

In the early nineteenth century, the most common currency used in the East Indies was the Spanish dollar, including issues both from Spain and from the new world Spanish colonies, most significantly Mexico, due to market circulation from the Spanish East Indies (Spanish Philippines). Locally issued coinages included the Kelantan and Trengganu keping, and the Penang dollar.

In 1837, the Indian rupee was made the sole official currency in the Straits Settlements, as it was administered as part of India. [Freaking Malaysians have no idea of this historic fact]

However, Spanish dollars continued to circulate and 1845 saw the introduction of coinage for the Straits Settlements using a system of 100 cents = 1 Straits dollar, with the dollar equal to the Spanish dollar or Mexican peso.

In 1867, the administration of the Straits Settlements was separated from India and the **Straits dollar was made the standard currency.**

The revenue of the colony in 1868 amounted to \$1,301,843. That for 1906 was \$9,512,132, exclusive of \$106,180 received for land sales. Of this sum, \$6,650,558 was derived from import duties on opium, wines, and spirits, and licences to deal in these articles ...

The Corporate Angle

The East India Company - the World's Most Powerful Monopoly.

Emily Erikson, a sociology professor at Yale University, Director of the Fox International Fellowship wrote and I quote:

One of the biggest, most dominant corporations in history operated long before the emergence of tech giants like Apple or Google or Amazon. The English East India Company was incorporated by royal charter on December 31, 1600 and went on to act as a part-trade organization, part-nation-state and reap vast profits from overseas trade with India, China, Persia and Indonesia for more than two centuries. Its business flooded England with affordable tea, cotton textiles and spices, and richly rewarded its London investors with returns as high as 30 per cent.

Princeton University Press, publisher of Emily Erikson's book, "Between Monopoly and Free Trade, The East India Company 1600 – 1757 reviewed as follows:

Emily Erikson demonstrates why the English East India Company was a dominant force in the expansion of trade between Europe and Asia, and she sheds light on the related problems of why England experienced rapid economic development and how the relationship between Europe and Asia shifted in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Though the Company held a monopoly on English overseas trade to Asia, the Court of Directors extended the right to trade in Asia to their employees, creating an unusual situation in which employees worked both for themselves and for the Company as overseas merchants. Building on the organizational infrastructure of the Company and the sophisticated commercial institutions of the markets of the East, employees constructed a cohesive internal network of peer communications that directed English trading ships during their voyages. This network integrated Company operations, encouraged innovation, and increased the Company's flexibility, adaptability, and responsiveness to local circumstance.

It was also larger than several nations. It was essentially the de facto emperor of large portions of India, which was one of the most productive economies in the world at that point But just when the East India Company's grip on trade weakened in the late 18th century, it found a new calling as an empire-builder. At one point, this mega corporation commanded a private army of 260,000 soldiers, twice the size of the standing British army. That kind of manpower was more than enough to scare off the remaining competition, conquer territory and coerce Indian rulers into one-sided contracts that granted the Company lucrative taxation powers.



Ships in Bombay Harbour 1731

The **American Battlefield Trust** provides an invaluable perspective, updated on January, 2024 and I quote in extenso:

The history of the British East India Company encompasses nearly three centuries and reflects Britain's rise to a global power, the expansion of European imperialism, and the tremendous growth in international trade in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. The company had access to an unprecedented source of wealth when it was given a monopoly over British trade in India and China, and it soon transformed from a solely commercial venture to an imperial power in its own right, fighting wars and ruling over vast swaths of territory in South Asia. The sale of tea to the North American colonies was

only one part of the company's commercial network, which brought luxury goods like Chinese porcelain or Indian calico along with tea to Western markets. But the tea trade soon affected the path of history, when the colonists' reaction against the British Parliament's tax on tea and the company's monopoly proved a catalyst for the American Revolution and the foundation of the United States.

For a company which would one day act as a sovereign nation, with tremendous resources of wealth, land, and labor, the East India Company had small beginnings. After the destruction of the Spanish Armada in 1588, Spanish and Portuguese dominance in the East Indies (today South Asia including the Indian coast and Malay Archipelago) declined and an opportunity for English merchants to enter the spice trade appeared. The East India Company--often known as the British or English East India Company to distinguish itself from its competitors--was founded in 1600, during the rule of Queen Elizabeth I. She issued a charter which created a monopoly on English trade to the East Indies and allowed a few merchants to band together and fund voyages to the area. This distributed risk across participants and gave individuals the ability to subscribe separately to each new venture. In 1612, the company instituted a simple, temporary joint-stock system; the joint stocks became permanent in 1657.

Although the East India Company's first aim was to secure spices, they soon expanded their business to trade in cotton, silk, indigo, tea, and saltpeter (an ingredient used in gunpowder.) Competition was intense, especially with the Dutch. Company ships fought their international competitors in sea battles like the Battle of Swally in 1612. These conflicts escalated to the level of war between England and the Netherlands three times in the 17th century. The company originally enjoyed the favor of the Mughal emperors and established fortified trading posts, known as factories, in Java and India.

In the 18th century, the company participated in the slave trade, especially in the middle decades of the century. It was most heavily involved not in American slavery but in transporting enslaved Africans from East Africa to India and Indonesia. The slave trade declined at the end of the century and was outlawed in the British Empire in 1807, although there is evidence that the company illegally continued the trade for years. Slavery would be abolished completely in the British Empire in 1833.

The East India Company's monopoly on English trade with India soon expanded to China, importing porcelain and tea to Great Britain and its colonies and flooding Chinese markets with opium. The eighteenth century also saw the consolidation of the company's rule in India and its victory in the Anglo-Mysore and Anglo-Maratha wars. Without considerable government oversight until the 1770s, the company essentially existed as its own imperial power, running British colonies in the interests of shareholders and possessing its own military force. It also had significant lobbying power in Parliament. In the eighteenth century, Britain's rivalry with France began to take precedence over conflict with the Dutch. Part of the Seven Years' War, known in North America as the French and Indian War, was fought with company troops against the French in India.

The British East India Company's monopoly on tea proved lucrative as the commodity grew in popularity across the British Empire. These profits were sorely needed when an overextended British financial market collapsed in 1772, threatening to send the company under. Eighteen million pounds of tea waited in storage, but the company was obligated by law to sell to the highest bidder in England—making the sale of tea less profitable than it would be without a middleman. In 1773, Parliament passed the Tea Act, allowing the company to sell directly to colonial markets. It also made the company exempt from an export tax, to be paid instead at American ports. The colonists, already smarting from Parliament's refusal to repeal the tax on tea, were dismayed by the monopoly's threat to smuggling and their own commerce. The special agents called consignees who would receive and sell the company tea would be able to easily undercut ordinary merchants' prices.

American patriots and the *Sons of Liberty* took advantage of the colonists' anger and encouraged Americans to boycott tea and publicly pressure the consignees to resign, sometimes through threats of violence. When ships carrying tea arrived at Boston Harbor, a resentful populace demanded the tea be sent back. The ships' owners, Massachusetts Governor Thomas Hutchinson, and the consignees all refused to do so. On December 16, 1773, the famous "Boston Tea Party" occurred when colonists boarded the ships and destroyed the tea, throwing it in the harbor.

The consequences were tremendous, for Boston and for the world. The closure of Boston's port in retaliation for the Boston Tea Party would lead to the outbreak of the American Revolution and the colonies' rebirth the independent United States. The British East India Company itself would suffer from the disruption of Anglo-American trade for decades.

The opium the company had traded to China, despite attempted restrictions by the Qing government, destabilized the country and led to the outbreak of the First Opium War in 1837. At the same time, frustration with the immense amount of power held in a private company's hands heralded calls for greater regulation and public control of colonies. In 1813, the company's monopoly was revoked, and the resulting boom in competition undermined its profits. In 1833, the company transitioned from a commercial to a managing role. Resentment over company rule in India caused the Indian Rebellion of 1857 (sometimes called the Sepoy Mutiny,) where both Indian and British civilians suffered atrocities and the company's mismanagement became evident. A popular outcry in Britain led to the passage of the Government of India Act of 1858, which placed India under the British government and reduced the company to an administrative agency. The East India Company was dissolved in 1874, nearly three hundred years after its founding.

As one of the largest, longest lasting, and most powerful companies in history, the British East India Company is significant for its role in the growth of the world economy between the 17th and 19th centuries. But because it existed at a time when economic, military, and political power were so intertwined, it was equally influential in the history of imperialism as a whole. The British Empire would have taken a very different shape if it had not co-evolved with the expansive merchant capitalism of the company. India may never have united, or China never suffered the Opium Wars, without the British East India Company. The company's impact on the American Revolution was also profound. Although a movement for American independence may still have occurred, there is no telling how strong it would have been or how different it would have looked without the specific Parliamentary policies which advantaged the company at the expense of the colonists..

Please read the final paragraph above at least three times!

Why???

I quoted in extenso *The American Battlefield Trust* because American patriots did not forget their history and I hope you will not forget the History of Malaya before it became Malaysia!

From the National Trust of UK, we get another perspective, the cruel power of the East India Company.

The Rulers: From its earliest days the Company had sought to protect its presence in India through the building of fortified outposts and field armies. Pushed on by threats from other European powers and local rulers, plus the individual ambition of several key figures, the Company's military machine expanded to fight numerous wars. With the

victories at Plassey (1757) and Buxar (1764) the Company forced the defeated Mughal emperor, Shah Alam II, to surrender the territories of Bengal, Bihar and Orrisa. From this point onwards the East India Company became rulers, able to create the laws and levy taxes. For almost a century after this the Company waged war until it had conquered the entirety of the Sub-continent and ruled over a population exceeding 200 million.

***The Tyrants:** As both merchant and ruler, the Company maintained high prices and charged its tax collectors with extracting as much revenue from the Indian population as possible, which opponents argued reduced many to subsistence poverty. The Company's policies and inaction also directly contributed to the ill effects of crop failures, such as in Bengal during 1769-70, where the resulting famine killed somewhere between 1-4 million people. As foreign conquerors, the Company felt itself in perpetual danger of rebellion and overthrow and was particularly wary of interfering in Indian religions. That said, the Company could be highly interventionist, particularly in terms of law and order, where it sought to maintain an image of unassailable power and was not beyond brutal retribution.*

***Drug barons:** By the late eighteenth century, however, customers and rivals increasingly complained of unfair pricing and practices As a result, it was left with a monopoly on only a few key products, principally tea, which it purchased from China. As the Chinese authorities would only accept silver in exchange, the Company looked to more profitable methods of exchange and increasingly relied on smuggling opium. This resulted in a terrible human cost and two 'Opium Wars' between Britain and China.*

Nothing has changed, and all you need to do is read again what Emily Erikson wrote,

"One of the biggest, most dominant corporations in history operated long before the emergence of tech giants like Apple or Google or Amazon...."

Have not the global corporate giants gobbled up the world? Blackrock has bought big chunks of Ukraine and would not accept the defeat of Ukraine and insisted that the Ukrainian oligarchs must deliver their side of the bargain for the globalists to take possession of hundreds of thousands hectares of prime land. Same goes for Libya and Syria.

Zionist Israel must deliver their side of the bargain to the globalists for the Gaza off-shore gas and oil rights!

Soon, we may be forced to prostitute our national wealth and treasures to global corporations.

So, what is it so difficult to understand? Just follow the money and the deals, stupid!

End Notes

- (1) Google Search and Wikipedia, source: for Some History Lessons and Interesting Facts. For detail sources, contact the author.

Further Reading:

- *The East India Company: Trade and Conquest* by Antony Wild
- *The Anarchy: The Relentless Rise of the East India Company* by William Dalrymple
- *The Corporation that Changed the World: How the East India Company Shaped the Modern Multinational* by Nick Robins
- *Tea: Addiction, Exploitation, and Empire* by Roy Moxham
- *The Opium War: Drugs, Dreams, and the Making of Modern China* by Julia Lovell
- *Adventurers: The Improbable Rise of the East India Company* by David Howarth